

Pinnacle News

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association

FALL 2013

Pinnacle Debuts New Website!

This September a totally redesigned website for the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association went live. The debut followed many weeks of gathering and formatting information and deciding upon the new look, content, and photographs. The redesigned website was the brainchild of Camilla Roberts and Laurie Indenbaum. We urge you to visit the NEW www.windmillhillpinnacle.org and to read more about that effort inside this newsletter.

Hats Off to Camilla Roberts!

In June the Pinnacle Association Board formally bid a fond farewell to Camilla Roberts as a WHPA Trustee. Camil will continue as a committee member helping with Vermont Housing and Conservation Board applications and Athens-Dome projects, but she is taking more time to concentrate on her painting and her position as a Lister for the Town of Rockingham. As Association Chairperson for seven years, Camil was known for her empowering leadership, broad vision, and attention to detail.

When asked what she was most proud of during her tenure, Camilla said:

- Focusing meetings on vision and decisions while empowering the committees to carry out the routines and specifics of implementing the full Board vision;
- Finding ways to be sustainable as an organization for the long term, yet continuing to grow when appropriate;
- Extending land holdings and trails into the Athens Dome area [land she has personally loved long before joining the Pinnacle Association];
- Enhancing the communications materials, newsletter, and new logo;
- Establishing the annual retreat for celebrating, and working on the more

challenging issues facing the Association;

- Supporting land management as an increasingly relevant function for Board and volunteer energy.

Camilla was also emphatic about the privilege it was to work with the many dynamic and dedicated people who pour skill and energy into the organization, land conservation, and efforts to engage people of all ages with the land.

Susan Roman, new Pinnacle Chairperson, summed up Camil's accomplishments: "Camilla's leadership has honored WHPA's history and traditions while guid-



Camilla Roberts, at left, holds a framed tile rendition of a view from the Pinnacle summit created by artist Carol Keiser of Putney and presented from the Board by Susan Roman.

ing the organization through growth and change. The 2009 strategic-planning process and its implementation and the development of WHPA's vision statement particularly stand out. She had an excellent instinct for keeping the board focused not only on the issue at hand but also the overall purpose and vision."

Camilla's predecessor, Beverly Major, who for 15 years was the first Chairperson of the Pinnacle Association, put her appreciation in more personal terms. "The Pinnacle was a bit like a child for me, and passing it on was a big issue. Not a day has gone by when I have not been thankful for Camilla's leadership and her quiet, reasoned, visionary, and professional competence – whether she was running a meeting or conferring with state officials or working on a committee or simply leading a walk in the woods."

Hikers, conservationists, and associates applaud Camil's seven years that vastly increased Pinnacle's land holdings, trail improvements, public image, and leadership example in the arena of nonprofit conservation organizations in Vermont. Thank you, Camilla Roberts, for a job truly well done!

Recent Highlights

Annual Meeting. The 2013 Annual Meeting was held on April 28 at Patch Farm in Westminster. Incoming Chair Susan Roman thanked retiring Board members – especially outgoing Chairperson Camilla Roberts. Accomplishments for the past year were reviewed, elections held for new Trustees, and the Volunteer of the Year Award presented to Ray Hitchcock. The program part of the meeting featured Michael Clough, his PowerPoint program on Vermont Reptiles and Amphibians, and an array of exciting live specimens.



Athens Dome. A footbridge across Ledge Brook and a hemlock picnic table next to the stream were welcome trail improvements created by Silos Roberts and Andy Toepfer. Stalwart volunteers helped to create trail steps up from the Ledge Road kiosk across from the parking area.

Trails. A section of Holden Trail to the Pinnacle was rerouted.

Officers. At a summer Board meeting, the Trustees elected officers for 2013-2014: Chairperson, Susan Roman of Westminster; Vice Chair, Silos Roberts of Rockingham; Treasurer and Registered Agent, Alison Latham of Westminster; Assistant Treasurer, Kath Martin of Rockingham; Secretary and Archivist, Beverly Major of Westminster; and Corresponding Secretary, Catherine Cooper-Ellis of Westminster.

Asked about her personal aims as new head of the Board, Susan Roman responded, "For most of my career I worked as a manager in the nonprofit sector and spent much of my free time hiking, biking, camping, and paddling in the Northeastern and Western U.S. As Chair of the Pinnacle I will have the opportunity to combine my professional experience with my awe of nature to guide us through the next stages of building and sustaining a healthy organization. As we continue to implement new initiatives and conserve new lands, it's my goal to keep this complex, all-volunteer organization on the successful trajectory set by the boards headed by Beverly Major and Camilla Roberts."



New Pinnacle Association Trustees, left to right: Mike LaRoss, Elaine Gordon, Rick Cowan, and Jim Jordan

From the Board



New Trustees. At the 2013 Annual Meeting Pinnacle members elected four new Trustees: Rick Cowan of Cambridgeport, and Elaine Gordon, Jim Jordan, and Mike LaRoss – all of Westminster.

Rick Cowan. Formerly Director of TABS, The Association of Boarding Schools, and Vice Rector for External Affairs at St. Paul's School in Concord, NH, Rick has worked at The Grammar School, The Putney School, and The Compass School, where he serves as Director of Admission and Development. His hobbies include birdwatching, travel, running, freelance writing, and photography. This is his second time on the Board – a "real education in local geography, culture, and history." He hopes to contribute his perspectives on communications and marketing, as well as his connections to local independent schools, towards increased habitat preservation.

Elaine Gordon. Working in education for over 30 years, originally as a wilderness trip leader for Outward Bound, the National Outdoor Leadership School, and other organizations, Elaine currently serves as coordinator of the After-school Program for the Westminster Schools. A 21-year resident of Westminster, she enjoys the outdoors, biking, cross-country skiing, and hiking. She joined the Pinnacle Board to give back to an organization that has done so much in securing land for use by all members of the community and is interested in expanding the use of the land by local children through both school and after-school programs.

Jim Jordan. A faculty member in the Department of Environmental Studies at Antioch University New England, Jim is especially interested in how humans drive and/or respond to environmental change across years, decades, centuries, and longer. His areas of expertise are in land-use history, soils and geomorphology, and climate change. For him WHPA is a dynamic, visionary, and purpose-driven organization. He hopes to contribute depth and energy to WHPA's mission through his professional perspectives and networks, and his enduring curiosity about the relationship between the human and natural communities that define the essence of our "place."

Mike LaRoss. The Accounting Manager for an optics company in Keene, NH, Mike – who has extensive experience in accounting/audit/finance in a variety of retail, wholesale, and manufacturing industries – is eager to learn about the world of "not for profit". An avid hiker and backpacker since college (he has through-hiked the Appalachian Trail, completed the Long Trail, and is currently working on completing all the side trails to the Long Trail), he is a trail adopter for a section of the AT/LT in southern Vermont and is also a member of the Bald Hill Conservation Committee. He is interested in increasing trail systems so local folks can find quality hiking choices close to where they live.

Schedule of Events: Weekend Strolls and More

September 21, Saturday, 11 AM-4 PM. Accessibility Day. This once-a-year opportunity for a vehicle ride to a special trail site will go to Paul's Ledges for lunch via an often rough road. Leaders will be Tony Coven and Bev Major. The popularity of this program and the need for four-wheel-drive vehicles make advance registrations a MUST for riders. Hikers do not need to pre-register. Bring water, bag lunch, and sweater or jacket for chilly weather at the top. Meet at the Westminster West Church to carpool. Contact Bev Major at 802-387-5737 or beverlymajor65@gmail.com for information and registration.

October 19, Saturday, 1-3:30 PM. Bald Hill Hike. Randy Major will lead this moderate hike to the Bald Hill summit area, Twin Falls, and mysterious historic earthworks. Meet at the trailhead at 232 Covered Bridge Road in Westminster. For information and registration, contact Randy Major at 802-387-5737 or majorrandy71@gmail.com.

November 2, Saturday, Noon-3 PM. Soapstone Hike. Led by Bill Brown of the Grafton Improvement Association and Andy Toepfer of the Pinnacle Association, this somewhat long moderate walk will feature the soapstone history of the area, and a look at one quarry and related cellar holes of a boarding house and mill where soapstone blocks were sawn with wire cable. Dress warmly, wear sturdy shoes, and bring water. Meet at the parking lot opposite The Nature Museum at Grafton to carpool to the start. For more information, contact Andy Toepfer at 802-869-3379 or atoepfer@sover.net.



Guess who found a dead snake at the Pinnacle shelter on Take a Kid for a Hike Day?

Please Welcome Pinnacle's Totally Redesigned Website!

The redesigned website was a major goal for former Pinnacle Chairperson Camilla Roberts, who coordinated the effort to amass material and convened a group to tackle the task. Laurie Indenbaum launched the project by offering her skill and time in designing the new website. Other major contributors to the website effort were Randy Major, Susan Roman, Clay West, and Lillian Willis.

Camilla Roberts, as Pinnacle Chairperson for seven years, knows Pinnacle's history, grants, partners, volunteers, trail plans, and maintenance work, as well as efforts to further Pinnacle's evolving mission. She wrote the More Recent History summary and much of the text for the other sections.

Randy Major is a member of both the Pinnacle Association Board and the Bald Hill Conservation Committee. He supplied the text and trail descriptions for the Bald Hill Reserve and the Bellows Falls Union High School Forest.

Susan Roman, long-time Pinnacle volunteer and present Chairperson, has a good idea of the organization, players involved, and how to get Pinnacle's mission and benefits across to the public. She was an invaluable advisor and reviewer.

Clay West, a graduate of Brattleboro Union High School, will major in photography in college. He specializes in portraits, landscapes, and sports photography, and visited the Bald Hill Reserve and Bellows Falls Union High School Forest to photograph trails and natural features for Pinnacle's website and publications.

Laurie Indenbaum, whose full-time job is Manager for a violin maker in Brattleboro, enjoys doing website design as a sideline business. Her aim is to make websites attractive, clean, and easily navigable. She has created or designed about a dozen and figured that designing a new website was the most logical way for her to make a truly useful, personal contribution in support of the Pinnacle Association and its important work.

Lillian Willis has extensive professional and volunteer experience in conservation, environmental education, communication, and marketing. She edited the new website, contributed advice and new articles, and supplied many photographs.

Additional grateful recognition goes to Jeff Nugent and Andy Toepfer, whose maps are utilized by Pinnacle in so many publications and are major features on the website and at trailhead kiosks. Jeff, long-time trusted advisor, has developed and revised the Windmill Ridge maps for the Pinnacle Association and Putney Mountain Association. Andy, a member of both the Pinnacle Association Board and the Athens Dome at Grafton Conservation Committee, is responsible for the trail routes and maps for the Athens Dome area. Finally, immense thanks go to Abigail Littlefield, who created and managed the previous website for all the years prior to this new design.

The website is a living, evolving asset for the Association. We welcome your comments and suggestions to make Pinnacle and its mission clearer and more appealing to more people. Please let us hear from you at whpa@sover.net.



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Permit No. 1



Rerouting a section of the Holden Trail to the Pinnacle was a big job. It involved cutting trees, making water-bars, and blocking off the old section. Victorious here after the effort are, left to right, Molly Wilson, Silos Roberts, Tony Coven, and Joe Valaske. Missing from the photo are Susan Roman and Sarah Waldo.

Thank You!!!

Next time you hike Pinnacle trails please think of these fantastic volunteers.

Our Trail Stewards!

These steadfast volunteers adopt trail sections and keep them safe and attractive.

Hubey Folsum	Bob Sartini
Roger Haydock	Arthur Westing
Jeff Nugent	Carol Westing
Joe Richards	Molly Wilson
Silos Roberts	Paul Wilson
	Judith Yogman

Our Trail Workers!

These stalwart volunteers may cut new trails, create steps or bridges, install water-bars, remove invasive plants, or any other special project to enhance our trails.

David Buchdahl	Andy Toepfer
Tony Coven	Joe Valaske
Bob Gay	Sarah Waldo
David Kahle	Dick Warren
Silos Roberts	Molly Wilson
Susan Roman	Paul Wilson

If you are interested in joining these dedicated volunteers, please contact Sarah Waldo at sarah_waldo@hotmail.com.

Volunteer of the Year: Ray Hitchcock

At left, Ray Hitchcock of Cambridgeport accepts the Volunteer of the Year Award from Pinnacle Trustee Silos Roberts at the Annual Meeting. The picture at Paul's Ledges was a thank-you for Ray's important and varied help in a number of projects: research and writing for the Act 250 application for the new trails in the Athens Dome and Bald Hill areas *and* for the application for WHPA to become formally recognized in the Vermont Trail System, design of information pages for the Athens Dome and Windmill Ridge maps, photos for publicity, and designation for proper handicapped access to appropriate Pinnacle properties. He also serves as Secretary for the Athens Dome at Grafton Conservation Committee. Wow!



Photographs Wanted

When you take your camera along on the trails and snap great high-res digital photos of flora, fauna, views, or people enjoying them or Pinnacle programs on WHPA lands, we'd love you to email them to sjroman1948@yahoo.com. We may be able to use them in a future newsletter or post them on our website www.windmillhillpinnacle.org.