

## Annual Meeting Highlights Bald Eagles in Arlington

The Board of Directors of the Arlington Land Trust is pleased to invite you to join the 2024 Annual Meeting on **Monday, January 27, 2025** at 7 pm. We will meet in the Back Room of the Donut Villa Diner, 319 Broadway in Arlington Center to elect Board members, hear a brief Treasurer's report, and provide updates on the proposed Thorndike Place development on the Mugar property in East Arlington and other local conservation projects.

**Paul M. Roberts**, an internationally acclaimed raptor expert from Medford, will present an illustrated program on **Bald Eagles in Arlington**. In 1999, Paul began to document the eagles who came to winter on the Mystic Lakes and Spy Pond and eventually to breed near the lakes. He will introduce the "reigns" of several territorial pairs, including "MK and KZ," and currently "FAE and KZ," and other intriguing, often confusing, eagles that might winter in the area. Paul has been studying hawks and hawk migration since the early 1970s. He founded the Eastern Mass Hawk Watch in 1976 and chaired one international and two regional raptor organizations over many years. He has taught classes on hawk identification for Mass Audubon and many bird clubs, and authored the article "Eagle Wars" in *Massachusetts Wildlife*, No. 2, 2020.



A pair of Bald Eagles in THE tree, a favorite spot near the Mystic River Dam. Credit: Paul M. Roberts

## Tufts Students Conduct Drone Survey of Elizabeth Island

In early October, Jon Caris, senior drone data scientist at Tufts University, brought 13 students to conduct short drone flights over Elizabeth Island. The students are enrolled in a class that focuses on drone mapping, data collection and analysis. Caris is an FAA certified remote pilot and an educational representative with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) charged with building a teaching and research drone program at Tufts.

Having an opportunity for the students to test their training in the field was a key aspect of Caris's original request to the Town and the Land Trust. David Morgan, Arlington's environmental planner and conservation agent, was also involved in the drone survey. They look forward to utilizing the data and analysis for future planning and aquatic management in Spy Pond, along with the Land Trust and the Spy Pond Committee.

The Land Trust is grateful to members Judi Berman and Ron Rosenbaum who graciously welcomed the Tufts group to use their shoreline close to the island for launching the drones.



One of the drone images of Elizabeth Island.



Jon Caris, center in cap, demonstrates a drone launch.

Thank you for supporting the Arlington Land Trust. You can donate online or by mail.

## Mugar Hearings Continue at Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission had not completed its review of stormwater issues at the proposed development of Thorndike Place on the Mugar property in East Arlington by the time this newsletter went to press. We will continue to monitor this project and provide updates through emails and on the ALT website.

Briefly, the Land Trust has been actively engaged during many months of hearings, and these efforts reinforce our long-standing belief that the Mugar parcel is not appropriate for any type of development. During the spring we coordinated with the Town to install continuously monitored wells on adjacent Town-owned

property, in order to provide a more accurate assessment of groundwater levels than the infrequent measurements taken by the developer's engineers. In addition, we hired hydrology experts Scott Horsley and Michael Mobile, who have identified numerous flaws in the stormwater

management systems proposed by the development team. They continue to review and comment on the reports provided to the Commission by the developer's engineers and the peer review consultants engaged in the process.

### Board News | Angel Mozina Joins the Board



Angel is a real estate and corporate attorney. She represents governmental and quasi-governmental agencies, non-profit institutions, property owners and tenants, and business entities in all aspects of finance, development, land use, zoning and title analysis, project management, leasing and commercial transactions. She and her family have resided in Arlington since 2018.

## 2024 Scholarship Winners

The Arlington Land Trust Conservation Scholarship was established to recognize graduating seniors at Arlington High School in 2024. The response was excellent, and we decided to award not one but three \$1,000 scholarships to students who will be pursuing education, volunteer service and work in conservation, environmental protection or a related field.

We congratulate **Tatem Kerr**, **Miriam Oliveri-Schneider** and **Clara Schneider** on their significant contributions to environ-

mental awareness and action in Arlington and wish them well in their future educational and career endeavors. For more information about this program and the 2024 winners, see the ALT website News page.

As a part of our conservation and education mission, we intend to open up the Scholarship application process to all Arlington-based high school seniors in 2025. We are grateful for the generosity of our members who make these awards possible. Thank you.

## Update on Symmes Monitoring

Since 2014 the Arlington Land Trust and Conservation Commission have been co-holders of a conservation restriction (CR) on more than eight acres of land surrounding Arlington 360 and BrightView on the former Symmes Hospital site off Summer Street. The terms of the CR require regular monitoring to ensure that the protected land is being maintained and the boundaries are respected.

Conservation monitor Maggie Werneburg has identified numerous instances of encroachments from abutting properties, ranging from dumped yard waste to occasional structures and landscaping on the CR land. Her conclusions have been corroborated by a survey commissioned by Arlington 360 and carried out by Beals & Thomas, Inc., a land planning and engineering firm. This year the ALT and the Conservation Commission met more than a dozen times with representatives from Beals & Thomas and Arlington 360 to determine appropriate approaches for dealing with the encroachments. We have made initial contact with all affected property owners, and will continue to work to ensure that they comply with the terms of the CR.

We are also working with Arlington 360 on implementation of the Forest Restoration and Invasive Species Mitigation Management Plan prepared last year by consulting arborist Daniel E. Cathcart. The Plan includes a complete plant inventory and map, a summary of invasive species populations, a multi-year policy for reducing invasive species, and a multi-year restoration planting strategy.

### New ALT T-shirts



These super-soft shirts are made from 100% organic cotton by a carbon neutral manufacturer. Shirts are available in adult sizes S, M, L and XL – a great holiday gift for the conservationist in your circle of family and friends. \$20 each. Orders can be placed on the ALT website.