

## **President's Message: Planning for the Next 50 Years**

Significant milestones like our 50th anniversary last year naturally include looking back at our accomplishments, including the protection of more than 2,000 acres. As we move on from our anniversary, it's time to look forward to the next 50 years.

Our goals are far broader than land acquisition. We've made decent progress in expanding our educational opportunities, and more is planned. When it comes to land acquisition, it's not simply acquisition for acquisition's sake – we prioritize acquisitions that abut existing landholdings because that helps create wildlife corridors that support biodiversity.

The 2,000 acres protected by CLCT represent one in every eight acres in Canton, which has roughly 16,000 acres in total. That's 12.5% of the town's land protected by CLCT. It's natural to begin thinking about an appropriate conservation goal — is there some proportion of the town that would represent an optimal protection percentage?

Worldwide, the Global Deal for Nature developed **30 by 30 – a goal to protect 30% of Earth by 2030.** It became official U.S. policy in 2021. Closer to home, the state of Connecticut set a goal:

"Twenty-one percent of the state's land area shall be held as open space land."

## This goal has two important qualifications:

1. It was established in 2020 as a goal for 2023, so it doesn't constitute a long-term aspiration.

2. It is a statewide average, reflecting urban, suburban and rural locations, each of which is likely to have different potential for open space conservation.

Additionally, this goal includes other open space holders such as towns and water companies. Canton's Natural Resource Inventory (adopted in 2020), estimates that

## *"over 20% of Canton's land area is preserved as open space."*

While that value is close to the statewide target, it is well below a reasonable goal for the long term, reflecting the closer-to-rural-thanurban nature of Canton.

Coming up with an overall goal for Canton and translating that into a goal for CLCT is worth discussing. We are always interested in talking to property owners about how CLCT can help preserve open space, but there are several reasons why now is a particularly good time to have that discussion.

Climate warming events such as intense rainfall, flooding and forest fires are in the news. Scientists agree that protecting forests is a high priority because forests absorb carbon dioxide. Landowners donated more than 90% of our holdings (with tax deductions where applicable.) When that's not a feasible option, there is grant money available to help us acquire properties or purchase conservation restrictions.

The state of Connecticut, through the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) grant program, has made grant money available for years. New and expanded federal grants, as well as private foundations providing grants related to climate change, result in more options for obtaining land-preservation funding.



CLCT has received OSWA grants and would be happy to discuss the process with any landowners. We are particularly interested in 20-acre or larger parcels of open space wherever located, or any-sized parcels contiguous to existing, privately owned land with a permanent conservation easement. Land contiguous to properties held by CLCT, the town of Canton or neighboring towns or land trusts is desirable as well.

## **Rainfall Compels Pratt Preserve Driveway Repair**

Remember the summer of '23? For a while it seemed like if it wasn't scorching hot, it was pouring rain. Yes, we needed the rain but while gentle drizzles or even long soaking rains would have been welcome, getting multiple inches of rain over just a few hours meant the rain was coming down faster than the ground could absorb it. Both driveways at the Pratt Preserve took a beating: 6- to 10-inch ruts appeared in each driveway, still passable, but ruts like that will quickly get deeper and become impassable if not repaired.

Over the course of three days in early August, trail crews organized by Board Director Bob Evenski and led by Board Director John Pech worked to address the ruts. We ordered six loads of asphalt millings, which is ground up old road surfacing made available for a reasonable price. We received a total of 108 tons of material. It's like using gravel, but the asphalt will partially melt on hot days and bind together. We used the same material to redo the Sweetheart Mountain parking area.





Before spreading the millings, John used the tractor bucket to scrape gravel into the ruts, filling them up partway. He then spread the millings over the gravel and shaped it to add a bit of a crown to the driveway so that rain would run to the sides rather than down the length of it. Some sections of the driveway were still in decent shape, so we did not need to completely cover the entire length (fingers crossed). The tractor bucket did the bulk of the work, but there was still plenty of work using shovels and rakes for the crew: Bob, Director John Bowen, Volunteers Giorgio Maglia and Martin Dodd and CLCT President Phil Philbrick. While the south driveway was fine for passenger cars and trucks, crews removed branches to ensure the large commercial truck delivering the product could maneuver easily.

Shortly after completion, we got another soaking. Most of the two driveways were fine, but there was one small section that received runoff from a neighbor. A solution has been identified and will be implemented. The driveways held following the deluge that fell in late September.

By Phil Philbrick

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## **Christmas Tree Sale Saturday, Dec. 2**

The Canton Land Conservation Trust plans its annual Christmas tree sale on Dec. 2 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the Smith Tree Farm property on Doyle Road, off Wright Road. Please check the website, **Canton-LandTrust.org**, for any changes due to weather. The snow date will be Sunday, Dec. 3.

Please leave your dogs at home, as there is a lot of traffic in and out. If this is your first time cutting a tree, dress warmly and bring some rope to tie the tree to your car. Members will be there with chainsaws and handsaws to assist in cutting down your chosen tree.



This is a good time to join the Land Trust or renew your membership. Given the limited supply, it may be the last year for tree sales for a few years until smaller trees grow. (See story, page 3))

## **Smith Tree Farm Needs Volunteers to Survive**



If you value the Canton Land Conservation Trust's Christmas tree sale and want it to continue, we need your help. The annual Christmas tree sale at the Smith Tree Farm has been a beloved social and fundraising event for many years. There is much more behind this one-day activity than most people can imagine.

It all begins with volunteers planting about 200 seedlings in early April. Volunteers set out flags at measured distances in advance, so trees are spaced appropriately. Volunteers dig small holes, loosen the soil and firmly plant one tree at a time, watering them immediately after planting.

As the trees begin to grow, so do the grasses and weeds which soon shade out the small seedlings and even older trees. Older trees also are a great attraction for vines. It's not too long into the early summer when we need to get out and mow the fields and clear the trees by hand. For years, Director John Pech has mowed the fields, and we have relied upon volunteers to clear around trees both with weed whackers and by hand. This is a time-consuming task and many times has not been followed through with a second mowing and clearing later in the summer.

It's also essential to water the new seedlings periodically the first year. This year we were lucky because there was sufficient rainfall. Last year, because trees were not watered beyond the initial planting and because it was a dry summer, we lost between 50% and 60% of the seedlings that had been planted in April.

The Land Trust has had an annual supply of Christmas

trees to sell in December. However, because of only a few volunteers to care for trees during the growing season, the supply of salable Christmas trees at the Smith farm is limited this year and it will be for the next couple of years until enough trees survive and grow sufficiently. The survival rate for Christmas trees is largely dependent upon volunteers who need to be committed to the necessary, repetitive farming tasks. Up to this point, we have not been able to groom trees to make them more desirable. Perhaps with more volunteers that will be possible.



We need at least a couple dozen volunteers to follow trees from the initial planting through to the final harvesting, which generally takes seven to nine years. We need your help to increase our tree crop. Without it, we don't know if we will be able to continue growing and selling Christmas trees. The more people who volunteer, the lower the burden on each individual. Volunteers don't need to sign up for all the tasks, but we need volunteers for every task.

## Here are the tree farm's annual needs:

- Plant and water 200+ seedlings in early April. This is the easy part, for which volunteers come out.
- Water new seedlings every three weeks until late September (as determined by rainfall). This has not been done in recent years, and trees have suffered.
- Mow the fields in the first half of June and clear around the trees. This has been done to some extent, but not as much as needed.
- Mow fields at the end of August and clear around the trees again. This has not been done consistently in recent years.
- Conduct the annual Christmas tree sale in early December as determined by the availability of trees.
- Repeat the process next year with the annual planting of seedlings in early April.



The future of the Canton Land Trust Christmas trees sale is in your hands. The trees need ongoing care for productive growth. If you'd like to help keep this tradition alive, please contact the CLCT through our website, cantonlandtrust.org/ contact/ or contact Bob Evenski at revenski@att.net.

By Bob Evenski

## Spring Bird Walk Brings Lucky Sightings

**CLCT Board Director Jav** Kaplan led eight bird enthusiasts for a 90-minute stroll around the "bunny cut" and along the woodland trails at the Sun, Wind and Woodlands property on May 7. The morning dawned in spectacular fashion, much needed after a week of rain, drizzle, clouds and cooler-than-normal tempera-

tures. These weather conditions no doubt impeded the spring songbird migration, although a pair of male American redstarts entertained us in the parking lot before we even started the walk. These birds probably had just arrived that morning.

The "bunny cut" is a 10-acre area that was clear-cut in the winter of 2016-2017 in order to provide habitat for the declining New England cottontail and for birds that nest in brushlands and young forest habitats. Some of the specialty species, such as indigo bunting, had not yet arrived, as these birds are expected in mid-May. The early arriving eastern towhees, however, were well represented and we heard, but did not see, three singing prairie warblers.

It should be noted that the "bunny cut" area has now grown considerably since the first spring bird walk conducted in 2017. We are no longer able to traverse the area, as it is now thick with saplings of birch, oak and other tree species. It is also difficult to see birds within the "bunny cut," as they are obscured by the foliage. This is known as succession, and in a few short years, the area will transition from a brushland to a young forest, and eventually revert to a mature forest. It will be interesting to note the changes in the bird community over the next several years. Already,



the area appears to hold fewer towhees and prairie warblers than it did just a year or two ago, and overall, there seems to be much less bird song emanating from the "bunny cut."

Leaving the "bunny cut" and checking our pants for the ticks that abound in this habitat, we headed into the woods. The woodland trails provided better birding, as we saw and heard ovenbirds, a warbler species that nests on the ground; almost stepped on a hermit thrush; and saw pairs of what are apparently breeding red-breasted nuthatches and



**Eastern towhee** 

blue-headed vireos. The mature white pine trees provide a habitat that is reminiscent of more northerly climes, and these birds do not nest readily in the deciduous forest found in other parts of Canton.

Concluding our walk in the parking lot at 8:30, we had good looks at chipping and song sparrows and heard several other common birds, including catbird and northern cardinal. We saw and heard a total of 23 bird species on the walk.

The new checklist of 'Birds of the Canton Land Trust properties' was distributed to all participants at the conclusion of the walk. This checklist can also be found at most of our trailheads.

**Guided Hikes** 

We are planning a number of fun, informative hikes for the upcoming year, and are looking for leaders to share their knowledge. Generally, these are on the weekends, and as we confirm the exact dates and details, we will post them on our website as well as on Facebook. If inclement weather (or no snow) requires us to cancel a hike, that too will be posted.

#### Hikes we have done:

- Spring and Fall: Bird walks with Jay Kaplan or Sarah Faulkner; vernal pool explorations with Tom Noonan.
- All Year: Themed hikes led by local experts. Past topics were lichens and mosses with Steve Messier, local history with Nate Cantwell and Ann Hall, wildflower ID with the CT Botanical Society, tips on photographing nature with Luke Furtney and native and invasive plant ID with Karen Berger and Holly Hambleton.
- Winter: Cross country ski or snowshoe trek with John Pech, and our annual moonlight hike. Look for an animal-tracks-in-thesnow hike with Sarah Faulkner.

#### What's your passion?

Do you have an idea for a hike that your would like to lead? Are you an expert on trees, rocks or water? Would you like to lead a group of children to look for fairies? How about an outing to paint landscapes outdoors. Or a hike on your favorite preserve with an after hike caffeine pick-me-up.

Contact Karen Manternach at kmanternach@Comcast.net with your idea and availability.

By Jay Kaplan

## Scouts Give Bunker Hill Preserve New Trail Loop and Bridge

The Bunker Hill Preserve has a new trail that extends to Cherry Brook. Hikers can access the new Yellow Trail from the Red Trail and hike over a sturdy wooden bridge that crosses the first small, no-name brook. The little pool below the bridge, the sound of the babbling brooks and the views of those brooks along the trails make for a really nice walk.

Both the new Yellow Trail and the established Red Trail on Bunker Hill are Eagle Scout projects. The route of each trail was laid out by an Eagle Scout working in conjunction with the Land Trust. The Land Trust volunteers did any necessary chainsaw work, including the cutting of two substantial trunks crossing the brook at the point where the bridge was installed. We managed to keep the trees across the brook from blocking the water's flow. The scouts took the development of the trails from that point. Eagle Scout Keith Thomas led the project that completed the Red Trail in 2021. Eagle Scout Ethan Newell led the project which completed the Yellow Trail in September.



Ethan's recent project added a substantial bridge to cross the first brook and access the eastern section of the Bunker Hill Preserve. A circular trail on the bridge's

other side takes hikers to Cherry Brook's banks.

Ethan put 28 hours into planning and 16 hours into constructing the





bridge. Getting materials and the pre-assembled 16-foot trusses a half mile to the brook was no small task. Materials were trailered by a small quad. Ethan cleverly attached an axle under the trusses and made them into a "truss trailer" to get them down to the stream crossing.

Ethan reported that he and a crew of eight scouts completed the majority of the work in two Sunday work sessions. The scouts hauled in concrete for the footings, poured the footings and did an initial clearing on about half of the trail in the first session. During the second work day, the scouts hauled in the trusses and materials for the bridge, assembled the bridge and cleared the remaining trail. In another work session, they completed the finishing touches and blazed the trail.

Ethan said his father helped him with the bridge design, and he received some guidance from Troop 77 leaders. He sought out a project that would allow him to use his woodworking skills, he said, and researched bridge designs as his Canton High School senior capstone project.

"Between sitting down with my dad and doing the research, I came up with a final design," Ethan said. "I showed it to Bob [Evenski. CLCT director]. He loved the look of it. He said go for it." The main point of an Eagle Scout project is community-based leadership, he said. "I've had leadership roles in the troop. It was definitely a learning curve. It was a lot more stressful than I thought it would be, keeping track of eight scouts," Ethan said. "The biggest takeaway was

leadership skills I've gained."

The new Yellow Trail is a significant addition to the Bunker Hill Preserve and makes for a delightful hike. The loop adds about 0.4 miles to the existing 0.7-mile Red Trail. Parking is on either side of the entrance along the road. There are plans to add some road millings to the roadside parking to make it more obvious.

> By Bob Evenski and Theresa Sullivan Barger

### John Bowen, Former Nurse and Construction Worker, Joins Board

My wife, Kim, and I moved to Canton in 1990 from Long Island, New York and had our son, Dillon, in 1992. I worked in construction when I first moved to Canton but soon decided I wanted to become a nurse. When I began nursing school I also started volunteering as an EMTI (emergency medical technician intermediate) for the Canton Fire & EMS Department, which I did for five years. After completing my nursing degree, I worked as a nurse at Hartford Hospital. During my 17 years there, I worked on a medical floor, cardio-thoracic step-down unit, surgical-trauma intensive care



unit and in the main operating room recovery room. I left floor nursing to work at a desk job for ConnectiCare Insurance Company as a nurse case manager. After leaving nursing in 2021, I have loved every minute of my retirement. Since moving here, Kim, Dillon and I have loved hiking on the Land Trust trails in Canton and the surrounding towns. I also enjoy kayaking, biking and golfing. I was introduced to Board Member Bob Evenski about two years ago when I volunteered for some trail work and have enjoyed working with him and the rest of the trail stewards on trail creation and maintenance.

I joined the Board of Directors so I could become more involved with creating and maintaining the CLCT's beautiful properties.

## **CLCT Welcomes New Website Volunteers**

The Canton Land Conservation Trust would like to welcome two community members who have volunteered to assist in the support and maintenance of the CLCT website – Lisa Kemp and Lisa Washko.

Lisa Kemp is a Business Solutions Advisor managing global clients for Sims Metal Management and experienced in marketing/presentations and web updates. She lived in Canton in the early 1980s and since 2006. While living in Higganum, Lisa enjoyed the trail system in the Cockaponset State Forest in Durham and surrounding areas. Growing up she and friends spent countless hours outside in the woods blazing their own paths, crossing streams on logs and rocks. "The CLCT trails afford me the opportunity to experience nature and spectacular scenery that I truly appreciate, and volunteering allows me to participate in sharing information for others to enjoy as well," she says.

Lisa Washko retired from her job of 38 years in IT at Central Connecticut State University in July 2022. She and her husband John have lived in Canton for 15 years. She discovered the Canton Land Trust trail system a few years ago and made it a goal to hike every one of the trails. She reached that goal in 2022, after retirement. And now the challenge is to hike the new trails, as they come along. When she read about the need for volunteers to help with web pages in the spring newsletter, she felt she could contribute given her background in IT and experience with designing and maintaining web pages. "I love living in Canton," Lisa says. "I didn't know how much I liked hiking until I moved here. I love the peaceful feeling I get when walking in the woods."

With the addition of our new volunteers, we are able to look at expanding some of the content on our website. The Canton Conservation Commission asked us to partner with the Commission to provide educational information about invasive species in Canton. A newly formed website subcommittee of three board members and two volunteers is working on this new web page that will highlight some of the worst invasive species that may be on our properties or yours. Look for that page early next year.

#### **Become a Volunteer**

Are you passionate about protecting Canton's natural resources and wildlife habitats? Do you have a special connection to one of our trails or properties? If so, we need your help. The Canton Land Conservation Trust is a volunteer-run organization. To fulfill our mission, we rely almost entirely on the time and talent of volunteers. There are lots of ways to get involved. To find out more and contact the Land Trust please go to our Volunteer web page at cantonlandtrust.org/time-andtalent/

> By Bill Porri, CLCT IT Committee Chair

## **Stewardship Volunteer Alexander Clarke Joins Board**

I was born here in Connecticut, but spent much of my childhood in Fairport, New York, close to my extended family. My parents and I moved back to Connecticut in 1991 and settled in Middlebury.

I migrated to the New Hartford area in the mid-nineties where I eventually met my wife Sarah while we were both working at Ski Sundown. After living in Torrington for 11 years, Sarah and I moved to Collinsville in 2016 and now have two wonderful children, Myles and Norah.

I'm a graduate of UConn, and for the last 20+ years, I've been working in the environmental consulting industry with a focus on site investigation, remediation, waste management and environmental health and safety and compliance. I got my start and invaluable experience while working for Loureiro Engineering Associates, and then 10 years ago, I took advantage of an opportunity to work for Eolas Environmental LLC where I continue to work on exciting projects while expanding our clientele. In addition to my years as an environmental consultant, I've been a certified lead inspector for the State of Connecticut for the past eight years.

I've always been a music lover and outdoor enthusiast and continue to enjoy live music, camping, hiking, paddling and especially snowboarding and skiing. I've hiked, backpacked, skied and snowboarded all around New England and beyond and really fell in love with the Sweetheart Mountain trails after we settled in Collinsville. Back in 2021, a close neighbor and friend of ours reached out to me and asked if I would like to help the CLCT with some trail maintenance projects on Sweetheart Mountain. That's when I met Land Trust Stewardship Committee member, Bob Evenski. And since meeting Bob, I've been helping out the CLCT every chance I can with



special focus on Sweetheart Mountain. I've been helping maintain the main Sweetheart Mountain trailhead parking area and reducing the spread of Japanese Knotweed there for the past two years.

I have truly enjoyed participating on the CLCT Board these last months and look forward to future projects. I am grateful for this great opportunity to further help and serve our wonderful community.

## Zbigniew Grabowski "Z" Joins Board

As a Canton Land Conservation Trust board member, I'm excited to contribute to making Canton a healthy and beautiful place to live. I'm a bit of a nerd and I get excited about strategic planning for parcel acquisition and expanding trail networks. I'd love to contribute to the greenway designation for the Farmington River Valley, and continue to work on integrating walking and multi-use paths to create a cohesive and accessible open space network for humans and wildlife alike.

I am an avid hiker, boater, mountain biker, climber, backcountry skier, and forager of edible and medicinal plants, and keen to contribute to the restoration of Indigenous agroecology in the



Northeast and beyond. My daughter Oona is an adaptive athlete with Summit Adaptive Sports and shares my passion for the outdoors, hearty meals and good company. I have lived in Canton for three years since returning to Connecticut from more than a decade of living abroad and around the U.S., with a few years on the West coast and several in Washington, D.C. My roots in the state go back to my childhood in Mansfield where I spent a lot of time in the woods, as well as many years visiting my father and family in the Farmington River Valley. I've come to love the many charms of Southern New England while also embarking on local, regional and global adventures to beautiful places.

Professionally I work on conservation and land use issues through UConn's Center for Land Use Education and Research, where I am an Associate Extension Educator in Water Quality focusing on sustainable land use systems. My B.S. and M.S. are in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Conservation Biology and Biodiversity, respectively, at UConn; and I received a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Resources from Portland State University, focused on Ecosystem Services for Urbanizing Regions.

## **Remembering Alan Duncan**

Former Canton Land Conservation Trust Board President Alan Duncan died Sept. 28, leaving behind a half a century of service to his community. He served as Land Trust President from 1985-1991 and was an active volunteer since the early 80's. Alan worked as an elementary school teacher in Simsbury and was inspired by a colleague to become a school psychologist. While teaching, he earned his master's degree and became an elementary school psychologist, working for 25 years in the Suffield Public Schools. He enjoyed the outdoors and hiking with his dogs on Land Trust trails.

"He had a strong civic spirit," which drove him to serving the Land Trust and other groups in town, says his friend and long-time neighbor Jim Carpenter. While working, Alan volunteered with the North Canton Fire Department. There were long nights when his family didn't know if he was safe.

After retiring, he became more involved with the Land Trust, sharing his self-taught carpentry skills with children to teach them how to build bluebird houses. "He would cut the pieces and then assist children in assembling them and painting them," Jim says. He helped



supply several CLCT properties with bluebird houses over many years while also teaching lots of children how to build bird houses.

Sometimes he and his wife, Anne Duncan, now a CLCT board member, held monthly Land Trust board meetings at their home, providing desserts and beverages. One night, as excitement built over an especially close UConn men's basketball game that Anne was watching in the other room, Alan announced it was time to adjourn the meeting early, says longtime Director Jay Weintraub. The board moved to the den to watch the last few minutes of the game. "The full board was treated to a buzzer beater by UConn's Tate George," Jay says.



Alan often brought his two poodles to neighboring towns' dog parks to play with other dogs, and his dogs enjoyed the socialization so much he thought Canton should have its own dog park, Jim says. Alan spearheaded the effort to bring a dog park to Canton, pulling together a crew of volunteers who worked with the town to find a location. The Friends of the Canton Dog Park volunteers raised the funds to build the park, which opened in 2020. A plan is underway to name the Commerce Drive dog park in Alan's memory.

By Theresa Sullivan Barger

#### Photos from our Pollinator Pathway Projects



Butternut tree at Mills Pond tennis courts freed of bittersweet vines.



Planted sneezeweed (we thought they were dead) showed up in September at Charlotte Craig.



Six-foot Blackhaw shrub relocated to new Collinsville Pollen Trail sign.

# **Trail Report**

#### Volunteers Help Build Tommy Ryan Trail Bridge

Working together, Canton High School students, board members, volunteers, and a local business owner installed a new bridge for the Tommy Ryan Trail that's part of the Mary Conklin Sanctuary property. The spur trail leaves the red-blazed Ray Smith Trail and meanders down until it meets the unpaved portion of Breezy Hill Road.



Just before it reaches Breezy Hill Road, it crosses a small unnamed brook. Many years ago, a small wooden bridge was constructed to cross the brook. This bridge was only a few inches above the normal waterline. Due to the passage of time and likely occasional floodings, the wooden bridge deteriorated to the point that it was discarded.

Shortly after the original bridge was removed, we considered simply replacing it, but past Land Trust Director Scott Persing suggested replacing it with a rock bridge a few yards upstream. That bridge served us well for some time, but two problems arose. The rocks attracted debris floating downstream, and the rocks became slippery, resulting in one person getting injured. An additional problem was that the west side of the brook near the rock bridge was extremely wet and was largely a bed of mud.

The Land Trust was contacted by Canton High School science teacher Eric Tucker, who offered to have his class help construct a bridge as a



school project. Board Director Nate Cantwell offered to work with the class. Rather than simply design a flat bridge to replace the original bridge, they proposed constructing an arched bridge, which would eliminate the potential for debris becoming trapped behind it and reduce the likelihood of high water soaking the bridge. Nate constructed the bridge during the 2022-23 school year with some help from students. Brandon Richard, the Industrial Arts teacher at CHS was essential to the bridge building, supervising the four students involved as necessary, as well as adding his knowledge to the project.

Steven Lingenheld, owner of Towstar, graciously offered to transport the bridge from the high school to the trailhead on Breezy Hill Road. The next step was to move the bridge down closer to its final destination. Volunteers carried the bridge down the trail, with Nate, **Director Bob Evenski and President** Phil Philbrick helping. Once the bridge was close to its final location, Nate identified landing sites on either side of the brook. They poured concrete footings, and then a crew picked up the bridge once more and dropped it in place. Crews added flooring planks to the bridge after it was placed in its final location.

From a historical perspective, the bridge crosses where a mill pond once existed. Caleb Crosell Goodwin, a descendant of early Hartford settlers, lived in the area near the



bridge in 1855. He and his father, a New Hartford clothier, owned a mill, located just below the bridge; the mill washed and processed raw cloth just off the loom. If you go downstream a bit you will see the remains of a cut stone dam and the foundation for a mill, believed to be the one used by C.C. Goodwin. We may choose to name the bridge for old C.C.

#### Now, my hike recommendation:

Park at the Conklin parking area off Indian Hill Road and choose from several possible routes that would lead to the Tommy Ryan Trail. After crossing the bridge at the western end, turn uphill on Breezy Hill Road (dirt) and go until you get to Indian Hill Road (paved); turn right and finish up at the parking area where you started. This is a nice walk no matter what combination of trails you choose. There is one parking spot near the Tommy Ryan Trail not far from the new bridge, but it isn't the best way to use the trail.

I'm required to rate water features, and any water-loving dog will like the clear running stream flowing under the bridge.

#### "Two Labradors"

I'm also rating the trip from one-to two-doughnuts in length. The CLCT and your doctors do not endorse the consumption of doughnuts of course, but I really don't care. If your mind needs them, they're health food.

By Nate Cantwell

## **Annual Meeting 2023**

For the second year in a row, the Canton Land Conservation Trust held its Annual Meeting at Pratt Preserve at 84 Cherry Brook Road on Sunday, June 3. Pratt has been deemed the perfect spot to hold our annual meeting on the banks of Cherry Brook, where we provided two hikes, a business meeting about what had transpired during the past year and a cookout.

Our Annual Meeting is held on the first Sunday in June, although this year it felt more like March. Folks who were fortunate to bring them donned jackets, gloves and hats. The weather was better suited for hot cocoa versus cold water, but the chillier temperatures meant the absence of bugs, other than those intentionally brought to the event. (See article, page 11)

#### **Trails Day Hikes**

As a tradition and to coincide with the Connecticut Forest and Park Association's "Connecticut Trails Day," CLCT Board Members Sarah Faulkner and Nate Cantwell led two hikes prior to the meeting.

Sarah led 10 participants on a short, easy hike on part of the Waquaheag Trail and all of the Horseshoe Trail. Nate led a longer, more demanding hike with 15 participants, traversing the edge of the brook and hiking steep sections along interesting rock features up the hill. It's a nice hike but short enough that it doesn't even burn off one doughnut, which is a shame because you certainly work hard going uphill on a few stretches.





Another bonus at this year's meeting was the addition of three picnic tables, built by Canton High School students. Steve Lingenheld, owner of







Towstar, stepped up and brought the tables to the site pro bono at the last minute. This provided additional seating and tabletops for those who didn't bring their own. Otherwise, folks gathered in groups catching up on upcoming and past Land Trust events, meeting new and old friends or simply enjoying the serenity of the landscape.

#### **Official Business**

President Stephen "Phil" Philbrick reviewed the many Land Trust highlights and accomplishments of the past year including the new website, photo contest, bird and nature hikes, vernal pool exploration, lichen hike, building bridges and blazing trails, Christmas tree sale, annual scholarship to a Canton High School graduating senior, and the planting of 200 Christmas tree seedlings. These are just a sampling of activities we do with the help of volunteers and members. If you would like to join the Land Trust, visit our website at Cantonlandtrust. org/membership.

Official business included the election of officers, the renewal of current board members and the introduction of three new board members. Treasurer Christian Winkler noted that our financial profile continues to be strong despite market variations. We also recognized the service of retiring board member Stephen Shaw.

Every year we celebrate with a potluck picnic, provided by the Land Trust board, members and volunteers. We had a great turnout with over 60 guests. Next year's meeting will be on June 2, 2024.

Details will be found on our website: **Cantonlandtrust.org.** Hope to see you next year.

By Jeanne Lecrenier Day

#### Attacking the Invasive **Woolly Adelgids and** Saving Hemlocks

At this year's Annual Meeting and Picnic, we were fortunate to have Carole Cheah, Ph.D., Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station entomologist, bring us bugs. Not just any bugs, but ladybeetles [Sasajiscymnus tsugae].

Carole has been studying ladybeetles as a one of the most widespread and effective predators of invasive hemlock woolly adelgids (HWA) for more than 25 years. HWA feed specifically on hemlock species. In the eastern United States, including Connecticut, HWA that originated in Japan have been plaguing hemlocks for at least 30 years. HWA feed on the base of hemlock needles and secrete a waxy, wool covering for protection. Those tiny, white wool masses can be easily spotted on the underside of hemlock branch tips. HWA can kill hemlock trees in three years, especially when the trees are in stressed, drought-prone sites.

Ladybeetles have been used for biological control of HWA in Connecticut since 1995, and the recovery of adelgid-infested stands has been recorded in Connecticut since 2005, while hemlocks' death has been minimal since 2002. Only about 1.7 mm long and 1.1 mm wide, the ladybeetles are a specialized, long-lived adelgid feeder that highly prefer HWA. Carole briefed Farmington **River Watershed Association River** Stewards, CLCT volunteers and other attendees on the role of the ladybeetles to counter the attack of HWA and demonstrated how to identify woolly adelgids on trees. Once identified, volunteers within the group assisted with the release of the beetles on select trees in an area near the brook, an area known as Hemlock Grove and considered worth saving.

By Jeanne Lecrenier Day

## Great Time to Tackle Invasive Plants

Fall and winter provide ideal conditions for removing invasive plants from your yard. In the fall, burning bush's red leaves make them easy to spot. The yellow and orange berries that make Oriental bittersweet so attractive also help distinguish them from other vines. Multiflora rose and Japanese barberry also sport red berries this time of year.

Non-native invaders are referred to as a form of "biological pollution" sweeping through natural and minimally managed landscapes, says the **Connecticut Invasive Plant Working** Group. If homeowners don't monitor or remove invasive plants in their yards, the invasive plants can spread to other areas, such as land trust and town property.

Vigilance against invasive plants is essential to anyone with a yard, garden or land, since birds are so efficient at eating the berries and depositing them everywhere, encased in their own little package of fertilizer. While invasive plants such as Japanese barberry, autumn olive, multiflora rose and Japanese honeysuckle may offer berries for birds and nectar for bees, they are harmful to native birds, bees, butterflies and moths because they crowd out native plants, which are essential to biodiversity. Native plants serve as host plants to native caterpillars, many of whom will not eat invasive plants. (Caterpillars not only transform into butterflies and moths; they are an essential food for songbirds, particularly when raising a clutch of baby birds and during migration. One brood of Chickadees requires 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars to reach the point of fledging the nest.) Invasive plants generally emerge in the spring before native plants, which is another reason to manage invasive plants in the fall and winter.

Since Japanese barberry is known as a tick magnet, check for ticks even if cutting down barberry in the winter. Because of our recent mild winters, some ticks are surviving. If you can, try digging up barberry, burning bush, honeysuckle, multiflora rose and other invasive shrubs; if you can't dig them up, cut them down to the ground and place the clippings in a pile.

For the Connecticut Invasive Plant List by common name go to cipwg.uconn.edu/invasive\_plant\_ list-by\_common\_name/. For photos and information on identifying, removing and replacing with a native alternative, see "Invasive Plants in Your Backyard! A Guide to Their Identification and Control" at tinyurl.com/muvdsrbm.

By Theresa Sullivan Barger

#### **Burning bush**





Autumn olive



## Join and Support the Canton Land Conservation Trust

The Canton Land Conservation Trust (CLCT) is an active, vibrant organization, with all of our trails and properties open to the public at no charge. And what do we need to keep this going?

#### **Time and money**

To say that the CLCT is an all-volunteer organization is an understatement. Almost all of our work is done by volunteer members. They keep our organization running. But it is our membership whom we depend on for financial support. We need you to become and stay a member to support our activities such as:

• Land Protection/Acquisition

### We can't exist without your support

- Boundary marking, GPS mapping, and boundary checking
- Trail development and maintenance
- Designing, making, and installing clear signage
- Construction and installation of kiosks with information
- Website development and updates
- Email notices to our members and the public
- Property maintenance (those fields don't mow themselves)
- Being a good neighbor (working with abutters to our properties)
- Public education about conserva-

tion and forest stewardship

- Engaging the public in the outdoors through hikes, programs, and events such as the Moonlight Hike/Chili Supper, bird walks, and the June Annual Meeting & Picnic
- Creating and mailing two newsletters a year
- Coordinating necessary services, such as working with the town or state for parking areas, signage, appraisals, and public safety
- Developing Board policies to ensure public availability and safety regarding dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, camping, fires and so much more



Our moonligt hike is a "friendraising event" that utilizes over 45 volunteers and board members over many days to make the night a success.

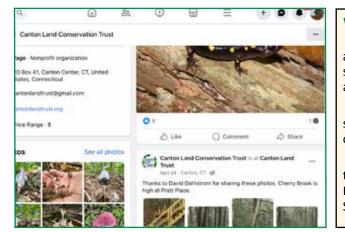
#### Please renew your membership or join today

This newsletter **IS** your renewal and membership form. We are no longer including the "membership envelope" in the fall newsletter.

Go online or cut out and mail the form on page 15 to renew or become a member. Thank You



Our membership envelope has been retired. Try out our online option.



#### WANTED: Communicators

We are looking for fresh new voices to help with both print and digital content to make it current and engaging. We are searching for photos and stories for the newsletter, the website, and social media posts.

We would like to expand and organize our photo library. We're seeking someone who can coordinate our existing work and add other platforms to reach all ages and demographics.

It's a great way to support the conservation of nature, education and recreation in Canton. If you can help, please email either President Phil Philbrick at **stephen.w.philbrick@gmail.com**, or Secretary Sarah Faulkner at **sffaulkner@comcast.net**.

#### 2023 Membership

#### By Michèle Evans, membership chair

The Canton Land Conservation Trust has been in existence for over 50 years and continues to acquire, preserve and protect land of scenic, natural or historic value within Canton. We thank all those who have contributed time and money in the last five decades.

Honorary and current members listed. Go online or use form on page 15 to renew or to become a member.

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#### Become a Member or Renew

Your Membership with CLCT runs from Jan. 1- Dec. 31 Please renew by the end of February

Name(s)			
Address			
City			
Email			
Phone (cell)			
Pay by check payable to:			
Canton Land Conservation Trust (CLCT)			
Mail to: CLCT, PO Box 41, Canton Center, CT 06020			

\$25	Individual				
\$50	Family				
\$100+	Conservationist				
\$250+	Preservationist				
\$500+	Naturalist				
\$1000+	Guardian				
\$ 100+	Business				
\$	Donation				
\$	TOTAL CONTRIBUTION				



Use the code to pay by Credit Card.

Additional gift memberships can also be entered. Email required to acknowledge your gift.

## Pay Online: CantonLandTrust.org/membership Give a Gift Membership to:

Name(s)		
Address		
City	State	Zip
Email		
Phone (cell)		

## BECOME A VOLUNTEER

#### CLCT has many ways for you to get involved

(Membership is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law)

Trail Maintenance 🗌 Mowing 🗌 Tree Planting 🗌 Invasive Removal
Social Media Advertising & Photography Event Planning Law
$\Box$ Finance $\Box$ Grant Writing $\Box$ Property Research $\Box$ Children's Programs
🗌 Hike Leader 🗌 Property Steward 🗌 Pollinator Pathway



## Memorial Donations:

Given in memory of James Flaherty

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#### **Pollinator Pathway Fund:**

#### **Donations:**

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#### Grants:

Connecticut Master Gardener Association

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Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc. PO Box 41 Canton Center, CT 06020

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#### **Newsletter Staff:**

Editor: Theresa Sullivan Barger Layout: Holly Hambleton Copy Editor: Jeanne Lecrenier Day

#### **CLCT Properties Summary**

**Property Protected:** approximately 2,100 acres Added in 2023: 0 acres

**Trails:** 43 trails; 25.6 miles Added in 2023: 1 trail; 0.4 miles

#### **DONATE to CLCT**

Canton Land Conservation Trust continues to encourage and accept donations by check.

CLCT also accepts donations and payments over \$20 with major credit cards (Master Card, Visa, Discover and American Express).

#### Website: CantonLandTrust.org

#### Facebook page:

#### Canton Land Conservation Trust

Thanks to your donations, membership renewals and volunteer time, CLCT continues to protect land and create and maintain trails for all to enjoy.

#### Take Action; Become a Volunteer

Our many activities, all done by volunteers, require people.

Our direct link is cantonlandtrust.org/ time-and-talent