

# Preserving the Nature of Alta, Utah

## Celebrating 30 Years in 2011

**Friends of Alta**  
 PO Box 8126  
 Alta, UT 84092  
 Jennifer Clancy  
 Executive Director  
 friendsofalta.org

**In Memoriam**

Bill Levitt, 1917 - 2009

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Dear Friends:

We have had the distinct pleasure and privilege of celebrating our 30th Anniversary in 2011 as Alta's local land trust and environmental stewardship organization against the backdrop of a remarkably snowy Alta. Locals, newcomers, and veteran visitors, alike, were energized to see their familiar and favorite slopes refreshed time and time again by perpetual spring snowfall predominantly in March and April. As of closing day on May 1st, Alta had received 724 inches of snow during the 2010-2011 ski season, and boasted a mid-mountain base of 200 inches. This April's mid-mountain base far exceeded April's 29-year average starting in 1980 of 128 inches of snow. These impressive late-season snow levels will surely hydrate the Alta landscape, and make for an explosion of vibrant wildflowers across the rolling fields of Albion Basin when summer at last arrives.



Photo Courtesy of Lee Cohen

In honor of our 30th Anniversary, we would like to dedicate this newsletter and issue a heartfelt THANK YOU to all of our friends, sponsors, and partners for their generosity and support in helping to sustain our efforts to protect Alta's cherished open spaces and vital culinary watershed. In light of our recent Annual Public Meeting, which took place on the snowy afternoon of April 10th at the Peruvian Lodge, we would like to extend our sincerest thanks to our strong and longstanding partners for their shared commitment to the protection of open spaces and watershed in Alta: Salt Lake City Public Utilities, the U.S. Forest Service, the Town of Alta, the Alta Ski Area and its Environmental Center, and the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. Special thanks to our local fundraising partners for their investment in the health of the Alta environment: Alta Shuttle and Tom Schneider, Jim Williams of Williams Realty, and John Blumenkamp of Teton Trail Photography. We would also like to extend a sincere thanks to our amazing local photographers for sharing their stunning images of snow and rock for our various publications; thank you for helping us to capture and admire the unique local beauty. And finally, special thanks to Alta Community Enrichment (ACE) and the Alta Historical Society for their partnership in coordinating the Alta Gala, an annual collaborative fundraiser for Alta's three non-profit organizations.

Friends of Alta (FOA) was founded as the Alta Defense Fund in 1981 to assist the Town of Alta in defending its protective zoning ordinances in the face of significant development threats. Friends of Alta has since upheld the vision of its founders by serving as a dedicated steward of the Alta environment, an area that Bill Levitt deemed "the Gem of the Wasatch Mountain Range." Development pressures against the Town of Alta continue to mount, with numerous building applications submitted to the Town for development in Albion Basin over the past few months. As we celebrate our 30th year of protecting Alta, we recall Bill's words in 2005 about the importance of preserving this pocket of open space: "Its [Alta's] pristine beauty, myriad of wildflowers, lush wetlands, crystal streams, variety of mountain wildlife, and awesome mountain peaks remain familiar to the thousands of people who have visited this uniquely beautiful place. It is no accident that when people refer to Alta as their 'spiritual home,' it is Albion Basin that is foremost in their minds." These are notions shared by all members of the strong and far-reaching Alta community who have the privilege of spending time in this high-altitude paradise. We appreciate your ongoing support so that we can continue to offer valuable services to the Alta community and fulfill our special niche.

Cordially,  
**Mimi Levitt & Jen Clancy**

*The Mission of Friends of Alta is to protect the environment of Alta, including watershed and wildlife habitat areas; to preserve Alta's unique character and heritage; and to encourage stewardship and sustainability of Alta's environment and community.*



# ~Alta is a State of Mind~

## FOA Celebrates 30 Years of Preserving the Beautiful Nature of Alta

Members of the FOA family of supporters, partners, and stakeholders convened on the evening of Saturday, January 15, 2011, at the Alta Club in downtown Salt Lake City to celebrate FOA's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Alta's local land trust. The evening event, which was made possible by the generous sponsorship of the Albion Financial Group ([www.albionfinancial.com](http://www.albionfinancial.com)), featured keynote speaker Dr. Jayne Belnap, a prominent soil crust scientist with the U.S. Department of Interior and a member of the FOA Advisory Committee, and guest speaker Ted Wilson, the former Mayor of Salt Lake City, a member of the FOA Board of Directors, and the current Senior Adviser on Environmental Matters to Utah Governor Gary Herbert. Special thanks for the contributions of local photographers/artists John Blumenkamp, Howie Garber, Creighton Hart, and Mimi Muray Levitt, and by Dave Davenport/The Alta Store and Monarch Mountain (Colorado) to our successful silent auction. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who joined us to celebrate FOA's past 30 years of accomplishments and to those who help to sustain our protection of Alta's open spaces, natural character, and vital culinary watershed.

### Patsey Marley Hill Subdivision

Currently, depositions are being conducted for a lawsuit resulting from the Town of Alta's (TOA) denial of a 10-lot subdivision proposal for the 26-acre Patsey Marley property; the lawsuit also names Salt Lake City as a defendant. The TOA's denial was based on a lack of compliance with ordinance requirements that included, but were not limited to, the access of culinary water to/from the site. This is the most immediate in a series of development-related challenges facing the TOA. Were this proposed development to be approved, other private property owners in Albion Basin would likely see a precedent and attempt to follow suit, thus threatening the Town's protective zoning regulations. Albion Basin is home to dozens of private in-holdings; further development of these areas could damage the culinary watershed and aesthetic qualities of this natural landscape. We expect a long road ahead and need your help.

## Leaf Pack Program for Watershed and Water Quality Education

We are excited to announce a forthcoming partnership between FOA and the Alta School (the one-room schoolhouse for students in grades K-8 located in the Goldminer's Daughter Lodge) to promote watershed and water quality education and environmental stewardship among the students. At the beginning of the 2011-2012 academic year at the Alta School, FOA will introduce a Little Cottonwood Canyon-specific version of the **Leaf Pack Network**, which is an interactive curriculum for watershed education that engages students in the hands-on process of collecting data on the constituents in local stream water. This program will also incorporate the *Wasatch Front Watershed Fourth Grade Activity Guide*, which was produced by SLC Public Utilities and serves as part of the 4th grade core curriculum in Utah.

### Update on Research Studies by Our Partners

The **U.S. Forest Service** recently published the *Albion Basin Transportation Feasibility Study*, in which it presents observations on the transportation situation in Albion Basin and offers suggestions for improvements. Partners are now gathering to discuss and evaluate possible implementation of the recommended options; FOA is an active partner in these discussions. Community partners are collectively dedicated to maintaining the natural experience and environmental health in Albion Basin and to implementing sustainable options for facilitating responsible recreation and transportation in Albion Basin.

The *Wasatch Canyons Tomorrow* report has been finalized by the **Envision Utah** team, and we are looking forward to the Salt Lake County Planning Commission's review of the report findings. We were specifically interested in the results of a spring 2009 survey about public values, including the following findings: first, that the respondents cited **watershed** as the "most important" issue for Little Cottonwood Canyon; and second, in response to "what do you value most about the canyons," 36.0% cited "recreation" and 30.2% cited "environment."

## Reflections on the Bill Levitt Fellowship by Annie Kramer



I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to Jen and the FOA Board of Directors for the opportunity to contribute to FOA's protection of the Alta environment as an intern last summer and as the organization's first Bill Levitt Fellow from November through May. The Bill Levitt Fellowship Program for Levitt's Civic Leaders was introduced last fall as a tribute to Bill's public service record and to his standards of excellence, intelligence, and integrity in public process, and as a mechanism to provide selected individuals the opportunity to serve alongside the Executive Director for three to six months. I feel incredibly fortunate to have experienced Alta over the past ten months as an active and engaged member of the FOA family, with ample opportunities to transform my personal sentiments about our high-altitude paradise into indoor and outdoor efforts to help sustain and nurture the Alta environment. Serving as the Bill Levitt Fellow over the past six months, I have assisted Jen with organizing and executing a variety of FOA programs and projects: FOA's 30th Anniversary Celebration in January; fundraising and community outreach ef-

forts; the investigation of opportunities for potential environmental education partnerships with the Alta School; the Alta Gala in April; Alta's first community-wide Earth Day Fair; and the bronzing of Bill Levitt's ski boots (see back page). I consider the Bill Levitt Fellowship to be a positive institution for FOA and for the Alta community, as it facilitates increased engagement and provides the tools necessary to build a network of younger, environmental stewards eager to aid in the protection of the cherished Alta environment.

Visit: [http://friendsofalta.org/educate/bl\\_fellowship](http://friendsofalta.org/educate/bl_fellowship)



# 2010 Calendar Year Contributions

We would like to thank everyone who has supported our mission and work over the past thirty years. In addition to those listed below as contributors during the 2010 calendar year, we would like to thank all those who wished to remain anonymous. We apologize for any misspellings or omissions; please notify us at [info@friendsofalta.org](mailto:info@friendsofalta.org) if either has occurred, or if you would like to be added to this list. Thank you!



## COLUMBINE: \$1,000+

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George Armantrout  
David Arnold III  
Fred M. Bering  
Nick & Ellen Besobrasov  
Laura & Andy Briefer  
The Byrne Family  
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Victoria Levitt  
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New Mexico Winter Study Group  
"Uncle Ed" Ohm  
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## ALPINE SHOOTING STAR:

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## INKIND SUPPORT

Albion Financial Group  
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The Alta Lodge  
Alta Marshalls Office  
Alta's Rustler Lodge  
Alta Ski Area & Alta Environmental  
Center  
Alta Shuttle  
The Alta Store & David Davenport  
Town of Alta  
John M Barstow  
Jay Beyer  
John Blumenkamp  
Lee Cohen  
Cottonwood Canyons Foundation  
Howie Garber  
Hansen Barnett & Maxwell CPA  
Creighton Hart  
James Kay  
Mimi Muray  
Nick Rice  
ParkParcels & Robin Roller  
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## DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF

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Bill and Nancy Thalhimer  
Jacob Tussel

Visit: [friendsofalta.org](http://friendsofalta.org) and join us through:



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# Events, Updates, and More...

## Friends of Alta New York Social Event

The Little Owl: The Venue @ 93 Greenwich Avenue  
New York City, New York  
November 11, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

Are you looking for the perfect opportunity to get energized about your next excursion to Little Cottonwood Canyon? Join us and other like-minded Alta enthusiasts for a New York social event to help sustain our work towards our mission of preserving the beautiful nature of Alta.

## Bronze Casting of Bill Levitt's Ski Boots

We are pleased to announce that we concluded FOA's Annual Public Meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup> with the presentation of a bronzed model of Bill Levitt's ski boots, a special project commissioned jointly by FOA and the Alta Historical Society (AHS) to memorialize Bill's positive and longtime footprint in the Alta community. AHS Chairman Alan Engen presented the bronzed boots



to FOA President Mimi Levitt on behalf of both organizations. The right and left boots will be placed in public areas around Alta. Special thanks to Stan Watts and the Atlas Bronze Casting team (Kearns, UT) for their beautiful bronze casting.

## 2011 Alta Gala

The fifth annual Alta Gala was held at La Caille in early April with close to 350 people in attendance. It was a snowy and festive evening, and members of the strong and far-reaching Alta community enjoyed our bountiful silent auction, a delicious dinner, and dancing to the live tunes of the JD Moffat Band.

**2011 Alta Gala Stellar Award:** The Alta Gala coordinators were honored to celebrate **Alan Engen** and his outstanding contributions to the Alta community and to its rich ski history.

Special thanks to all Gala attendees and supporters for helping to unite the community. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to the Alta Ski Area for its generous support of the event and to everyone who donated to our highly successful silent auction.



Friends of Alta  
Real Estate  
Advantage Program

Mention this program to broker Jim Williams and he will donate \$1,000 to FOA from his commission with the successful closure of any real estate transaction in Utah or Idaho. This program will not affect the closing price of the buyer or seller. Please help spread the word about this unique program and its benefits to FOA. A special thank you to everyone who has supported FOA through this program over the past few years!

## FOA Merchandise

All proceeds support our work towards FOA's mission.



We have organic cotton t-shirts, socks, hats, visors, and stickers.

Visit [friendsofalta.org/support/merchandise](http://friendsofalta.org/support/merchandise).

## SUMMER ACTIVITIES ~ MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### Volunteer Opportunities - Invasive Weed Pulls:

Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>  
2 daily sessions: 9am—12noon & 1pm—4pm (attend one or both)  
More information at: [friendsofalta.org/support/volunteer](http://friendsofalta.org/support/volunteer)

### Memorial and Volunteer Tree Planting Program ~ Dates TBA

**Wasatch Wildflower Festival** ~ In Alta on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup>  
More information at: [wasatchwildflowerfestival.org](http://wasatchwildflowerfestival.org)

### Ongoing Stewardship Programs

**Conservation Easement Program:** We will conduct our annual visits to undeveloped parcels of land on which we hold conservation easements to ensure that the use of these lands is under the terms of the easement. Our written and photographic documentation helps to ensure that these cherished lands are protected in perpetuity and provide a benefit to future generations.

**Phased Hydrologic Investigations of Albion Basin:** The summer of 2011 marks our seventh year of working in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Parkside to monitor the Albion Basin's valuable wetland and spring areas.

**Funding for the Town of Alta Summer Booth Program:** The Summer Booth is a valuable resource for information about watershed regulations, hiking opportunities, and the fragile nature of Alta's alpine environment.

## Looking for Gifts with a Benefit?

Local photographer John Blumenkamp of Teton Trail Photography will donate 50% of the net proceeds from the online Albion Basin Gallery to FOA at:

[john-blumenkamp.artistwebsites.com/art/all/albion+basin/all](http://john-blumenkamp.artistwebsites.com/art/all/albion+basin/all)



## ALTA SHUTTLE

For All Your Transportation Needs

1-866-274-0225

[www.altashuttle.com](http://www.altashuttle.com)



Alta Shuttle continued to donate 2% of the proceeds from all shuttle services to and from the Town of Alta to FOA during the 2010-2011 ski season, marking the fourth consecutive season that Alta Shuttle has contributed to the community with this program. Thanks again to Alta Shuttle, Tom and the shuttle drivers, and to all of the customers who supported Alta Shuttle and thus the mission of FOA.



1981 - 2011

## Highlights

### 30 Years of Preserving the Nature of Alta, Utah

*The Mission of Friends of Alta is to protect the environment of Alta, including watershed and wildlife habitat areas; to preserve Alta's unique character and heritage; and to encourage stewardship and sustainability of Alta's environment and community.*

#### LAND

- FOA currently holds 20 conservation easements on parcels of land in Alta; 19 are in Albion Basin and one is near the Hellgate Condominiums along Highway 210. Using our specially designated "Conservation Fund," we will continue to focus on purchasing undeveloped, privately owned lots and placing conservation easements on open space lands for the protection of the vital culinary watershed that originates in Albion Basin and for the preservation of wildlife habitats and the natural and scientific value of open space.
- In 2007, FOA joined the national Land Trust Alliance and adopted the organization's Standards and Practices (guidelines for ethical and effective operations for land trusts).
- In 2002, FOA supported the first geographic information system (GIS) study to be conducted in Alta, providing a valuable database for teachers, students, government agencies, and the general public.

#### WATER

- FOA has collected five years (2005-2010) of data for the Phased Hydrologic Investigations of Albion Basin, a baseline wetland study, in partnership with the University of Wisconsin, Parkside. We are continuing to gather data on water levels and inorganic constituents in Albion Basin's valuable wetland and spring areas.

#### SYMPOSIUMS/EDUCATION

- In 2009, FOA hosted the Land and Water Symposium with panel discussions on public land use and water conservation in urban areas. Addresses were made by Utah Governor Gary Herbert and Town of Alta Mayor Tom Pollard; there was also a debate between Pat Shea and Mike Noel regarding if federal public lands should be managed by the federal government or by state law.
- In 2008, FOA hosted its first Water Symposium at Alf's Restaurant in Albion Basin, which included two panel discussions and addresses by Utah Governor Jon Huntsman, Attorney General Mark Shurtleff, Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon, and former Town of Alta Mayor Bill Levitt.
- From 2004 to 2006, FOA partnered with the Utah State Education Commission to host a Teacher In-Service in Alta featuring workshops to demonstrate how teachers can use GIS as a valuable, in-classroom teaching aid. The lesson plans developed by the teachers at this workshop are available on FOA's website.

#### SUMMER VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

- With your dedication and helping hands, we have been successful as hands-on stewards of the beautiful Alta environment. Volunteer opportunities include: pulling invasive weeds, planting trees and other vegetation native to Little Cottonwood Canyon, maintaining trails, and removing litter from recreation areas in Albion Basin. These volunteer opportunities are made possible through valuable partnerships with the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation, Alta Environmental Center, US Forest Service, Town of Alta, and Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities.
- During the summer of 2010, FOA formalized its Volunteer and Memorial Tree Planting Program. With the support and brute strength of our volunteers, we planted two Engelmann spruce trees, two Douglas fir trees, and 100 seedlings along the Summer Road in Albion Basin.

## TOWN SUPPORT

- Since 1995, FOA has supported the Town of Alta's Summer Booth Program; this support has allowed the Town to maintain the booth as a free service to the public. The Alta Summer Booth is a valuable resource for information about watershed regulations, hiking opportunities, weekend shuttle services, parking along the Alta Summer Road, and the fragile nature of Alta's alpine environment.
- FOA received a grant from Rio Tinto to aid in our financial support of the 2011 Alta Summer Booth Program.
- FOA has contributed to the Town of Alta's management of Memorial Grove, a beautiful area for reflection and inspiration along the Alta Summer Road on U.S. Forest Service land. FOA planted seedlings with a group of Boy Scouts in the 1990's, and then planted 4 trees and 80 seedlings in the summer of 2010. FOA's continued efforts have helped to maintain Memorial Grove as a peaceful place for reflecting, thinking about loved ones, and admiring the nature of Alta.
- FOA helped to fund the Town of Alta Master Plan (1991-1992); the Town of Alta Planning Commission is currently in the process of updating the 2005 Master Plan.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Since 2007, FOA has helped to develop and coordinate the Alta Gala, a fundraiser for three non-profit organizations based in Alta. As participation at this event has grown to over 300 individuals, revenue has doubled each year, and in 2011, FOA raised \$10,000 from the event. This spring's Alta Gala was held on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at La Caille; visit [www.altagala.org](http://www.altagala.org) for photos and details.
- FOA has supported and collaborated (and will continue to do so) with the following non-profit organizations: Cottonwood Canyons Foundation, the Alta School, Alta Community Enrichment, Alta Historical Society, and Friends of the Utah Avalanche Center.
- FOA partnered with Alta Environmental Center in 2010 to develop and print "A Brief Guide to Planting: Native Plant Species of Little Cottonwood Canyon." Contact us for a copy.
- FOA has participated as a stakeholder in the following efforts:
  - FOA has partnered, and will continue to do so, with Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities and other stakeholders on watershed protection.
  - Alta Community Emissions Reduction Campaign ("Turn Your Key, Be Idle-Free"), alongside the Town of Alta, the Alta Environmental Center, and Alta Community Enrichment (ACE) (2009-present)
  - The U.S. Forest Service Albion Basin Transportation Feasibility Study (2009-)
  - Wasatch Canyons Tomorrow: Updating the 1989 Wasatch Canyons Master Plan (2009-2010)
  - Expansion of Wasatch Wilderness areas (2008-)
  - The first Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory (2007) for the Alta community, which FOA funded in partnership with the Town of Alta and Alta Ski Area
  - Recently, FOA has worked persistently to help prevent the construction of an interconnect tunnel, which would have diverted traffic from Park City through Brighton to Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon.

## FUNDRAISING

- In addition to your generous support, FOA works toward its Mission of preserving the open space values of Alta's environment with the funds raised through the following partnerships and programs:
  - Biannual Newsletter Publications (Spring & Fall)
  - Alta Shuttle Donation Program (2007/2008 ski season-present)
  - FOA Real Estate Advantage Program with Williams Realty (2007-present)
  - Regional Dinners (Save the Date for NYC – November 11, 2011, Boston - 2009)
  - FOA t-shirt, hat, sock and visor sales, visit [www.friendsofalta.org/support/merchandise](http://www.friendsofalta.org/support/merchandise)
  - Teton Trail Photography, Albion Basin Gallery donation program

*We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for your support of our important cause. We look forward to continuing our work in 2011 to ensure that Alta remains a vital culinary watershed and a place of relaxation, inspiration, and enjoyment for generations to come.*