



The Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

Spring 2011

Newsletter

Edited by Gail Deutsch

LETTER FROM Charlie DeWeese, Co-President

Take a hike!

The spring is upon us, and it is a beautiful time to get out and enjoy nature. When we meet with other land preservation organizations and land trusts, they are always impressed to learn that the Canton Land Conservation Trust keeps all of its properties open to the public. While it is not required under our bylaws that properties are open to the public, this has been very important to us from the beginning. We have built and maintained trails on virtually all of our larger properties, and we have planned for and constructed trails that link several properties wherever it is feasible. This is a lot of work for our volunteers, but very enjoyable in itself, and enjoyable when we see the enthusiasm of the people who come to hike and ski here.

Recently we had a visit from the Farmington Continuing Education hiking club, and we have hosted many groups from other towns in the valley, in addition to the many Canton residents who enjoy the trails. This is a particularly fine time to be out enjoying the woods. Go for a hike on one of the land trust trails you are familiar with, or check our website and find another one that you may not have been on before. Even better, join us for one of our trail building or trail maintenance days. You'll help the land trust and the community, and have fun with some like minded people.

GRANTS – By Co-President, Barry Deutsch

The CLCT has received three grants during the past year plus, one of which was noted in our last newsletter and two of which were received since that time. The following is intended as a summary of the grants and status updates.

Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP). This project is being done at the Conklin and Sun, Wind & Woodlands properties, details of which were first reported in last Fall's newsletter. A meeting was conducted with DEP personnel. The fields need more work before new seed is planted. Seed has been ordered and discussions held with contractors who will do additional mechanical and chemical removal of invasive species. We intend to have the new seed planted by June 15, 2011, most likely by the DEP. The Grant is being managed by Mike Gotaski and John Pech, Co-Chairmen of the Stewardship Committee.

Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG). We received a grant in late fall from the HFPG; the HFPG retained a consultant on the CLCT's behalf to conduct 2 two hour sessions focusing on mid and long term planning through the development of Goals and Objectives. The Board of Directors participated in the sessions which resulted in the Board adopting Goals and (PAGE 2)

(cont.) Objectives in support of the CLCT's Mission Statement.

Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC). The CLCT received a grant from the FRCC to partially fund the CLCT's Watershed Trail and Informational Signs project. The CLCT is in the process of placing Farmington River Watershed (FRW) informational signs on all of its properties included in the FRW. In addition, the CLCT is installing large-scale property informational signs and trail signs on all of its properties having trails. We are also planning to install kiosks on four of the properties similar to the one presently in place on the Sun, Wind & Woodland property. The kiosks will include trail brochures for the public's use and trail topographical maps. Ted Cowles and Sarah Faulkner prepared the application resulting in the grant, and Ted is the leader in moving the project to completion. Thanks to Ted and Bunny Terry the property and trail signs are assembled and ready for installation.

Stewardship Committee Needs Your Help by Mike Gotaski

Now that spring has arrived and people are returning to the Land Trust's trails, the Stewardship Committee is asking for help from hikers to report any trail maintenance needs. Let us know if you encounter any winter blowdowns, storm related damage, trail erosion, safety concerns, need for trail reblazing, etc. requiring prompt attention for the 2011 season. Please inform us of any problems so they can be quickly remedied. If you become aware of a maintenance issue on any of the Land Trust's properties, please send a brief description via e-mail to [Mike Gotaski @m.gotaski@comcast.net](mailto:Mike.Gotaski@comcast.net). Thanks

AN OPEN LETTER TO CANTON RESIDENTS

Hi, My name is Wayne Jekot. I moved to Canton in 2009 with my wife, Meggan. The primary reason we chose our home was because of its location in the midst of Canton Land Conservation Trust property at the top of Breezy Hill Road. We are surrounded by hundreds of acres of undeveloped woods and waters, most of which belong to the CLCT.

Our family and friends at first questioned our decision to live seemingly in the middle of nowhere, but with the passing of time we were able to reassure them that not only are we surrounded by deer, turkeys, bears, owls, and many other wild neighbors, we are also regularly greeted by friendly folks who use the trails and woods around our home for various types of recreation. We've seen cross-country skiers, hikers, photographers, and snowshoers, to name a few. Sometimes it's a lone adventurer, sometimes a small group, but often it's a whole family we see along the byways bonding with nature and with each other.

We have seen still others participating in the CLCT's organized activities, including Discovery hikes, Flatbread Pizza Nights, the Annual Members Dinner, and Trail Crews. Two memories of such activities stand out: first, looking up while raking leaves last autumn to see a farm tractor slowly pull a trailer full of children along Breezy Hill Road for the Trailblazers hayride, and second, walking along the luminary-lit, snow-covered trails of the Breezy Hill Farm Preserve in January as adults and children alike chugged along to a destination of chili and hot chocolate at the end of the Full Moon Hike.

Although the character of Canton is diverse, there exists a strong accord with nature that is directly supported by the CLCT. We all can benefit from the efforts of those who came before us, those who devoted time, energy, and money to acquiring and preserving CLCT's lands and easements, and from the efforts of those who continue to create new and fun ways to use those properties.

Please help the Canton Land Conservation Trust continue to preserve open space for public access by renewing your membership for as little as \$25 per year. You'll get a tax deduction, continued access to increasingly rare open space, opportunities to participate in CLCT activities, and, best of all, the knowledge that you are maintaining wild areas for our children and children's children.

Best Regards, Wayne

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

First Tracks of the Season by Mike Ignatowicz



It's December 27th. A New Snowfall in Canton. Strap on the Snowshoes and head to CLCT's Uplands Preserve. Wind whistles through the bare trees. They are groaning and creaking in protest. Sugary snow with nary a footprint. The sun makes it glisten. My snowshoeing rhythm returns.

The woods seem alive, but everything's so quiet! A nice respite from the bustle of the holidays. The trails I walk in other seasons take on a new look under the blanket of snow .

Cross Country Ski Event –by Barry Deutsch

This winter was the perfect season to have developed a cross country ski trail on the CLCT's Sun, Wind & Woodland property. From the time of the year's first snow fall, the trail was used and enjoyed by X-country skiers and snow shoers who were able to take advantage of the abundant snow.

The official inaugural event for the trail was Sunday February 26th. The sun shone on 20 skiers and snow



shoers who spent over 2 hours traversing the trail. One person came from Newington, having seen notice of the event on the CLCT's web site. Refreshments of cider and donut holes were available in the parking lot to add to the day's enjoyment. Thanks to John Pech and Mike Gotaski for making the trail ready for the event and to Charlie DeWeese for plowing the parking lot.

If Mother Nature cooperates this event will become an annual affair.

Winter Survival - by Bill Duncan

For our November 2010 event, we convened at the Capen Cabin where **Margery Winters**, Assistant Director of the Roaring Brook Nature Center, taught us what we ought best to have with us to survive should we find ourselves lost or stranded in the woods. No, not a heavy backpack stuffed with expensive gizmos from an extreme outfitter. Besides the right clothes on our back, it all fits into a fanny pack. Margery is very practical as well as entertaining. She demonstrated how to use small items readily available in local stores for comfort, first aid or protection while awaiting



rescue, tramping downstream to civilization, or just waiting out darkness in bad weather. Bottom line: get your kit together and belt it on as you head outside for your next hike.

(Starting a fire by using a 9 volt battery).

Vernal Pool Hike and Lecture at the Uplands Preserve—

led by Tom Noonan, April 17th



(Fairy Shrimp)

Supporters of CLCT come out in force for Annual Member's Dinner by Mike Ignatowicz

On Tuesday, March 22nd over 90 members and other supporters of CLCT came together at La Trattoria restaurant in Canton for our Annual Member's Dinner.

The evening began with cocktails and conversation, aided by Jazz music performed by *The Award Winning Canton High School Jazz Combo*. The members of the Combo were Zach Wiles (Bass), Bill Villano (Trumpet), and Tom Kelley (Alto Sax). Many thanks to Karen Berger for arranging for the appearance of the Jazz Combo as well as handling the invitations to our dinner.

This relaxing environment was the perfect backdrop for our Silent Auction, which dinner attendees always look forward to. We were fortunate to have 30 local businesses and individuals that generously donated items for the auction. Some items like gift certificates were easy to take home. Others, like a recreational kayak, required a bit more effort to get out of the restaurant (thanks Charlie De Weesel!). This year, over \$1400 was raised by the auction to benefit CLCT lands and programs. Many thanks to all of the auction donors who made it such a success. See a complete list of local businesses and organizations who provided donations at <http://www.cantonlandtrust.org/>.

There were many interesting conversations at each table as dinner was served. CLCT asked at least one Board member to sit at each table so members could learn more about CLCT, and answer any questions. Co-President Charlie DeWeese provided an update to attendees about the significant activities of CLCT over the past year.

As the photos in the dinner program suggested, the night's theme was bears. Our dinner speaker was Paul Rego, wildlife biologist with the Wildlife Division of the

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Paul's focus within DEP is furbearer and bear biology. Paul did a great job providing a historical context behind Connecticut's bear population, and outlining its' growth since a low point in the mid-1800's. He conveyed lots of information about bear migration patterns. Radio collars and animal tagging provides DEP with significant data about how far bears travel throughout their adult lives, with male bears being the wanderers and females remaining in a fairly small geographic area. Paul spoke extensively about bear hibernation patterns. He showed the group several photos to help illustrate the appearance of bear dens. Paul provided attendees some good tips about do's and don'ts when maintaining residential property to avoid unwelcome attention of bears.

All-in-all, it was a fun and informative evening. Fred Feibel deserves a big thank you for putting together the arrangements for the dinner, and Jay Kaplan for arranging Paul Rego's appearance. If you did not have a chance to attend this year, look for announcements for our 2012 Annual Member's Dinner.

Early Morning Bird Walk—by Jay Kaplan

Sunday May 1st was a beautiful spring day, and 12 early risers took advantage of it right



from the start, meeting at the Mary Conklin property for a morning bird walk. The woods were surprisingly quiet although we were treated to a territorial skirmish between male downy woodpeckers and another involving a group of yellow-bellied sapsuckers. The Conklin property is noted for its woodpeckers and five of the six species that nest on the property were seen or heard. One of the new bird houses appears to have attracted a pair of eastern bluebirds and several tree swallows were seen in the vicinity of another. After spending an hour at the Conklin property, the group departed for a rendezvous at

nearby Cherry Brook Primary School where we left our cars for a leisurely stroll down Barbourtown Road to Meadow Road. The latter is one of the best "birding" roads in Canton and it provided us with nice looks at a variety of birds including green heron, purple finch and yellow warbler among others. The walk concluded at 9:30 AM, with 41 species of birds seen or heard. Birds noted on the walk included the following (* designates heard only):

Canada Goose, Mallard, Wild Turkey, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker*, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Common Flicker*, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo*, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Eurasian Starling, Yellow Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler*, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow*, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch



Christmas Tree Planting

On April 30th, Gail Deutsch, Mike Gotaski, John Pech and Kristin Oswald

planted 200 Blue Spruce seedlings at the Smith Tree farm. With a little cooperation from the neighborhood deer, these seedlings will grow to become a new generation of Christmas Trees.

June 5, 2011

Family Hike in Winsor Woods as part of the Connecticut Forest & Parks Trail Day. (1:00)

Discovery Talk: Teresa Kramer presentation on Raptors at Roaring Brook Nature Center (cosponsored by RBNC). (3:00)

Canton Land Conservation Trust Annual Meeting of Members & Picnic at Roaring Brook Nature Center. (4:30)

CLCT ASSETS AS OF 12/31/2010

By Gail Deutsch

Current Assets

Total Checking/Savings - \$206,292

Endowment Investment - \$203,634

Fixed assets

land, buildings, equipment) - \$6,517,763

Total Assets: - \$6,927,690

Board of Trustees

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Charles DeWeese

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Garrett Tilton

JOIN A CLCT COMMITTEE!!!

Contact Barry: b-gdeutsch@comcast.net

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

Annual Moonlight Hike by Mary Ellen Mullins

Our Annual Moonlight Hike 2011 was
Saturday January 22.

It's hard to forget the amount of snow we had this winter making preparing the Breezy Hill Farm Trail for the annual moonlight hike a bit of a challenge. Many thanks go to the team of "Clydesdale" snowshoers that tirelessly tramped down the trail making it easier for the approximately 200 attendees of all ages to make their way along the luminary lit trail to the hot chili. Many thanks go once again to the Smith family who graciously allowed CLT to hold this magical event at their horse barn.



If you missed it this year in favor of a warm spot on the couch you will be surprised to hear that the only complaint we heard on that frigid January night was "I over dressed!". It was a beautiful sight seeing the rosy smiling faces of the young and young at heart, group by group arriving after passing the 350 luminaries under a dark winter sky. Hikers fearlessly passing the bear, sheep, moose, cowboy and cowgirl that artistically dotted the Smith property.

Looking around the indoor horse barn, seeing everyone mingling, chatting and warming up with hot chocolate, spicy chili and homemade treats you couldn't help but feel the sense of pride in those who participated. Getting outside, enjoying nature, embracing winter in New England, participating in a community event, being with family and friends, hiking under the canopy of stars and of course, meeting new friends.

This event not only draws members of the Canton Land Trust, especially the Trailblazer families but has also drawn people from other towns. We would like to especially thank those who donated generously to make this event possible.