



The Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

Fall 2011

Newsletter

Edited by Gail Deutsch

LETTER FROM the PRESIDENT– Barry Deutsch

This is not the Letter I intended to write for the fall newsletter. However Mother Nature's Halloween trick, aka Storm Alfred, has resulted in many changes of plans, least of all my intended Letter. As I sit at my computer on November 9th, I have hopefully heard my last emergency phone message advising that there are about 120 homes still without power. As **Robert Burns** wrote, "the best laid plans of mice and men often go astray." After the prolonged power outage, many of us may feel like the poor mouse that prompted **Robert Burns** to pen his lines.

I have hiked the **Ray Smith** trail on the **CLCT's Mary Conklin** property several times since the storm. This trail and several others that are at lower elevations need clean-up to remove downed trees and limbs.

Our Stewardship Committee and regularly scheduled Trail maintenance crews will not be able to clean the trails without considerable extra man/woman power. I hope we can obtain some volunteers to do clean-up work on the trails during the normal work week. If you would like to volunteer for trail work, please contact me at bgdeutsch@comcast.net.

The trails on the CLCT's properties provide a wonderful opportunity for Canton residents to hike in the woods and enjoy peace and quiet. A hike is a wonderful way to rejuvenate one's mind and in addition helps to fight the national epidemic of obesity.

Changing subjects without a proper segue, I'd like to thank **Garry Tilton** who retired from the Board after many years of devoted service. **Garry** was the **CLCT's** Membership Chairman and this responsibility has now been assumed by **Wayne Jekot**.

Also after developing and leading the **CLCT's Trailblazer** program, **Mary Ellen Mullins** and **Rhonda DeWeese** have relinquished the reins to **Mary Dean**, **Jennifer Mason** and **Gretchen Sonju**. **Mary Ellen** and **Rhonda** cannot be thanked enough for their devoted efforts to the **Trailblazers**. **Jan Tanner**, who was the 3rd adult guide for the **Trailblazers** is continuing her involvement and insuring that the transition to the new leadership is smooth. Thank you **Jan**. The **CLCT's Trailblazer** program is in good hands for many years to come.

[From the CLCT Stewardship committee - Michael A. Gotaski](#)

It has been a busy year for the Stewardship Committee. Here is a brief overview of the ongoing activities, along with some additional efforts currently in the planning stages. Our primary efforts for 2011 have been focused on 2 major projects.

The CLCT has been the fortunate benefactor of a grant from the Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC) to fund a Watershed Trail and Informational Signs project. (cont).

A CLCT team lead by Ted Cowles has designed, fabricated, and installed enhanced signage for those CLCT properties containing trails. There are 3 types of signage being employed. The first is a property identification sign containing the name of the particular property designed to be visible from the street and allow the property to be located. The second is a smaller sign designating the trail name, designed for use within the property allowing the trail head(s) to be located. The third type is a larger, roofed kiosk designed for properties containing a trail network. Attached to the kiosk will be a map of the trail network contained within that property, along with an additional map showing the property and its location and importance within the Farmington River watershed.



We are currently in the process of installing the signs. The property and trail signs are shaped to resemble a stylized boundary outline of the town of Canton with a green trimmed white background. If you have recently visited one of our properties and have seen the signs, let us know what you think.

In conjunction with this effort we have been GPS mapping the trails with the intent to create trail maps in electronic format. These would then be available on line. When enlarged, printed and laminated they would also be affixed to the kiosks. We are currently examining the various available formats for this material and hope to roll out a finished product soon. Stay tuned!



Many thanks to Ted Cowles for spearheading this effort along with the Canton Sign Shop, Miner's Inc., Karl Ide-Pech for GPS mapping, and the FRCC.

Work has continued on the WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program) grant at the Conklin and Sun, Wind, Woodland properties. This is a matching grant to enhance

meadowlands being lost due to surrounding forest encroachment. This is a multi-year program In spring 2011, this was followed by preparation of the seedbed for meadow grass and seeding. Thanks to the assistance of CT DEEP for their specialized drill seeding equipment we have accomplished reseeding of the meadows. With the abundant rainfall this past growing season, the meadows seem to have re-seeded nicely.

Some of the other 2011 activities accomplished: Work parties in the spring planted 120 Blue Spruce seedlings at the Smith tree farm. A similar effort is planned for 2012.

The CLCT purchased a trailer to allow for movement of our tractor between various properties to allow for more efficient use of time for property maintenance.



Over the course of the next year this committee will review and update the current property steward assignments. Property stewardship is one of the basic tenets of the Landtrust and the individual property stewards are a key component in the process. Our goal is to develop a stronger steward network acting as the stewardship committee's eyes and ears for each of the individual properties. If you use a property regularly or have developed an affinity for a particular property, have a bit of spare time and an interest in learning more or helping in this endeavor please contact us (m.gotaski@comcast.net) and we would be happy to discuss it further.

From the CLCT Membership committee - Wayne Jekot

How much would you spend for a round of golf, a trip to the beach, a movie at the cinema, or a dinner out? Membership in the CLCT is just twenty-five dollars per year for individuals or fifty dollars for families.

That works out to be less than fifty cents per week for an individual and less than a dollar per week for a family membership. By joining or renewing your membership, you'll have the opportunity to take part in all our activities and to meet other like-minded people who are interested in taking advantage of the benefits of the highly-successful CLCT organization.

For this upcoming year, we continue our tradition of offering a full slate of activities for our members and the Canton community. We will host a number of guided hikes, including discovery and family hikes, in addition to the popular Full Moon Hike to be held this coming winter. There will be various talks and lectures offered, both on the trail and at the Roaring Brook Nature Center. We also will join together once again this spring for our annual dinner, which again will feature an informative lecture and silent auction. We are in the process of planning our fortieth anniversary celebration to be held next autumn, details of which will be announced in the near future. For those who are also Trailblazer members, there will be various fun outdoor adventures planned specifically for families with children. And of course, there will be all the other activities that make up the business of a land trust, such as property maintenance, tree planting, and trail blazing-- if you are the type to roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty.

I invite you to participate in the many CLCT activities planned this year by starting or renewing your membership today. With your membership contribution, you will of course also help us to continue to succeed in preserving ever-decreasing open space for access by you, your family, friends, and neighbors. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

From the 40th Anniversary Committee - Karen Berger

The celebration of 40 years of CLCT stewardship of unique and diverse land in Canton begins September 29, 2012 with day and evening activities.

Several CLCT properties will host naturalist led hikes and a family friendly game of capture the flag. The Mary Conklin property will feature ongoing demonstrations, fairy house building, bluebird house building, a gathering of the captured flags and a hearty autumn lunch.

The day will culminate in a gala dinner and dance at Ski Sundown, home of CLCT's highest property at the top of Gunbarrel ski run.

SAM COLLINS DAY - Barry Deutsch

On September 17, 2011, the Town of Canton held its annual Sam Collins Day celebration.

The Canton Land Conservation Trust sponsored a booth in the Community tent.

As part of its exhibit, the CLCT was proud to show off one of its new kiosks which will be erected on each of the properties having 1 or more hiking trails. Many thanks to Ted Cowles for delivering the kiosk to the **Land Trust's** booth.



Land Trust Board members and spouses who set up and manned its booth included John Rohlfing, Sarah Faulkner, Tom Kissko, Barry and Gail Deutsch, Scott McAlindin, Karen Berger, Mike and Norma Ignatowicz, Wayne Jekot, Betty Stanley, Fred Feibel and Garry Tilton.

As in years past, the map showing the **CLCT's** properties brought the most public interest. A new map illustrating how many of the CLCT's properties fit within the **Farmington River** water shed was affixed to the kiosk.

Thanks to the efforts of **Norma Ignatowicz and Sandy Weintraub** the booth also included an advance announcement of the **Land Trust's** 40th year celebration in the year 2012. We intend to make it a **c o m m u n i t y c e l e b r a t i o n .**

Mushroom Walk- Betty Stanley

Saturday, October 8th, the Land Trust was treated to another wonderful mushroom walk led by Connecticut Mycological member Marlene Sniecinski.



Thanks to late summer rains and a wet fall mushrooms were in abundance. Twenty three CLOT members were briefed on mushrooms before setting off into the woods of our Upland Preserve. Mushrooms are a type of fungus and today fungi are " no longer regarded as plants. They are now allocated to a kingdom of their own; which, in evolutionary terms is more closely allied to the animal world. Fungal species outnumber plants by a ratio of 6 to 1. They make up a quarter of the Earth, s biomass, occurring on every surface and in, or attached to, every other living organism. The planet's life-systems would close down without fungi's ceaseless involvement as digesters, recyclers, biochemical enablers and a kind of exterior

immune system for their hosts. (Wall Street Journal, October 24, 2011).



Foraging or hunting for mushrooms is far more important in Europe and Asia than here, where foraging is considered a hobby and a passion and not necessarily as a standard way to put food on the table. This may change as more and more people are treated to the taste of a wild mushroom, which makes the taste of a cultivated mushroom bland and uninteresting by comparison. Also more people are thinking about the benefits of obtaining food locally and eating organically. Although we did not find choice edible mushrooms such as Chicken of the Woods and Hen of the Woods, which sell for \$35 a pound in NYC gourmet groceries, we did find an Aborted Entoloma which when cooked is similar to shrimp. Other mushrooms on the trail included a variety of Polypores and Russulas, Shelf Mushrooms growing on rotting logs, Honey Mushrooms, Puff Balls, some Fragile Gilled Mushrooms, and very poisonous Amanitas.

After the hike everyone enjoyed some mushrooms marinated and / or cooked by Marlene - certainly a delightful treat for everyone. Should you decide in the future to go foraging for mushrooms, do be careful. Understand that there may be bold mushroom hunters, but there are no old and bold mushroom hunters. For further information please contact the Connecticut Mycological Society at: mushroomlinda@yahoo.com or CVMS Yahoo Group at: <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/cvms/>.



FLATBREAD COMPANY FUND RAISER—Barry Deutsch

On October 18, 2011, the Canton Land Conservation Trust hosted a fund raiser at the Flatbread Company restaurant located in the Shoppes at Farmington Valley.

Friends and members of the CLCT enjoyed excellent food and interesting conversation while helping to raise funds to support various CLCT endeavors. The Flatbread Company contributed more than \$420 to the CLCT based on the number of pizzas sold the evening of the 18th. Many thanks to Erich

Kronschnabel and his staff at Flatbread for their kind cooperation.

The CLCT also conducted a 50-50 raffle. The winning ticket was drawn by Erich. The winner of the raffle was **Meggan Jekot**.



Credit for the evening's success is due Betty Stanley and her Community Relations Committee for publicizing the event, John and Peggy Rohlffing for their beautiful banner which was displayed at the restaurant and Gail Deutsch for selling raffle tickets.

Most of all, THANKS to everyone who supported the evening.

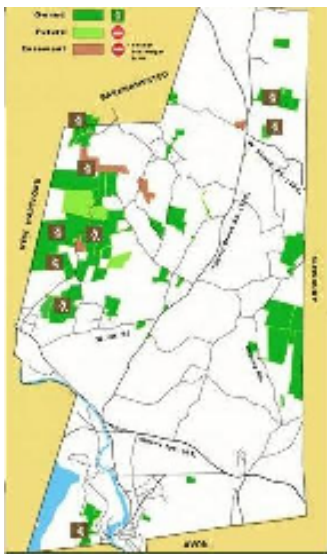
NOTES FROM THE NATURE CENTER—Jay Kaplan

In January 2011, the Canton Conservation Commission and the Canton Open Space Preservation and Acquisition Commission began compiling an inventory of Canton's natural resources.

Canton residents and organizations as well as regional and statewide experts in their fields have assisted with this project. The purpose of the document, when it is completed, will be to assist with long-term planning as a part of Canton's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Every ten years Connecticut towns are required to create a POCD. A number of towns have completed such "natural resources inventories" as part of their POCD. For example, the Town of Salisbury has produced an outstanding publication that provides extensive information on that town's natural resources including sections on the geology and topography; open space; critical habitats; forest, water, agricultural and recreational resources as well as historic landmarks. Canton Land Conservation Trust holdings now exceed 2,000 acres in preserves large and small scattered throughout the town. It stands to reason that many of Canton's natural resources may be found on Land Trust properties.

The Town of Canton encompasses some 16,000 acres meaning that Land Trust properties comprise over 12% of Canton's land area. This acreage is held as open space for the benefit of all Canton residents. Some Land Trust preserves include what can be considered

critical habitats including trap rock ridges, vernal pools, grassland areas, and most conspicuously, upland forests. These habitats provide homes for wildlife including some of Canton's rarest and most threatened plants and animals. The Long-leafed Bluet, for example, is a small wildflower that is found in fewer than five locations in Connecticut. One of these is on a Land Trust property. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) maintains a list of Connecticut's endangered, threatened and special concern species. Species on this list that have been documented in Canton include a diverse array. Listed species that have been found on Land Trust properties include Eastern Box and Wood Turtles, and a variety of birds including Sharp-shinned Hawk (endangered), Whip-poor-will, Bobolink, Alder Flycatcher and Northern Parula Warbler (all special concern species). Future research efforts may expand this list to include additional species such as the Jefferson's Salamander, a special concern species that breeds exclusively in vernal pools. Land Trust properties host multiple vernal pools, but these are not the only water resources of note. Cherry Brook, Saw Mill Brook, and numerous smaller watercourses traverse Land Trust preserves. These watercourses provide habitat for wildlife from mink and muskrat to wood ducks and kingfishers to native brook trout and other fish species. Perhaps the most prominent of Land Trust natural resources are upland forests. The larger Land Trust preserves consist of significant unbroken forest blocks, providing important nesting habitat to interior forest-nesting birds such as thrushes, tanagers, vireos and warblers. In many parts of Connecticut, forests have been fragmented by development. Building a road and but a few scattered homes within a large forested area significantly reduces nesting success because it allows numerous nest predators like raccoons, opossums, crows, blue jays, and domestic house cats access to the forest interior where they prey on nestlings and recently fledged young that cannot yet fly well. Perhaps the most obvious role that Land Trust properties play in the



development of the natural resources inventory is in the area of recreational resources. Land Trust properties are open to all Canton residents for passive pursuits such as hiking/walking, cross-country skiing, wildlife and nature photography. Land Trust properties are an important component of our Town's Natural Resources Inventory. The Trust provides opportunity for Canton residents to get involved in the continued care and maintenance of its properties by running workdays throughout the year. Check the Land Trust web site for more information. If you should have questions about the Natural Resources Inventory, please contact a member of the Town's Conservation Commission. Monthly Commission meeting dates and times are listed on the Town's web site and there are currently openings on the Commission.

Coverts Project—John Pech
[Professional Forestry, Grasslands and Wildlife Habitat Assistance Offered by University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System](#)

UCONN Cooperative Extension System offers Connecticut land owners a program to help us learn how to manage our forest and field properties and promote forest and wildlife conservation. The Coverts program provides assistance with professional forestry & wildlife management, wildlife habitat and property stewardship.

The program is offered every year at Great Mountain Forest in Norfolk CT and is run by UCONN's Assistant Extension Professor Thomas Worthley. Approximately 20 people attend and upon completion of the seminar they are "Coverts Cooperators" who help preserve land and assist others that have similar interests.

The program starts with a history of New England forests and the impact that Native Americans, wildlife and the industrial age had on the forests and landscape. The importance of forests to our eco system, clean water supply and oxygen is very well presented. The program covers forest management using various types of logging operations for the land owners desired outcome, field maintenance, the importance of shrub lands for wildlife habitat and the types of birds and other wildlife that like various habitats. Creation of many types of habitat is explained, as well as management of invasive plants such as Japanese Barberry.

The accommodations are very nice cabins in the middle of the Great Woods at the Yale forestry camp; the classroom is rustic and historical. The dining hall and discussion room have huge stone fire places which provide the only heat at the facility. Electricity is provided by a generator that comes on at 6:00AM and lights off at 10:00PM. The food is provided by a caterer and could easily be rated five stars.

The payment for three very interesting days and nights listening to professionals explain the history of Connecticut's and New England's forests, hiking through managed forests and fields, learning about wildlife habitat and how the forests and wildlife arrived where they are today and where they may be headed tomorrow is the cooperators agreement to do three things during the following year:

1. Develop and Implement a sound forest and wildlife stewardship plan for woodlands the cooperator owns or oversees and seek opportunities for others to learn from those experiences.
2. Maintain, for at least one year, up-to-date reference materials which are provided by the Coverts program, and work with the program to publicize the cooperators availability and seek opportunities to answer questions other landowners have.
3. Make an active effort in conjunction with other cooperators to reach out to landowners in the community and share the knowledge gained from the Coverts program.

The Coverts program is supported by the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and professionals are made available to land owners for consultation on how to best manage their property for the owner's desired outcome using a management plan.

A few Canton Land Conservation Trust board members have attended the 3 day seminar and have found it very beneficial. As mentioned, one of the requirements is for participants to reach out to the community and offer assistance to land owners by sharing knowledge and helping them get in touch with forestry experts and other land and habitat management experts who will be happy to provide assistance in finding resources and information to properly manage forests, fields and habitat. Many of these resources are free of charge to help land owners learn how to manage their woodlands and fields with the desired outcome of healthier forests,

preserved fields and better habitat for the desired wildlife. The Coverts program has contacts for everything from creating song bird habitat and field maintenance to timber harvest.

Canton Land Conservation Trust board member John Pech attended the program this year and Rhonda and Charlie DeWeese attended the program a couple of years ago. John, Charlie and Rhonda are available to assist anyone interested in learning more about forest and wildlife management and where to get help from professionals in forestry, invasive species control, field maintenance, wildlife management and timber harvesting through the Coverts Program and DEEP.

John Pech can be contacted at 860-693-2880 and Rhonda and Charlie DeWeese can be contacted at 860-693-3988.

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www.cantonlandtrust.org

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 Robert Sigman
 Elenor Smith
 Betty Stanley
 Wayne Jekot