



# THE MEADOW VIEW

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

Vol. VIII No. 1

January 1996

The Great Meadows Conservation Trust  
Presents

**"WAYS MOTHER NATURE CAN DEFEAT THE IRS"**  
Through Better Understanding of Estate and Financial Planning

By

**Austin D. Barney II**  
of Business Planning Associates, Inc., Avon, CT.

*Thursday, February 8, 7.30 P.M.*  
*Rocky Hill Community Center*  
*Church Street, Rocky Hill*

Mr. Barney has been active in The Nature Conservancy, recently receiving its prestigious Oak Leaf award. He has been involved with numerous other conservation organizations including the Connecticut River Watershed Council. A founder and former president of Farmvest, Inc. he has been involved in farm property investments. He lives in West Simsbury.

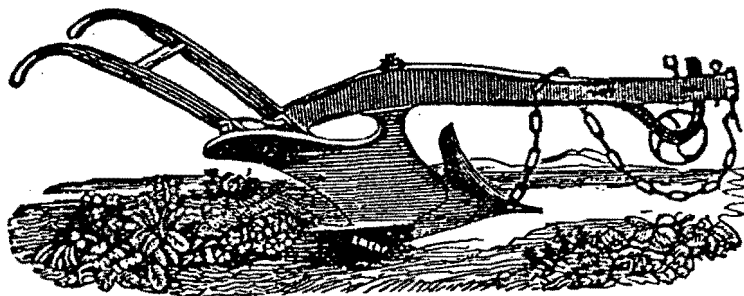
**The Public is invited**

**Refreshments after**

See Map on back page for location

## CONTENTS

President's View	2
Muddy But Merry	2
R.Hill's Environ. Group	3
Folly Brook Monitor	3
Farming On The Edge	3
Land Heritage Program	4
Simple Forecasting	4
Brisk Winter Walks	5
Map To The Meeting	Back page



PLOW OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

## THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW

There is intrinsic value in parks, greenways, open space, wetlands and farmland. Those of us who have joined the Great Meadows Conservation Trust have done so because we believe the Meadows are of inestimable value to all of us now and in the future. We believe that the Trust serves the community by being alert to that which might take away from this place of great beauty. Belonging to an organization, paying our dues is part, volunteering our time and energy is part, but there is more we can and must do. For one: persuading our elected officials to preserve and protect our natural resources is an ongoing responsibility. In today's congressional and state legislative mindset it is of paramount importance that we speak up for the wildlife and the land and waterways that cry out for protection. This we can do. write, phone. E-mail or fax our representatives in Congress.

We can write to the governor today, ask him to release bonds already allocated for the Recreation and Natural Heritage Fund which will enable the state to acquire more forest and open space to add to our overused state parks. We can also beg him to allocate more bonding for the Farm Preservation Program so that farmland owners wishing to sell development rights to their land can be encouraged to do so. We can persuade our local elected officials about the tax advantage of holding on to open space and farmland over approving another residential or commercial development.

Field work is another a way to show support for the land, an example of this is described in "Muddy But Merry" below.

The Trust's Board of Directors and members of its Operations Committee continue to monitor a number of activities or proposed uses of land in the Meadows that might cause irreversible changes in floodplain ecology. Some of these concerns are as follows.

The proposed boat launch ramp at the Putnam Bridge in Wethersfield has long been an issue. In testimony at hearings, the Trust has repeatedly cited the dangers of boat launching where the river current is swift, and possible damage due to the cut in the river bank for the ramp. Flood waters might carve a new channel for the river, ruining much farmland.

Crow Point Cove is the site for a proposed bridge assembly on a barge by the National Eastern Corporation. While a one-time project, it will require substantial dredging, installation of piles for barge mooring, an access

road and some clearing. The project has been approved by Wethersfield town commissions. It has yet to obtain a permit from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Trust testified at the Wethersfield hearings concerning the environmental impact of the project. The Trust plans to take part in the proceedings at DEP. Expert testimony may be required.

A motor cycle track has been created in the Rocky Hill Meadows off North Meadow Lane. In response to a letter from the Trust inquiring if this is a permitted activity or if the owners have applied for a permit, the Town responded that no permit has been issued and that DEP is investigating the matter. The Trust will keep informed on this issue.

The Trust remains concerned with the proposed cutting of trees in the aircraft approaches to Brainard Field. No Trust property is directly involved, but the clearing of the Folly Brook Natural Area by the Department of Transportation several years ago is still in mind. We have discussed the matter with David Gumbart of The Nature Conservancy and the state engineer responsible for the new work.

I am looking forward to working with members of the Trust in the New Year to continue protecting the Great Meadows. Volunteers are always needed for work parties. We also seek people interested in serving on the board or its committees. We need a recording secretary for board meetings! Please call me (633-9379) or any member of the board to let us know your interest or concerns.

Jolly Steffens

## MUDDY BUT MERRY

Christmas was still over three weeks off, mud was thick, a few grunts were heard under the heavy loads of junk being dragged to pick-up points. Still it was a merry band of Great Meadows members who joined the Fish and Game Club to help clean up the Rocky Hill Meadows on December 2nd.

Ingrid Boelhouwer, Thayer Chase, Neal Cox, John Lepper, Peter Revill and Duffy Schade turned up at the Trust's DiPaola Parcel on a clear, crisp and windy day dressed for work. John and Neal tackled the most challenging junk. With ingenious help of a come-along they pulled a massive iron sink out of the stream. Two car hulks were a little too much for them and are a problem still to be solved.

For smaller debris, picture the dignity of our crew as they slopped through mud puddles carrying and dragging rotting lumber, carpeting, roofing, tires, cast iron, styrofoam, beer cans and logs out to the roadside. The town of Rocky Hill has promised to pick it all up and haul it away.

Thayer was the hero of the day, providing donuts for us. That brought forth the merriment!

Thayer's love of trees shone forth as he snipped and pulled poison ivy and grape vines which had been strangling many of the trunks. It's primarily thanks to him too that the stream will now be visible as one passes along the road. With saw and clippers, plus a small amount of help from another crew member, he has controlled the rampant unwanted growth there--for a while.

I think I can say the knowledge that this little bit of the Rocky Hill Meadows has been cleaned up, its quiet beauty restored, is worth the aching backs we may have felt for a while.

Duffy Schade

## ROCKY HILL'S NEW ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

The Friends of the Rocky Hill River Region was organized October 24, 1995, and immediately started work on several fronts. Its purpose is to encourage public awareness of the town's several parks bordering or close to the Connecticut River, and the Rocky Hill Meadows.

The group is sponsored by the Rocky Hill Parks Advisory Board and facilitated by June Cooke. The town, through Christy Hass, Director of Parks and Recreation, is giving assistance with a number of projects.

Of particular interest to the Trust are the cooperative cleanup of the meadows, the move to discourage trash dumping and vandalism, and work on improving Quarry Park, in the forming of which which we played a part.

An immediate benefit to the Trust has been the cleanup workday of December 2 when the Rocky Hill Fish and Game Club and the Great Meadows Conservation Trust collected trash and put it by the roadside for pick up by the town. Duffy Schade's account above is an inspiration for us all!

This new group and the Friends of the Rocky Hill Rails Path are having an **OWL PROWL** on the night of the Full Moon, Sunday, February 4 in the Meadows. Meet 7.30 P.M. at Ferry Park. For information call 529-7139

## FOLLY BROOK AREA MONITORED BY TNC

The Nature Conservancy maintains an interest in their former lands including our "Nature Conservancy" parcel on the west side of Wethersfield Cove. Amy O'Neal, Preserve Monitor, visited the area November 4, with Eleanor Wolf and Peter Revill.

The TNC inspection report notes that the area is primarily a wilderness preserve though efforts have been made to control purple loosestrife\*. The absence of a plaque acknowledging TNC's involvement with the parcel was observed. As a result we have received a metal sign - "The Nature Conservancy - This Area Was Protected With The Assistance of The Nature Conservancy". It is to be mounted where the public can see it, but the parcel is landlocked behind houses on Hartford Avenue. Eleanor has suggested that we put it on a tree on the banks of Folly Brook because the only public access to the area is by boat from the Cove.

We await reasonable weather for the installation.

\* This parcel was the focus of a workday in July reported in the September 1995 Meadow View.

## FARMING ON THE EDGE

"Farming on the Edge: Agriculture in an Urban Environment." was the subject of the program sponsored by the Trust at the Solomon Welles House, October 19. Joyce Bauer, Program Chair, introduced the speaker, Robert Wagner, Director of State and Local Programs for the American Farmland Trust (AFT). Illustrating his points with slides, Wagner provided a perspective on the real potential for economic return in farming close to the city. He reviewed problems facing farmers as development impinges and new neighbors complain of odors, spraying and noises from the farm next door. He spoke of many farmers being in their sixties losing the incentive for staying in farming with its long work hours, weather difficulties, and the temptation to sell and retire to Florida.

To slow the loss of farmland to developers, Wagner had a number of recommendations. First and foremost he urged us to get to know the farm families in our community and work with them to support efforts to stem the loss of valuable farmland. He also pressed for town planning based on cluster

housing and buffer strips adjacent to working farms. Open space and farm preservation programs need citizen pressure on the state legislature to increase bonding allocation for purchasing farm development rights.

Questioned about the advantages to a town to acquire and hold on to open space and farmland, Wagner cited a number of studies done by AFT which demonstrated that the least cost in tax dollars to a community is that for open space and farmland. Residential areas are the most costly with much of its tax money going to schools, but cows don't have to go to school!

Wagner's presentation was well received and his suggestions appreciated.

A video-tape of "Farming on the Edge" filmed by Stephen Uccich of Wethersfield, a member of the Trust, is available for public showing.

## LAND HERITAGE PROGRAM

The Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury will hold its annual meeting on Wednesday, January 31 at the Connecticut Audubon Center in Glastonbury. The public is invited to hear Susan Merrow give her talk "A WAY TO GO" at 8 P.M. Ms. Merrow is First Selectman of East Haddam, Connecticut and serves as Co-chair of the Connecticut Greenways Committee. She is on the Advisory Committee for Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

## SIMPLE FORECASTING, THE SAXON WAY

We may be sceptical of the woodchuck's behavior as a guide to the rest of winter, but we must take notice of the ancients who had the gift of prophecy. In *Weather Lore*, compiled by Richard Inwards and published for the Royal Meteorological Society of London in 1950, we find the following--

According to ancient Saxon lore the general trend of a year's weather was influenced as follows by the day of the week on which 1st January fell. -

Monday: a severe and confused winter, a good spring, a windy summer; Tuesday: a dreary and severe winter, a windy spring, a rainy summer; Wednesday: a hard winter, a bad spring, a good summer; Thursday: a good winter, a windy spring, a good summer; Friday: a variable winter, a good spring and summer;

Saturday: a snowy winter, a blowing spring, a rainy summer; Sunday: a good winter, a windy spring, a dry summer.

Now the test - Our experience -

1994, Jan. 1 was on a Saturday - we did have a ferocious winter with lots of snow. *Saxons correct.*

1995 - Jan. 1 was on a Sunday - we had an amazingly warm winter with little snow, and we had a dry summer. *Saxons correct.*

1996 - Jan. 1 was on a Monday - at least so far it has been severe if not confused. *Saxons correct.*

That's pretty good long range (and long distance) forecasting before the days of barometers, thermometers, hygrometers, radar and any Weather Bureau or America. In fact it's quite spooky!

## THE GREAT MEADOWS CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julianne Steffens (Jolly), President	633-9379
Deborah McIntosh, Vice-Pres.	633-2179
Eleanor D. Revill, Secretary	529-9254
Ingrid Boelhouwer, Treasurer	529-1185
Joyce Bauer	529-6776
Clyde Brooks	633-7406
John C. Lepper	529-2290
Peter J. Revill	529-9254
Edith Schade (Duffy)	633-4885
Donald G. Watson	529-4373

**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.

FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION, please write to Membership Chair, Great Meadows Conservation Trust, P.O. Box 171, Glastonbury, CT 06033  
Or call Joan Mihm at 633-1806

### CREDITS

Material for this issue has been provided by Edith Schade, Julianne Steffens and Editor Peter Revill

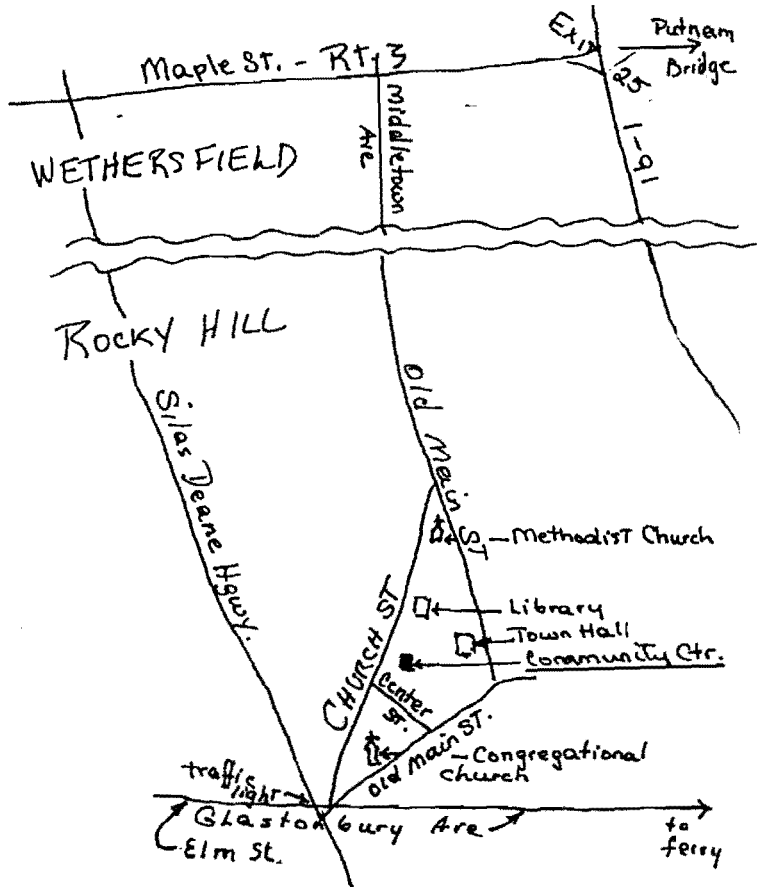
## BRISK WINTER WALKS

The Land Management Committee has planned three walks through the Great Meadows to acquaint members with some of the Trust's lands. At the time of publishing the snow depth seems a little discouraging, but with optimism we present the schedule!

<u>Date and Time</u>	<u>Area to be Visited and Meeting Place</u>
Sat. Jan. 27, 2 P.M.	Glastonbury, Point Meadows, several parcels. Meet at Point Rd. off Naubuc Ave. south of Rt. 2 overpass.
Sat. Feb. 10, 2 P.M.	Rocky Hill, three parcels, one south by the Connecticut River and two in the north part. Meet at Ferry Park area, later walk or drive to Goff Brook Lane.
Sat. Feb. 17, 2 P.M.	Wethersfield, two parcels. Meet along Great Meadows Rd, near Rt. 3 overpass. Access via Marsh St. east of I-91.

Walks will last about two hours. Weather, ground and river conditions may make it necessary to revise or cancel walks. A guide will be at the meeting place 15 minutes before the walk starts unless the weather is atrocious. Dress warmly and visibly.

For further information call 529-9254 or 563-4143.



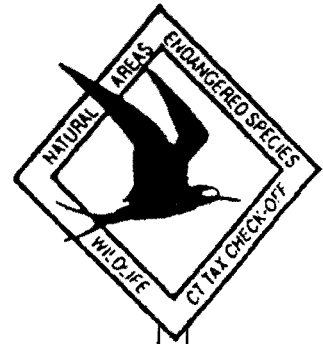
**LOCATION OF ROCKY HILL COMMUNITY CENTER**



*Printed on Recycled Paper*



P.O. Box 171, Glastonbury, CT 06033



**ON TAX DAY,  
DON'T FORGET  
YOUR OTHER  
DEPENDENTS**

If you're getting a refund on your state income taxes, you can now indicate on your tax form that you want to donate part or all of that refund to the Endangered Species, Natural Area Preserves and Nonharvested Wildlife programs at the state Department of Environmental Protection.

