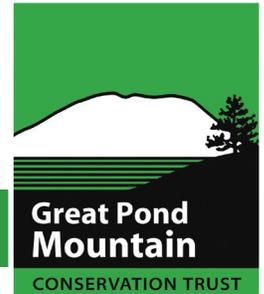


The Mountain Ear

The Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust Newsletter

FALL / WINTER 2017 / 18



Great Pond Mountain

CONSERVATION TRUST

Conserving Land, Water and Wildlife Habitat for the Communities of Northwest Hancock County

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THE MOUNTAINEAR

Published by the Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust

Editor: Cheri Domina
Design: Olga Lange

Contributors: Cheri Domina, Julianne Taylor, Hans Krichels, Emily Hawkins, Roger Greene, Shawn Mercer, Jim Beach, HCSWCD, Nancy Patterson, Jake Maier, Sharon Bray

Printed on recycled paper.

Chapman Farm Grand Opening; Blueberry Field Leased

We celebrated the grand opening of our Old Chapman Farm property in Bucksport August 19, with refreshments and a guided hike. Dampish weather kept crowds down, but we still had a great time mingling with friends and neighbors, and our guests of honor—the Kimball family from Pennsylvania who donated the 65-acre property.

The land has been spiffed up with a new two-mile loop trail, parking area, signs and a kiosk. There are also two designated parking areas (look for signs) on the way in from the south, for those without 4WD. The trail showcases the property's big old trees, beaver meadow and boulders. Check out the page on our website; we are working on a new map!

Enjoy the view from the blueberry field—but please don't walk through! We are proud to
"Chapman Farm" continues on page 2



The official opening of the Old Chapman Farm property was celebrated in August.

Explore Outdoors!

by Julianne Taylor, Education Coordinator

This summer and fall has certainly been full of wonderful adventures and educational moments with people of all ages. Our "Five Peaks" hiking program with the Bucksport YMCA, August 7–11, provided middle-schoolers the opportunity to hike all the Wildlands peaks. Volunteers and staff helped guide and share the places they love along the trails. Kids picked blueberries, investigated glacial erratics and caves and learned to read the local landscape. It was a highlight of my summer and we look forward to doing it again next year!

Joining forces with Downeast Audubon and Blue Hill Heritage Trust, I met with administrators and teachers at schools on the Blue Hill Peninsula. A current project includes a year-long study of the Bagaduce River with Castine's Adams School, as well as citizen science and place-based study at the Hundred-Acre Wood in

"Explore" continues on page 3



Young hikers taking part in the Five Peaks program explored the Wildlands last summer.

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From the President's Desk

OLGA LANGE

by Emily Fuller Hawkins

At year end, the Trust will bid a heartfelt bon voyage to Cheri Domina. Cheri has been continuously involved with GPMCT since before its founding in 1993, first as volunteer, then for the past 12 years, as its first Executive Director. Her dedication, quiet demeanor (except when she's passionate on an issue) and dry sense of humor have guided GPMCT to being one of the most respected land trusts in Maine. Her service on the statewide Maine Land Trust Network Steering Committee (nine years) and on other local committees is commended. We wish Cheri and her family all the best—we'll miss you! An event to thank and honor her is planned for late June, 2018.

GPMCT has commenced the search for a new, full-time Executive Director, hopefully to be on the job by February. Exciting and daunting!

2018 marks the 25th anniversary of GPMCT. I hope you'll join in the celebratory events throughout the year, and our new matching gift challenge—the GPMCT 25/25 Anniversary Initiative! If supporters raise \$25,000 to add to our long-term (endowment and land stewardship) funds, this amount will be matched! That's \$50,000 to add to our endowment!

New Land Steward Shawn Mercer and Education Coordinator Julianne Taylor are terrific. Check out their posts on Facebook and Instagram. Kids, seniors, musicians and others have enjoyed the Wildlands through their efforts this season. I've enjoyed several outings on our lands this summer and fall, hiking with Julianne and kids from the Bucksport YMCA, participating in an educational forestry tour by Forester Roger Greene, and volunteering at the Oct. 29 Trail Run. I'm honored to serve our wonderful staff and consultants, volunteers and board members and the cohort of GPMCT members. Thank you all!

Alamoosook Lake Watershed Protection Project

Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District has grant funding to fix erosion issues on federal, public, and private roads and residential sites in the Alamoosook Watershed through fall, 2018. Several projects are now underway! To receive funds to improve your yard, driveway or camp road (you don't have to be right on the lake), call the District at (207) 667-8663 or e-mail zsteele@hancockcountyswcd.org for free technical assistance.

Qualifying project examples:

- Shoreline landscaping
- Fixing driveway and private road drainage
- Culverts and ditching
- Managing roof runoff

Funding, in part, is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, and administered by the Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection in partnership with EPA.

"Chapman Farm" continues from page 1



HANS KRICHELS

A new kiosk at the Old Chapman Farm property introduces hikers to a two-mile loop trail.

announce that the 5.5-acre field is now being leased to and managed by Foggy Hill Farm, an organic blueberry grower in Frankfort. Ask us how to buy berries next summer!

The Upper Long Pond Road area has a long farming history, and was once a thriving little village called the Long Pond Settlement in the 1800s, then Santiago in the early 1900s. Garry & Harriet Chapman built a house and farm on this land south of Colby Brook in 1834. Chapman died in 1886, and Burrills, Colbys, Colson, Shutes, Smiths and a Groszka went on to hold the deed; 130 years later, all that remains of Santiago are cellarholes, stone walls, apple trees and an old cemetery, and the town has abandoned the road. It's now one of the wildest places in Bucksport.

Why the name "Santiago"? Our best theory is that it was in honor of the American victory over the Spanish in 1898 in the Battle of Santiago de Cuba, shortly after the USS Maine sunk in Havana Harbor.

How to get there: The farm is 2.5 miles north of the Mast Hill Road and Moosehorn Drive intersection. Upper Long Pond Road is a dirt road leaving Moosehorn Drive; it is maintained to the town sludge storage facility. North of that the road becomes rough and you'll need good ground clearance. April 15 to Nov. 15, you may park in a signed area at the town facility and walk/bike 1.1 mile to the farm. Parking is also available 0.4 miles north at the private composting facility; it's a 0.7 mile walk from there. Adventurous drivers will find a small parking area at the farm. Do not attempt to drive to the property from the north; the bridge over Colby Brook is unsafe for cars. Winter visitors are invited to snowmobile, ski or hike in.

Executive Director Says Goodbye

by Cheri Domina

It all started 26 years ago, in a cabin on the shore of Hancock Pond, where Stuart Gross gathered a group of conservation-minded people to talk about the land around Great Pond Mountain. I was 25 years old (!), fresh out of grad school, and had followed my fiancée from New Hampshire to live at Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery. I'd lived in Orland less than a year, but I could see just how special this place was, and jumped at the chance to help conserve it for the future. Within a year (1993), our little group had become an official non-profit organization, I was secretary of the Board, and we were off and running as Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust.

Flash forward to today—GPMCT is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2018, and I've spent 12 years as Executive Director. We have an incredible staff of four, an amazing cadre of dedicated volunteers, and a membership of both year-round and summer residents—many of whom have supported us since the early days. We are nationally accredited, and a leader in Maine's conservation community. When I look around and see people enjoying our lands, hear what our new Education Coordinator is up to in the schools, or sit with our hard-working committee members, I am so grateful to all the people (like YOU) who help keep this corner of Maine such a great place to live, work and play in. Pat yourselves on the back!



JAKE MAIER



SHARON BRAY



HANS KRICHELS

Top right—Board members Stuart Gross, Virginia Davis, Peter Burke, Carolyn Bennatti, and front row, Cheri Domina and Linda Best pose with GPMCT's first anniversary cake in 1994. **Above left**—Jennifer Riefler and Cheri Domina snowshoe the Dead River Trail in 2008. **Above right**—Land Steward Shawn Mercer and Cheri Domina at the Old Chapman Farm Grand Opening this summer.

I decided this summer that it's time for me to do something new, and gave my notice; I'll be leaving as of Jan. 31, 2018. I am departing this position feeling that my work here is done, and ready to pass the baton to the next ED. I don't know what I'll be doing next—and that's pretty exciting—but I imagine writing and consulting will play a part.

Wishing you all happy trails, and continued success in conserving the lands you love, Cheri

"Explore" continues from page 1

Brooklin. We also plan to continue a vernal pool study at the Miles Lane School in Bucksport, including installation of new wooden platforms, and I'll be getting to know RSU 25 administration, teachers and staff and planning future outdoor classroom experiences for their students.

Once school started, GPMCT again collaborated with the Bucksport YMCA to offer nature-based activities to their after-school program. From learning about bats and deciduous trees—to a visit from the owls of Birdsacre—kids were introduced to the wonders of native flora and fauna. GPMCT and the Bucksport Y plan to



JULIANNE TAYLOR

Left—Owl fun at Bucksport's YMCA after school program.

continue these programs throughout the year! We also offer education programs twice monthly at Blue Hill Public Library, which have included the science behind fall foliage, a preschool story-time reading of "A Little Brown Bat Story," and owl pellet dissections.

On Sept. 30, in celebration of Great

Maine Outdoor Weekend, I offered a letterboxing and geocaching program in the Wildlands (see article). It was wonderful to see people out hiking paths and trails in search of hidden treasures in the woods!

Hired this spring as a collaboration between GPMCT and Downeast Audubon, Julianne started work in June, offering indoor and outdoor science and nature programs for the public and schools! If you would like to have Julianne visit and work with your school or homeschool group from Bucksport down to the Blue Hill Peninsula, contact her at julianne@greatpondtrust.org or 469-6929.

Notes from the Trail

by Shawn Mercer, Land Steward

I've been Land Steward here at GPMCT for just over six months—long enough to know that I absolutely love my job. I feel honored to be caring for our lands, and privileged to work with our dedicated staff and volunteers.

I realized early on that there is too much work to do it all myself, so I rely heavily on volunteers to monitor and maintain our trails and complete projects. For instance, Adopt-A-Path participants have done an amazing job this year keeping things clear and well-marked. Nearly every Wildlands path on the map is cared for—but there's room for more if you're interested!

With the help of volunteers this season, we improved the Connector Trail; trimmed Flag Hill Path; installed a kiosk and finished the trail on the Old Chapman Farm in Bucksport; finished

the Mead Mt./Mitchville Loop; put curbing on the new Baker Brook bridge; and much more. Check our Facebook page for work party events next year, and join the fun.

I have been acquainted with the lands now owned by GPMCT since early childhood, but the last six months have given me the opportunity to get to know them more intimately. This is one of the greatest gifts I receive as Land Steward; I am only beginning to know and understand this place, but I am already deeply connected. Please know that I'm truly dedicated to caring for this place, filled with gratitude for the opportunity to do so, and will strive



SHAWN MERCER (BOTH)

Katie & John Greenman, Zanny & Cara Stwertka, John Wedin, and Bob Mercer finished the Mead Mountain /Mitchville loop (old Tin Can Trail) with new tin can blazes.

to make our organization an example of how humanity should relate to our lands and the earth. Please follow me on Instagram ([gpmct_land_steward](#)) and like our Facebook page @GPMCT for regular updates and reflections from the field!

Hiking our trails? Don't forget to sign the visitor log! Knowing numbers of visitors helps us apply for grants, print maps, and more.

Sacred Places Concert for the Wildlands

by Shawn Mercer, Land Steward

The Sacred Places Concert for the Wildlands this fall brought together two of my greatest loves, music and nature. As a songwriter, my work often reflects my deep reverence for the natural world, and I strive to use my music to help protect and restore the earth. In planning the concert, I wanted to connect with area songwriters, share insights about our craft, and talk about using art to promote positive change.

Friday, September 8, Brian Estes, Trisha Mason, Chris Poulin, Julianne Gardner, and Chris Matthews joined me for a hike up Flying Moose Mtn. On a perfect fall afternoon, we sat on the sunny ledge overlooking Branch Lake, Flag Hill and MDI,



SHAWN MERCER

September's Sacred Places Concert for the Wildlands, held at the Bald Mountain Community Center, featured performances by songwriters and a discussion of the songwriting process.

and talked about different ways songs come to us, the challenges and blessings of performing, and other aspects of our musical lives.

The following Friday, September 15, the Bald Mountain Community Center ([www.bmc-corland.org](#)) hosted the fundraising concert for the Wildlands. Brian, Trisha, Chris and Julianne were joined onstage by Stesha Cano and Josh Small. The question and answer format gave audience members a chance to get to know each artist, and the quality of the music was impressive!

The songwriters also gained a lot from this experience; we have gotten to know each other better, and appreciate the opportunity to support each other. We'll continue to meet regularly, and welcome other area songwriters to join us.

If you happened to miss the Sacred Places Concert for the Wildlands, don't worry—it's likely to become an annual event!

Connect with us on social media! Visit our website at [greatpondtrust.org](#), or follow us on Facebook @GPMCT and Instagram @gpmct_maine (Julianne) or gpmct_land_steward (Shawn) to get updates on events, programs and volunteer opportunities, or browse our photo galleries! Feel free to share your experiences and photos as well!

From the Forester

by Roger Greene

Wildlands Now a Tree Farm

This year, the 4,500-acre Wildlands achieved “Tree Farm” designation under the American Tree Farm Program. This program recognizes lands under sustainable forest management and certifies products produced from these lands with the “Well-Managed Certified Wood” label. To become a certified Tree Farm, rigorous criteria must be met; our application included a review of our Forest Management Plans and a field inspection of our practices since 2007. With an eye to improving forest health, structure and wildlife habitat, we have treated 40 stands totaling 255 acres in the past ten years, or ~7% of our managed forest area.

What does this mean for GPMCT?

As our forest grows and our ability to generate forest products increases, our wood will be labeled as having come from a sustainable, well-managed forest. This certification may allow us to enter new markets with specialty products.

Boundary Maintenance

With our renewal of 1.8 miles of Wildlands boundary this season, we’ve completed marking or re-marking 68% of our boundary lines—or 13.5 miles! Renewal work consists of finding the lines, clearing brush to a width of about 3 feet, re-blazing and



CHERI DOMINA

The Wildlands property has received certification as a Tree Farm under the American Tree Farm Program.

painting of blazes along the line segments being worked. Thanks to Geo Atwood, Bob Gomes, Katie & John Greenman, Sarah Levine, Jack MacBrayne, George Motycka and John Wedin—this year’s Linear Rangers!

Letterboxing and Geocaching: Hunting for Treasures

by Julianne Taylor & Cheri Domina

On September 30, to celebrate Great Maine Outdoor Weekend, GPMCT hosted a letterboxing and geocaching event in the Wildlands. A cool, clear autumn morning enticed more than a dozen people of all ages to learn how to locate hidden “treasure boxes” in the woods.

We worked together to find our first letterbox, reading the clues that would guide us to its secret location. After successfully finding the wooden box upon a stump, we opened it to reveal a uniquely-carved stamp and logbook. Luckily, we had two experienced letterboxers join us and demonstrate what to do once the box was found. We currently have eight letterboxes in the Wildlands; clues are available in brochures at the kiosks, on our website or at Atlasquest.com. If you find all eight, you win a special GPMCT letterboxing decal!

Geocaching uses GPS coordinates to guide hikers to a hidden box containing a logbook and trinkets or trackable items that are traded out by other geocachers when found. Participants at our event learned how to enter coordinates and use the GPS to locate a box. The Wildlands contains at least a dozen geocaches; anyone can place one, with permission of the landowner. Geocache listings and tips can



JULIANNE TAYLOR

Letterboxing and geocaching are great ways to add extra fun to a hike. There are eight letterboxes hidden in the Wildlands and at least a dozen geocaches.

be found on Geocaching.com; a free Geocaching app is also available!

Local geocacher and GPMCT member Jim Beach recently requested permission to hide several new geocaches along Wildlands trails on the Dead River side. Beach shared with us a couple online comments from people who first discovered two of the caches, activated in October.

Alamoosook View (Hay Ledges Trail): FTF - First to Find. Very nice hike. I actually drove down this way to do the Stockton Springs caches and saw this wasn't found yet. We drove a little

extra and hiked up the Stuart Gross Trail .74 to the cache. The coordinates are spot on. We heard a loon while up here. Thanks for bringing me to a new hike.

Stuart's Treasure (Stuart Gross Trail): A beautiful morning for a hike. I was hiking this area two weeks ago and was excited when I saw that you placed more caches in this area. I was able to get FTF on this one and thank you for the FTF trackable. I left the other trackable as requested. Thank you.

Good luck and happy hunting!



Coming Events:

**New Year's Eve
Moonlight Hike**
Sunday, Dec. 31, 6 pm
Rain Date Jan. 1

Meet at Wildlands South Gate on Rte. 1,
207-356-7084

Great Maine Outdoor Week
February 9-18.

Watch for winter events that week,
including our Winter Fun Day / Snow-
shoe Run on Feb. 18.

**Check our Facebook page or website
for details!**

Gifts for Hikers!

Blue Hill Heritage Trust has produced a new guide to **Hiking Trails & Public Access Points of the Greater Blue Hill Peninsula**—which means Bucksport all the way down to Stonington. A must have for local adventurers! Get it for \$5 from the GPMCT or BHHT office, or BookStacks in Bucksport.

Hot off the press, new **25th anniversary t-shirts** feature artwork by Brian Keegstra! They are short-sleeved and come in women's sizes (seafoam or denim); and men's (denim, forest or wine). Plus we have ball caps in khaki, forest and (new) orange, and stainless water bottles. These things are available at the Bucksport office, or contact us at info@greatpondtrust.org or 207-469-6929 about shipping. Memberships make great gifts, too—we'll send a newsletter and card.



Can't find it locally? Fill in your gift list this holiday at smile.amazon.com/ch/01-0488464 and Amazon donates to Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust!

Thanks to

Terrence Reid for repairing the GPMCT canoe; **Olga Lange** for new t-shirt design; **Chris Johnson** for help around the office and at the farmer's market; **Jim Beach** for educating us on geocaching; **Jennifer Riefler** and **Ruth Gomes** for continued work on the Vernal Pool Trail; **Chris Johnson, Bonnie & Jack MacBrayne, Hans Krichels** for letterboxing program and maintenance; **Karen Johnson** for hosting the May 21 GEAR walk in the Wildlands; **Nancy Minott** and the **Bucksport Heart & Soul** crew for inviting us to co-host a Recreation Forum June 4; **Dave Doherty, Emily Hawkins, Bob Gomes, Jennifer Riefler** for helping with Orland River Day June 24, plus **Karen Francoeur** and the Castine Kayak crew for the Alewife Run paddle; **Jackie Hewett** for staffing our table at Tom Wessels' talk in Blue Hill; **Bonnie & Jack MacBrayne** and **Emily Hawkins** for the July 1 Mushrall Meadow dedication; Bucksport Bay Festival volunteers



Geo Atwood, Sarah Levine, Bob Gomes, BJ Harris; Bob Gomes for mowing & road work; **Brian Keegstra** for new map boxes and Old Chapman Farm kiosk; **Geo Atwood** for doing a lot of everything; **Tom Beauchamp** for small engine repair and firewood splitting; **Emily Hawkins** and **Sarah Levine** for their help with August hiking camp; **Ella & Maizey Mercer** for help at the Sacred Places Concert Sept. 15; **Rob Hutchinson, Tom Beauchamp, Jennifer Riefler, John Wedin, Bob Mercer, Zanny & Cara Stwertka, John & Katie Greenman,**

Carl & Mary Derian and Nick Tymoczko for trail work and storm cleanup; Trail Adopters: **Geo Atwood, Dick Brubaker, Travis Chapman & Family, Sarah Levine, Bob Gomes, Shaw Smith, Katie & John Greenman, the Beauchamps, Brian Keegstra, Bob Mercer, Jennifer Riefler, Jim Davis, Dave Doherty, Christina Perkins, Mark Barrows, Amanda Haskell and Wendy Brooks; Bonnie and Jack** for hosting the lovely board dinner and the volunteer party Sept. 16; **John Wedin, Jack MacBrayne and Geo Atwood** for monitoring our lands and

Mauricette, VanDongen Win Wildlands Trail Race

Eric Mauricette, 26, of Baileyville crossed the finish line first—amongst a field of 32 runners and one black bear—in this year’s Wildlands Trail Race Oct. 29. Mauricette charged through the mountainous 6.3-mile course in 46:18. Jennifer VanDongen, 40, of Bar Harbor was the first female finisher (and fourth overall) for the fifth year in a row, finishing in 48:46. The two went on to compete in Frenchman Bay Conservancy’s Autumn Trail Run in Sullivan Nov. 5, and VanDongen kept the Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race Challenge crown.

Coming in second overall in the run was Clifford Watson, 35 of Bucksport, with a time of 46:43; third was Andrew Knightly, 45 of Bangor, finishing in 48:12. In the women’s division, second place finisher (and 13th overall) was Lauren Jacobs, 32, of Old Town, with a time of 58:28, and third place went to Katrina Linscott, 36, of Seal Cove, who finished the course in 14th place overall in 58:37. The bear was spotted



HANS KRICHELS

This year’s 6.3 mile Wildlands Trail Race saw a field of 32 runners, not including a black bear who failed to register. Additionally, 22 runners competed in the two-mile fun run.

running but did not cross the finish line.

This year’s event in the Great Pond Mountain Wildlands also included a new two-mile fun run, won by 15-year-old Finian Burns of Bass Harbor, with a time of 12:42. He was followed by his brother Francis, 12, with a time of 16:02, and 11-year-old Kasper Hansen of Franklin with a time of 18:05. In the female division, 11-year-old Anasofia Hansen of Franklin took home the prize with a time of 18:57, followed by Kristen Gaylord, 32 of Orland with 19:12, and Tamera Murphy, 59, of Trenton with 20:37. Twenty-two runners participated in the fun run.

Race proceeds benefited the 4,500-

acre Great Pond Mountain Wildlands. Results and photos are available online at www.greatpondtrust.org. Thanks especially to Peter Keeney, Jennifer Riefler and Bonnie MacBrayne for their organization, and to our sponsors: Awards, Signage & Trophies; Dave’s Tractor Services; Tradewinds Market; Cadillac Mountain Sports; Bucksport Hannaford; MacLeod’s Restaurant & Pub; Grand Rental Station, Paul DeVore. Thanks also to our door prize donors: Curtis Family Shoe; Great Maine Lumberjack Show; Epi Sub; Jordan’s Restaurant; A & B Naturals; Bar Harbor Ferry Co.; Downeast Windjammers; National Park Tours; Ben & Bill’s Chocolate Emporium; Pat’s Pizza.

Thanks to the Trail Run Volunteers

From a runner’s perspective, I want to tell you what your volunteering meant to me. I could run those trails anytime, but having the opportunity to push my hardest with all of you behind me put me on a different physical and mental plane of exhilaration.

I am grateful for every branch and limb that was cut, every flag put out, every sip of water, every ring of the bells, every cheer, every bite of chili and fruit and cookies, every prize (wow! mugs, glass, bell, hats!), every bit of registration help, every ounce of planning, every runner, and every bit of camaraderie.



HANS KRICHELS

So you see, all this put together made for quite the back-to-back race days indeed, and I thank you for your part in them. You gave us a chance to run in a fun way and to support FBC and GPMCT at the same time. Thank you!
—Nancy Patterson



easements this fall; Oct. 29 Wildlands Trail Run volunteers **Peter Keeney, Jennifer Riefler & Patrick Reid, CJ Langley, Bonnie & Jack MacBrayne, Emily Hawkins, Chris Johnson, Iris Simon, Sarah LeVine, Dianna McKeeage, Karen Page & Geo Atwood, Hans Krichels, Connie Tuller, Karen Keeney, Gene Behrenshouser, Gina & Bill Erlanson.** And thanks, of course, to our board and committee members and fantastic staff—**Karen Balas-Cote, Shawn Mercer, Julianne Taylor and Cheri Domina**—who organize and implement all the above!



The Mountain Ear
 PO Box 266
 Orland, ME 04472

*Celebrating 25 years of conservation
 in northwest Hancock County*

 Find us on Facebook!
 Or, visit www.greatpondtrust.org



BECOME A MEMBER OF GPMCT, RENEW OR MAKE A GIFT

If you're not yet a member, you can show your appreciation for GPMCT's conservation work by joining—and consider giving memberships to friends and family! Membership benefits include the *MountainEar* newsletter (2x/year), and invitations to the annual meeting and events.

Please consider becoming a **Conservation Leader** by making a monthly gift! Use your bank's billpay service or donate online via our website and choose the recurring donation option.

Please enter my 2017/18 membership:

- Individual: \$30
- Family: \$50
- Pathfinder: \$100
- Trailblazer: \$250
- Mountaineer: \$500
- Summit Club: \$1,000

Name(s) _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
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Please create a gift membership for:

Name(s) _____
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 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
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Please make checks payable to GPMCT and mail to PO Box 266, Orland, ME 04472. Contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. (You can also donate online: www.GreatPondTrust.org) Thank you!