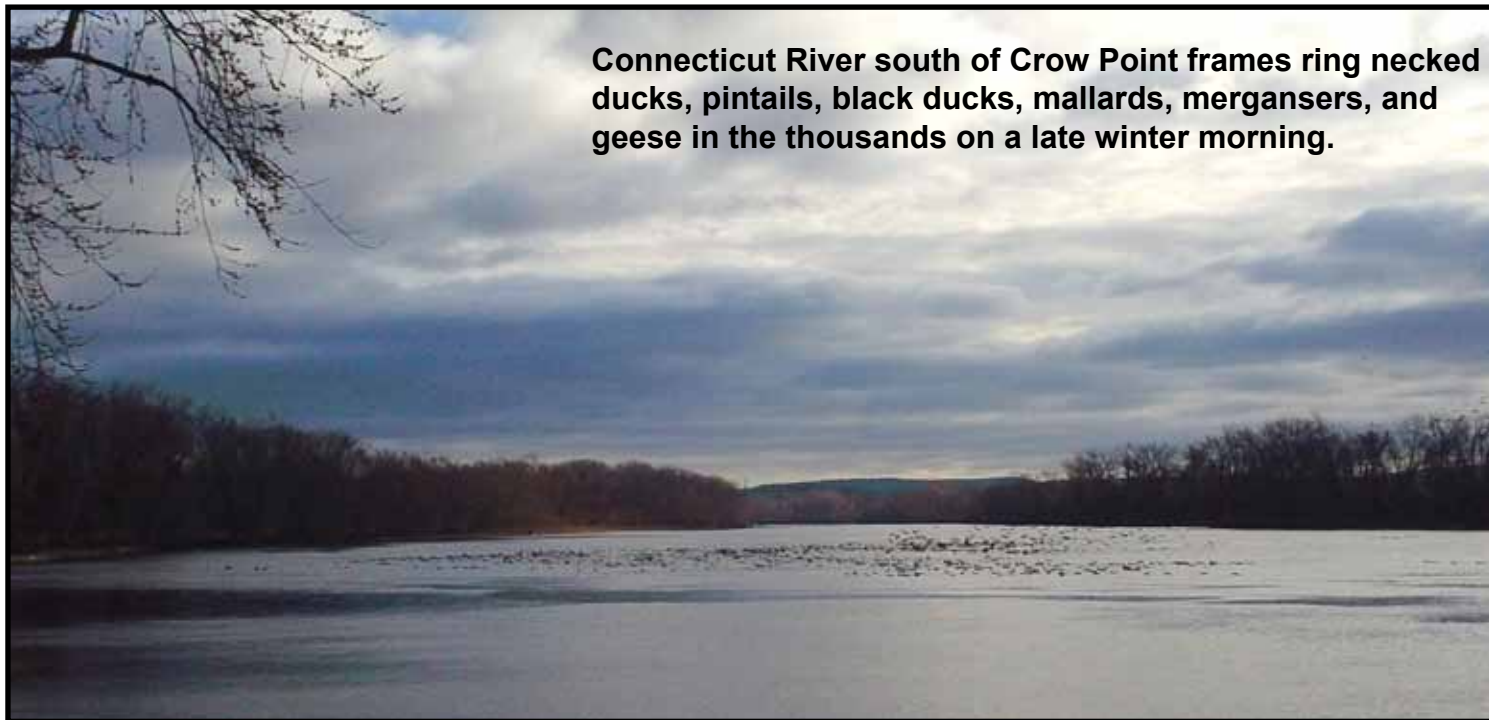




Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.
 P. O. Box 171
 Glastonbury, CT 06033
 www.gmct.org

Call to Annual Meeting—Thursday, March 21, 2013
The Gallery, 141 New London Turnpike, Glastonbury
 Details—Page 7

Connecticut River south of Crow Point frames ring necked ducks, pintails, black ducks, mallards, mergansers, and geese in the thousands on a late winter morning.



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

Vol. XXIX no. 2

March 2013

2012 President's Annual Report

Mark Packard, President

Hello one last time. As the winter snows give way to spring, the GMCT will soon have a new President. According to the GMCT bylaws a board member can only serve two terms of 3 years and my second term will end at the annual meeting this month. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of those individuals who have shared and supported my Presidency and the GMCT over the years. Without your help and support the GMCT would not be the vibrant force the meadows needs and deserves. Thank you.

Conservation Defense Insurance

GMCT has been working on this for a few years now and have finally completed all the steps. Defense insurance is important for properties we hold easements on but are owned by others. The insurance will help GMCT legally challenge infringements upon the easements we hold. In order to be eligible for this insurance GMCT needed to get our policies and procedures in order and I'm happy to report that mission has been accomplished. GMCT now has a Mission statement, Land Management Policy, Land Acquisition Policy and a Records Policy. This is a great place for a new board member to start when learning what the Trust is

all about.

Wood Parcel Improvements:

This year the Wood Parcel received a face lift in the form of a new sign. Drive by the parcel on Middletown Avenue in Wethersfield and it's hard to miss. Jim Woodworth and Bob Ludwig along with others have erected a wonderful sign/information kiosk complete with roof. The sign invites the public into the parcel and on the back side there is information about GMCT and the parcel available. Truly a great addition and a wonderful way to spread the word about the GMCT. You can now park your car just off Middletown Avenue and venture down a short path to last year's improvement, a 35 foot long bridge. The bridge affords a wonderful



view of the marsh and also provides unfettered access to the rest of the parcel on the east side of Beaver Brook.

Elm Street

The GMCT has been busy as of late attending meetings in Wethersfield on an application for a 4000 square foot office/equipment

storage building to be built on Elm Street. Sound familiar? Those were words out of last years report! I'm proud to announce that this issue came up again this year in the form of a requested change to the zoning regulations, and was defeated yet again. It was only through a strong showing of interested

See President's Report, p.2

Agenda—Annual Meeting, March 21, 2013

- 1. Minutes of Annual Meeting March 22, 2012
- 2. Treasurer’s report for fiscal year 2012
- 3. President’s annual report to the members
- 4. Report of the Nominating Committee
- 5. Election of Directors to serve through 2016
Motion: That Sandi Kelly, Daniel Schnaidt and Rebecca Zalznock be elected to serve as Directors for their respective designated

- terms.
- 6. Election of Officers to serve until next annual meeting
Motion: That Tom Kehoe, Sandi Kelly, and Richard Doran be elected to serve as President, Vice President and Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively of the GMCT for the 2013 – 2014 term.

Nominating Committee Report – 2013 January 30, 2013

Committee Members: Sandi Kelly, Tom Kehoe, Ralph Moyer
2013 Slate of Officers and Directors:

Officers:

- President – Tom Kehoe
(Glastonbury – 1st – 2014)
- Vice President – Sandi Kelly
(Rocky Hill – 2nd 2016)
- Secretary – Sandi Kelly
(Rocky Hill – 2nd 2016)
- Treasurer – Richard Doran
(Wethersfield – 1st – 2014)

Directors

- Sandi Kelly
(Rocky Hill – 2nd - 2016)
- Daniel Schnaidt
(Glastonbury--1st – 2016)
- Rebecca M. Zalznock
(Wethersfield – 2nd – 2016)
- Vacancy - Rocky Hill (2013)

Continuing Directors

- Sandy Weiss
(Rocky Hill – 1st – 2014)
- Joseph Hickey
(Wethersfield – 2nd – 2015)
- Elizabeth Schmitt
(Glastonbury – 2nd - 2015)
- Pamela St. Jean
(Wethersfield – 1st – 2015)
- James Zagroba
(Rocky Hill-1st-2015)
- Tom Kehoe
(Glastonbury – 1st – 2014)
- Penny Rusnak
(Glastonbury-1st-2014)
- Richard Doran
(Wethersfield – 1st – 2014)

President’s Report, Continued

individuals with compelling information, neighbors, environmentalists and GMCT members, that this issue was again defeated. Stay tuned, it’s bound to come up again.

Rocky Hill Landfill

Our involvement with the former Rocky Hill landfill continues. Because we own an abutting parcel to the landfill we have a very strong voice in what happens on that site. As reported last year and the year before, Meadow Properties, LLC, is trying to reopen the landfill under the premise that it needs

to be properly capped. GMCT has taken the stance that only necessary repairs, if needed, should be made and impact should be minimized as much as possible. Betty Schmitt and Becky Zalznock have been closely monitoring the process and continue to work hard to ensure the appropriate processes are followed in an appropriate manner..

Please join us, there *is* strength in numbers and our voice with our elected officials gets stronger with every member who recommits to our shared stewardship of the Great Meadows.

Sincerely, —Mark Packard

Special Guest Speaker

Steve Grant

A Brief Environmental History of the Connecticut River: 1600 to the Present



Steve Grant wrote about the environment, nature, adventure travel and outdoor recreation for The Hartford Courant for three decades. He continues to write for The Courant and other print and on-line media as a freelance writer. The University of Connecticut’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources named him the first recipient of its Outstanding Environmental Leadership Award for career-long contributions to improving Connecticut’s natural resources.



The Gallery

141 New London Turnpike
Glastonbury

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Social Hour 5:30 • Dinner 6:30
Annual Meeting and speaker to follow

Buffet Dinner Menu

- Cheese and cracker tray, cocktail meatballs*
- Tossed Salad and assorted cold salads*
- Carving station with roast prime rib of beef and baked ham*
- Pasta with Alfredo and Marinara sauces*
- Baked scrod, breaded with lemon and butter*
- Vegetables du jour, red roasted potatoes*
- Dessert du jour*
- Regular and decaffe coffee and tea*

Cash bar for all other beverages and soda

The cost per person for dinner is \$28.00, tax and gratuity included

.....
—clip here—

GMCT Annual Dinner Reservations

Please reserve **no later** than March 14th
for the dinner Thursday, March 21th, 2013

Questions may be directed to Rick Doran at 860- 690- 9983 or info@GMCT.org

The cost per person for dinner is \$28.00.

Name(s): _____

Phone Number _____ Address _____

Dinners @ \$28.00

Memberships @ \$15 individual/\$25 family

Additional Donation

Total Enclosed:

_____	=	_____
_____	=	_____
_____		_____
_____		_____

Please enclose a check payable to “GMCT” and mail to:



**GMCT Annual Meeting
Rick Doran
223 Main Street,
Wethersfield, CT 06109**

Treasurer's Annual Report by Richard Doran

Assets under investment increased 7.5% in 2012, compared with 2011. Same as last year, these assets remain invested in seven separate funds within the Vanguard Funds. At the direction of the Board in December 2012, the Trust has reallocated assets within Vanguard Funds, by transferring funds from our Money Market Account into three of our other existing funds, in an effort to provide improved current income and long term capital appreciation.

Also during 2012, the Finance and Development Committee reviewed the stated purpose of the investment strategy of the Trust and developed a statement of a plan of investment. The plan of investment of the Trust is to maintain a balanced portfolio, reasonably adjusting the holdings, as appropriate, to reflect economic conditions and achievement of the goals of the Trust.

The general operating account of the Trust remains in balance in a checking account administered and maintained at TD Bank.

An audit of the Treasurer's

accounts was performed and the auditors concluded all of the Trust accounts remain in balance and properly accounted for, using generally accepted accounting principles.

The annual operating budget for 2013 was approved by the Board at the February meeting.

Auditors' Report by Penny Rusnak and Jim Zagroba

To the Board of Directors:

We have reviewed the consolidated statements of cash flows for the one year period beginning January 1, 2012 and ending December 31, 2012. The statements were compared to bank and mutual fund statements, receipts, deposits, and disbursements. All documents were found to support the consolidated statement, as well as the year-end financial report.

In our opinion, the financial statements and reports of the financial position of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. for the period noted are presented fairly, in all material respects.

Penny Rusnak 2/28/13

Penny Rusnak

42 Glazier Drive

South Glastonbury, CT

James Zagroba 2/28/13

James Zagroba

263 Meadow Road

Rocky Hill, CT

Archives Annual Report – 2012, by Larry Lundin

The major accomplishment this year is the adoption of a new Records Policy by the Board of Directors. After much spirited debate, the revised policy is in place, and meets the requirements of the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices, and the conservation easement defense insurance program. The policy addresses the creation, risks, storage locations, and retention period of all our important documents. It also lists the documents required of each of the Trust officials.

I discarded many documents that had outlived their useful life, and made provision for new documents expected in the future. The archives contain a wealth of information on the history and activities of the Trust over its 44 year life.

The nature center provides heating and dehumidification in the basement storage area where our archives are located. One of the dehumidifiers was not working correctly this summer. This has

been fixed. I am monitoring the temperature and humidity in the archive cabinet. I am using the preservation guidelines from the Image Permanence Institute at the Rochester Institute of Technology to evaluate the conditions. According to their estimates, the papers in our archives have a life expectancy of 56 years. There is no risk of mechanical damage or mold, and a minor risk of metal corrosion in the summer.

The plans for the coming year are to continue to convince the Trust officials to give me copies of their documents for safe keeping. The one big challenge with an all volunteer organization is that each official keeps their records at home, where they could get lost if the official becomes inactive. I will be relying on the board of directors to encourage our officials to give the Trust records to the archives when they are no longer actively needed.

Larry Lundin, Archivist

Land Management Report 2012 by Larry Lunden, Land Management Chair

We now own 45 parcels with a total area of 170.6 acres. We have three easements with a total area of 14.7 acres.

I continued to work with the town of Glastonbury to help them update the maps of Point Meadows. The maps now show the location of our remaining Dickau parcel. It is 0.01 acre in size.

We have completed inspections on 28 parcels this year. Eight of them were done by committee members. To help our committee locate our parcels, I have begun to post our boundary signs and paint trees with yellow rings to mark their boundaries. I am also making a series of small maps of each parcel as I do this. Hopefully more reports will be written by committee members in the future.

We put a lot of work into the Wood Parcel in Wethersfield. Jim Woodworth led the project to install a bridge over Beaver Brook so you can visit the back part of the parcel and walk through into the fields. The mayor of



View of wood duck family from Wood Parcel bridge over Beaver Brook

Wethersfield dedicated the bridge on our winter walk. Bob Ludwig led a crew to install a new sign and kiosk at the entrance where we can post notices. I cleaned out the culverts through the dike so the water will drain without overflowing the path. We also cleared out much of the storm debris from the trail.

Several of our neighbors of the Wolf Parcel built and installed a new entrance gate, to replace the old one that had fallen into disrepair. Bob Ludwig carved the gate with our name. Jim Woodworth is planning additional habitat maintenance work using the WHIP grant we received a few years ago.

Our leasing program with local farmers continues to keep 50 acres of farmland in active use. Several of our farming parcels in Glastonbury were not under lease, so we put them out to bid by local farmers. We received a winning bid from Thompson Street Farm for a very small plot, which fit their plan for small scale intensive farming. We welcomed them into our family of farmers.

We are planning to participate in an easement

defense insurance program with the Land Trust Alliance. This will give us coverage in case we find a violation of the conservation easements we hold. Betty Schmidt has been working on a required baseline report for the Walker easement in Glastonbury. There are new owners there and they are enthused about helping us protect the property. They cleared the parcel of lots of dead trees and made it an attractive place. Similarly Rick Doran is working on the baseline report for the Hale easement, and Penny Rusnak on the DeMille easement, both in Wethersfield. The owners are very cooperative in our protection efforts.

The trust is working with the property owners association of the Meadow Hill condominiums in Glastonbury to gain access to our Glastonbury Meadow parcels. There are very few access routes into the area, which makes it difficult for inspections. They are very cooperative with us, and we are finalizing a mutual access agreement.

Two documents that define the committee work are the charge to the committee from the Board and the Land Management Plan. Both have been out of date for many years. I started updating them, with many suggestions from Board members and guidance from the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices. I am including much material from the towns' plans of Conservation and Development to show how our efforts mesh with their policies. The Board will be considering the revisions in the coming year.

We held six winter walks for the public, co-sponsored with the Connecticut Audubon Society at Glastonbury, the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center, and Goodwin

College. We had an attendance of 403 people total, a big increase from past years. We got publicity in the Hartford Courant. Meetup.com continues to be a good form of publicity..



Larry Lunden informs walkers to the Wilcott and Crilly Parcel about agriculture in the meadows while a rare rough legged hawk flies across the field behind him.

Fair Weather Acres and Thompson Street Farm lease farmland from GMCT Michelle and Billy Collins are adapting Fair Weather Acres, their family farm operation, toward the future of sustainable, locally grown and consumed food

A tough environment for commodity green beans had the Collins family thinking about new directions, but \$1 million dollars in losses from hurricane Irene and Lee in August of 2011 were the last straw.

They reduced the 600 acres/2 million pounds of green beans they had been growing in the meadows and on upland in Suffield and elsewhere to 220 acres in the meadows. They began marketing their wholesale beans directly to Whole Foods and other local supermarkets to get a better price. They planted 120 acres of grain corn that rose as high as an elephant's eye and yielded 200 bushels an acre, while corn in the heartland of America was shriveling in an epic drought. They continued to plant 35 acres of pumpkins...some of us remember the drift of pumpkins swept up by the August '11 floods.

And Fair Weather Acres began offering a CSA, selling 150 shares the first year. "Community Supported Agriculture" is a way for the consumer to shoulder some of the risks of farming, by paying the farmer in

advance, reducing his borrowing costs, in return for a box of fresh vegetables every week throughout the 18 week growing/harvesting season. In their second year, they are already nearing their goal of 350 shares. Details of their CSA can be found on their website: <http://www.fairweatheracres.com>.

On their farm at 1146 Cromwell Avenue in Rocky Hill, they built more greenhouses, and created a successful corn maze. On upland and meadowland they planted 4 varieties of sweet corn every four days to ensure a steady supply of fresh ripe sweet corn throughout the season for their stand on Cromwell Avenue, and for their CSA.

The 30 acres of vegetables they plant mean they can supply 8 kinds of lettuce, 3 kinds of onions, purple and orange carrots, kale and collard greens, to name a few varieties. The list of vegetables and recipes in last year's boxes are available on the website, but expect

surprises.

Fair Weather Acres was founded in 1982 by Chris and Mary Collins and their son Billy. Michelle has taken over the retail side of the business from Mary. Chris passed away not long ago, but, to quote the website, Chris's "determination, work ethic, and love of farming will now be passed on to yet another generation of young farmers. Fifth generation farmers, Andrew and Shaun Collins are determined to make their grandpa proud as long as it does not cut into their nap time."



Agriculture and wildlife thrive together on Fair Weather Acres fields in the meadows



Deer tracks in the sandy farm road lead from the forest along the river toward corn fields nearer the gate at Meadow Road where a kestrel box is mounted. Kestrels, our smallest falcon, thrive in open fields. Though they eat some small birds, much of their diet consist of grasshoppers and other large insects. Kestrels have been in decline for many years, so efforts to preserve open grassland habitat, and nest boxes is critical. Art Gingert, a bird enthusiast from Cornwall, has posted boxes all over CT and spreads the word.

Brenda Sullivan's Thompson Street Farm, introduces "SPIN" farming to CT



Brenda Sullivan tills GMCT's Matava Parcel with hand tools

Brenda Sullivan began farming in her large backyard on Thompson Street in Glastonbury, allowing her to work from home, care for her daughter, and reconnect with her family farming roots.

She markets her micro greens, herbs, and fresh produce at farmers markets. Her fragrant craft soaps can be found at Comstock, Ferre in Wethersfield.

To grow her knowledge and skills beyond her own experience, Brenda has taken advantage of the peer to peer learning offered by SPIN. SPIN is an online community promoting "small plot intensive farming" techniques as a step beyond gardening toward economic independence and healthy food production.



Sullivan's first season on the Matava parcel produced abundant sunflowers, green beans, onions. In the background are the trees lining the River.



FWA bean fields are tilled into ridges, allowing the beans planted on ridges to drain well. Integrated pest management techniques reduce the pesticide inputs. Crops are rotated. A cover crop of rye grass, and forage radishes helps to retain nutrients and break up soil compaction.

Support your local farmers!
Fair Weather Acres—
<http://www.fairweatheracres.com>
Thompson Street Farm—
<http://www.thompsonstreetfarm.com/>
Anderson Farms—
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Anderson-Farms/112438265446155>
Killam & Bassett Farmstead—
<http://www.kandbfarmstead.com>
Wethersfield Farmers Market—
<http://wethersfieldfarmersmarket.com/>



FWA's bean harvester scoops up the beans, blows out the vines and stalks and throws the beans up into the hopper.



The freshly picked beans go from the harvester into the washer, then into the dryer, up the conveyor to the packing table where workers fill the boxes for delivery to the regional market or directly to supermarkets. In past years 600 acres of beans yielded \$2 million pounds of beans.



Gingert explains the art of kestrel chick banding to a group enthralled by the feisty fluffy chicks. The kestrel box Art mounted on the gate post at the entrance to Fair Weather Acres farm operation on Meadow Road hosted a pair of kestrels who hatched 4 chicks in spite of constant tractor traffic.



Mark Packard, Anthony Zemba, Ed Chuicarello, Phyllis Carrier, each hold a kestrel chick, ready for banding. Theo and Amelia Packard assist.