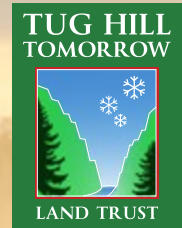


2018 HIGHLIGHTS
& ANNUAL REPORT



*"This land is part of our family, our community.
It becomes part of who you are." - Ed Siebels*



When Farmland Matters

Local family considers national security, family, and community

When Ed and Elizabeth Siebels decided to conserve their 449-acre farm in the towns of Fowler and Rossie, NY, they knew “it was the right thing to do for our kids, our family, and the community.”

What they didn’t realize was that their land would be joining 19,425 other acres with conservation agreements in the region. More and more, folks are choosing to protect local farmland, as well as the woodlands and waterways critical to the local economy, clean water, and wildlife.

“Our family has worked this land in St. Lawrence County for three generations—over 100 years—and that hard work and love of the land is something we appreciate, every day. Farming is part of our heritage here, and we want to keep it that way,” reflects Ed Siebels.

Across the country, and here in New York State, farmland faces ongoing threats of development, tough market conditions, and aging farm ownership. “Farmland conservation is key to passing our land to the next generation—it makes it more affordable for the next generation of farmers and keeps it out of developers’ hands,” explains Ed. “We still own the land, manage it, and can grow and diversify our operation, but we never have to worry that it will be converted to sprawling development.”

2018 HIGHLIGHTS



- 17 families continued to explore how to conserve their land, totaling 3,370 acres.
- 2 families conserved their land, protecting almost 10,000 feet along the Independence River.
- According to National Ag Census, from 2012-2017 four Tug Hill Counties saw a loss of 237 farms and 63,020 acres out of active production.

Thanks to donors like you, THTLT helped slow the loss.



Surprise Landing, Farmers Welcome Unexpected Guests

"Fort Drum continually strives to build long-lasting partnerships with our North Country neighbors. The Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program supports the Army's mission to train to fight and win our nation's wars. The ability to train by land and air is what makes Fort Drum's military value unmatched.

Although completely coincidental, the recent landing of an aircraft on ACUB protected land is an example of why strategically-placed easements surrounding Fort Drum are critical to our training mission today and in the future," said Eric F. Wagenaar, Fort Drum Deputy to the Garrison Commander.

Federal funding for land protection around military bases comes from the ACUB Program. New York State provides important matching funds as well. Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (THTLT) works with local partners, including Ducks Unlimited to facilitate the farmland protection applications and projects. Over the past 10 years, 26 farms—encompassing 7,977 acres—have been conserved using ACUB and New York State funds from the Environmental Protection Fund.

"We are delighted that we can assist these farm families and support Fort Drum," explains Linda Garrett, Executive Director of THTLT. "The farmers want to do this for their country as well as their families. It helps with wildlife conservation too."

Do you know...

Your donation provides a critical component of our farmland protection work? While state and federal funding covers costs after the grant has been awarded, your gift helps to cover the thousands of hours required to assist farm families and communities to prepare for these grants. *This year is no exception; your contribution will allow us to work with many farm families so they can decide if conservation is right for them.*

Supporting Dairy Farms

With milk prices continuing to drop to levels that don't cover production costs, 2018 was a tough year for NY dairy farmers—putting many families under extreme financial stress.

NY State responded by creating a one-time dairy farmland protection fund to help farmers diversify and stabilize their operations or transfer to the next generation. The process was highly competitive, with THTLT assisting five families in Oneida, Lewis, Jefferson, and St. Lawrence counties, to submit applications to the state.

The Jones Farm was the first to be awarded funding, allowing them to rebuild their barns and reinvest in the farm, after a catastrophic fire. "It was a glimmer of hope in a very difficult time for our family," remarked Terry Jones. Funding from people like you will allow THTLT to assist other farm families should the state issue additional funding.



Bringing Joy and Birds to the Classroom

The love of nature starts young, thanks to you

Susan Jeffers teaches 2nd graders at Mt. Markham Elementary, and she's amazed how birds can be a window into the love of learning.

As part of the Tug Hill Bird Quest, during a week in May, students observe their classroom's bird feeders each day. "It's exciting because they come back in from their weekends and say, 'Oh, Mrs. Jeffers, I saw a cardinal,' or, 'I saw a

Blue Jay.' They're becoming more observant of their own world, both in and out of school."

All around the country, educators and researchers are documenting that access to nature enhances concentration, memory recall, and team problem solving. "Kids really become involved with the world around them," Susan says. "One day, as they were watching birds, they spotted a baby bunny. Then they wanted to find out where the bunny lived, and went exploring to find out."



©Susan Jeffers.

The Tug Hill Bird Quest program partnered with 35 classrooms and 13 homeschool programs in 2018. We provided bird feeders, bird seed, and basic supplies (underwritten by donors and local businesses), while the schools and families tapped into the curriculum. According to Mrs. Jeffers and other teachers, Bird Quest provides a way for everyone get involved including giving some students who don't always thrive academically a chance to shine.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

35

Classrooms



13

Homeschool Programs



28

Public Events & Special Programs





Nature Comes Alive at Local Libraries

"You wouldn't believe the excitement some of these kids have, with this program, and the parents were just as interested," remarked Colleen, the librarian at the Mexico Public Library in Oswego County.

In a time when kids are increasingly disengaged with nature, and finding it hard to concentrate at school, stories have been documented to both enhance their learning and focus, and build stronger empathy and compassion for farms and the natural world.

THTLT's Community Programs Director, Linda Gibbs, is currently leading these complementary programs in Oswego and Oneida Counties as part of our commitment to ensure the next generation cares about land and water, too.

Grant funding from Richard S. Shineman Foundation and The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, Inc., the Casimir S. Butnoris Fund, Edward J. Sator Family Fund and the Margaret M. Purcell Fund.



Volunteers Lead the Way

What do 25 people, in the woods, have in common? A love of nature.

"Getting outside and sharing time with others in nature is a great antidote to a rainy day, or a long winter. I've made some great friends and seen amazing places I otherwise wouldn't have experienced," comments Maria Mogg.

Walks, hikes, and paddles are led in partnership with volunteer trip-leaders, local landowners, as well as land trust board and staff.

In 2018 people as young as six months and as wise as 93 years came to see Great Blue Herons, picnic at the Independence River, explore the majestic old growth trees of the "Core Forest," and experience our shared connections to the land.



Caring for Land in a Changing World

Building a land ethic is one thing, learning how to care for it in the face of climate change and increasing numbers of invasive species, is another.

That's why in 2018, we partnered with a number of local conservation organizations to provide programs ranging from creative uses for garlic mustard (an invasive plant introduced by European settlers in the 1800s, that outcompetes native plants), to identifying the dreaded Emerald Ash Borer and new forest management strategies.

"Our community is the future of land stewardship in Tug Hill," explained Megan Pistolese, SLELO-PRISM. Local landowners and gardeners have a major role to play in ensuring that we retain viable habitat for bees and butterflies as well as woodland birds and forests. That's how we'll make a difference.

This summer and fall, come discover Tug Hill with us...

If you're looking for a chance to be part of something special, have fun, and share your love of the outdoors, come join us. We provide a variety of experiences so no matter your ability, or age, we have something that's right for you.

Thanks to the generosity of donors and supporters, these programs are offered free of charge to the public. See our website at tughilltomorrowlandtrust.org or sign up for our e-News, and we'll be in touch.

Take a Walk on the Wild Side

Trails, experiencing nature, and sharing the wonders of Tug Hill is part of what you have made possible over the years, and 2018 was no exception.

Local community members, school groups, and families have found the Joseph A. Blake Wildlife Sanctuary's trails to be a great place to go for a walk, learn to bird watch, or spend time with friends.

These trails are managed in partnership with local businesses and volunteers in addition to land trust staff and board members.

"We find that people appreciate trails and nature, close to home, even in rural areas," observes Katie Malinowski, Executive Director of the Tug Hill Commission.

One such area is the Trenton Greenbelt, an early project of the land trust. Now, with your support, we hope to make strides on the 20-mile Tug Hill Traverse Trail, to connect people to the beauty of the Core Forest.

Special thanks to...

OD Greene Lumber and Hardware for their donation of rakes, shovels, and clippers.

The tools make a huge difference in how much trail work our volunteers get done.



"The picnic is a blast. I look forward to it every year. I love the project updates and sense of community. This annual event is not to be missed!"
— Beth Steria, Lowville

Thank You Picnic

How do you like to celebrate local land conservation successes?

As part of our way to thank you, our family of supporters, we hope you'll come and bring family and friends to the **Annual Community Picnic on the Independence River on July 13, 2019.**

There's a lot to celebrate—almost 20,000 acres of conserved farm and forest lands throughout Tug Hill, owned and protected by families who care, as well as thousands of school kids and families who have experienced nature and farms, thanks to you. As a supporter, look for an invitation in the mail later this summer.

You're Conserving Lands Critical to Wildlife

2018 continued to build partnerships

When songbirds migrate, and bobcat meander hundreds of miles, they experience something in common. Like hundreds of other species increasingly in need of refuge in the face of climate change, they need safe passageways that connect land that provides food, water, and places to raise their young.

Extreme weather is accentuating this issue. During times of drought, providing access to water and a variety of habitats, is important. Inversely, as the northeast experiences prolonged periods of rain, cover from high waters and torrential downpours is critical.

As part of our commitment to local and regional conservation efforts, Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (THTLT), along with landowners and families in the Black River Valley, focused in the towns of Boonville, Forestport, Remsen, Steuben, Ava, and Western, continues to work with local organizations like the Tug Hill Commission and national conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and National Audubon Society—all the way into Canada—to conserve critical land for people and wildlife.

A Landscape Mosaic

Much of this land is forested which involves working with landowners to develop strategies to manage their woodlands in a sustainable manner.

Farms also play a central role in this habitat protection effort, providing hedgerows for safe travel, and a variety of food sources within the woodlands, wetlands, and meadows affiliated with them.

“Large, relatively unbroken landscapes are increasingly important to the survival of wildlife,” explains Linda Garrett, Executive Director of THTLT. “We expect to see greater migration of species in and out of our area who need to adapt to climate change and follow food sources, as they migrate due to changing conditions.”

2018 saw the continuation of our wildlife connectivity program work with local landowners to better understand animal behavior and patterns on their land so that landowners can manage their lands in a manner that benefits wildlife.

This is an area of great wildlife diversity and its protection will have far-reaching impacts for a variety of animals, including song birds who migrate as far as South America and require northern habitats in the summer to thrive.

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust is working with partners and local communities to conserve an additional 5,000 acres of farm and forest land central to wildlife habitat, water quality, and farm viability.



© Pamela Underhill Karax

© Douglas McRae



"I volunteer because I believe it's important to have public open space for anyone who wants to come out to enjoy the land and the only way to truly enjoy it is to walk through it. We have to get out, help, and make sure trails are cleared so we can all enjoy them."

—Ken Mix



Land Protection over Generations is Our Commitment. It Starts with You.

Land trusts like ours are the only nonprofits that pledge to be here for generations to come. We promise to partner with Tug Hill families who have conserved their property to ensure these lands remain the cherished places they are today.

We also promise to care for the land we own and to provide special community-oriented places to connect with nature. As part of that, we know that for kids to grow up caring about nature and farms like you do, we need to ensure that they have regular, inspirational, and fun experiences all year long.

Some might say it's an audacious pledge. We say it's the right thing to do. You can help. Your planned gift, through your will or during your lifetime, is what will make all this possible. Thank you for taking this journey with us.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

1,200

Volunteer
Hours



Volunteers Inspire Us, Every Day

The bird walks, snowshoe hikes, as well as mushroom walks and exploring the woodlands, streams, and meadows of Tug Hill, are led by volunteers who share their knowledge and passion about nature, all year long. And that's just the beginning. Volunteers share amazing photos, improve trails, host neighborhood gatherings, and assist with events and mailings.

Thank you to those of you who give time, talent, and compassion for the lands and waters you love. You made 2018 an incredible year—and 2019 looks to be even better. Give us a call if you'd like to volunteer.

Volunteers/In-Kind Services

Sharing Expertise

Judy Anderson,
Community Consultants
David Geurtsen, Conboy,
McKay Bachman & Kendall
Pamela Underhill Karaz
Katie Malinowski
Bob Quinn
Anne Richter & Brian Ashley
Zachary Wakeman
Dorene Warner, W Design

Field Trip/Program Leaders

Vici & Steve Diehl
Cary Fassler & Deb Kahkejian
Bob & Carol Keller
Dave & Uli Larrabee
Robert McNamara
Lynn Morgan
Loretta Lepkowski
Barb Schwartz
Janet Thompson
Emmanuel Vaucher
Chris & Melany Welch,
Cocktail Party Hosts

Trail Work

Adam Garrett
Amanda Paddock
Haleigh Schultes

Office Help

Carol Sawyer
Adam Winegarden
Paul Miller

Partners

Adirondack Land Trust
Cornell Cooperative Extension
of Oneida County
Development Authority of
the North Country
Ducks Unlimited
Fort Drum

Land Trust Alliance
Nature Up North
NYS Department of Environmental
Conservation
St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario
Partnership for Regional Invasive
Species Management
The Conservation Fund

The Nature Conservancy
Adirondack Chapter
The Nature Conservancy Central
& Western NY Chapter
The New York State Zoo at
Thompson Park
Tug Hill Commission



© Zach Wakeman.

27 Years of Conserving Tug Hill...



Here's what you are working to conserve, the special places that make Tug Hill what it is for generations to come.



40 feet of snow in a single winter—the snowiest place east of the Rockies.

Most premier trout and spawning fishing streams in New York State.

Gulfs up to **300** feet deep.



4,000 miles of streams.

117,000 acres of wetlands.

160,000 acres of core forest.



We Handle the Details, You Make the Difference

Are you interested in stepping up the pace of conservation?
Do you want to leverage your love of the land? You may want to consider joining others and donating your camp, house, or open land to Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust.

That's what Ron did, because he says, "It felt like I would be inspiring others if I donated land to the land trust to sell knowing it will remain protected as part of the process. I know I'll have helped conserve land all over Tug Hill, too."

As part of the effort to conserve and celebrate our region's special places, we accept gifts of real estate specifically designated to be resold. (Properties with important conservation features would be protected before resale.) All proceeds go to conserving additional lands, managing trails, and hosting community programs.

Sometimes families will donate land to establish a new public conservation area, with trails, and that can be great, too. "It's a gift that keeps on giving, and I love that," says Ron.

Check out our website if you'd like to learn more or give Linda Garrett a call at (315) 779-8240.



"If you love the sound of a babbling brook, enjoy a paddle down a lazy river, or like to fish in a pristine lake... We owe it to future generations to preserve and protect the miles and miles of unspoiled waterways throughout the Tug Hill region."—Anne Richter, retired WWNY TV anchor

2018 Financials

As a nationally accredited land trust we believe in building an organization that is here to stay. Your gifts are investments in the future of all who live in, and visit, Tug Hill—as well as the wildlife who call it home.

Our success is your success.

For a more detailed financial report call Linda Garrett to request our 990s. Together we are leveraging thousands of dollars of state and federal funding to conserve the lands that matter most.



2018 Revenue

Foundations & Grants ¹	\$633,459
Individual contributions	\$260,282
Special events	\$20,629
Other income ²	\$215,041
Total	\$1,129,411



2018 Expenses

Program Services	\$951,212
Administration	\$51,452
Fundraising	\$42,664
Total	\$1,045,328

¹Foundations and Grants: In 2018 we received several grants to purchase development rights (conservation agreements) including NYS Ag & Markets and the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC).

²Other Income: Includes stewardship fund contributions, income from conservation projects and contract work, and investment income.

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. These audited figures reflect the fiscal year January 1, 2018–December 31, 2018. A copy of the full audited financial statement is available upon request by calling Linda Garrett at 315-779-8240 or emailing lgarrett@tughilltomorrow.org.

Let's Celebrate...

Thanks to you, more of Tug Hill's waters, farms, woodlands, and wildlife

Thank you for conserving land, connecting people and our communities to the extraordinary places of Tug Hill, and celebrating what we can do together. Clean water doesn't happen by accident. Nor does conserving our local heritage. Your compassion, generosity, and enthusiasm is what makes our community a better place to live, work, and play for today, tomorrow, and generations to come.

(M) Monthly Donors

✧ Donors giving more than 10 years

♣ Donors giving more than 20 years

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Remembering One of Tug Hill's Finest

Richard (Dick) Hill 1926-2018

Dick had a huge impact on the land trust. He first became a loyal field trip participant, a donor, and then served on the THTLT board from 2001 until his passing. Dick not only contributed greatly to our mission of conserving Tug Hill's farms and forests, he was especially passionate about protecting wild land, the places that are unspoiled by human activity.

Shortly after his 90th birthday, in June of 2016, the first "Top of the Hill" award was presented to Dick, honoring his lifelong dedication to preserving nature and his years of support of the land trust as a generous donor and board member for 15 years.

Dick's presence will always be missed, but his memory lives on in all of us who had the pleasure of knowing him. Continuing to honor Dick's legacy, THTLT recognizes donors of "a certain age" who embody Dick's dedication to nature and Tug Hill with the "Top of the Hill" award. Recipients to date include Dick Hill, Tom Walker and Ben Coe.



In Memory of Dick Hill

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Continued from page 14

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Tom & Mabel Walker ♦

Headwaters Society \$10,000+

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Gifts of Land

Ronald Becker

Planned Gifts

Leiter Doolittle
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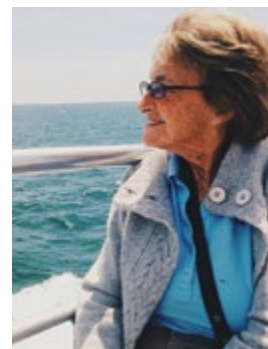
In Honor of

Andrew & Emily Bingham's
wedding
Robin Haugen
Andrew & Emily Bingham
Linda Garrett birthday
James and Maryann Garrett,
Kay Ogden
& Facebook friends
Lucy Reed Foltyniak & Julie
Reed Duflo
Mary Lou Reed
Jonas Kelly & Heidi Jones
Bob & Carol Keller
Jonathan Schell birthday
Facebook friends
Haleigh Schultes birthday
Facebook friends
Tug Hill Traverse Trail
George & Nancy Grisham
Chris & Melany Welch
Peggy & Brian O'Shea
Katherine Adams

In Memory of

Caroline Blair
Jan & Natalie Bogdanowicz
Katherine Cavanaugh
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Mildred Behrens
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Joseph Dombroski
Phyllis Dombroski Healey
Marjorie Trudeau
Barbara Tokarsky
Dick Hill
See page 13
Ronald Service
Linda M. Garrett



Carol Welch 1929-2018

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These gifts were made by donors between January 1–December 31, 2018. We sincerely apologize for any errors or omissions. Please give us a call at 315-779-8240 if you have a correction to make.

Celebrating What You Love

In May of 2018, Emily and Andrew Bingham spent a wonderful day with friends and family celebrating their marriage.

The day was filled with sunshine, great food and laughter, and of course dancing—but they wanted their love of the outdoors and Tug Hill to be part of that experience, too. Emily has fond memories of visiting her grandparents farm in Constableville, and she wanted to honor them in a very special way. So, Emily designated THTLT on her wedding registry. Each gift furthers the conservation of the lands she loves, up here in the north country.

We are honored to be part of their wedding, and to remember this couple and all those who contributed in their honor, every time we work to conserve the lands we love in Tug Hill.



© Robert McNamara.

Commemorating Big and Small Events in Your Life

Social media is a great place to be, well, social—and that's what people who love Tug Hill are doing.

Whether it's asking friends to contribute to Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust to help celebrate their birthday, anniversary, or wedding, or posting images of the places and wildlife you love, social media via Facebook and Instagram is a terrific way to share your love of the region.

If you'd like to join our Social Media Ambassadors team, let us know. We're looking for folks who will share posts, provide comments, and elevate our land trust's work to reach and connect with more people. It's a great way to help out no matter where you live. All you need is a passion for Tug Hill and a desire to inspire.

*"I love tracking the land trust's Facebook page. The images and articles are so inspiring."
—Wendi Ward*



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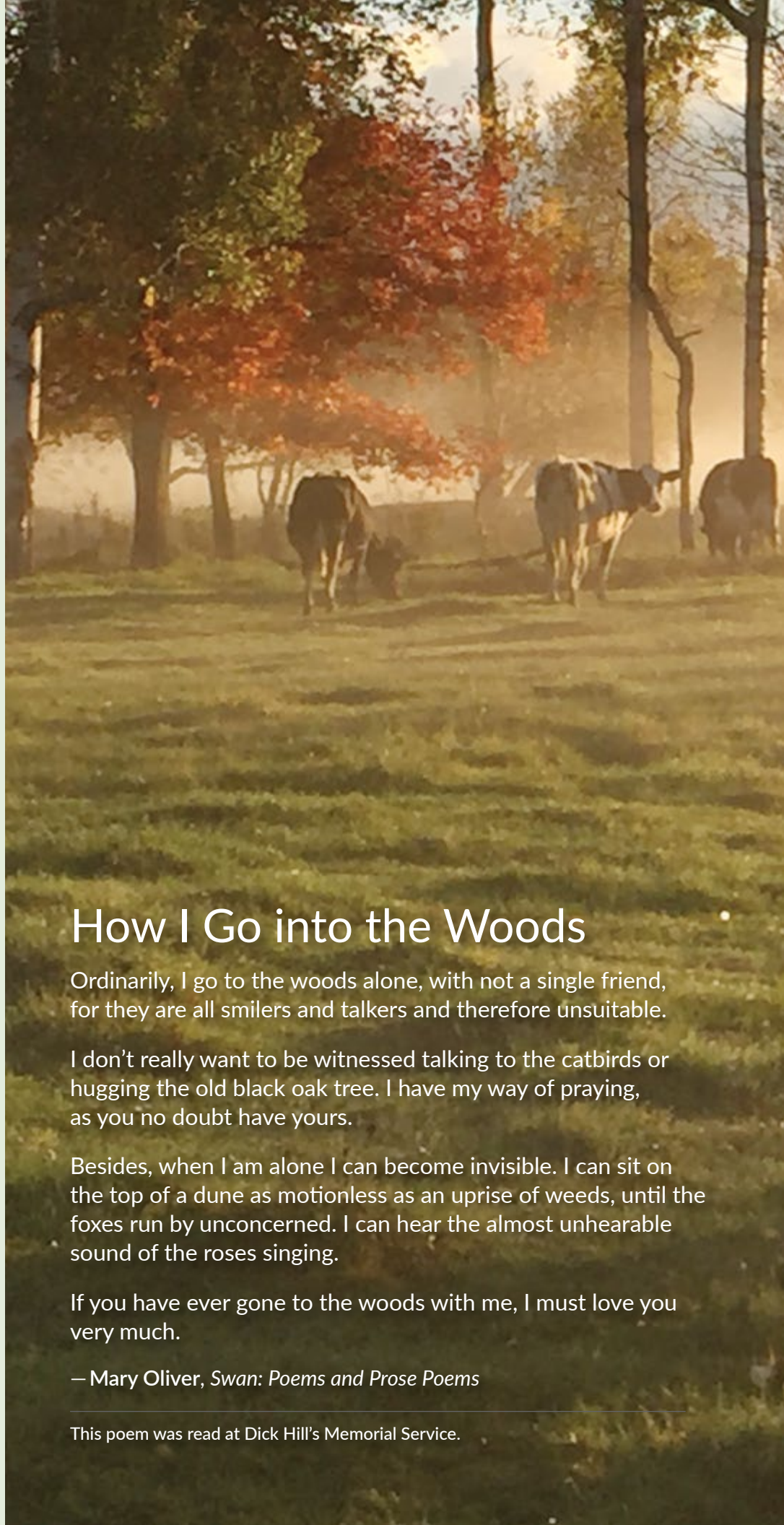


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We don't share our mailing lists, so your privacy is protected.



How I Go into the Woods

Ordinarily, I go to the woods alone, with not a single friend,
for they are all smilers and talkers and therefore unsuitable.

I don't really want to be witnessed talking to the catbirds or
hugging the old black oak tree. I have my way of praying,
as you no doubt have yours.

Besides, when I am alone I can become invisible. I can sit on
the top of a dune as motionless as an uprise of weeds, until the
foxes run by unconcerned. I can hear the almost unheard
sound of the roses singing.

If you have ever gone to the woods with me, I must love you
very much.

— Mary Oliver, *Swan: Poems and Prose Poems*

This poem was read at Dick Hill's Memorial Service.