

## The Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

## Fall/Winter 2013

**Newsletter** 

Edited by Gail Deutsch

## Co-Presidents' Message

As 2013, draws to a close, we would like to take the opportunity to thank the many people who have made the Canton Land Conservation Trust the successful organization it has become. First and foremost, thank you to the members of the board, past and present, who have given of their time and talents in order to make things work! A lot goes on from organizing this newsletter to managing properties now totaling over 2,000 acres to maintaining a substantial membership database. A wide range of activities throughout the year including an annual dinner with a guest speaker, an annual membership meeting, members' activities like mushroom rambles and moonlight walks, and an active Trailblazers' program for students keeps board members and volunteers busy. And, speaking of volunteers, this organization has some terrific ones. Although volunteerism, in general, has fallen off for many organizations over the past decade, the Land Trust has been generally successful in finding volunteers to fill key positions. That is not to say we cannot use additional volunteer help. We are sorely in need of volunteers to help with trail work on our properties, to help with organizing major events, and to even, on occasion, help with our web site and mailings. Take a look elsewhere in this newsletter for some of the many "jobs" available for potential volunteers. I know many of us are already doing great things for other organizations in Canton and beyond. We hope some of you reading this newsletter will also consider what the Land Trust provides to this community. This Land Trust has done some good works over past years, but going forward, we will be only as successful as our volunteer base allows. If you have a little bit of free time, please think about it. We can certainly use your help!

Best wishes to you and your family for the Holiday season and for a happy, healthy New Year.

Make a resolution to get out on a Land Trust trail in 2014 with family and friends. We'll look forward to seeing you!

Land Trust Co-Presidents
Jay Kaplan & Barry Deutsch



## Sam Collins Day

The CLCT annual activities started with the Sam Collins Day town-wide event on September 21, 2013. This year the CLCT booth was dedicated to vernal pools. Many of the CLCT properties have vernal pools. Thanks to cooperation from the Roaring Brook Nature Center our exhibit included vernal pool critters as well as informative question and answer materials pertaining to vernal pools.

Thank you very much to Marjorie Winters of the Roaring Brook Nature Center for assisting in preparation of the vernal pool materials. Thanks also to John Rohlfing for assisting in setting up and taking down our exhibit and to Sarah Faulkner, Gail Deutsch, Christian Winkler, Karen Berger, Ted Cowles, Fred Feibel and Jen Mason for manning the exhibit.

## Our Vernal Pools— Important Wildlife Habitat





Spring



Summer

#### What are vernal pools?

Vernal pools are natural, temporary to semipermanent bodies of water occurring in shallow depressions that typically fill during the spring or fall and that may dry during the summer

As they are dry for part of the year, vernal pools do not support breeding populations of fish.

Certain wildlife such as mole salamanders, wood frogs and fairy shrimp have evolved to breed only in these temporary wetlands where their offspring will not be eaten by fish.



#### Vernal Pool Food Web

The early spring sunlight shining through bare trees and the fallen leaves from the surrounding upland forests provide the energy base of the pool ecosystem. Aquatic insects feed on the dead leaves. Bacteria feed on the detritus, releasing nutrients to the water which are used by the growing algae. Wood frog tadpoles and mosquito larvae feed on the algae and salamander larvae eat the mosquito larva. The frogs and salamanders then become food for many forest animals such as snakes, turtles, birds, and mammals.

#### Abundant Amphibians!

The vernal pool amphibians, adult & juvenile,
make up a large amount of the total animal biomass
(collective weight) in the forests surrounding vernal pools.



#### Life Beyond the Pool

Vernal pool amphibians spend most of their lives in the cool, damp places provided by the leaf litter and decaying fallen logs in the surrounding forest. Adult wood frogs travel more than 1500 feet from pools. Spotted salamanders are generally found within 750 feet of the pool perimeter. Without these upland forests, there would be little life in vernal pools.



Salamanders & wood frogs return to the same pool each year to breed. Watch for them crossing roads on the first rainy, warm evenings in spring.

#### **Trailblazers**

The Trailblazers 2013-2014 hiking season is off to a great start! We have enjoyed a few hikes already this year and have many more hikes planned! Our season began with a Halloween Hike and Scavenger hunt at the Sun, Wind and Woodland site. Many of the Trailblazers arrived in costume to hike the Tom Perry Trail. We had a pirate, a witch, a deviled egg, a zebra and a tree, among other costumed hikers. The most adventurous hikers searched for and found many Halloween treats along the way. One of the favorite finds was a cauldron full of spooky cat and bat rings.



Our second hike of the year was a Leaf Identification hike at the Swan Preserve. While the weather was initially a bit unsettled, everyone who came would agree that we ended up with a beautiful day in the woods! The hikers picked up many leaves along the way and then we all worked together to identify the leaves while socializing at the end of the hike. Many of the children also created personal leaf identification books to showcase their leaf collection.



We have welcomed new friends each month and hope to continue to welcome new hikers!

We have exciting hikes planned each month through June, each with a different theme. Our next hike is planned for December 8 at Mary Conklin. We will hike and have some Holiday Fun together! We might even meet up with a special jolly guest along the trail. We hope to see you on the trail!

Any questions- please contact your trusty trail guides: Gretchen, Michelle and Jen

gsonju@gmail.com,

michelle@winklernews.net, jmason242@co mcast.net

## Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee has been busy this fall crossing off items on its to do list. We completed extensive trail cleanup on the Sweeton Trail, removed roadside vegetation from the Charlotte Craig property, and repaired the driveway at our Pratt Place property. In addition to our normal Stewardship Committee tasks, we also completed tasks that are required under the terms of our USDA NRCS WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program) grant, including removing invasive plants from the Sun, Wind, and Woodland parking area, and mowing the meadow areas at both the Sun, Wind, and Woodland and Mary Conklin properties. Ted Cowles completed a special project to resolve drainage issues at the Smith Tree Farm, and John Pech and Mike Gotaski completed repairs on our Kubota tractor as well as an International Harvester Model 354 tractor donated to CLCT by Dr. Fred Feibel. We welcomed Christian Winkler to our committee this year, and he has already proved to be a hard-working addition to our team. Please let us know if you'd like to help out the Stewardship Committee, and we'll keep you informed of dates and times when we'll be out and about working to cross more items off our to do list. Thanks!

For Stewardship information, contact Mike Gotaski and John Pech

## **New CLCT Properties**

This fall the CLCT obtained title to two new properties, which had been previously reported as pending. The first of the properties is approximately 5 acres on Onion Mountain .The property was purchased from Jeffrey and Betsy Brewster with the assistance of an open space grant from the Connecticut DEEP.

The second property was basically donated by the family of Sam Humphrey and is about 16 acres located on the west side of West Street adjoining the Cherry Brook. The new property is named Humphrey Woods in honor of the Humphrey family and abuts the CLCT's Goedicke property located directly on West Street. Please see the accompanying article by Fred Humphrey & Marianne Humphrey Burbank which gives more information about this land. The CLCT expects to provide trails on this property for hiking along the Cherry Brook.

## Special Humphrey Story

THE HUMPHREY WOODS BY FRED HUMPHREY (age 100)!!!! Edited by Marianne Humphrey Burbank

In 1888, the year of the great Blizzard, Will Humphrey, the grandfather of Harold, Ruth, Sam, Fred, and Lucy Humphrey, all formerly of the original Cherry Brook Farm in Canton Center, bought a woodlot on the West Road property from the descendants of Capt. John Brown , grandfather of the Abolitionist who was a distant cousin of the Humphreys. This land, totaling 15.7 acres was one of several woodlots that the Brown family sold off during that time. The lot was located about 2 miles from the Humphreys' home farm . It was boarded on the West by Cherry Brook, rose sharply up to the East, and was bordered by other lots of the Brown family.

It appears that its primary interest to the Humphreys lay in its supply of oaks- trees that grew well on its rocky terrain and were valued for timber to make beams, flooring, and for firewood. During World War II Harold Humphrey Jr. cut his winter supply of firewood on the property and Fred hauled it out with the farm's tractor and sled. In the 1980s a logger working on adjacent lands cut several large oaks on it- but he disappeared before this theft was discovered. Now oaks are slowly regenerating; soft woods are present; and mountain laurel grows abundantly in the understory.

Because of its isolated location, the Humphreys visited it only rarely. Eventually, unbeknownst to them, a house was built on their right of way in from the West Road, making access a potentially contentious issue. However, no problems have appeared as no one has challenged the situation. Marianne Humphrey Burbank has memories of being taken on walks by her father, Sam Humphrey, on this beautiful property throughout the years and having only friendly encounters with the folks living in the house. She also adds that she always thought this land by the falling brook could rival many spots on the Appalachian Trail.

In 2003 the Humphreys' LLC granted the Canton Land Conservation Trust a 150' easement along the Cherry Brook for public access by fishermen, hikers, etc, Now the Humphreys who include, Fred Humphrey and Lucy Humphrey Wong, Harold Humphrey's 5 daughters, Joyce Humphrey Hawes, Judy Humphrey, Mary Lou Humphrey Thomas, Nancy Humphrey Case and Kathy Humphrey Wollman, and Sam Humphrey's children, Warren Humphrey, Ken Humphrey, and Marianne Humphrey Burbank ( all three of whom currently live and/or own other property in town) have taken the final step to make this land available to the public in perpetuity by selling it at a bargain price to the Canton Land Conservation Trust. The Trust is placing a Conservation easement on it to insure its future as a place for the public to enjoy its quiet solitude and the bubbling Cherry Brook.

#### CLCT Flatbread Pizza Event

On October 8, 2013, the CLCT held its annual Flatbread Pizza fund raiser. The evening not only enables the CLCT to raise



much needed funds, but is an extremely lively and enjoyable social event. The event also included a 50-50 raffle which was won by the CLCT"s own Mike Gotaski.

Thank you very much to Peggy and John Steinway for preparing the lovely banner advertising the evening and to Jane Latus for placing announcements of the evening's event in the community newspapers. Thanks also to the staff of the Flatbread Pizza Company for their assistance in making the night both enjoyable and financially rewarding. The CLCT was able to raise about \$400 for the night's enjoyment..

GPS Mapping - A Primer on GPS, GIS, and CLCT Mapping

For the first time in the history of CLCT, all hiking trails have been mapped. The maps have been posted on trailhead kiosks and on our webpage

(http://www.cantonlandtrust.org/trails.php). Each colored line on a map represents a trail, and the color corresponds with the painted blazes found along that trail. When two trails overlap (such as parts of the Tom Perry trail and Breezy Hill Farm trail) the blazes along the trail are bicolored, one color for each trail. The dashed black lines on the maps represent major unmarked trails, such as old logging roads. In some cases, points of interest and parking areas are shown. Laminated booklets of the maps showing our hiking trails are available with a tax deductible charitable contribution of \$20 to CLCT.

We would like to continue to improve our trail maps, booklets, and blazes. First, we ask for you to share with us ideas for points of interest that could be added to a map. For example, a particularly impressive scenic view could be marked on a map and become a destination to someone who is unfamiliar with that particular hiking area. Second, we are considering adding written trail descriptions to the map booklet and are seeking authors to write informative vignettes for each trail or hiking area. Finally, we need volunteers to aid in the upkeep of the painted trail blazes. Please email us at <a href="http://www.cantonlandtrust.org/emailus.php">http://www.cantonlandtrust.org/emailus.php</a> if you would like to help.

The mapping was done using global positioning satellite (GPS) technology. Each trail was mapped with a handheld Magellan Triton 400 GPS device, and then the data from that handheld device was uploaded to a computer, where it was manipulated using ARCMap software. The software was made available for a nominal administrative fee of \$100 through a nonprofit grant from ERSI, the company that developed ARCMap. ARCMap is the worldwide industry standard for mapping software. Please let us know if you like to make a tax-deductible contribution that will directly and specifically support our ongoing mapping efforts.

In addition to mapping all CLCT trails, the same technology was used to map CLCT parcels. Officials from the Town of Canton, including Town Planner Neil Pade, worked in partnership with CLCT to create our parcel map by sharing data from the town's own geographic information system (GIS). In return, we have shared electronic versions of our trail and parcel maps and now those maps are being integrated into the town's GIS database. The town also uses software and databases created by ERSI. We continue to work in partnership with the town in our mapping efforts, and we have plans to map in the future all open space parcels in the town of Canton, including those owned by other entities besides CLCT.

by Wayne Jekot

## Black Bear Update

As reported in the Spring/Summer Newsletter of 2013, Michael Evans, a PhD student at UCONN is conducting a study of the black bear population in Connecticut. As part of his study, he has set up enclosures in an attempt



to gather DNA from bears in the Canton area as well as other parts of the State. Some of the enclosures have been place on CLCT property. At our October 22, 2013 board meeting, Mr. Evans brought the CLC T Board up to date on his work. He

is presently undertaking an analysis of the bear DNA he collected over the summer and after the analysis is completed will return to provide the CLCT board with the then current results of his study. The CLCT is pleased that it is assisting Mr. Evans in his study

## **Upcoming Events of Note:**

Mark your calendars for these major upcoming CLCT events in early 2014.

On the night of February 15, 2014 the CLCT will host its annual moonlight hike.

This event has become one of the highlights of the Canton winter social season. Over 200 men, women and children of all ages have attended each of the past 2 hikes. Announcements of details of the event will be sent by email and will be posted on the CLCT's website and Facebook page.

On March 25, 2014 the CLCT will host its annual dinner at the La Trattoria restaurant in Canton.

Our guest speaker will be Peter Marteka the Outdoor columnist for the Hartford Courant.

#### Volunteers Needed

Our Directors are the primary source of volunteers to handle our many tasks. The CLCT needs a larger base of volunteers to effectively handle the needs of our land trust.

Volunteers are needed to,

- Help clear trails and properties (Stewardship).
- Assist in writing and sending thank-you notes and developing plans to increase membership (Membership).
- Develop and organize community events (Community Relations).

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please contact either co-president Barry Deutsch (<u>b-gdeutsch@comcast.net</u>) or Jay Kaplan (<u>jaybrd49@aol.com</u>)

# A New Way to DONATE to CLCT - use your credit card!

Canton Land Conservation Trust continues to encourage and accept donations by cash or by check. As of December 2013, 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: http://payments.lawpay.com/bpl/lp2525952

#### CLCT Assets as of 09/30/13

by Gail Deutsch, Treasurer

**Current Assets** 

Total Checking/Savings - \$294,548 Endowment Investment - \$262,585

Fixed assets

(land, buildings, equipment)

\$6,543,085

Total Assets: - \$7,100,218

### **CLCT 2013 Membership**

We are using a new membership data base. Please let us know if your name is missing or misspelled. Send that information to wayne.jekot@att.net.

Richard & Judy Abraham Mahmoud & Rawya Agha

Eileen Ahlquist

Gloria & Roger Ahlstron Peter & Laverne Aivano Roger & Doriann Albert Sally & Rich Albrecht Richard & Cherilyn Albrycht

Skip & Nancy Alford Bob & Jane Allen

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Anderson

Kate Arborio

Sarah & Todd Atkinson

Scott Atwater

Harold & Vivian Atwood Barbara Backman

Kevin L. & Melanie Baldwin

Tim Barber

Timothy J. Barber

Richard J. & Carol Barlow Penny & Scott Barrows Frank & Hedy Barton Jackie Bass-Zagoren John H. Bazzoni Steven M. Beauregard John & Joan Benham

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Marshall & Karen Berger Jan & David Bernard James & Helen Black Rick & Anne Black Peter & Ruth Black Greg & Trish Blair Dr. Gerard E. Bogucki

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**Brad Bowman** 

Gregory & Harriet Boyko

Maryann Bradley

Robert P. & Maria Bradley

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David A. Bristol

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Eugene & Ann Bross

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Lisa Campbell

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Canton Advocates for Responsible Expansion,

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Cherry Brook Garden Club c/o Kate Ciccarillo

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Denis Collinsville Savings Society

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Stacey Cote

Frederic M. & Janet Cowles

Brian Crockett
Bill & Susan Crowe
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Win Gentile

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