

Spotlight on New Board Members



Top: George Olsen
Middle: Bill Mulligan
Bottom: Judith Stockdale

“**Y**ou ask me what my special place is and I’ll tell you it’s a spot on the Smith River float from Camp Baker, where the Tenderfoot empties into the Smith,” says **George Olsen**. “It’s a place of great beauty and mystery. The beauty is obvious and the mystery is the land in the Tenderfoot drainage that you can’t see from the river. All beautiful country and a part of my heritage.”

George has a deep connection to Montana land through his long service with the Montana Land Reliance. He was there at its inception in 1978 and joined the board in 1979. He was secretary-treasurer of the board before taking over as president two years ago. As a certified public accountant, George spent much of his professional career advising ranchers, farmers and large landowners. In 2012, he retired as a shareholder from Galusha, Higgins & Galusha, PC.

A member of the Montana Society of CPAs, George serves as the chair of its Legislation & Governmental Affairs Committee. He serves on several boards, including the Ruby Habitat Foundation, a 1,100-acre ranch dedicated to creating sustainable agriculture and preserving and enhancing the natural resources and social and economic make-up of Southwest Montana.

“While on the Land Trust Alliance board, I hope to be able to contribute ideas from my time with the Montana Land Reliance and my work as a CPA with landowners and donors,” says George. “The land trust community is at a point where there is a need for new solutions to land protection and planning.”

William “Bill” Mulligan says he has always loved the outdoors and open space. “My childhood memories include time spent sailing in northern Michigan, rafting in Wyoming and exploring the wonderful network of parks that surround Cleveland, known to many

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–Judith Stockdale

as the ‘Emerald Necklace.’” While he still loves those places, he has a special fondness for “the network of protected properties that surrounds my home in Hunting Valley. I hike the land several times a week, always with our two dogs. The time on the trail is calming after a long day at the office, and provides me a

chance to connect with nature. It is a beautiful walk among the towering oaks and maples, streams and ponds, and underscores for me the importance of our land conservation work.”

Bill says there is no question that he has joined the Alliance board at an exciting time, “with all that is going on. We are now at the mid-point of our five-year strategic plan and so much has been accomplished. That said, there is more to do. I currently serve on the Finance/Investment, Program and Conservation Defense committees, which has kept me quite busy during the first six months on the board. I feel very much

engaged, look forward to working on many of the important initiatives under way and hope that I can make a meaningful contribution.”

Bill is a managing director of Primus Capital Funds, a Cleveland-based private equity firm that he joined in 1985. Prior to Primus, he served in various management and operating roles at McKinsey & Company, Deere and Company and First Chicago Corporation. Bill is a director of two public companies and several private companies in the Primus portfolio. He also serves as a trustee of the Cleveland Clinic, Denison University and the Western Reserve Land Conservancy (OH).

Growing up in the United Kingdom, **Judith Stockdale** says she was outside all the time. “My uncles had farms. My mother was an ardent hiker/walker in the Lake District, and we went on picnics all the time.” She says she can’t narrow down so many choices to one special place that inspires her. But she tells the story of why land conservation matters to her.

“So much land in America has been wasted by bad land use decisions. When I came to this country and took a night flight across it, the landscape passing underneath was dark. That was around 1970. If you fly across country now, there are lights *everywhere*.”

Judith has rejoined the Land Trust Alliance board, having been an early board member of the fledgling organization. “I’m excited to be back on the board after so many years because the Alliance has grown up so much and so well,” she says. “It is doing such encompassing work now and has such a competent crew. Think of all the new steps forward: accreditation, training, leadership, TerraFirma. That’s exciting!”

After positions as an economic analyst, a college instructor and a natural resources planner, in 1978 Judith became executive director of Openlands in Chicago. She initiated efforts to preserve and protect natural lands in urban and rural northeastern Illinois through creation of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, Friends of the Chicago River and Wetlands Research, Inc. In 1987, she became a senior staff associate of the Chicago Community Trust.

Judith was executive director of the Great Lakes Protection Fund, the nation’s first multistate environmental endowment. Then in 1994, she became executive director of the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, a Chicago-based private foundation whose mission is land conservation and artistic vitality in both the Chicago region and the Lowcountry of South Carolina. When Judith left the foundation in 2012, the board chair stated, “For nearly two decades Judith’s leadership has positively shaped the foundation’s focus and vision in significant, lasting ways.” •

In Memoriam: Gordon Abbott

Gordon Abbott, Jr., a conservationist, journalist and WWII veteran, died on April 17 at the age of 85. While Gordon served on the board and council of Maine Coast Heritage Trust for many years, his commitment to land conservation extended far beyond Maine. For 18 years he served as the director of The Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts. He was a founder and treasurer of the Land Trust Alliance. He also founded and taught at the Center for Rural Massachusetts at UMass Amherst. His obituary can be found at www.campbellfuneral.com/book-of-memories/1556286/Abbott-Gordon/obituary.php. •

Ear to the Ground

Andrew McElwaine, the new president of American Farmland Trust, says that “From the time I was a young boy spending summers at my uncle’s family ranch in Dubois, Wyoming, I knew my career would be focused on conserving working and natural lands, especially farms and ranches.”

Essex County Greenbelt Association (MA) honored **Laura Johnson**, former Massachusetts Audubon president and current vice chair of the Land Trust Alliance board, with the 2013 Al Creighton Conservation Award at its annual meeting in May.

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation has selected **Brett Glymph** to be the organization’s new executive director.

The Environmental Law Institute awarded **Mark Silberstein**, executive director of the Elkhorn Slough Foundation (CA), the 2013 National Wetlands Award as a Community Leader.

Piedmont Environmental Council (VA) has received a Gold Medal among the 2013 Governor’s Environmental Excellence Awards.

The board of Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts is proud to announce the recent hiring of **Laurel Sayer** as its first executive director. 🌱



Greenbelt Executive Director Ed Becker and Laura Johnson