



# THE MEADOW VIEW

The Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield, Connecticut

VOL. VII NO. 1

APRIL 1995

## ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 21 STARTS WITH DINNER, INCLUDES CONNECTICUT RIVER PROGRAM

The Annual Meeting of the Trust will be held at the Rocky Hill United Methodist Church on Friday April 21. It will be preceded by a catered dinner for which reservations and payment must be made by April 14. Please use the enclosed form on which details of the evening are given. No reservation or payment is required to attend the meeting beginning at 7 P.M. Following the completion of business, Thomas Maloney will present **THE CONNECTICUT RIVER: ECOLOGY AND STEWARDSHIP.**

Tom is Connecticut River Steward with the Connecticut River Watershed Council. He has a Master's Degree from Antioch New England where he studied Resource Management and Administration. He will illustrate his talk with slides.

### WINTER WALKS WERE MUDDY!

The four "1995 Brisk Winter Walks" took muddy footed walkers to various parts of the Great Meadows, enabling us to visit eight of the Trust's parcels.

**Walk 1 on January 14** through the Point Meadow in Glastonbury first took nine of us across fields down to the Connecticut River which sparkled in the winter sunshine. We then slogged under the east end of the Putnam Bridge and saw that the fields north of Route 3 had been used for growing corn as in past years. Tired, we returned to our cars just before the sun headed into the sunset shadows.

**Walk 2 on January 22** had as one objective a close look at the Trust's new Di Paola Parcel alongside Goff Brook and North Meadow Road in Rocky Hill. Six walkers found the ground sort of firm under a generous layer of mud, then found the water so high at the brook that the targeted land could not be reached without serious wading. Frustrating! However we found plenty to comment on as we walked past piles of rubbish along North Meadow Road. A pickup truck was seen romping in the muddy fields making a mess of the ground. The rest of the walk took us along the cleared section of the old railroad track, part of the PATH (Rails to Trails project), and up into

the quarry, always an interesting place.

**Walk 3 on February 11** was the briskest. It was taken over snowy and icy ground to Crow Point to look at the area where promoters plan the "build a bridge on a barge" project. The cove was frozen and there were many people ice fishing in the bright sunshine. We marched along the west edge of the water and headed west into the woods to seek the east end of our Welles Hale Easement Parcel. This we saw, but never fixed its boundary. The six walkers approached a deep gorge spanned by a log bridge. One brave soul started to cross, but the badly tipped deck and rope "handrail" made the journey too perilous, so a safer terra firma route took us back to the cars.

**Walk 4 on February 19** was a long one. Twelve started out, but some turned back early on account of the inescapable mud. Starting at the MDC sewage works, we followed North Meadow Road for a while, then headed north across fields to look at two Trust properties on the river in Wethersfield, the Crilly and United Aircraft parcels. Having taken note of the conditions of these areas (good), we took a short cut back and came to a complex of brooks. The party split, one group braved the fast flowing streams, got a bit wet but reached their cars quickly. The other group kept drier but walked much further, even using the railroad tracks to get to their cars. All had a good walk, some going about four miles at a rather slow pace, admiring the winter charm of the Great Meadows.

### MUSSELS IN THE MEADOWS

In our August 1994 issue we included Professor Frank Child's article on finding mussels in Goff Brook in the Rocky Hill meadows. He had sent a sample to Julie Victoria, Wildlife Biologist with the Department of Environmental Protection, and was awaiting a reply, recently received.

Ms. Victoria had the following comments:-

"Thank you for the mussel sample and location report that you sent to me. It is a freshwater species called *Elliptio complanata*. I don't know the common name for this species but, as you pointed out, common names are not very useful. This is a fairly common mussel in the Connecticut River drainage system. In the few years that I have been working with freshwater mussels, this species is the most common one that I've run across."

Further on she concludes:- "Thanks again for your report. The more observers looking for mussels makes protection of this species group a little easier."

### PRE-DAWN FANTASY

#### (Wethersfield Cove)

Early morning fog drifts black upon the meadows,  
No lights, no sound escapes its rolls and spirals  
above the silent river.

Through the eerie light the haybarn, long vanished  
from the shore.

Rises ghostly from the meadow lane.

Prison guards, pulled by specter dogs, waver at  
the gaping barn door.

"Bessie, Bessie, are you there?"

From the hayloft, caught, despairing, she  
whispers down, "I'se here."

In the distance phantom prison bells again ring out  
that long-ago escape.

At the water's edge fish houses, off-floated on  
the flood of '38.

Sway upwards from their ancient brownstone  
beds.

Calls of command, or shouts of hollow laughter,  
return from fishermen

Gathered long ago in preparation for yearly  
alewife runs.

Again the fog-enshrouded ice house looms  
Once filled with sawdust-covered blocks of frozen  
water.

But now the fog assumes a purplish hue.

Light grows above the highway's bank.

Silently the buildings sink into the trailing feather  
mists

Voices fade into the beat and roar of morning  
traffic.

The sun, a brilliant disc, climbs above the  
Glastonbury hills,

Melts the fog to gossamer white

And Day evaporates the specter light.

Eleanor B. Wolf  
September 1994

### OUR AUTHORS

We are proud to have Eleanor Buck Wolf and Edith Royce Schade (Duffy) members of the Trust! Eleanor Wolf, whose poems and articles frequently grace this newsletter, has produced "The Wonderful Barns of Wethersfield". It has delightful sketches of an amazing number of surviving barns. Short histories and old time maxims add to the richness of this book which is available at the Wethersfield Historical Society.

Duffy's book, "From May Sarton's Well", with its wonderful anthology of Sarton's work, is beautifully enriched by Duffy's photographs. It is available at bookstores.

## WILL YOU WORK ON THE LAND?

Two glorious work days are in the planning stage for stewardship of our DiPaola and Nature Conservancy Parcels. Will you help? Here are preliminary details—

### **The DiPaola Parcel in Rocky Hill.**

This 9.4 acre piece needs much cleaning up along its border facing North Meadow Road and along the lane through the east side. The land's location invites quick and easy dumping of trash, but we hope that we can discourage misuse of the land by signs and other means. A major cleanup is essential! At this time it seems as if **late May** would be a good time to do the work. To make definite plans, we need to know how many members of the Trust would be willing to help and what tools they could bring (along with the bug spray). Then we have —

### **The Nature Conservancy Parcel at Wethersfield Cove.**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) will be helping the Trust in the stewardship of this land which now belongs to the Trust but in which TNC, former owner, has an interest. TNC is scheduling one of its volunteer work parties to be with us on **Saturday July 29** at 10 A.M. to help remove woody growth from the open meadowland and eradicate purple loosestrife.

**We hope many will come to these work parties, but we do need to know who. If you are interested, please call Peter Revill (529-9254) or Neal Cox (563-4143) so we can send you details closer to the work days.**

## QUARRY PARK PROBLEM RESOLVED

In 1991 a conflict between the State, Town of Rocky Hill and an adjacent landowner began with the illegal cutting of a roadway through park land at Matteson Avenue. The matter has recently been resolved following lengthy negotiations involving transfers of land and the granting of easements. Signs and a gate have been installed to control access to the quarry and two adjacent residential parcels of land.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Judy Parker, Past President of the Trust, was declared Republican of the Year by the Wethersfield Republican Town Committee at a recent meeting.

## SAY SOMETHING **WILD** TO YOUR TAX PREPARER !!



When having your state income tax prepared, remind your accountant that you want to donate part or all of your refund to the Endangered Species, Natural Area Preserves and Nonharvested Wildlife programs and ...

## GO WILD ON YOUR TAXES

Cut out and give this ad to your tax preparer as a reminder to make your gift.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

## WARM DECEMBER, WARM WINTER?

Your editor has analyzed his thirty year temperature records to see if there is any predictive value in December's temperature for the following three months. Now that winter is safely over, he can fearlessly say "generally yes".

The average temperature for December is 30F, and the average temperature for the combined months of January, February and March (JFM) is also 30F.

Number of years—

Dec. colder than average, following JFM colder than average 11

Dec. warmer than average, following JFM warmer than average 9

Dec. colder than average, following JFM warmer than average 3

Dec. warmer than average, following JFM colder than average 4

So in 20 cases out of 27 the December temperature predicts the winter temperature, i.e. warm December, warm winter; cold December, cold winter. However, no guarantee given!

## 1995 NAYAUG CANOE RACES

The Nayaug Canoe Race, Sunday October 1, will be one of the last "point races" of the Connecticut Canoe Racing Association (CCRA) season. Canoe and kayak racers accumulate points for distance raced, and time and place in the year's CCRA schedule. The point races are exciting to watch, and there are short races for novices and local businesses. For more information, call Dave Ahlgren, Co-chairman of the event at 633-5665.

## COMMENT

We have seen plans for a racetrack come, and we hope, gone for ever; we are warily watching designs for a boat launch ramp and moorings for a bridge assembly plant coming along in spite of our objections; but it is difficult to believe that Wethersfield would want to see the large meadow area south of Route 3 developed as a business park.

The proposal can only invite comparison with what has happened to Hartford's South Meadows - need one say more? Yes! Surely the town ought to rejoice in still having a merciful break from expressways and buildings along Route 3. This road should be a fitting and beautiful entrance to a proud and historic community, not an imitation of Hartford's Murphy Road. (Editor)

## CREDITS

Material for this issue has been provided by Joyce Bauer, Frank Child, Eleanor Revill, Julianne Steffens, Eleanor Wolf and Editor Peter Revill.



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**The Great Meadows Conservation Trust** was incorporated in 1968 as a non-profit tax exempt land trust to protect and preserve the flood plain lands of the Connecticut River in Glastonbury, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield. The Trust has acquired land, holds conservation easements and leases land for farming.

## MEMBERSHIP

For membership information, please write to  
Membership Chair., Great Meadows  
Conservation Trust, P.O.Box 171,  
Glastonbury, CT 06033

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P.O. Box 171, Glastonbury, CT 06033

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**Annual Meeting Reservation  
Form Enclosed**

**GREAT MEADOWS CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.  
" ANNUAL MEETING "**

**Date:** Friday, April 21st, 1995      **Time:** 7:00 P.M.

**Place:** United Methodist Church Parish Hall  
623 Old Main Street (at corner of Church Street)  
Rocky Hill, Connecticut. (Parking lot off Church St.)

- Agenda:**
1. Annual reports to the members.
  2. Election of Directors to serve until the 1997 Annual Meeting.
  3. Any other business which may come before the meeting.

Eleanor D. Revill, Secretary

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**A CATERED DINNER WILL PRECEDE THE MEETING**

**5:30 PM** Social hour with fruit punch  
**6:00** Dinner prepared by United Methodist Women  
of Rocky Hill  
**7:00** Annual Meeting  
**7:45** Program: **THE CONNECTICUT RIVER: ECOLOGY  
AND STEWARDSHIP** presented by Thomas H. Maloney, Connecticut  
River Steward of the Connecticut River Watershed Council.

Please complete the dinner reservation form below and send with your payment (all reservations must be prepaid) by **April 14th** to Eleanor D. Revill, 460 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067-1575.

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I/we plan to attend the Great Meadows dinner on April 21st, 1995.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED (**\$8.00 PER PERSON**) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.