

THE AUSBON SARGENT LAND PRESERVATION TRUST

Helping to Preserve the Rural Landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Ragged/Lake Sunapee Region

Andover, Bradford, Danbury, Goshen, Grantham, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner & Wilmot



Chatter



Summer 2024



We Connect to Protect

From the Interim Executive Director:

Andy Deegan, Interim Executive Director



Connections are a way to find similar interests, which allow us to collaborate with others to conserve land. Every individual who works with Ausbon Sargent has a different perspective as to why a unique property should be conserved. Finding and fostering these connections is integral to the success of our organization now and in perpetuity.

Our most important job is to connect with people. Ausbon Sargent was founded by people committed to protecting our local environment, and the organization could not exist and thrive without passionate people. This isn't just regarding Ausbon Sargent's staff, but our many volunteers, our easement landowners and generous members and donors. We work to find and develop connections with all kinds of people so they are excited about helping Ausbon Sargent to succeed.

For some individuals, their strongest connection is being out on the properties we have protected. These individuals often help us with our monitoring program. We are required to visit each of our protected properties on an annual basis and we couldn't do this without the help of our dedicated volunteer monitors. But bushwhacking through the woods is not for everyone, and sometimes it is social interaction with staff and other volunteers that is the connection. Some volunteers cherish the social aspect of envelope "stuffing," while others assist with filing or data entry in our office. There are other volunteers who want to help guide Ausbon Sargent's strategic success. These individuals may join one of our committees or our Board of Trustees, helping to ensure we meet our obligations as an accredited land trust and continue to be a trusted organization in our region.

We also connect with many landowners whose deep affection for their land motivates them to work with Ausbon Sargent. We understand and relate to this attachment to place, the amazing natural resources of our region, and endeavor to work with each potential conservation landowner to achieve their goals for protection. Connecting with landowners who live on conserved land, whether or not they are the original easement donors, is another key component of our work. It is essential that we connect with landowners about the unique conservation values

of their protected land so that they are inspired to be excellent stewards of their important property.

Connecting with grant funders is also important. We must secure grants to help fund land protection projects and cover costs associated with running the organization. A strong connection with these programs and foundations is vital to understand the types of projects each is interested in funding and ensure we are meeting grant conditions. Understanding grant criteria and requirements allows us to be more successful in our fundraising efforts.

Ultimately, our connections with people are most often centered on a connection to the land. There is a reason we came to this region of New Hampshire, and a reason we remain rooted here. There is a reason this place is special. For some of us it is the open space and trails, for others it is the scenic farms and forests. Many enjoy watching the wildlife that roam our protected land or recreating in the sparkling waters of our beautiful lakes and ponds. For whatever reason you choose to live or vacation here, you too have a connection to the land – be it one special property or many, that lets you know you are home. It is these connections to people and place that have made Ausbon Sargent successful over the years, and these connections that will continue to make our region a wonderful place to live and play.

Andy Deegan, *Interim Executive Director*

Andy has worked at Ausbon Sargent for 16 years as the Land Protection Specialist. Recently, he has stepped into the role of Interim Executive Director. He lives in New London with his wife and two children. In his free time he enjoys birding, kayaking, hiking, and generally being outside.



ABOUT THE COVER >

Multigenerational participants at our annual Dragonfly Walk connect at the Esther Currier Wildlife Management Area at Low Plain. Photo courtesy: Jen Esten





Participants in the Council on Aging's "Outside Recreation For Seniors" (ORFS) group enjoy a guided hike on the Cassey Brook Preserve, Wilmot.

Meaningful Connections Through Conservation

By Kristy Heath, Development and Communications Coordinator

Much like the way one piece of land connects to another, Ausbon Sargent works every day to connect people to each other and to the special lands that surround us. The term "rural character" has a lot to do with the landscape that surrounds us. It includes open spaces, farms, forests, wildlife sightings, dark skies at night, and knowing that the air and water are fresh and clean.

Our mission to preserve and protect the rural character of our region is broken down into four segments that help guide us in reaching our goals:

1. Land Conservation – To increase the amount of conserved acreage in the region and to identify land with a high priority for protection.

Our Land Protection Specialist connects with landowners who inquire about conserving their property. They may walk the property together, sometimes with members of the Land Protection Committee, providing an opportunity for Ausbon Sargent to understand the landowner's connection to the land. If the land will be purchased or the landowner is not able to make an easement donation, fundraising must be done. A fundraising campaign connects Ausbon Sargent with conservation commissions, grantors, foundations, and with citizens of the town. More connections occur with surveyors, appraisers, hazardous waste assessors, lawyers, and sometimes town's governing bodies. The Stewardship Manager connects to the process when the easement language is being drafted, to make sure that Ausbon Sargent can promote and enforce allowances and restrictions put on the property.

2. Stewardship – To fulfill our growing obligation to protect lands now and forever.

Ausbon Sargent holds an interest in 167 properties, which is over 13,500 acres of land. Each property must be monitored on at least a yearly basis, so connecting with volunteers to help with this task is vital. Our Stewardship Manager conducts trainings each spring with volunteers who want to be monitors. The monitors connect with

landowners prior to visiting a property to ask some management questions and see if they want to join the monitoring visit. Some landowners enjoy the walk, while others appreciate the check in. Another connection is made.

3. Community Engagement – To ensure that a broad demographic will understand and value the benefits of conserved land and become involved in our mission.

We try to bring awareness to our work so that people will understand why it is important. We lead hikes, hold workshops and events, create educational tools (like the one you're reading right now), and work to build our social media presence, all to bring awareness and engage the community. We love to hear from a new member or volunteer: "Oh, I always wondered what those green squirrel signs were for!"

4. Organizational Integrity – To continue as a trusted organization of excellence as evidenced by our financial stability and strong leadership and management.

The word "trust" is not just a part of our name, it also explains how we operate. Ausbon Sargent is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, which ensures that our organization has completed a strenuous third-party review process and that our policies and procedures will stand the test of time. We are also audited each year to make sure that our income and expenses are transparent and reasonable for the work being done.

As you can see, the business of protecting land is achieved through a series of important connections. The connections we make with each land project helps solidify our efforts to keep our rural character intact in the Mr. Kearsarge/Ragged/Lake Sunapee region.

Kristy is starting her 10th year with the Land Trust this summer and serves as the Development and Communications Coordinator. She likes to travel, camp with friends, and partake in summer and winter activities in and around the region. A NH native, she currently resides in New London.

Land Project Updates



A view of Sucker Brook along the McDonough property.

McDonough Easement 5.12 Acres in Andover

This past February, the donation of a 5.12-acre conservation easement by the Town of Andover was finalized. The property has frontage on the Northern Rail Trail, Route 11, and Sucker Brook.

The McDonough property, owned by the Town of Andover, is primarily forested and undeveloped, and enhances and enlarges over 1,200 acres of conserved land in the area. Conservation of this land helps to protect wetlands and approximately 850 feet of frontage on Sucker Brook in the Lower Pemigewasset River Watershed.

This property is open to the public for low impact noncommercial recreation, including hunting and fishing.

Read more about the interesting history of this property on Page 5.



Some of the busy wetland habitat within the McLaughlin property.

McLaughlin Easement 145 Acres in Salisbury (near the Andover town line)

On April 19, 2024, Ausbon Sargent finalized the donation of a conservation easement on 145 acres in Salisbury. The McLaughlin property is primarily forested and undeveloped. It encompasses Vermetti Pond, whose habitat for nesting herons adds to the already high habitat rankings it has earned for being home to deer, moose, turkey, woodland birds, reptiles and insects. The property contains important forestry soils. Conservation of the property's open water, wetlands, and streams helps to protect the waters of the Merrimack River Watershed.

Connecting two large tracts of conservation land, this property is adjacent to or near almost 1,600 acres of protected land. This is important for wildlife movement and migration in our region.

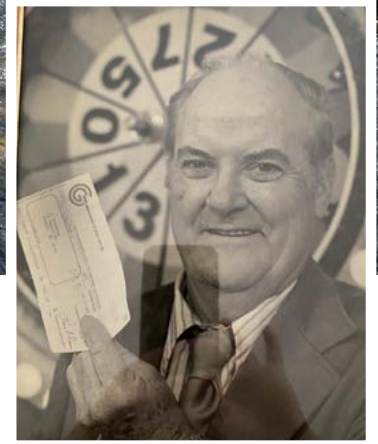
This property is open to the public for low impact noncommercial recreation such as hiking and snowshoeing. It includes over 2,000 feet on Montgomery Road (a Class VI Road) which is a dedicated snowmobile corridor. The protection of this property promotes the use of the outdoor space for those in the area.

Although just outside of the Ausbon Sargent service area, the McLaughlin property is in very close proximity to the town of Andover, which is within our region. This fact, and the high agricultural value of this property, were sufficient reasons for us to undertake this important project.



How a Second-Chance Lottery Helped Protect a Special Place in Andover

By Jesse Schust and Helen Wickham, Andover



Arthur McDonough
with his winnings

The McDonough Parcel is owned by the Town of Andover and has been for several decades. The history behind this parcel's donation to the town is very interesting.

The parcel was bought by Emelda "Mel" and Arthur McDonough in 1969. Their niece, Irene Roushon, describes them as "average, working people who enjoyed the quiet and the view of nature" in Andover, where they already owned a cabin near Horseshoe Pond. Arthur and Mel had known each other in school, but married later in life, in the 1960s. Mel worked in Boston, at the Copley Plaza, for the waltz evenings of Margaret Howell, Inc., among other things. Arthur was a tool and die maker. They visited Andover in the summers and loved the place. They went to the 4th of July celebrations (where Mel's sister Bertha won 2nd prize for her blueberry pie one year), and also met the ladies of Freedom Acres. Irene has many happy memories of time spent with her aunt and uncle in Andover: 4th of July celebrations, Pleasant Lake (Elkins), and learning to ski.

Arthur and Mel may have been helped in buying the land that became known as the McDonough Parcel when Arthur won \$100,000 in the Massachusetts second-chance lottery (sending in a losing lottery ticket and winning the draw). That money also enabled them to visit Ireland, where Arthur's family originated.

Mel and Arthur originally planned to build a home for their retirement on the McDonough Parcel, but after Arthur was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, their plans changed. Their niece Irene, says:

"They continued to visit Andover as often as possible - the area spoke to Arthur and calmed his dementia. After his death in 1988, Emelda wanted to honor his memory. She came up with the idea of donating that parcel of land to the Town of Andover. She hoped this parcel would stay in its undeveloped state... the brook continuing to be available to beavers, deer visiting the area, and other animals that the couple had spotted when visiting their land. Arthur would often take a chair and go to the parcel and sit and watch the landscape and whatever animals happened by. Emelda was just a normal, working-class lady who loved nature and felt we all had an obligation to preserve what this land offered to all... she donated that parcel in Arthur's memory."

Emelda donated the parcel to the Town of Andover in December of 1990. She lived until 2017, just two weeks short of her 98th birthday.

In 2023, the Andover Conservation Commission proposed to the Town of Andover that the McDonough Parcel (now called the McDonough Sucker Brook Parcel) be protected by a conservation easement. The proposal was unanimously endorsed by those present at Town Meeting in 2023, and in 2024 the process was completed with help from Ausbon Sargent, the holder of the easement. This is the first time Andover has worked with Ausbon Sargent to put Town owned land into a conservation easement.

Jesse Schust is Co-Chair of the Andover Conservation Commission. He and his spouse Helen Wickham have lived in Andover for 10 years. They previously resided in the UK where they were members of the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, an organization which protects and regenerates wetlands.

Connecting to Steward Lands

By Anne Payeur, Stewardship Manager

Ausbon Sargent works with many partners and landowners to conserve lands in our region. Once a property has been conserved the partnerships and connections continue to grow to ensure the land is well managed forever.

Conserved lands can be working landscapes with actively managed farms and forests. Working lands require good communication between the landowner and the land trust so we can have a better understanding of the landowner's management practices. Conservation easements typically require activities be guided by best management practices. We can provide landowners with resources to ensure we are all upholding the conservation easement.

When it comes to working with landowners on active farm and forest management, we can connect them to educational resources such as the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension or the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service. These experts can provide information and guidance on land management and ensure best management practices are implemented during the planning process. In cases where landowners are working around rare, threatened, or endangered species, we connect them with experts at New Hampshire Fish and Game for guidance on best practices.

When it comes to actively managed forests, we work with landowners who have employed licensed professional foresters to understand their goals and planned timber harvests. We will connect with their foresters and arrange visits to active harvests to check on the conditions of the land. With active agriculture we check in with landowners or farm managers on topics like the crops they raise, the cattle they run, and their breeding programs. We follow up on all management activities with on-the-ground visits with volunteers and staff.

Ausbon Sargent relies on our numerous volunteers to conduct these on-the-ground property visits in addition to staff visits. During annual monitoring visits, volunteers connect with landowners to discuss activities that have happened in the last year and their plans for the upcoming year. Volunteer monitors are community members who want to play an active role in the conservation of lands in our community. Our volunteers help Ausbon Sargent visit every conserved property on the ground at least once every year.

Connections like these only continue to grow as time goes on. These connections are vital to our stewardship program and ensure our conserved lands are well managed forever.

Anne has been with Ausbon Sargent for four years as the Stewardship Manager. She oversees the stewarding of conservation easement properties, as well as the management of properties owned by Ausbon Sargent. Anne and her husband, Hunter, live in Boscawen with their son.



Volunteer monitors and landowners on an annual monitor visit.



Ausbon Sargent Welcomes New Stewardship & Program Coordinator

Jamie Wilson was hired by Ausbon Sargent in late May 2024 and started working as its Stewardship and Program Coordinator on June 10, 2024. You may recognize Jamie from her previous position at Spring Ledge Farm, where she worked as a Greenhouse Supervisor and was responsible for overseeing greenhouse crewmembers and providing plant recommendations to customers. Jamie's background includes conducting wildlife surveys in Costa Rica, California, and Oregon, and serving as a farmhand in Maine. She received her bachelor's in chemistry from St. Lawrence University in 2017. In her free time, Jamie enjoys mountain biking, skiing, and photography. In her new position, Jamie is looking forward to community engagement and becoming more familiar with the conserved lands in our region. Feel free to stop by the office to welcome Jamie to the Ausbon Sargent family! And look for hikes and other events that she will lead in the very near future. Welcome, Jamie!

Volunteer Party Update

During the month of May, Ausbon Sargent traditionally holds its Volunteer Appreciation Party to thank its volunteers for the tremendous amount of time and expertise they give to the Land Trust. This year's gathering was held at Lake Sunapee Protective Association's Center for Lake Studies in Sunapee Harbor. About 70 volunteers joined the party, where conversation and laughter were interrupted only by the pauses needed to indulge in the fantastic appetizers and sweets everyone brought. Interim Executive Director, Andy Deegan, thanked the volunteers for the many hours of work they had provided to Ausbon Sargent over the last year. He noted the importance of every volunteer hour, whether it be spent stuffing envelopes, serving on a committee, doing trail work, or monitoring a property. The weather was perfect, and the company was even better! Over the past year, Ausbon Sargent employed the help of 282 volunteers who provided over 2,300 hours of work! Simply amazing! If you'd like to volunteer at Ausbon Sargent, please let us know! There is always something going on and some way we could use your time and skills.



Volunteers enjoying food and company at the 2024 Volunteer Appreciation Party.





Membership & Annual Fund

Ausbon Sargent wants to thank our Membership, Annual Fund and Corporate Matching Gift donors from 7/1/2023-6/30/2024.

*denotes gifts to both Membership & Annual Fund.

+denotes a corporate matching gift.

^ denotes deceased.

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Thank you for the following special gifts not mentioned in the winter issue. You will see our Volunteer, Land Donor, and Easement Donor thank you lists in the winter issue.

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An aerial view of the Sawyer Brook Headwaters property in Grantham.

Town Spotlight

Ausbon Sargent serves 12 towns that make up our Mt. Kearsarge/ Ragged/ Lake Sunapee Region, including Andover, Bradford, Danbury, Goshen, Grantham, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner and Wilmot. As many of our readers may be new to the area or perhaps unfamiliar with the surrounding towns, each upcoming issue will feature a spotlight on a town and its conservation history with our land trust. For many more details on properties we have protected in each town, please visit the Ausbon Sargent website and click on the "properties" section. From there you can choose to learn more about a property by name or search an entire town to see what has been protected there.

Town of Grantham

From Grantham's website: Grantham was named for Thomas Robinson, the first Baron of Grantham, an active supporter of American independence. He was known as a diplomat in Europe and was one of Great Britain's first postmaster general. The area was first granted in 1761, the same year Robinson received his peerage. No settlers took up that claim, and the land was regranted in 1767 as New Grantham. In 1780, the western portion of Grantham and the eastern portion of Plainfield were made into the parish of Meriden, a name the region bears today. The town was incorporated as New Grantham in 1788 and incorporated as Grantham in 1818.

Grantham:

- Has an estimated population of about 3,400 people
- Is 27.2 sq miles in size with 0.9 sq miles of inland water area
- Has its own elementary school, Methodist Church, and Dunbar Free Library
- Is home to the Eastman Community Association
- Is fully within the Connecticut River Watershed

Protected Land in Grantham:

- Two Ausbon Sargent conservation easement properties make up 390.06 acres (roughly 2.24% of the town).
- Other lands in Grantham are protected through state, municipal, and private easements/agreements.
- See page 7 to learn about a land project happening in Grantham right now!



An aerial view showing the outline of the Byron Barton Woods property.



A map showing the proximity of the Byron Barton Woods property in Grantham.

Land Project Underway in Grantham

Ausbon Sargent is in the midst of a campaign to raise funds to protect 151 acres on Route 114 in Grantham, which abuts the protected Reney Memorial Forest. This property is called “Byron Barton Woods” and it provides beautiful scenic views visible across from the rest area on I-89 in Springfield. The NH Wildlife Action Plan shows a portion of this property as ranking high for significant wildlife habitat, which includes rare cliffs and talus slope. The landscape is a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees with good soils for long-term forest resiliency. As part of the Sugar River watershed, this property will aid in the protection

of this important resource. Lastly, there is an opportunity for low-impact recreation along the existing snowmobile trail, and future trails that have the potential to tie into the 400-acre Reney Memorial Forest. We hope you will find value in this property that not only protects our treasured wildlife, but also our important watershed, and beautiful scenic vistas for those traveling through our region.

Byron Barton Woods is being sold to Ausbon Sargent by the owner who has discounted the appraised value of the land by \$75,000 under the condition that the project is complete by the end of August 2024. Should you have questions, please contact our office. Donations can be made on the Ausbon Sargent website, or by check (with Byron Barton in the notes section). Thank you for your support!

Antarctica Trip Planned for November, 2025

Following a Galapagos Islands trip in 2023, Ausbon Sargent is once again partnering with Lindblad Expeditions to offer another “bucket list” trip for you, which is also a fundraiser for us! If you have ever wanted to visit Antarctica, this is the trip for you! This adventure departs Puerto Natales on November 14, 2025, and includes 8 days/7 nights aboard the National Geographic Explorer. Those wary about the Drake Passage (which we hear can be quite turbulent) can put your minds at ease; this trip includes chartered flights to and from King George Island. More information will be shared at a later date, but please be advised that Ausbon Sargent has just 20 spots available for purchase. **For more information, please call the office or email Kristy at: kheath@ausbonsargent.org**



Calendar of

UPCOMING EVENTS

Guided Hike, in partnership with the Tracy Library – August 1, 2024
10am at Clark Pond, New London

Dragonfly Walk, in partnership with Lake Sunapee Protective Association – August 2, 2024
2pm at the Esther Currier Wildlife Management Area, New London

Hospital Days – August 3, 2024
Catch a glimpse of “Seymour Woods ‘n Fields” in the parade! 10am, Main Street in New London

Rosenblum Trail Day – August 13, 2024
9-11am at the Rosenblum Conservation Easement, Danbury

Annual Meeting – October 20, 2024
3pm at the Wilmot Community Association’s Red Barn

Holiday Party – December 2, 2024
5:30pm at The Livery in Sunapee Harbor

Please check our online calendar regularly at ausbonsargent.org to find our most updated event schedule.

Hikes are free and open to all, however registration is required. **Please contact: jwilson@ausbonsargent.org for more information or to register.**



Dedication of Building

In the winter issue of *Chatter*, we shared that our office building at 71 Pleasant Street was being dedicated to Nancy Lyon, a selfless volunteer who left her mark on almost every element of Ausbon Sargent. After receiving a bequest last year on behalf of Nancy, the decision was made, and a sign was installed. We are proud to walk underneath this sign each day and welcome our visitors and members into the building, which Nancy helped make possible.

Stewardship Wish List

Each year, Ausbon Sargent is required to monitor over 160 protected properties, including land we own and land on which we hold easements. Along with monitoring, we manage our own properties and trails with volunteers. Stewardship requires the use of tools and materials that either get used up annually or need replacement after years of use.

If you would like to help us with any items below, please send along a note with your donation or give us a call to let us know your intent. Gift certificates in any denomination to Rocky's Ace Hardware or Belletetes are also helpful to purchase tools and materials.

Native Grass Seed

for former Log Landing at the Bradford Bog Headwaters

Wood for Trail Bridge Replacement

on the Wayne and Trudy Beaver Saga Pond Forest

Blaze Orange Vests for Monitoring and Event Volunteers

Paint for Maintaining Boundaries

Plastic Trail Markers

Please contact our Stewardship Manager, Anne Payeur (apayeur@ausbonsargent.org) to get details on any of the above items, or other items we may need.

Thank you!

The Acorn Society

Making a Lasting Connection

It truly gives a peek into someone's core value system when you come to understand that they have provided for a non-profit organization in their estate planning. Those who have named Ausbon Sargent as a beneficiary in their will or trust will not only be assisting the Land Trust in continuing their work protecting special places, but they are also leaving a lasting legacy to be remembered forever.

Once Ausbon Sargent is informed that someone has made provisions for the Land Trust in their estate planning, they are inducted into the "Acorn Society." Squirrels are famous for holing away acorns for future use, and in the same essence, the 93 individuals in our Society (some of whom remain anonymous), are helping Ausbon Sargent by providing for its future.

There are several ways to include Ausbon Sargent in your will or trust:

A Bequest in a Will or Trust: You can designate a specific amount of money, a percentage of your estate or trust, or a specific asset.

IRA Assets: Assets in your IRA are part of your estate. If left to individuals other than your spouse, they may be subject to estate tax. Unlike other assets, they are also subject to income tax when distributed to your heirs. If you name a charity such as Ausbon Sargent as a beneficiary, all taxes are generally avoided.

Life Insurance: You can designate Ausbon Sargent as the owner and beneficiary of a new or existing policy you no longer need. Or you can name Ausbon Sargent as a contingent beneficiary of an existing policy.

Life Income Gifts: Gifts in the form of a charitable remainder unitrust or pooled income fund provide you and/or your designated beneficiary income for life. Life Income Gifts allow you to make significant gifts to Ausbon Sargent while receiving tax benefits and income for yourself or other family members.

Our communities are blessed with natural beauty, a distinctive character and healthy values. These cherished attributes stem from the rural qualities of our region; qualities that can be put at risk if we fail to plan ahead.



The individuals listed below have notified us that they have provided for Ausbon Sargent in their estate plans.

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| Sylvia & John Garfield | "Sissy" Wastcoat[^] |
| John Garvey | Ruth White[^] |
| & Cotton Cleveland | <i>[^]denotes deceased</i> |
| Gerald & Jane Gold |  |

If the Land Trust is named in your estate plan or if you would like to discuss a possible bequest, please let us know.

You may contact our office at 603-526-6555 or email info@ausbonsargent.org

Those that prefer not to be recognized can remain anonymous.



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STAFF

Back row (l-r):

Andy Deegan, Land Protection Specialist & Interim Executive Director
Kristy Heath, Development and Communications Coordinator
Sue Andrews, Support Staff

Front row (l-r):

Anne Payeur, Stewardship Manager
Jamie Wilson, Stewardship & Program Coordinator
Jen Deasy, Operations Manager



OFFICERS

Chair: Lisa Andrews
Vice-Chair: Bob Zeller
Secretary: Susan Ellison
Treasurer: Mike Quinn

TRUSTEES

Robin Albing
Aimee Ayers
Chuck Bolduc
Laurie DiClerico
Deborah Lang
Russ Moore
Jim Owers
Diane Robbins
Steve Root

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