



Together, protecting forever
the land we love

Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2026



A Season for Legacy

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What makes for a perfect spring and summer in the Monadnock region?

Is it the plants pushing up through the dirt, the new leaves on the trees, the wildlife venturing out from their winter slumber, or the local farms filling their stands and our stores with locally grown and raised food? All these little miracles of spring are dependent on conserved land and the community that values its protection. At the Monadnock Conservancy, we believe that it is you, our supporters, who have made this season so special.

Year after year, we can welcome spring and enjoy summer because the land is here for us. The Conservancy's work is many things, but most importantly, it is a promise that the land will remain healthy and verdant for generations to come. That is the legacy of your support, growing stronger each year.

In the following pages, we invite you to think about the legacy your support has created. Thank you for the joy of spring and summer.



Save the date for our 37th Annual Celebration!

On October 3rd, 2026, the Conservancy invites you to a very special Annual Celebration event, happening at our new headquarters in downtown Keene adjacent to Ashuelot River Park. This event will be an open house, where you are invited to explore this new space and learn about all the amazing, impactful ways it will help the Conservancy engage the Monadnock community and continue to grow our core work of land protection and stewardship. Stay tuned to our social media and emailed newsletters for more information! Also important to note, the Conservancy's old office on Eagle Court is now closed as we are preparing to move. From late May until August, staff will primarily be working remotely but are available by appointment during this transitional time. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

Stay connected year-round! Follow us on social media, and sign up at [MonadnockConservancy.org](https://www.monadnockconservancy.org) for our monthly e-newsletter.



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Helping our community thrive

Transportation Heritage Trail

At the Conservancy, we are responsible for the trail networks on properties that we own. We also seek to help improve access to the outdoors on trails that are owned and managed by our partners. To that end, we are very pleased to announce we have given the City of Keene a \$20,000 donation to improve the Transportation Heritage Trail which runs from Eastern Avenue in Keene to the Swanzey town line. This money will help the city make vital improvements to the trail, including a pedestrian bridge over Route 101. This gift builds on a long standing partnership with the City and Pathways for Keene. Since 2014, the Conservancy, through donor restricted funds, has given roughly \$88,000 in grants to the City for trail improvements, all with a goal of connecting people to the outdoors!



Correction: Twitchell

In the Conservancy's 2025 Annual Report, which was mailed in February of 2026, we erroneously referred to the Twitchell project as a donation of two conservation easements. The project was in fact a donation to the Conservancy of two separate woodlots totaling 105 acres, not conservation easements. We apologize for any confusion and thank Anne Twitchell for her generous donation of land in Fitzwilliam.



Welcome Colleen & Kate!

The Conservancy has hired two additional team members to help us engage the community and conserve more, and more impactful, land. These positions are being funded from the money raised from our recent capital campaign. Colleen Sculley has joined the team as a conservation project manager. Colleen joins the Monadnock Conservancy after a 26-year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service where she oversaw Federal grant delivery to State agencies, Tribes and NGOs across the northeastern United States for fish and wildlife conservation, environmental education, and connecting people with nature. Kate Witte will be serving as our community engagement manager, a new position designed to bring more of the community into the work of land conservation. Kate comes to the Conservancy from Keene State College where she served as the sustainability coordinator. She holds undergraduate degrees in environmental science and sustainability studies from Messiah University and a master's degree in environmental education from Antioch University New England.



Colleen Sculley



Kate Witte

Anthony Toepfer is still bringing us together

On his porch in Westmoreland, Anthony Toepfer would watch the birds. He and his partner Debra sat for hours, observing the bluebirds, warblers, and swallows. This was Tony's church, a place where his work, his art, his attention to detail, his boundless creativity, and his cancer diagnosis, fell away in the sun-dappled panorama of nature's precision and beauty.

A self-taught tinkerer of the highest quality, Tony filled his home of 30 years with beautiful creations that reflected his craftsmanship and care: hand-made furniture, serving ware, and the stunning jewelry he designed – beloved centerpieces of many a marriage proposal and special occasion across New England and beyond. But Tony's house was never meant to be simply a showcase for his and Debra's enormous talent — that wasn't his way. First and foremost, it was a gathering place for family, friends, and his community.

The end of Tony's life – the family hikes, the care for others, and his generous gift to the Monadnock Conservancy and the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association – reflected how it began. The son of a Harvard professor and a master gardener with a passion for innovative farming, Tony and his four brothers grew up on a farm in Harvard, Massachusetts. In 1966 the family bought a hillside farm in Athens, Vermont where Anthony spent summers. His job was to care for the chickens; although there was no love lost between the sharp-clawed hens and young Tony, it's possible that his lifelong aversion to city life was rooted in those early years on the farm. Perhaps too, his lifelong love of bringing the family together in the Westmoreland house, or walking the Monadnock region's trails with his brother, stemmed from this close-knit family working the land in Vermont.

But Tony was unique even within this impressive family. As a young man, Tony developed a passion for arts and crafts. After attending Beloit College, he arrived in Bellows Falls, Vermont in 1972 and opened a jewelry store with his college friend Robert Lee Morris. Together, they dove headfirst into artistic life — teaching themselves how to make jewelry and furniture, caning chairs and painting business signs for extra money. From the beginning, File and Hammer Silver was a hub for creativity and self-expression. Former customers remember Tony's sense of humor, the long chats he would have in the backroom, and his penchant for playing his banjo for amused shoppers. Robert would eventually leave the region to pursue a storied career as a jeweler in New York. He invited Tony to come with him on this adventure, but Tony's heart was in the close-knit community of small towns. In 1978, Tony relocated the store from Bellows Falls to Keene, New Hampshire



NEW SHOP OPEN — Tony Toepfer, standing, and Robert Morris, co-owners of the File and Hammer art and crafts shop, are seen at the opening of their new shop at 29 Westminster

and, a few years later, renamed it Anthony Toepfer Jewelers. The store became a Keene institution; Tony and Robert remained lifelong friends and artistic collaborators.

Tony wed Anne McKelvey in 1988, and though the marriage didn't last, he remained a close friend to Anne and her family throughout his life. As with Robert, Tony cared for people in a deep and lasting way. The universe rewarded him in 2008, when he visited a framing shop in Keene where Debra Stevens, a fine artist from the Midwest, was working. After meeting again the following year at a friend's dinner party, Debra and Tony recognized in each other a shared passion for art, community, and nature — bonds that would strengthen their love and partnership for the next 17 years.

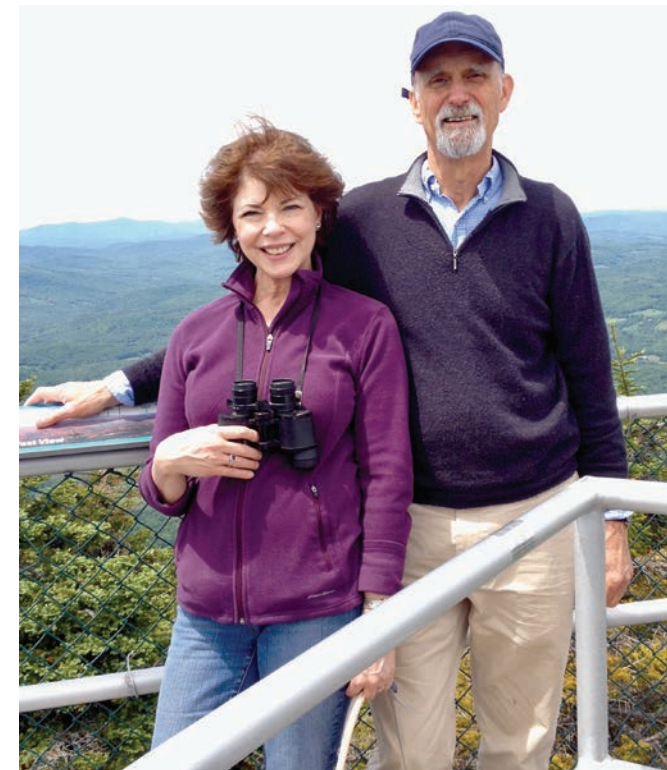
In 2013, Anthony received a diagnosis of renal carcinoma stage 4. Given only two years to live, he went to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where he was treated with kindness, respect, and excellent medical care, giving him over 10 years of happy, productive time with loved ones in beautiful New England.

In these years, Tony closed his jewelry business and participated in clinical trials, contributing to scientific development that could help other patients long after his life ended. Most of all, he did what he had always done: he gathered his family and friends for meals, laughter, and adventures in nature.

Tony organized hikes with Debra, his brother Andy, Andy's partner Laurie, and a rotating cast of family and friends. While the rest of the party wore standard hiking gear, Tony would dress to the nines, displaying the sense of humor that would stay with him until the end.

Perhaps it was on one of these hikes where Tony decided to bestow a parting gift on the people and natural places he loved — a donation of \$1.9 million to the Monadnock Conservancy and a separate gift to the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association. His extraordinary generosity will protect our precious outdoor spaces for years to come, a final gesture of love to the community and an enduring legacy for the Monadnock region.

He passed away at home on January 8, 2025, with loved ones by his side. Tributes poured in from people whose lives he had touched: couples who bought their wedding rings at his shop, former employees who remembered him as a kind boss, dear friends who celebrated his love of music, flowers, and life. From the family he cherished to the artists he nurtured and to the land he helped protect, Anthony Toepfer is still bringing people together.



Island Pond

The Conservancy is now the proud owner and steward of 20.6 acres in and around Island Pond in Stoddard! These 20.6 acres, which consist of eight small islands and a marsh parcel, were donated to the Conservancy by the Price family, long-time summer residents of Island Pond. The islands are available to the public (as they have been in the past) for light recreation including blueberry picking, swimming, and viewing wildlife. The Conservancy is honored to help protect the scenic shoreline and abundant wildlife habitat in and around Island Pond. We thank the Price Estate, Bonnie Price Taylor and her daughter Gwen Bethel Riley, Sharon Price Aadalen, and Trevor Price for working with us to see this land protected. The Conservancy would also like to thank the Island Pond community, including many members of the Treelyn Road Association and the Island Pond Association for their financial support for this project.



A view from Island Pond in Stoddard, NH.

Goodnow



A hay field is part of the roughly 46 acres recently conserved in West Swanzey.

The Conservancy is honored to have accepted the donation of a conservation easement covering 46.5 acres of forests, fields, streams, and wetlands in West Swanzey, New Hampshire. These acres boast many important water resources for the Town of Swanzey, including a stratified drift aquifer, three separate wellhead protection areas (an area surrounding a water well or wellfield that supplies a public water system) which serve roughly 850 members of the Swanzey community, and Bailey Brook and its associated floodplain and wetlands. The land also sits near 216 acres of conserved land and two other properties under easement with the Monadnock Conservancy. The property is also within the California Brook watershed, and downstream from the California Brook Natural Area, an important area for local conservation efforts. The conservation easement covering these 46.5 acres was donated to the Conservancy in memory of George and Arline Goodnow Sr. and George and Sophie Goodnow Jr., who owned this land for many years.

Five Sigma Farm

Five Sigma Farm is a sheep and egg farm in Sullivan, New Hampshire. Owner Milton Trimitsis, along with his adorable and well-trained dogs (all nine of them!), has operated this farm since 2016. Milton's hard work on this 55-acre farm helps provide local stores, including the Monadnock Food Co-op, with pasture-raised meat and eggs. Milton is committed to the best farming practices, rotating his flock daily to fresh pastures. With the help of his dogs and to the delight of his neighbors, who enjoy watching Milton bring his flock through the town multiple times a year, Milton now manages over 100 sheep and 500 laying hens.

In 2026, the Monadnock Conservancy purchased a

conservation easement covering 55 acres of Five Sigma Farm, ensuring this local gem will be protected from development in perpetuity.

This purchased easement was made possible by many funding sources, including The Monadnock Food Co-op, which supported the project through its Farm Fund, and its Round It Up program where all throughout the month of April 2026, shoppers had the opportunity to round up their purchases to support this project. Institutional funders, including the NH State Conservation Committee Moose Plate Grant Program, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation's Thomas W. Haas Fund, and the New Hampshire Farm Future Fund, also provided vital funding to the project.



Five Sigma Farm in Sullivan, now forever conserved



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Founded in 1989, the Monadnock Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust working with you and your neighbors in 39 towns throughout the Monadnock region to protect the land and water of southwestern New Hampshire.



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You too can leave a legacy that lasts forever by joining the Monadnock Forever Society. Members of this group go the extra mile, committing to giving a donation after their death. These legacy donors may name the Conservancy as a beneficiary on their financial accounts such as retirement plans, bank accounts, and life insurance policies. They may also name the Conservancy in their will or trust or donate the principle of their donor advised fund upon their passing. Like Anthony's gift, these donations are often transformational for the organization, and cost nothing to the donor during their lifetime.

Thank you to the current members of the Monadnock Forever Society who have made this impactful decision and included the Monadnock Conservancy in their estate plans. If you are interested in becoming a legacy donor, visit our website or reach out to Development Director, Lindsay Taflas, at Lindsay@monadnockconservancy.org or (603) 357-0600, ext.113 to have a confidential conversation today.

Monadnock Forever Society Members

Anonymous	Thomas & Paula S. Duston	Marcia Ober
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Welcome Dundas	Michael & Katherine Nerrie	Suzanne & Peter Whittemore

*deceased