



The Meadow View

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT MEADOWS CONSERVATION TRUST
GLASTONBURY, ROCKY HILL AND WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Vol. XII

Summer 2003

Annual Meeting Features Good Food, Elections, and a Fine Speaker

Following a delicious dinner prepared and served by the Women of United Methodist Church in Rocky Hill, President Ralph Moyer called the Annual Meeting of the Trust to order on March 10, 2003.

The first order of business was the presentation of the Outstanding Volunteer award to Deb McIntosh. Next Moyer turned the meeting over to the nominating committee who presented the slate of directors and officers.

As directors for three year terms:

Duffy Schade – Glastonbury
Chris Sprague – Rocky Hill
Jim Woodworth – Wethersfield
Joe Hickey – Wethersfield

As officers for one year:

President – Jim Woodworth, Wethersfield
Vice President – Lisa Olson, Glastonbury
Secretary – Jolly Steffens, Glastonbury
Treasurer – Neal Cox, Rocky Hill

After the unanimous election of directors and officers, Ralph passed the symbol of office--the old goat--to new president Jim Woodworth. Woodworth thanked Moyer for his three years serving the Trust as president.

Following the business meeting, Heather Crawford, an Extension Educator, for the Connecticut Sea Grant Extension Program gave an illustrated talk on "Clean Waters: Starting in Your Home or Yard."

To learn more, check out:

http://nemo.uconn.edu/workshops_initiatives/clean_waters.htm.



Ralph Moyer presented Deb McIntosh with a photograph taken from Quarry Park, Rocky Hill, by Duffy Schade to express the Trust's gratitude for her years of service.

Deb McIntosh Outstanding Volunteer

Each year we honor one of our members for their service to the trust. This year the award was presented at the Annual Meeting to Deborah McIntosh for the many roles she has played since becoming a member in 1969. Deb was elected to the Board of Directors in 1983. For many years she was chair of the Land Acquisition committee and continues to serve on it now. She helped develop the "Gifts of Land" brochure. She saw to the by-laws revisions in 1997 and in 2000 agreed to chair a major fund raising initiative for the Trust.

THAYER CHASE IN MEMORIUM

by Joe Hickey

With the recent passing of Thayer Chase, we all lost an unassuming friend who was ever the gentleman and the symbol of decency and integrity. In addition Wethersfield lost a good citizen and the Trust a long term, loyal member. Thayer, from an old Rhode Island farm family background on Aquidneck Island, was thus imbued with a love of and respect for the land.

Landscape Architecture, therefore, was an appropriate career choice, offering creative opportunity to work with and sometimes improve on Mother Nature.

Thayer was best known for his landscape design emphasizing native plants or the renowned Merritt Parkway, later designated a National Scenic Byway. However, he was also recognized for the many park development plans prepared in his later career with the former State Park and Forest Commission.

At the local level, Thayer, also made a significant contribution, at one time working with Eleanor Wolf to help save Wintergreen Woods in Wethersfield. In addition, he worked on landscaping plans for the Silas Deane Highway, the Broad Street Green and the Keeney Cultural Center and served on the Town's Tree Committee. Finally, he was active and dependable



The Trust extends its heartfelt sympathy to Thayer's family and thanks to those who contributed to the Trust in Thayer's memory.

member of the Trust's Operations Committee, doing needed mapping and title searching.

In short, Thayer had a long and productive career. His contributions as a professional and as a citizen will remain a memorial to him. We shall miss him.

Autobiographical Notes from Our New President, Jim Woodworth

My earliest memories of the Great Meadows are of gardening with my grandfather in his vegetable patch at the end of Elm Street on a corner of the Comstock, Ferre lot that now lies under I91. From my vantage point perched on my pedal propelled tractor on the sidewalk on the Broad Street Green, I watched the parade of farm vehicles from Anderson and Harris Farms, as well as my uncles on the seed company John Deeres, head down Elm Street to the Meadows.

A stint at college in Vermont led to a career teaching English, interrupted by a draft dodge into the Army Reserve Band. A few years ago my teaching career at South Windsor High School segued into Media Center Technician, while I play on in the 94th Army Band.

Twenty five years ago when my wife Kate and I and our two little boys moved back to Wethersfield into Kate's childhood home on River Road, involvement in the Historical Society came with the c. 1783 house. Activity in the Society meant getting to know Trust members Wolf, Chase, Parker, and sympathizing with the causes of the GMCT, even if there didn't seem enough hours to get involved.

I joined the trust just as the Study and the Wood property purchase were being finalized. My involvement with Larry Lunden's land management committee, and the farmer lease program brought me full circle. When I first talked with David Anderson about leasing the

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Trash and Invasive Species Targeted on Wood Parcel

By Larry Lunden
Chairman, Land Management

This spring eight Trust members helped on three work days at the Trust's Wood parcel in Wethersfield. We continued cutting down the invasive Japanese knotweed and cut a tree that was interfering with this job. We removed tires, glass, plastic pots, cans, sheet metal, an old dog house with its wire fencing and assorted other items. Each session we put the collected trash at the curb and the town took them away. We also tried to remove several larger metal items, but the roots of marsh plants had grown into them and fastened them to the ground. There are other heavy items also on the parcel to be removed.

Many other Trust parcels have had trash problems. Trash is often dumped on parcels that are next to the meadow roads. Many of the parcels had trash on them at the time we acquired them. Under the state law on public nuisances, the property owner is responsible for any items on their land that may cause pollution.

autobiography cont.

acreage on the Wood parcel, David shared memories of my grandfather working the farm in the Meadows, and he even recalled little Jimmy Woodworth cutting through his barnyard on the way to first grade at Wells School.

It is my privilege as newly elected president to lead an organization with such an important and effective past. While I knew so many Wethersfield members, I am so glad to have gotten to know them better, and to know members from Glastonbury and Rocky Hill, as well.

The future for the Trust looks busy and bright as we pursue initiatives in fundraising, membership, land acquisition, land management, and our new presence on the WEB, while planning for fitting memorials to founding members Eleanor Wolf and Thayer Chase.



Cleanup crew members (from l.) Charlie Steffens, Jolly Steffens, Larry Lunden, Paul Flannery, and Rich Doran. Not pictured: Bob Hansen, Paul Woodworth, and Phil Lohman.

The DEP through use of aerial photos locates such large items then sends a notice to the landowner requesting its removal. A few years ago we had to remove a rusting car from the DiPaola parcel with a tree growing through it!

Putnam Bridge Boat Launch Refloated by DEP Submerged by Budget Crises

The DEP once again brought up their proposal to build a boat launch under the Putnam Bridge to compensate for a launch taken by DOT in Old Saybrook.

The resources of Trust files together with engineering reports from the Town Engineer's files provided Trust members with strong arguments. Completing the boat launch would further compromise the river bank and could contribute to the river changing course and cutting deeply into the Wethersfield Meadows unless a berm advocated by the Trust, but rejected by DEP were built. These arguments were delivered by President Jim Woodworth in a hearing before Town Council and in letters to the DEP hearing officer in early May.

Though shelved by the Governor temporarily, the Trust will be ready after the budget crises.



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Late Breaking News!!

Trust Receives Legacy from Eleanor Buck Wolf Estate

The Trust is pleased to announce the receipt of \$47,813.41 in memory of Eleanor Buck Wolf. John D. Wolf, Executor of the Estate of Eleanor Buck Wolf, wrote, "Please use the gift to acquire additional land to further protect the floodplains my mother worked so hard to preserve during her lifetime."

Source to the Sea Paddlers Came Our Way

Depending on the "kindness of strangers" for nightly lodging, canoers Dave Morine and Ramsey Peard shoved off from the Canadian border in late May, arriving in the Great Meadows June 22 right on schedule.

GMCT members Hal Buckingham and his wife Joyce provided showers, pot roast and soft beds for the two "strangers" while Jim Woodworth and Phil Lohman hosted a BLT and beer lunch at the Cove.

In return for our kindness, the two paddlers shared a stream of one-liners (...Ramsey's rule: for every 100 miles of paddling the canoe gets a foot shorter...), an appreciation for the beauty of our meadows, and a passion for land preservation. Dave also shared his expertise gleaned from a career heading land acquisitions for the Nature Conservancy in a drive through the meadows with GMCT president Jim Woodworth. The meadows' lush beauty was, he noted, "a mirror image" of the meadows at the source of the Connecticut River near Canada.

Dave was also acting as "agent" for another "kind stranger" with a number of incentive grants to distribute to land trusts with projects deemed worthy. Naturally, we in the Trust are hopeful that our passion for preserving the Great Meadows shined brightly in the late June sun.

Meadows Eaglette Update

The eaglette born and raised in the new nest in the Meadows is nearly as tall as his parents, strutting around the nest, and flapping its wings, reports GMCT eagle watcher Ken Etheridge. The healthy young eagle has been banded, and, according to eagle study group leader Michael O'Leary, is one of 8 healthy CT eaglettes.



Paddlers Dave Morine and Ramsey Peard relax with Hal Buckingham and Jim Woodworth at the Ferry Landing after their 13 mile paddle. Photo by Jolly Steffens.