



The Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

Spring/Summer 2016

Newsletter

Edited by Gail Deutsch

Presidents' Message

Why Consider a "Bunny" Cut

In 1985, the Canton Land Conservation Trust (CLCT) received a gift of 108 acres on Ratlum Mountain from Thomas M. Perry. Over the next decade, several additional gifts from the Thomas M. Perry Charitable Trust provided protection for almost 500 acres of mature and secondary forest in this northwest portion of Canton. These generous gifts form a large, unfragmented forest sanctuary in the Breezy Hill/Ratlum Mountain area. Today, CLCT owns in excess of 2000 acres making CLCT one of the larger land trusts in Connecticut in terms of acreage of property held.

One of the primary responsibilities of a land trust is to preserve natural resources and the Trust's Board of Directors takes this responsibility very seriously. So, why would the Trust consider clearcutting a ten acre portion of land on its Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve on Ratlum Mountain? This is a question that has and will continue to require a great deal of thought on the part of the Land Trust Board and its members. Let me try to summarize as follows:

The State of Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and other partners has embarked upon a program designed to create habitat for New England Cottontails, Connecticut's original rabbit, and 47 additional species that are listed as "species of greatest conservation need." The New England Cottontail, once abundant throughout our state, is in serious decline. It has been replaced by the non-native Eastern Cottontail, brought from the midwest for hunting during the nineteenth century when

Connecticut was primarily covered by vegetable crops, orchards, pastures and grazing livestock. Land trusts may make application to this program, entitled the New England Cottontail Initiative (NECI). If selected, funding will be provided to offset the cost of clearcutting approximately ten acres of more mature forest land in order to create young forest and shrubland habitat. In that New England Cottontails have been found in adjacent New Hartford, this part of Canton is considered to be within the core area for this species.

So, why would the Land Trust consider such a project? When I first came to Canton in the early 1970s, many portions of town were covered by young forests and overgrown shrublands that were typical of the many small farm fields that were in the process of reverting to forest. Birds like ruffed grouse were relatively common through much of Canton. I would lead an annual "whip-poor-will walk," and when I would imitate their call on a mid-May evening, the birds would buzz the heads of unsuspecting participants. Songbirds like the warblers that prefer young forests were quite common and over twenty species could be found on a mid-May morning bird walk. Today, Canton is blessed with many acres of mature forest and these habitats support large mammals and a number of other bird species.



Ruffed grouse and whip-poor-will, however, are nearly impossible to find in Canton and other shrubland birds are now rare and continue to decline. Another responsibility of land trusts is to promote diversity in our town. By diversity I mean protecting as great a variety of habitats, plants and animals as our open spaces will allow. This is one reason to consider such a project. I will say that a group of birders recently toured an NECI project in Litchfield County. They were astounded at the numbers of birds inhabiting this new shrubland area.

Should the Land Trust go forward, and should we be accepted and receive funding, there are still questions to be answered. Steps must be taken to insure that invasive plant species do not proliferate on newly cut areas, an issue now being discussed by our stewardship committee.



Decisions on which applicants receive funding will likely be made this summer. Should the Trust receive a grant to move forward with a cut, the Board will need to discuss and vote as to whether to proceed. We do want to hear from our members particularly members and residents of Breezy Hill Road who live in proximity to the Sun, Wind and Woodland property. CLCT Co-Presidents Jay Kaplan and Phil Philbrick are more than happy to discuss the project and we will be reaching out to neighbors in the very near future. At this time, let me reiterate that no decision has been made. Please let us hear from you.

Happy Summer!

Jay Kaplan and Stephen (Phil) Philbrick
Canton Land Conservation Trust Co-Presidents

Annual Dinner

On Tuesday March 22,2016, the CLCT held its Annual Dinner at the La Trattoria Restaurant in Canton. The guest speaker was Paul Rego, a wildlife biologist with the DEEP. Several years ago, Mr. Rego discussed the black bear population in our State.

This year, Mr Rego’s remarks were directed towards the coyote population, their history, biology and current status. Approximately 100

members and guests of the CLCT attended the night’s festivities.

The evening started with a cocktail hour. The guests were serenaded by the Canton High School Jazz Combo, comprising bassist Ethan Porter, drummer Joseph Bowman, guitarist Adam Evtan, pianist Mia Tuccillo, saxophonist Zachary Oliver and trumpeter Tigger Kluessendorf. The combo was assisted by Stan Sullivan, who professionally handled the sound system.

The evening’s events also included a silent auction. Thanks to the hard work of the CLCT’s Board of Directors and the generous support of our underwriters and donors, the CLCT was able to offer over 70 prizes for bidding. The auction earned over \$3200, money that will be used by the CLCT to support its mission. Our evening’s underwriters and donors are listed. Thank you one and all.

The evening would not have been as successful without the extra effort provided by Board Members Karen Berger, Gail and Barry Deutsch, Anne Duncan, Sarah Faulkner, Fred Feibel, and Betty Stanley.
Barry Deutsch

Auction Donors

Larsen Ace Hardware	Judi Friedman
Anne and Alan Duncan	Judith Kempe
Avon Prime Meat	Karen Berger
Avon Veterinary Clinic— Underwriter	La Trattoria Restaurant
Benidorms	Lisa’s Crown & Hammer Restaurant
Blumen Laden	Long’s Automotive
Red Sox	Marandino’s Foods

Buon Appetito	Mary Ellen Mullins and Chi Healing Center
Cake Gypsy	Midas Automotive
Cherry Brook Pizzeria	Mikado Asian Bistro
Clayworks Pottery	Mitchell Auto Group
Collinsville Farmer's Market	Moto Photo
Collinsville Savings Bank— Underwriter	Norma Ignatowicz
Cook & Kozlak	Petals and Paws
David Kubas	Portobello's Restaurant
David P. Sinish	Raimie H. Weber
Dynamic auto Works	Roaring Brook Nature Center
Eastern Mountain Sports	Rootz Salon
Farmington Valley Stage Company	Rownie Okie
Frank and Betty Stanley	Saybrook Fish House
Harvey & Lewis	ShopRite
Harold Mullins	Spirited Hand
Hickory Ledges	Super Cellar Wines
Hike on CLCT trail led by S. Faulkner, H. Barton & T.Kucia	Sarah Faulkner
Greg Boyko	Ted Cowles
Infinity Music Hall	Tractor Supply Company
Jane Latus	Trader Joe's
Jay Kaplan	Trailblazers
John Rohlfig and Peggy Steinway	Village Café & Bistro

Bird Walk at Conklin Property

Although the sky remained overcast, the threat of rain showers did not materialize, and thus, 17 hardy members and friends of the Canton Land Conservation Trust gathered at the Conklin property on Sunday, May 22nd for what is becoming an annual Land Trust tradition. Although bird walks are best held at first light, some members of our group apparently are not “very” early birds, so we kicked off the walk at the rather late hour, birdwise, of 7:30 AM.

Fortunately, cool temperatures and cloudy skies keep the birds active longer into the morning, and we were well rewarded from the beginning of the walk until the very end. As we gathered in the parking area, we heard typical morning songs from a number of the property's nesting species including chipping sparrow, American redstart and red-eyed vireo. The birds were at treetop level and difficult to see, so imagine the excitement when right off the bat, a singing indigo bunting, our only all-blue bird, was found not much over eye level in a tree at the end of the driveway. Much of our group got leisurely looks at this spectacular bird before it departed, but the next sighting was even more thrilling – male and female scarlet tanagers just about out in open branches of an oak tree not far off. The tanager is perhaps our most beautiful, at least in this observer's opinion, songbird and the male looked like a brightly colored Christmas tree ornament. The tanagers were most cooperative, flitting from branch to branch looking for caterpillars. Turning around, we then saw perhaps the most unusual sighting of the day - a common loon migrating northward. Loons can occasionally be seen on Nepaug Reservoir in spring and fall, but one has to be lucky to see them flying directly overhead. We continued along the field edge getting nice looks at eastern bluebird, great crested flycatcher, tree swallows and a pair of house finches. Entering the woods, things became trickier as the leaves made viewing difficult and we relied on bird song to identify most species. A glaring exception was one of my favorite warblers – a blackburnian warbler, sometimes called the “firethroat” for its bright orange throat and upper chest. A few of those more experienced at focusing their binoculars, were able to see this beauty. We continued along the “red” trail, hearing several yellow-bellied sapsuckers, black-and-white warblers, and a blue-headed vireo – louder and more succinct than the more common red-eyed. A quick glimpse of a large hawk was,

unfortunately, not sufficient for identification. Time flies when you're having fun, and after two hours, we emerged from the red trail where we began near the cars. What a surprise when a large pileated woodpecker flew right in front of us, followed by a Baltimore oriole, who stopped to sing from the top of a nearby tree. Thanks to Anne Duncan and the Community Relations Committee for providing refreshments at the conclusion (and the beginning) of the walk. A total of 32 bird species were seen and heard.

Jay Kaplan

Weather Requires Change in Annual Meeting Location

On Sunday afternoon, June 5th, the Canton Land Trust held its annual meeting at the home of Phil and Polly Philbrick. The meeting had been scheduled to take place at the Smith Tree Farm, however, heavy rain showers required a last minute change of venue and the Philbricks were kind enough to offer to host the meeting.

A brief business meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM, and included minutes from last year's annual meeting provided by Secretary Sarah Faulkner; a Treasurer's report by Gail Deutsch; and a summary of Land Trust events over the past year by Co-President, Jay Kaplan. Betty Stanley, a

member of the Nominating Committee, recommended the following slate of officers for the 2016-2017 year: Co-Presidents Jay Kaplan and Phil Philbrick; Vice-



President Jay Weintraub, Secretary Sarah Faulkner and Treasurer Christian Winkler. In addition, the following were nominated to serve three year terms ending in 2019: Sarah Bailey, Anne Duncan, Fred Feibel, Mike Ignatowicz, Jennifer Mason, Elizabeth Stanley and Christian Winkler. There were no nominations from the floor and the slate of officers and directors was approved unanimously. Co-President Jay Kaplan thanked retiring Treasurer Gail Deutsch for her many years of outstanding service to the Land Trust, noting that Gail will remain on the Board of Directors. Jay also thanked retiring Director Jim Davis, who completed a three-year term as a Director. After a round of thanks to the many who

volunteered their time and talents to the Trust during the past year, the meeting adjourned and was followed by a delicious pot luck supper and excellent conversation.

Jay Kaplan

Land Trust Receives ShopRite Donation

The Canton Land Conservation Trust is most appreciative for a recent donation received from Joseph Family Markets, the owners of Canton ShopRite, in the amount of \$1500.00.

This is the third installment of a \$10,000 pledge made to the Trust over a five year period. ShopRite employees also assisted with the Trust's spring work parties this year, and we are most appreciative for their support. We continue to look forward to working with Joseph Family Markets and Canton ShopRite employees in the future.

Jay Kaplan

New Board Member

Sarah Bailey is a Certified Advanced Master Gardener and a Connecticut Accredited Nursery Professional. She has worked in the horticultural industry for the last two decades as, variously, a retail nursery manager, a private gardener and garden designer and a consultant for several landscape firms. She is the Hartford County coordinator for the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program and the Extension youth gardening coordinator. She currently serves on the education committee of the CT Nursery and Landscape Association. She shares her life with husband Bob, doting on one granddaughter and trying to keep up with two overly smart and energetic herding dogs.

Karen Berger

CLCC

On March 19, a beautiful, crisp, early spring day, the Connecticut land conservation community gathered at Wesleyan University for the 32nd annual Connecticut Land Conservation Council conference. The get-together was a sell-out, with 475 registered attendees from all over the state representing land trusts, local governments, CT DEEP, and various professions.

Tom Condon, recently retired from the Hartford Courant, gave a moving keynote address to kick off the proceedings. His focus was on the role of land use planning in taking development pressure

off the land. He was encouraged by the trend of today's younger generations returning to denser, more urban, more walkable communities, and how the revival of cities helps reduce sprawl in the suburbs. He noted that Connecticut today uses more land for lawns than for agriculture, and he exhorted us to take a more regional, form-based and transit-oriented approach to zoning and development.

After the keynote, we broke into small groups for workshops and seminars covering a wide range of topics. The first session I attended covered land management planning for land trusts, a timely topic as CLCT is looking to establish or renew management plans for several of our properties. Next came a workshop on using the GPS capabilities of our mobile phones, along with apps like Track Kit, to capture and use geographic data. This was very practical information which I and other board members have already put to good use in developing the boundaries for our proposed "bunny cut" (see Jay Kaplan's article in this newsletter for more "bunny cut" discussion).

For the third and final session I learned how volunteers can assess and document stream quality from the macroinvertebrates, such as various stonefly larvae, that are found in riffles. The program, which is called Riffle Bioassessment by Volunteers, is organized by the CT DEEP. One of the panelists who spoke about his experience with the program was Mike Jastremski, the Water Protection Manager for the Housatonic Valley Association, a large land trust and watershed protection organization. It turns out that Mike is a Canton resident and CLCT member, and at a subsequent Trailblazers hike Mike demonstrated how to sample a stream riffle. This took place at the Swan preserve, and in addition to finding a number of sensitive macroinvertebrates that signify high water quality, Mike also found several large crayfish and a two-lined salamander!

All in all, the conference was an inspiring event. The number of participants, the level of expertise of the workshop leaders, and the general level of enthusiasm, dedication, and camaraderie left me feeling encouraged about the future of land conservation in Connecticut.

Christian Winkler

Trailblazers

The 2015-2016 Canton Trailblazers season was spectacular! Many new families joined the Canton Land Conservation Trust and

participated in the Trailblazers hikes and outdoor adventures this year. Our group is comprised of children and their families who enjoy engaging in outdoor activities and hikes throughout the year. Led by Jen Mason and Michelle Winkler, monthly outings are planned from October-June. This year, we explored new Land Trust trails,



hiked some old favorites, learned about streams, walked through Canton history and more. Here are some of the highlights from this season:

The Halloween Scavenger Hunt at Sun, Wind and Woodland is always a great way to kick off the year! The fall weather was perfect and a record number of costumed hikers came out for our first hike of the year. This brave group of princesses, pirates, vampires, Star Wars characters and others pushed through the thickly cob-webbed trail entrance, boldly ignoring the caution tape and warning signs. However, once the group got started along the trail, they were rewarded with a trail that was full of treats! Another great hike this season was at Sweetheart Mountain, where we visited the site of the former Canton Ski Club ski area, and hiked through history. There were many reminders of the mountains' past including old ski area equipment along the trail. The strenuous uphill climb was also noted by many as a perfect slope to ski down! We also heard a personal story about learning to ski here from one of our mature hikers. This hike was interesting and fun! Another great hike this year was the hike and stream study at Swan Preserve. Those in attendance were rewarded with a true scientific research approach to stream study. The children were delighted to

splash through the stream to collect information about the stream water and its inhabitants. Several hikers went home happy and with wet sneakers.



We hope to see you on the trail! We encourage outdoor enthusiasts to join Trailblazers and new members are always welcome! Information about the 2016-2017 Trailblazers season will be

available on the CLCT website in September.

Jen Mason

The Moonlight Hike

The Annual CLCT Moonlight Hike is undoubtedly our most popular event of the year, and this year was no exception. Hikers of all ages are welcome to attend this special community event. The weather this year was unseasonably warm and for the first time in many years there was no snow lining the trail. Many enthusiastic hikers followed the glow of the Luminarias through the woods to a festive party in a nearby barn where chili, hot cocoa, other beverages and countless sweet treats were waiting. New and old friends alike enjoyed the giant outdoor bon-fire. Information about the Moonlight hike is posted on our website and sent out via email reminder to our members prior to this annual event each winter. We hope you will join us in 2017!

Jen Mason

Mary Conklin Sanctuary Historic Research Project

As you may know, the Trust received funding to work on the history of the Mary Conklin Sanctuary with the goal of developing a history by the next annual meeting. This project has begun with an appeal to all members, friends, or relatives who might have any historical information about the area or the people involved. The three objectives of the project are: to develop a

history of the parcel's use from the earliest times to the present; to determine what specific sites within the sanctuary might have archeological value; and to gather the recollections of people who have enjoyed the property since its acquisition by the land trust. The hope is that the project will add to people's experience of the property by illuminating not only the reasons for current condition of the property, but that the project will also become a living reminder of the wide variety of human experience.

The area is rich with connections to many aspects of Canton's history. There was Native American settlement and activity in the area: Native American artifacts found in the nearby vicinity connect to the region's soapstone quarries, which are located farther up river in People's State Forest in Barkhamsted. In the nineteenth century, the town's poor farm or poorhouse is believed to have been located here. These institutions, now nearly forgotten about, were once a vital part of the social fabric of every town. Today, the land reflects the changing currents of land use history in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. The way the forests have returned in the old fields, it appears at first glance to be a uniform transition to second-growth forest. Yet, the former use of each old field: be it for hay, pasture, or cropland, has shaped and continues to shape the growing forest.

Each of these, and other, threads of human and natural history will be explored in the coming year. It is my hope that the resultant history will add to our current and future stewardship and enjoyment of a particularly lovely property.

For more information or to share any information, please contact Anne C. Hall, Ph.D. at annechall@att.net

Trail Crew

Drew Stone organized a trail crew at Sweetheart Mountain on April 30. Fourteen people showed up, including seven Shoprite volunteers, and seven CLCT members. Drew divided up the volunteers into four teams. One group cleaned out a catch-basin, another group worked on a section of the blue trail, another group worked on clearing an area on the red trail to improve a nice



vista, and several had the pleasure of removing Japanese knotweed (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fallopia_japonica) and other invasives from the border of the parking lot.

We turned the invasive removal into an experiment; Christian led a team on the west side of the parking lot, which chopped off the stalks near their base, and applied a chemical, which should be absorbed by the stalks to kill the roots. Phil led a team on the east side of the parking lot which tried digging up the plants and removing the roots. We will monitor both areas to see which approach is more effective. While not all the invasives are gone, a substantial portion of the problem has been removed.



The ShopRite volunteers included: Josh Clark, Marvin Garcia, Pat Alexander, Joann Sprenker, Lindsey Sprenker, Bill Derby and Korli Pannozzo.

Showing up from the CLCT were: Drew Stone, Art Major, Mary Ducor, Don Ducor, Giorgio Maglia, Christian Winkler, and Phil Philbrick

The vista is looking much better, the catch-basin is clear and the blue trail, once considered for abandonment because it was so over-grown, is looking great. Thanks to all volunteers who accomplished a lot!

Phil Philbrick

Sweeton Acquisition



In March of 2006, the CLCT acquired property known as Sweeton Pasture, located on Bunker Hill Road. It was procured in 2006 by the CLCT with the help of a State of Connecticut open space grant for, “the conservation and preservation of a scenic resource in order to yield a significant

public benefit for passive recreation and open space protection.” The property owners included Fred Sweeton, a past member of the Board, who has donated other parcels of land to the Trust.

(Before and after photos)

In the spring of 2016, Noah Mason, son of Board member and Trailblazer leader Jen Mason, approached the CLCT with an interest to work on a project for school called MAGIC (Making America Great Involves Commitment). About the same time, Rick Cowles, son of Board member Ted Cowles, expressed interest in being a steward for the Sweeton Pasture property. There has been interest in adding a hiking and nature trail to the property, but before cutting a trail, it is critical to clearly identify all of the boundaries. While the deed specifies all of these points, most are pieces of rebar or pipe, often covered by leaves and branches. Noah volunteered to track down the boundary points, clear out the debris, and mark them clearly. The boundary is defined by 26 different points, all of which needed to be located, cleared, marked and mapped.



The first part of the project is complete. All of the boundary points have been located, and the rebar and pipe have been painted in fluorescent orange, to make them easier to identify in the future. Orange driveway markers have been

added to each point, to make them easier to locate. Boundary signs has been added to trees just inside the property line, to make the border of the property clear to anyone visiting the property. The points will be mapped with GPS software, to identify the exact latitude and longitude of each point.

Noah and his father John have marked a possible trail through the property, choosing a path which maximizes the scenic beauty of the property, and uses an existing logging road for some of the course. The CLCT Board will approve or modify the course, and then a trail crew will be assemble to cut the trail. The layout of the possible trail is in progress at the time this report is being written, and the next steps are planned over the next few months.

Phil Philbrick

For more info please check our web- site:
www.cantonlandtrust.org.
or search Facebook for
Canton Land Conservation Trust
Become a member today!!!

Test Your Skill- Match the early spring flower to its name:

- A) Dwarf Ginseng
- B) Jack in the Pulpit
- C) Marsh Marigold
- D) Trout Lily
- E) Wood Anemone

1.



2.



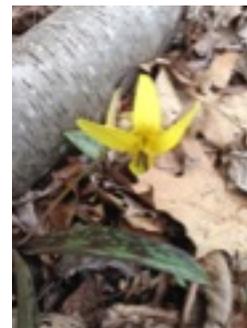
3.



4.



5.



(Answers: 1-E, 2-A, 3-C, 4-B, 5-D)

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CLCT Assets as of 06/22/15

by Gail Deutsch, Treasurer

Current Assets

Total Checking/Savings - \$300,602

Endowment Investment - \$309,900

Fixed assets

(land, buildings, equipment)

- \$6,869,233

Total Assets: - \$7,479,734

DONATE to CLCT - use your credit card!

Canton Land Conservation Trust continues to encourage and accept donations by cash or by check. CLCT will be accepting donations and payments over \$20 by major credit cards (Master Card, Visa, Discover and American Express).

Please go to our website:

www.cantonlandtrust.org or our Facebook page:

Canton Land Trust to find the DONATE NOW button, or go to CLCT's

Secure Payment Link:

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