



Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

Fall 2000
Newsletter

New Land Trust Directors

The Board of Directors welcomes three new Directors, and says goodbye to retiring Director **Shirley Sutton**. Shirley has contributed greatly to the success of the Land Trust, most particularly in her tireless work constructing, maintaining and marking our trails. Despite retiring as a Director, Shirley is still active as a volunteer on the trails. The new Directors are:

Sara Campbell returns to the Board after a seven-year absence. During that time, Sara spent time with her two children, Scott and Cathy. Sara and her husband Tim live on Orchard Hill Road, but are now empty nesters and are building a smaller home. Sara, a CPA, is a consultant for RHI Management Resources. She is committed to preserving land for future generations and is pleased to be back on the Board. Sara also returns as Treasurer for the Land Trust. Her professional skills are a welcome addition in this role.

Jackie Shadford is a recent graduate of Central Connecticut State University. She is currently doing graduate work in the field of Geography Tourism and issues in Environmental Protection. Her newly acquired technical skills include Cartography and GIS (Geographic Information Systems). Jackie and her husband Jonathan live on Cherry Brook Road in Canton Center after living in Collinsville for twenty years. They enjoy sailing a traditional wooden boat at their getaway home in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. Jackie is an active member of the Cherry Brook Garden Club, the Master Gardener's Association, and the Connecticut Women's Culinary Alliance.

Steve Stang lives in Simsbury with his wife Norma and their three children, ages 9 through 14. In addition to being a stockbroker with Paine Webber in Hartford, Steve owns and operates the Canton Cycles motorcycle shop here in town, as well as other business property in Canton, and is an enthusiastic steward for the Sweetheart Mountain Preserve. He brings a great deal of energy, commitment and business acumen to the Board.

NEWS FROM THE SUN, WIND & WOODLAND PRESERVE

Acquisition of the Sun, Wind & Woodland Preserve was completed this summer. A partnership between the State of Connecticut's Open Space and Watershed Grant program and the generous financial support of the many friends of the Land Trust who supported the Land Acquisition Fund enabled us to buy this wonderful property. Boundary marking will continue this fall, now that the leaves are off. We will be starting again on November 19 (see the Calendar), and will continue as good weather and able volunteers permit. We hope to lay out and begin construction on hiking trails through Sun, Wind & Woodland during 2001.

Generous Gift of the Swan Family

The family of Fred and Bea Swan has made the very generous donation of eighty three acres of woodland to the Land Trust. Located on the eastern side of Case Street in North Canton, just north of the junction with Route 179, this lovely section of hillside is a gift to all of us from our longtime friends and neighbors. Fred and Bea moved into their home on Case Street in 1940. It was the beauty and the tranquility of the country that attracted them here and they spent many years raising their family on this land that they so dearly loved.

Pamela, Maris, Fred Jr. and the six Swan grandchildren each have memories of years spent hiking, picnicking and playing in the brook. Fred Jr. and his wife will be moving into the family home this fall, so the traditions and excursions will be carried on.

There were many years of Fred Sr. leading the Swans down the hill, past the pond and across the brook. Trails were blazed and many rocks were piled in efforts to create swimming holes in the eastern branch of the Cherry Brook. One large pool was created by nature near the northern property line during the flood of 1955. This pool remains a source of relief and enjoyment on hot days.

The public will have access to this land through a right-of-way just north of the Birge residence. This passageway will lead down the gradual hill just south of the Swan home and the open field that remains in the family. Arriving at the brook, hikers will use the stepping stones to cross. They can then choose to ascend the very gentle rise up the hillside or head off to the left along the eastern bank of the brook. The trails form a large loop roughly following the boundaries of the property, with several crossing sections. Land Trust work parties will be at work this Spring to make certain the trails are open and well marked.

Fred Sr. enjoyed telling the history of earlier generations hiking through the woods from West Simsbury to attend the North Canton Methodist Church just south of his property. Fred always spoke with great pride of his land. Fred and Bea both valued preservation of the environment highly. In their later years, they consulted with their children and jointly decided that when Fred and Bea's time on the land ended, the greater portion of their holding would be turned over to the Land Trust for use by those who

appreciate nature.

With gratitude and sincere thanks the Canton Land Conservation Trust accepts this generous gift, and will maintain the land as a memorial to Fred and Bea Swan.

Tour of Ratlum

The 2nd Annual Tour of Ratlum, Mountain was held on Sunday, June 4, 2000. A small but enthusiastic group started out on the Ray Smith Trail at Mary Conklin's at 8 am: Mary Ellen and Sean Mullins, Charlie, Rhonda and Zack DeWeese and Katherine Pearson. Among the noteworthy sights and sounds were a grouse and its chicks at Mary Conklin's, veeries everywhere at Mary Conklin's and on through Sun Wind & Woodland, porcupine quills embedded in a tree on the Ted Wright Trail, a pair of interesting caterpillars, one yellow and white, one bright green, a slug, a spider, an interesting bug with very long legs on Rhonda's shirt, and lots of red eftts.

We left the trail at Sun Wind & Woodland, and followed streamers from the recent survey. We saw cliffs, stone piles, springs, marshes and streams, and found an old piece of a tractor. Along the way we found boundary stones on the Canton/New Hartford boundary. an older one was marked with a "C" carved into a flat rock. The newer one near it had NH and C cast into concrete. We skirted a large marsh to investigate next spring for wildflowers.

The hikers were feeling pretty good until we walked into a wall of Mountain laurel, which sapped energy but not spirits. There was some speculation over just how good a navigator Charlie might be, resolved when we popped out about where expected. From there we picked up the Ted Wright Trail to the Smith Tree Farm - already 1 o'clock and energy running down, left the rest of the walk for another day.

Trail Report for Sweetheart Mountain

The following report was prepared by RORY PARKER, a 9th grader and steward for Sweetheart Mountain. He and his brother and Land Trust director Steve Stang plan to take care of the various work recommended in Rory's report:

I have checked out the trails and found many problems that should be remedied. I compared all the trails with the map that appeared in the Properties and Trails of the Canton Land Trust booklet. The lower parts of the trails is where the real clearing needs to be done. Near the start of Mother's Meadow Trail, there is a large downed pine tree across the path. People have made a path to circumvent it, which may be better than the original because it is slightly higher and has a place where a picnic table could go. The rest of the clearing is mostly small brush, grass and vines, which die in the winter but return each year. A lot of the Hickory Loop and some of the Mother's Meadow should be remarked. They have either faded or disappeared from the trees dying. Some places needed better marking because certain bends present the idea that you should go straight instead, especially on the bottom of Hickory Loop.

I also recommend marking the old ski trail that goes up the middle a third color or red to match the Mother's Meadow trail which, when it is clear, it leads into. These would help end the confusion of where to go at the beginning. Also the trail sign at the beginning bears little resemblance to the actual trails and does not include the old ski trail, the lookouts and some other features. I think it would help if the sign was replaced or modified to be better attuned with the mountain. People do not often use the trail that winds up the mountain in the beginning. They head straight up the old ski trail instead, so arrows at the back of the Dunne property would make it work out better. The sign where the Hickory trail and Hickory Loop meet needs to be replaced, because it was torn off, and should read Hickory and Hickory Loop, instead of Hickory and Mother's Meadow. Where Mother's Meadow and Hickory Loop actually meet, there needs to be a sign as well. The lookout on Hickory Loop at the top in the middle is not as good as it used to be because the trees have grown and block much of the view even during winter and fall. I think the only other thing that remains is that people, I am guessing mostly younger, have created new paths off the old ones, including one at the very corner of Hickory Loop, marked with spirals that leads all the way to the MDC reservoir on the other side of the mountain.

These are my suggestions and I would be willing to help the Land Trust if needed with repairs on the mountain. Just notify me if there is anything I can do.

NEWS FROM THE MARY CONKLIN PRESERVE

There is a new trail guide for the Ray Smith Trail, funded by a generous gift from the Ray Smith Endowment. The Land Trust thanks Suzi Smith for providing this gift. Land Trust Board member Jay Kaplan wrote the text for the trail guide. Copies of the guide are free to members. Obtain one by calling Betty Stanley at 693-2074 (or email: elizabethstanley@home.com).

The guide co-ordinates with a series of points of interest, marked along the trail by numbered posts. The posts were donated by Ted Cowles, and installed by a volunteer party from the Congregational Church youth group, led by Pat

and Dorene Grace. The youth group volunteers included Jen Needham, John Henry Morehouse, Ben Humphrey, Jeff Futterlieb, Dan Lowell, Abbey Grace and Mike Lingenheld. It is great to have Canton's youth participate in improving and maintaining Land Trust properties.

Another Canton young person, Sean McAlindin, completed his work on a spur trail that connects the Ray Smith trail to Breezy Hill Road. This spur trail is blazed in yellow with a green dot. Sean researched and built this trail as his senior project at Canton High, and gave a presentation to his advisors when he was finished.

LAND TRUST PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

The Land Trust held its second Annual Photo Contest in conjunction with Sam Collins Day. The following photographers won prizes in the various categories of competition:

<u>Best of Show</u> - Todd Fairchild	<u>Second Prize</u>	Kate Fitzgerald Derek Miller Jack Potter	<u>Honorable Mention</u>	Betty Stanley Alison Pech
<u>First Prize</u>	Alison Pech Todd Fairchild Emily Van Gemergen Kate Fitzgerald Betty Stanley	<u>Third Prize</u>	Derek Miller Phyllis Mancini Chris Williams	

The winning entries were on display in the library during the month of October. Prizes were generously donated by the following businesses: Collinsville Canoe and Kayak, Hinman's Flower Shop, Gertrude & Alice's, Worley Ace Hardware, Riverside Nursery, Farmington Valley Office Supply, Canton Feed & Supply, Maria's Italian Restaurant, Saybrook Fish House, Framemakers, Quiet Sports, Barbourtown Sugar Farm, and Mystic Color Labs. We thank all of these businesses for their support.

News from the Smith Tree Farm

The Land Trust's forester, Jim Gillespie of Forest Land Associates made a generous donation of a solar powered electric fence that will be used to protect the regenerating trees in the area that was cleared as a part of forestry operations in 1999. In addition to donating the materials, Jim also donated his labor to install the fence, which encloses an area of about two acres, and has been monitoring the fence for us to make sure it is operating properly.

The Land Trust has also installed a smaller electric fence around a stand of Fraser firs, Christmas trees that are particularly tasty to the deer. Rich Hefler of Cape Cod Fence dug fence post holes as a donation to the Land Trust. Directors Ted Cowles, Dick Swibold and Charlie DeWeese installed the fence, with some timely advice from Jim Gillespie.

A new section of trail has been built going up to the lookout at the top of the existing Charlotte Craig Trail, but by a longer and gentler route. That trail now can be used as a loop. It still needs some work, including marking, but makes for a very pleasant hike.

The Connecticut chapter of the Society of American Foresters toured the Smith Tree Farm as part of its Annual Meeting. About 30 foresters walked the property, and learned

about how the Land Trust is managing the land and the recent forestry operations. They expressed particular admiration for the careful forestry being practiced on this property.

Call for Volunteers

Please join us at one of the scheduled work days, for Christmas tree pruning, trail building and maintenance or boundary marking. Even better, lead a work day yourself! There are now over 1300 acres under the management of the Land Trust. As the number of Land Trust properties grows, we need an expanding volunteer base to keep up with the improvement and maintenance of trails, signs and other projects. Meet your fellow lovers of the land and have some fun.

The Board of Directors of the Land Trust has decided it should commission an audit of its finances. If you are a qualified auditor and able to help us with this project as a donation or at reduced cost, please contact Betty Stanley, 693-2074.

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This spring, when SEAN MULLINS was in the 2nd grade at Cherry Brook Primary School, he went on a hike on the Ted Wright Trail to prepare for the Earth Day hikes all the Cherry Brook students took on Land Trust and other properties. He wrote the following about his experience.

THE CANTON LAND TRUST TRAIL

By the time we reached the top of the long and steep driveway, I was so ready to go on the hike. I had a water bottle, Clif Bar, and a good attitude!

Mrs. DeWeese was the leader. We walked on a leafy, windy path that led to a bright trail. It had an unforgettable view of trees. If you looked down, you could see a clean and blue stream. It sounded so great you would know what it was with your eyes closed!

The dogs were so lucky— they got to go in the stream! I was worried that someone was going to get hurt. Someone could fall on a root and land face first! But luckily, just in case, someone had a first aid kit.

I felt very tired, hungry and happy. We walked to a mossy covered rock. “CRACK”. My knuckles in my arm cracked when I sat down. But the last person in line pushed me off. I was on my feet again. We got to a stream with just a log. I got on it! I was losing my balance. Wobble-wobble went the log, but luckily I was still on. I put my arms out in sweat. There was one more inch until I was there. “Phew!” I said.

There were people waiting for their turn. It was hard, but they made it. We walked for twenty more minutes. We were getting to the end. I started on a dirt path and heard swishing noises. I wondered what it was. I got closer. “SWISH”. I saw that it was lots of cars going by. Then we found our cars, ate something and took a drink. “Gulp, gulp.” I felt very proud and tired, and ready to go. I wished I could do it again.

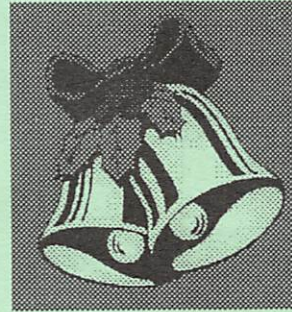


Cherry Brook Primary School Earth Day Hikes

Once again this Earth Day, all of the Cherry Brook Primary School children had the opportunity to have a field trip to one of the Land Trust properties or another woodland property in town. This program was developed and promoted by Sarah Leff. Among the Land Trust properties visited were the Mary Conklin Preserve, the Breezy Hill Farm Preserve and the Ted Wright Trail.

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Calendar

Date	Time	Activity	Location	Contact Person	Phone
Sat, Nov 11	9-12:00	Tree Pruning Trail Work	Smith Tree Farm	Ted Cowles	693-6340
Sun, Nov 19	1 - 4:00	Boundary Marking	Sun Wind & Woodland	Charlie DeWeese	693-3988
Sat, Dec 9	9 - 2:00	Christmas Tree Sale	Smith Tree Farm	Ted Cowles	693-6340
Sat, Dec 10	9- 2:00	Rain Date for Christmas Tree Sale			



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