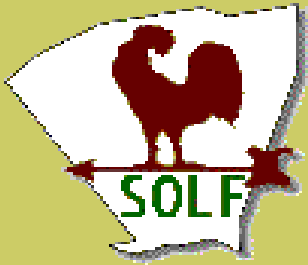


# Southborough Open Land Foundation



Our deep thanks to all the donors who made the Chestnut Hill Farm project a reality:

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## SOLF FOUNDER REFLECTS

Larry Susskind, the motivating force behind the founding of SOLF is leaving Southborough after more than 30 years. He was asked for his memories of the founding of SOLF and his views on whether SOLF has met the founders' goals.

Larry Susskind built his house in 1976 on Jericho Hill Rd. in Southborough. At that time, he claims, there were almost as many cows in town as people. When Susskind built his house, there were just two other houses on the street. Now there are eight others. In 1979, with support from the Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission Susskind helped to organize a

Southborough Citizens Planning effort, which students from MIT's Planning Department staffed. It produced a comprehensive analysis of the changes that had occurred in Southborough, showing how the land in town was used, who was living and working in the community, and what the various growth projections suggested would happen in the future. Based on this analysis, and with help from the Boston law firm of Choate, Hall and Stewart, the Southborough Open Land Foundation (SOLF) was created to respond to three needs the Citizens' Planning effort (cont. p.2 – Susskind)

## The evolution of a community activist

In the spring of 2006, SOLF presented the Elaine Beals Award for Conservation to Freddie Gillespie in recognition of her outstanding preservation efforts in Southborough. The following is a letter which SOLF received from Freddie tracing her journey from spectator to activist.

Dear SOLF Board Members,  
I would like to express my appreciation for the honor bestowed upon me by you in your presentation to me of the SOLF Elaine Beals Award for 2006. I was deeply touched and honored. There is nothing that I have accomplished that could have been done without the help of so many other hard working people. SOLF has always been there as a willing partner and facilitator.

I moved to Southborough in 1998 with my husband and at the closing of the purchase of our home, SVT was present because a parcel of land that was a part of the property was sectioned off and sold to SVT. That property is now under the control of SOLF. Behind that property is the Sudbury River, which I can hear running from my back yard.

Before we had even actually moved into our home, I saw a newspaper article about a new group forming to protect the Sudbury River, so I went to find out more. I met Linda Hubley co-founder of SWAMP (Sudbury

Watershed Monitoring and Protection) at that meeting and little did I know that my life had changed. Linda had applied for a grant for SWAMP to get water quality monitoring equipment but didn't have the needed 501c3(non profit status) for SWAMP. SOLF pitched in and acted as the fiscal agent and the grant was awarded. Through my activities with SWAMP, I was introduced to the SuAsCo Watershed Community Council, of which I became a member. Through them I received a full scholarship to attend the UMASS Community Preservation Institute.

In 1999 Linda discovered that the Sudbury River had run dry at Fruit Street, Hopkinton, very near the Southborough town line. With much effort we managed to get officials interested in why the River had dried up. Finally in 2003, the State jointly funded a study with the USGS, which I became the lead volunteer coordinator for. Linda and I worked with other volunteers for over 2 years going out to the river and its tributaries at 7 locations from Westborough to Framingham; collecting data for the USGS study, which shows scientifically that the Sudbury River went dry due to well water withdrawals and not just because of natural drought conditions.

In 2003 SWAMP applied for a grant (Cont – page 4 , Gillespie letter)

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## Susskind (continued from page 1)

identified: first, to raise money to buy land (or at least development rights) so that environmentally and historically important parcels could be protected, second, to use some of the money from the sale of donated or purchased land to encourage the building of affordable housing, and third, to advocate for more and better land use planning so that the unique features that give the community of Southborough its distinctive identity might be protected

SOLF has been successful in achieving the first and third goal, although not the second. The purchase of the development rights on the Beals' property and the purchase, donation or protection of dozens of acres throughout the town would not have happened without SOLF (and its partner, Sudbury Valley Trustees). The original SOLF Board included a number of people such as Inge Tufts, Larry Capodalupo and Susskind, who were active in the Citizens' Planning effort. They raised the money needed to hire an Executive Director and took the steps necessary to incorporate SOLF as a 501 c (3). They tried to convince neighbors in a position to do so, to help preserve open space.

SOLF also lobbied hard at town meeting for the creation of the post of town planner which the town now has. Although others have picked up the affordable housing theme, SOLF has not yet figured out a way to capture the added value created by land preservation to subsidize affordable housing, a goal achieved by some other land trusts around the country. Southborough's commitment to the Community Preservation Act, which does use some of the revenue the town receives from the transfer tax on the sale of homes, is finally providing some subsidization of affordable units. Susskind points out that unless we find a way to increase this effort, Southborough runs the risk of becoming a one-class town, a situation which benefits no one. The new master planning effort in Southborough is just getting under way and Susskind is challenging SOLF to take a lead role in working hard to ensure that affordable housing is included in the long-term future of the town.

Susskind has several suggestions for increasing affordable housing in town.

One method would be by authorizing by statute that all single-family homes have the option of "condo-izing" to become two family homes, allowing two families to share one driveway, one septic system and one yard. As children leave home, the older people would not have to sell, but rather would be able to downsize and invest in transforming their single family home into a two family home. The second half of the house would be put up for sale, allowing the owners to generate income to help them cover costs later in their lives. Several such units exist in Northborough and are visually indistinguishable from the single-family houses around them.

Affordable housing could also be provided by insisting that any new higher density development dedicate at least 10% of its units to an Affordable Housing Trust which the Commonwealth would help to subsidize. The units would look the same as all the others, but the owners would receive a partial subsidy at least for period of years

Susskind is a Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning at MIT where he has been on the faculty for 35 years. He is also one of the founders of the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School and, with his wife, Leslie Tuttle, started the not-for-profit Consensus Building Institute that provides mediation services in complicated disputes around the world. His most recent book is *Breaking Robert's Rules: The New Way to Run Your Meeting, Build Consensus and Get Results* (Oxford, 2006).

While Susskind remained on the political sidelines during his 30 years in Southborough, his wife, Leslie Tuttle, was elected to the School Committee and served as Chair of the Southborough School Committee. Their children attended elementary and middle school in Southborough. Noah graduated from St. Marks and will graduate from Williams College this spring. Lily graduated from Concord Academy and is now a sophomore at Goucher College. The Susskind-Tuttle family is moving to Cambridge, Massachusetts to downsize and eliminate the commute to work.

## Chestnut Hill Farm – A Town Jewel

At a Special Town Meeting held on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006, funds were appropriated for the purchase of a conservation restriction (CR) on 109 acres of Chestnut Hill Farm. The land, owned by the Philip C. Beals Trust, is one of the largest pieces of undeveloped land remaining in the town and is home to over 400 species of plants and animals. The purchase of the CR was made possible by the eagerness of the Beals family to see the land protected, and by the hard work of many people including town officials, especially members of the Open Space Preservation Commission and the Community Preservation Committee, members of Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT), and members of SOLF. The town of Southborough completed the purchase of the CR on the 109 acres on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Trails on the farm will now be open

for passive recreation. Active farming will continue on much of the land. Funding for the project came from a variety of sources including a \$500,000 state Self-Help grant, \$4 million appropriated from various sources at the town meeting, and nearly \$600,000 raised through the combined efforts of SVT and SOLF. SOLF sincerely thanks everyone who donated money to help make the purchase of the CR possible. The long list of donors appearing in this newsletter illustrates the widespread support that this project had within town and beyond.

In December 2006, Phil and Elaine Beals donated an additional conservation restriction to SVT on 55 acres known as the Red Gate Parcel. Along with a CR donation made in 2000 on 48 acres and the town held CR, over 200 acres of Chestnut Hill Farm are now protected.

## Peter Kallander – Conservationist & Aviator

The SOLF Board of Trustees was deeply saddened at its March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting to learn that Peter Kallander had died earlier in the day after battling cancer for several months. Pete was one of the first members of SOLF and served as its president for many years. He grew up in Southborough, graduating from the former Peters High School in 1949. Working on the family farm he developed a great deal of respect for the land. As Southborough came under tremendous development pressures, Peter's knowledge of the town, its land, and residents, made him an invaluable asset to SOLF. He helped guide the organization in its pursuit to protect open space. His concern was translated into action as he served on the Southborough Conservation Commission, helped start SOLF, led fund raising campaigns for the purchase of land, and donated several parcels of his own land to SOLF.

Peter's interests extended beyond land conservation. He had a passion for flying which led him to pursue a career in aviation after serving in the US Army. He was a pilot for Northeast Airlines and Delta Airlines, from which he retired in 1991. Retirement did not mean giving up flying as he flew his own airplane and was active in several aviation clubs. The outpouring of tributes from around

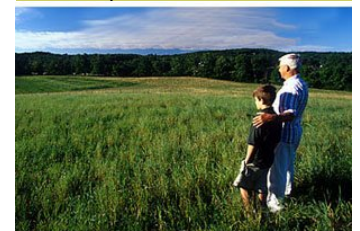
The country when news of his death spread shows the tremendous respect and love which people felt toward him. Two of the entries in the memorial book reflect the tone of the dozens of other entries. "...A superb mentor of humanity...one who reminds us to live happily and respectfully, and with a twinkle in one's eyes, as time moves way too fast. I can still remember how you'd chat with Pete, whether at his office in Boston, across from the scheduling desk, or out in the world somewhere, then upon leaving you'd realize it was a great day..." Rob Buck (Waterbury Center, VT) and "Pete was one of the kindest and most caring people I have ever met. He treated everyone with respect. He was a real "class act" and will always have a special place in the hearts of those who were lucky enough to have called him their friend. He will be sorely missed....and always remembered." Janet Richardson (Foxboro, MA)

We at SOLF will sorely miss him and will always remember the many contributions he made to our organization and town.

In January, the SOLF Board of Trustees voted to honor Peter with the Elaine Beals Award for conservation, and had notified him of his selection. Regretfully, the presentation ceremony at the annual meeting will be posthumous

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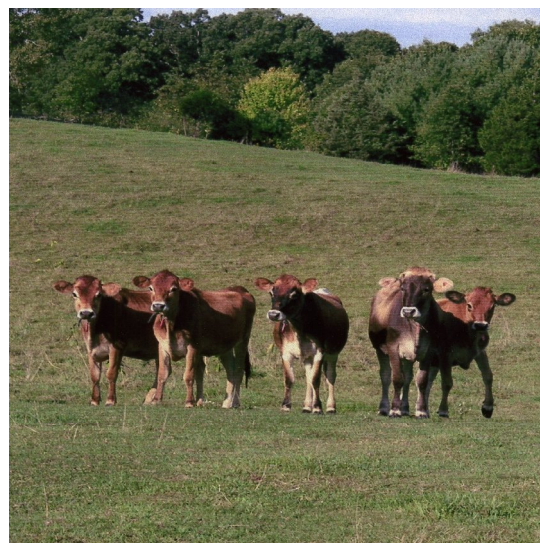
*Peter Kallander and his grandson at Chestnut Hill Farm*

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Cows grazing at Chestnut Hill Farm SOLF photo contest winner by Justine Hoge (age 12)

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## Gil Gillespie Letter (continued from page 1)

from the State Riverways Program to do Storm Drain Stenciling in the 4 towns on the Upper Sudbury River. Again SOLF stepped up and acted as our Fiscal Agent, which allowed us to apply for the grant, which we received.

I also became increasingly concerned with the amount of land in Southborough changing from woods and fields to housing developments. I would cry out "What's Wrong with This Town?" but at about the 4th development, I finally realized that I was "this town" and it was up to me to do something, not just complain. So I volunteered for the town's Open Space Preservation Commission (OSPC).

In 2003, the commuter rail station was going in and I had concerns over the paving of the historical stone bridge going over the Sudbury River. I contacted the Chair of the Historical Commission, at the time Paul Bourdon, and told him my concerns. He invited me to lunch to meet other like-minded people and we embarked on a yearlong campaign to get the Community Preservation Act (CPA) passed in Southborough. Ultimately, not only was the CPA passed, but several of us became members of the Open Space Preservation Commission. Throughout the CPA campaign, SOLF was an active participant and partner. SOLF contributed money, wrote support letters to your membership, helped get the signs out and campaigned with us at the polls. The CPA would not have been passed without SOLF's help.

When the opportunity to preserve Chestnut Hill Farm arose, we had the CPA in place to help with the funding, but just as importantly we needed to inform the citizens of what the project meant. The Open Space Preservation Commission (OSPC) provided the needed information and education. We sponsored many walks of the property, held public information forums and gave the presentation at town meeting. As an official town entity, the OSPC could not campaign for Chestnut Hill Farm, only educate and inform. SOLF stepped up and not only did the campaigning but also did the fund raising. The January 2006 town meeting when Chestnut Hill Farm was forever protected was a huge success! Without the combined efforts of the OSPC, SOLF and SVT, we would not have been able to preserve the farm.

In the meantime, I was still working for the protection of the Sudbury River. We had evolved from a group for the upper Sudbury River to one for the entire Sudbury, from Westborough to Concord, a process that continues today. We changed our name from SWAMP to the Sudbury River Watershed Organization. Look us up on the web at [www.sudburyriver.org](http://www.sudburyriver.org) As Executive Director of the Sudbury River Watershed Organization I have had the opportunity to work on many environmental issues affecting the river, not only in Southborough, but also in the region. As a new organization without a 501c3 (non profit status) getting funding poses a problem. Once again SOLF has stepped up and helped, acting as the fiscal agent in 2005 and 2006 for the grant we received through the National Park Service.

I owe special appreciation to the individuals and organizations that have changed my life since moving to Southborough. Linda Hubley who started me on my journey, Nancy Bryant and the SuAsCo Watershed Community Council which has mentored me, my Soul Sisters – Meme Luttrell and Laurie Bourdon who have enriched my life, and the members of SOLF, SVT, the Open Space Preservation Commission and the Community Preservation Committee who all work so hard to protect the community we all live in. And finally, I must mention my husband Richard, who helps my work in thousands of ways I couldn't even begin to mention. I believe he is the one who actually deserves the award. In closing I would like to say thank you again for the award and for the beautiful carved decoy. I humor myself thinking that you chose the Killdeer decoy for me because the description in Will Kirkpatrick's catalogue made you think of me: "Graceful, saucy, perky and plucky!" (Ok, well 3 out of the 4 fit) Thanks again, Frederica Gillespie  
"Freddie"



*Freddie collecting samples in the Sudbury River*

***Annual River  
fest***

***"Family Fun Day on  
the Sudbury  
River"***

**Sunday  
June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

*For more information  
Visit:*

[www.sudburyriver.org](http://www.sudburyriver.org)

**VISIT THE LAND TRUST ALLIANCE WEBSITE:**

<http://www.lta.org>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT DONATIONS.**

**LAND TRUST ALLIANCE NEWS ABOUT PLANS FOR ACCREDITATION & NEW TAX BREAKS FOR LAND DONATIONS**

The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) describes itself as the “national convener, strategist and representative of more than 1500 land trusts across America.” The LTA has developed a set of forty-two standards and practices which it asks its members to adopt. SOLF, a member of LTA, has adopted the standards and practices advocated.

The Land Trust Alliance is currently working on a program of accreditation for land trusts to ensure that the trusts are following the forty-two standards and practices “that indicate a land trust’s ability to act in an ethical, legally sound and technically sound manner and ensure the long term protection of land in the public interest.” The program of accreditation will begin in 2008 and is being made possible by a one million dollar gift to the Land Trust Alliance in August 2006 by Wayland, MA residents Forrest Berkley and his wife Marcie Tyre.

A person who is interested in protecting his/her land has three options: 1) an outright donation of the land, 2) a bargain sale of the land to a land trust, or 2) donating or selling a conservation easement (restriction) on the land. There are tax benefits to the donor of either land or conservation

easements. In August 2006, Congress passed legislation that increases the tax benefits for donations of conservation easements. The conservation tax incentive, in place for 26 years, has been adjusted to:

- \* Raise the maximum deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation easement from 30% of adjusted gross income (AGI) in any year to 50%;

- \* Allow farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of AGI; and

- \* Extend the carry-forward period for a donor to take tax deductions for a voluntary conservation agreement from 5 to 15 years.

The newly revised tax incentives helps family farmers, ranchers, and other moderate-income landowners get a significant tax benefit for making the charitable donation of a conservation easement, restricting future development of their land to protect an important public resource . Legislation has been introduced in to make these changes a permanent part of the tax code.

For more information about the benefits of donating land or conservation easements, visit the LTA web site, which has been the source of information for this article, at <http://www.lta.org>

**SOLF NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

SOLF deeply appreciates all your support, both financial and

purchase of the Chestnut Hill Farm Conservation Restriction. We now

it is time to renew membership. Of equal, or even greater importance, is

our need for a

little of your time. We need volunteers to serve as trustees and to help

with other projects

so to continue the work of protecting open space in Southborough.

**RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOUTHBOROUGH OPEN LAND FOUNDATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 family \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 supporting \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ \$5000 corporate

If you are eligible for a matching gift, we would appreciate you applying for it.

All donations are tax deductible.

I would like to volunteer to: \_\_\_\_\_serve as a trustee \_\_\_\_\_help with mailings  
 \_\_\_\_\_help with outdoor projects.

MAIL TO: SOLF, P.O. Box 345, Southborough, MA 01772.

## Letter from the president of SOLF

-2006 was a great year for Southborough's future, beginning with the Town Meeting vote in January enabling the preservation of Chestnut Hill Farm and ending in December with the protection of the adjacent 55 acre "Red Gate" parcel, donated as a Conservation Restriction by the Beals family.

At the same time, we are deeply saddened by the passing last month of our dear friend and benefactor, Peter Kallander. Peter put a friendly, down to earth face on our efforts to preserve Southborough's fields and forests, woodlots and meadows. His generous donations of land, resources, time, and energy will always be remembered. A memorial service for Peter will be held at Pilgrim Church on Sunday, May 13th, at 2:00 PM.

### *Preserving Chestnut Hill*

It is now April and as we greet Spring, we look forward with a sort of nervous hope about things to come for Southborough and beyond across our entire "Spaceship Earth." and its uncertain future. As the idea of Global Warming gains attention with new acceptance and headlines everywhere, and Al Gore receives his Oscar - some perhaps feel smug with a sort of "I told you so" vindication. And yet this newly chic attitude is in some ways a hollow reminder of words from a half century ago uttered as a warning by Adlai Stevenson.

*"We travel together, passengers on a little spaceship, dependent on its vulnerable reserves of air and soil; all committed for our safety to its security and peace; preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and I will say the love we give our fragile craft. We cannot maintain it half fortunate, half miserable, half confident, half despairing, half slave to the ancient enemies of man, half free in a liberation of resources undreamed of until this day. No craft, now crew can travel safely with such vast contradictions. On their resolution depends the survival of us all."*

Thanks so much in helping us to "act locally" in trying to help preserve our "vulnerable reserves!"

Sincerely,

David Morgan

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We're on the Web!

*See us at:*

[www.SOLF.org](http://www.SOLF.org)

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Southborough Open Land Foundation  
P.O. Box 345  
Southborough, MA 01772

In October work was done to create access to SOLF's parcel of land between Wyndemere Drive and Sears Road. A survey of the access easement was done, and then stonework to mark and create an entrance off of Sears Road was completed. Eight foot returns going into the access from the stonewall were constructed on either side of the entrance by Heckman Masonry Corp. Some small trees and brush will be cleared to provide access to the property. A portion of the land abuts Chestnut Hill Farm so when the project is completed there will be opportunities for lovely hikes through the two properties. Research showed that the Wyndemere/Sears Parcel was once part of Wolf Pen Farm, so SOLF will now refer to it as Wolf Pen Pastures. The access is located just beyond 14 Sears Road.