

# THE YEAR-ROUNDER

a newsletter of Island Housing Trust  
Volume 18 | Issue 1 | Spring 2022

## Individuals *can* make a difference!

By Gail La Rosa Thompson, IHT Director of Advancement

In early 2017, Alan and Amanda Mogridge, who had moved to Mount Desert Island in 2014, thought things were going well. Alan was recovering from a medical issue, they had welcomed their first child, and had found a wonderful rental house in Trenton after moving from an apartment on MDI. That changed when they received notice from their landlord that they would need to vacate their home in 45 days. Alan, a dedicated optimist, told Amanda that he just knew that although the journey wouldn't be easy, things would get better.

Knowing that prospects were dismal for finding a house for rent on MDI or in nearby towns, Alan reached out on Facebook to ask for help. Rob and Cristy Benson, friends of Alan and Amanda, responded, saying they

were building a new house in Bar Harbor and they would be happy to rent their current house in Mount Desert to them. And by May of 2017, the Mogridges had moved into what they describe as a “beyond perfect house in an amazing place.”

Rob and Cristy knew that their beloved home of 14 years, where they had raised their two sons, would be well cared for by Alan and Amanda. It was important to them that their house would be home to a year-round family who worked on MDI and had community connections. The Mogridges were the perfect fit. They rented the house through 2021, and welcomed another child to their family.

In 2021, the Bensons were ready to sell the house. They didn't want to

see it become a seasonal or weekly rental, taking another year-round house out of circulation. They wanted to ensure a year-round family would be the new owners. Rob approached Alan with the idea of him and Amanda buying the home they'd lived in for almost five years, and obviously loved. It seemed like an impossible dream, knowing that house prices had spiked during the pandemic. But the Bensons were willing to explore options that would make home ownership possible for the Mogridges.

Both Rob and Cristy were familiar with Island Housing Trust, with friends living in IHT neighborhoods, so they approached the organization to ask if there was any way they could create a new housing opportunity with their house in



ISLAND HOUSING TRUST

INDIVIDUALS, continued

Mount Desert. Alan and Amanda applied and were approved by IHT to become homeowners of a house with year-round, affordability covenants. After several meetings and consultations with IHT's Board of Directors, a solution was found. This January, IHT purchased the house from the Bensons,



Rob and Cristy Benson and Alan and Amanda Mogridge at their closing.

and after placing affordability covenants on the house, IHT sold it to the Mogridges at a lower price, with a 99-year land-lease. With this model, IHT retains ownership of the land and the Mogridges own the buildings, keeping the house affordable and ensuring that it remains a year-round home that is affordable to median-income workers in the future. Rob and Cristy were delighted to have the Mogridges remain in the home, and the Mogridges were happy knowing that when they were ready to move on, the house would become available for the next year-round family.

As Alan said, things would get better. In fact, things couldn't be more perfect.

In Memoriam

A TRIBUTE TO ELLEN KAPPES

Island Housing Trust notes with sadness the passing of Ellen Kappes, former board member and friend to the organization.

Retired IHT Executive Director Chris Spruce remembers Ellen fondly. "Ellen was a committed board member in all things IHT. She was active in nearly every board subcommittee and rarely missed a meeting, even when it became hard for her to mount the steep steps in the Pineo Building. She opened her house to us as the site of Development Committee meetings when we were raising funds for the Ripples Hill project. She also always volunteered to help at our many open house events and assisted me in making fundraising visits over the years we worked



COURTESY CHRIS SPRUCE

Chris Spruce and Ellen Kappes reviewing early drawings of Ripples Hill, 2007.

together for the cause of IHT."

IHT sends condolences to Ellen's family and friends, with our gratitude for all she did for IHT and MDI.



Public information meeting at Chris's Pond. PHOTO BY JANE AYRES

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Chris's Pond, Southwest Harbor

Over the years Island Housing Trust has had the good fortune to partner with Maine Coast Heritage to advance conservation and year-round community. Recently, MCHT has been working with Southwest Harbor's Conservation Commission to expand the town's beloved Chris's Pond area. Chris's Pond, a pocket park which for decades has provided a quiet woodland skating pond, was protected by the town and MCHT in the mid-1990s. Recently MCHT had the opportunity to purchase an abutting property to expand protection around the pond and provide dedicated parking. The abutting property also has sufficient space to create new year-round workforce housing; MCHT has been working with IHT to explore that possibility. This is one of those rare projects that aligns multiple partners to benefit our year-round community.

We have heard strong support from the community for these new housing and conservation opportunities in Southwest Harbor, and look forward to partnering to pursue them.

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## MISSION

Island Housing Trust promotes viable, year-round communities by advancing permanent workforce housing on Mount Desert Island, Maine.

## CONTACT US

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GAIL LA ROSA THOMPSON

## ISLAND NOTES

IHT's newest neighborhood at Jones Marsh is underway. You'll find details and photos elsewhere in this newsletter. This progress has been made possible thanks to the generosity of our community—when we asked for your support, you responded! From September 2020 to December 2021, nearly 300 generous supporters gave more than \$3.5 million to *Coming Home: IHT's Campaign for MDI* to create new year-round housing opportunities for the island's workforce.

In late 2021 an anonymous donor offered a challenge grant to match up to \$400,000 in gifts and pledges. It was just the incentive needed to inspire more than 100 donors to meet the challenge in just two months. With the end of the year push, IHT blasted past the challenge, exceeding it and our campaign goal.

There are so many people for us to thank, which we will do in an annual and campaign report this summer. For now, I am pleased to note that we received donations of all sizes from individuals, businesses, and foundations. A public campaign

across MDI brought in dozens of new supporters. All of us at IHT say "THANK YOU" to everyone who contributed!



EAGER EYE PHOTOGRAPHY

One of the most satisfying aspects of the campaign was having conversations with so many people in our community. We talked with you at the local libraries over Zoom, presented to Rotary and Chambers, and heard from many of you with questions and ideas. It is now a time of growth for IHT and our work, and we look forward to talking with you more about new year-round housing opportunities as they are planned for our communities. Keep your ideas coming, and don't hesitate to contact us anytime you have questions.

Until later,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marla S. O'Byrne". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Marla O'Byrne  
Executive Director



Above and right: clearing roads at Jones Marsh. Below: Single family house, drawing by Todd Stanley, Downeast Home Design.

# EXCITING HAPPENINGS AT JONES MARSH

Jones Marsh is closer to becoming IHT's newest neighborhood!

The subdivision has received all its permits and ground construction has begun. Infrastructure work has started with road construction into the neighborhood, to be followed by preparation of the house sites.

IHT has contracted for the construction and placement of four single-family houses and one duplex in 2022. The remaining

units are planned for 2023. IHT has approved applicants for the purchase of the first six homes, which are scheduled to be delivered late this summer.

To find out more about the Jones Marsh neighborhood, please visit [islandhousingtrust.org/jonesmarsh](http://islandhousingtrust.org/jonesmarsh)

If you'd like a tour of the new neighborhood, please contact Natalie Osborne, IHT program manager, 207-244-8011 or [nosborne@islandhousingtrust.org](mailto:nosborne@islandhousingtrust.org).



# IHT Business Partners

Business support for IHT gives many people the chance to build a life on MDI and creates a better future for all of us. Thank you to the businesses who generously supported *Coming Home: IHT's Campaign for Mount Desert Island*.



WITHAM  
FAMILY  
HOTELS

CHARITABLE FUND

## WITHAM FAMILY HOTELS CHARITABLE FUND

The Witham Family Hotels Charitable Fund generously contributed \$100,000 to IHT's *Coming Home* campaign, supporting new housing opportunities for MDI's year-round workforce.



## BAR HARBOR BANK & TRUST

Bar Harbor Bank & Trust has been a longtime supporter and sponsor of IHT, and joined the *Coming Home* campaign early on with a \$25,000 gift.



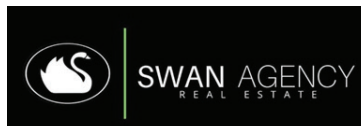
## FIRST NATIONAL BANK

Island Housing Trust received a \$25,000 gift from First National Bank in support of the *Coming Home* campaign.



BOS  
PROPERTIES

FALT  
BUILDERS



## MAKE YOUR GIFT MATTER MORE!

Did you know that Island Housing Trust accepts gifts of all kinds?

- DONOR ADVISED FUNDS
- STOCKS
- QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

For additional information, please contact Gail Thompson, Director of Advancement:

[glthompson@islandhousingtrust.org](mailto:glthompson@islandhousingtrust.org)

W: 207-244-8011

C: 207-479-5501



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TO DONATE  
ONLINE

HOAP house  
under construction



ISLAND HOUSING TRUST  
PO BOX 851  
MOUNT DESERT  
MAINE 04660



## WELCOME TO IHT'S NEW MEMBERS: We appreciate your support!

*November 15, 2021 - March 31, 2022*

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