
The Balance Sheet

Cheshire Land Trust cheshirelandtrust.org Vol. 37, No. 1 March 2009
Preserving Land as a Living Resource Since 1969

40th Annual Meeting

The fortieth Annual Meeting of the Cheshire Land Trust will be held **Thursday, March 19th at the Cheshire Senior Center**. Join us for a buffet dinner at 6:00 PM followed the business meeting and the election of 2009 governing board. **Peter Picone**, Wildlife Biologist and Naturalist is this year's guest speaker. For more about Peter and his talk see the story on page 3.

Sweet Relief Caterers will provide the main buffet course of entrees, beverages and desserts. Please let us know if you will be attending so we can be sure to have enough food on hand. Contact Janice Yusza 272-9491 PKD405@aol.com.

CLT Celebrates Forty Years

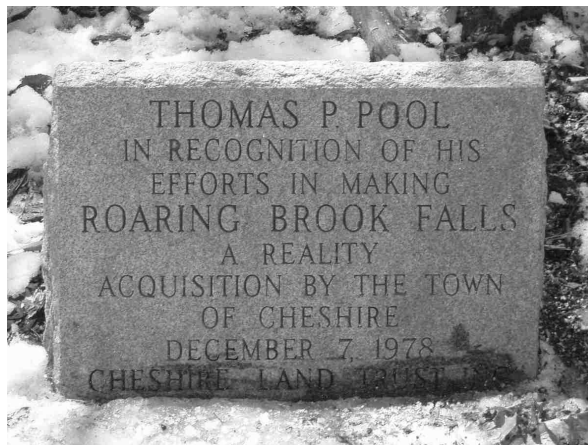
A Retrospective
by Jeanné Chesanow

In 1994, on the Land Trust's 25th anniversary, the program notes contained a year by year chronology of activities. Now as we turn forty let's look back again.

DECADE ONE 1969-1979 The Land Trust put its heart and soul into the acquisition of Roaring Brook. The chronology for 1973 simply states, "Land Trust begins effort to preserve **Roaring Brook Falls**." In 1974, the Trust invited members of the Town Council to meet at the Falls. In 1975, a *Save the Falls petition* with 1,568 signatures was presented to the Mayor by Trust members Tom Pool, Denis Firth, Herbert Cran, and Jackson Jupp. In 1976 \$4000 was pledged by individuals and groups towards the preservation of Roaring Brook. Then in 1978, on November 15th, the Town Council unanimously approved the acquisition of Roaring

Brook – a great triumph for all who worked so hard. The Land Trust scrapbooks from that time period are full of newspaper stories about this effort -- not an easy task since many people were opposed to this acquisition including one man who said that it was nothing but a nest of copperheads!

DECADE TWO 1979-1989 The work on Roaring Brooks culminated in 1981, with the placing of a memorial stone on the Roaring Brook Trail, to commemorate the work of Tom Pool for his many contributions to land preservation. With the acquisition of **Fresh Meadows** in 1985, the Trust
Continued on page 2



Memorial to Tom Pool

Inside This Issue

- 1 Annual Meeting
 - 2 Meet Our New Executive Director
 - 3 The Year In Review
 - 4 2008 Financial Statement
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CLT Celebrates Forty

Continued from page 1

embarked upon a giant cleanup of the once threatened property. Ten truckloads of junk dumped there for many years were finally hauled away to the landfill. Work on Fresh Meadows in 1986 brought forth a parking area, a fence, a wildflower garden and hiking trails. In 1987 a bridge was added to Fresh Meadows. Named for Alice Jupp (past president of the Land Trust), this wooden bridge leads from Brittany Court subdivision into the preserve.

DECADE THREE 1989-1999 During the nineties the Land Trust turned outward to offer educational events to the public. In 1993, the CLT co-sponsored a land preservation/financial planning conference at Quinnipiac College which featured the state of the art communications at the time – satellite broadcast from Boston to an additional sixteen sites in New England! In 1994 the **TRAILS** book came out, a cooperative effort between the town's Environment Commission and the Land Trust. This bright red paperback was a best seller, encouraging people to get out and walk (and bicycle) around Cheshire. Two well-attended forums – one on Open Space and one on Trap Rock Ridges – added to the array of outreach activities of that decade.

DECADE FOUR 1999-2009 The past decade brought a series of firsts: the first buildings acquired by the Trust and the first farm management undertaken by the Trust. Much more land has come our way – McKee-Lewis and Giddings easements, Elizabeth Carpenter's bequest of Brooke Preserve, the Pelz Farm gift, the 164 acre Ives Farm bequest and much more money too, mostly in the form of bequests. More money and more land have brought us more responsibilities, more paperwork, and more happiness. In turn we hope to pass on to the community through trails, walks, and programs –our pride in taking care of our lands, and our joy in sharing them with others.

As we begin our fifth decade, with your support as always, we are proud of our work, thankful for what we've been given, and confident that we will be serving the community for years to come.

1st Executive Director Onboard

Over recent years, CLT has experienced significant growth, due to several large acquisitions, included among them an active farming operation. Further, regulatory and development demands have grown as well. To address these needs, we have engaged Ms. Janice O'Neill Yusza as Executive Director to support the Trust with these challenges.



Janice comes to us with a strong business and development background. She has been deeply involved with the Land Trust for many years serving as the Secretary for the last four years.

Janice has worked for five years with the Women and Girls Fund, a donor advised fund within the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven. She most recently held the position at Webster Bank, responsible for the overall success of Webster's new branches, including marketing, strategic and tactical planning, and personnel.

As we look forward we are confident we are taking the appropriate steps to not only grow, but to strongly support our existing properties and operations.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Grow with us and help us grow. It's time to renew your membership. The membership year is from 4/1/09 to 3/31/10. Your Donations are tax deductible. The Cheshire Land Trust actively manages 25 properties and 4 conservation easements totaling 525 acres. Membership dues and contributions provide for management of these properties.

FOR UPCOMING CHESHIRE LAND TRUST EVENTS

Visit the Calendar section at www.cheshirelandtrust.org

Guest Speaker – Peter Picone

Peter Picone will be the guest speaker at the 40th Anniversary meeting March 19th. His PowerPoint slide show presentation, **"Managing and Improving Habitats for Wildlife: Plants and Wildlife Are Inextricably Linked"** is packed with specific examples of how you can make a difference for wildlife by improving habitat using native plants. Learn which native trees, shrubs, vines and wildflowers are valuable for improving and diversifying wildlife habitat through the seasons of the year. Picone has a 25 year career as a wildlife biologist focusing on wildlife management, research and habitat enhancement in Connecticut. He has been involved locally doing wildlife impact assessments and he has been a board member of the QRWA. For more information about Mr. Picone visit: www.wildlifepassion.net.

The Year in Review

By Kevin Wetmore, President



Kevin Wetmore

This month marks the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Cheshire Land Trust. This is quite a milestone for any organization and especially one that has relied on the dedication of volunteers, over four decades, in support of its mission, vision and growth.

On March 26th 1969 a special meeting of the Cheshire Conservation Committee was held to initiate the formation of the Trust to be organized to preserve the natural resources of Cheshire. Before it was fashionable to talk about going green, carbon footprints, climate change, think globally/act locally, CLT was established by local folks with the idea and energy to form an organization that is in the forefront of these issues. CLT will continue in its efforts to preserve the land and its resources and to

maintain and improve the quality of life for future generations within and beyond our community.

Thanks to the vision of the men and women who formed the initial governing board and the efforts of many dedicated volunteers and members since its founding, CLT over the last 40 years has grown to be the steward of 29 properties covering 525 acres. That same dedication, energy and vision continues to drive our organization.

To celebrate our 40 years of service the Trust's board has planned a series of activities and events during 2009. Our initial event was held on January 3rd and was called "A Winter's Walk in the Woods". The walk was an extensive hike of the woodland and fields of Ives Farms and was very well attended. The hike was led by CLT Directors Bob Davis and Rick Marinaro who have been involved in laying out trails through the woodlands. Much appreciated cups of hot chocolate was provided by Tim Casey mid way through the hike.

March 19th will be our Annual meeting and 40th Anniversary celebration dinner to be held at the Cheshire Senior Center. Other events will include additional tours, a hike to celebrate National Trails Days, Arbor Day celebration and our participation in town wide activities such as the Memorial day parade and the Cheshire Fall Festival. These events will be advertised in the Cheshire Herald and in CLT's website.

PROPERTY & STEWARDSHIP

With the amount of property under our stewardship we had a very busy year in 2008 and I would like to review a few of the key areas of accomplishment:

We have continued to upgrade access to the Brook Memorial property on Sperry Road and have seen a concurrent increase in utilization by hikers and Boy Scouts.

Our Fresh Meadows property on Cook Hill is another property that needs and receives ongoing attention to ensure the preservation of the meadows and as a natural habitat for wildlife.

Continued page 4

Year in Review *Continued from page 3*



Our largest property, Ives Farm, continues to receive special focus. We continue to implement the long range plan for the property based on the plan developed in conjunction with the Yale Graduate School of Forestry and Environmental Sciences. To improve the environment, we removed and properly disposed at the Regional Water Authority's hazardous material treatment center, outdated fertilizer and insecticides. We also worked with Excavation Technologies, Inc. of Cheshire to remove an above ground oil tank that had not been used in years.

One of our goals for the farm is to maintain the historical, iconic farm image of Ives Farm. Toward that end we would like to maintain, repair, restore, or replace with comparable buildings the structures on the farm. We have had a restoration architectural engineer review the large hay barn to determine what would be needed to preserve the structure and put it back into usable operation. Based on the results of that study we have applied for a matching grant to restore the barn. Two additional smaller sheds are beyond restoration and in danger of collapse and will be replaced by comparable looking buildings this spring. Additionally the very large and old Maple tree at the edge of the driveway was running into some problems with rot and insect infestations. We hired a tree surgeon in our efforts to save the tree. At this point it appears we caught the problem in time.

After obtaining property, our primary responsibility is the ongoing stewardship of the property. This includes, at a minimum, an annual onsite inspection and property review with a written report on each property that identifies required maintenance, potential hazards/safety issues, the appearance of any invasive plants (i.e. nonnative), dumping or encroachment by other property owners. To focus on this key area we have a standing Stewardship committee who identifies and trains potential property stewards. With the number of properties there is a continued need for additional stewards due to turnover among existing stewards due to moving, graduation, new job responsibilities etc. If you

would be interested in being a steward for one of our properties or volunteer for other CLT activities please e-mail us at cheshirelandtrust.org with your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address so we can contact you.

In 2008 work was being done to upgrade the power lines through Cheshire and other towns. This impacted one of our properties where the upgrade was going over an existing right of way. We worked with the public utility involved to ensure there was minimal impact on our property while their contractor was working on the lines and using their access over the right of way. Additionally, we had an issue of encroachment on one of our properties which we aggressively pursued to a satisfactory agreement that will repair the damage and provide recovery for CLT's out of pocket cost. We also worked with AT&T to resolve a problem arising out of water damage to a neighbor's property caused by water flowing over their right of way on our property.

As I mentioned in my report last year, the significant growth in CLT's responsibilities caused us to review how we can best meet CLT's added new and growing operational responsibilities. This past spring we rented a small office for our headquarters (2nd floor 1030 South Main St.) for our board, committees and donor meetings and conferences. Furthermore, the space was badly needed to centralize all our files, supplies and equipment used in conducting CLT business that over 40 years was spread out in homes, garages, attics etc. We were able to reduce our costs by renovating the office through the volunteer efforts of Director Larry Piviroto who removed partitions, installed paneling and trim and made an effective office out of two small rooms. We were able to obtain donated office equipment from AT&T and were able to decorate the office with donated paintings and pictures of CLT's properties.

Last year the board authorized the utilization of an independent contractor/consultant to work on required projects as a part time Executive Director. In December, Janice Yusza, a former Board Secretary, was selected and has started to work on

Continued page 5

Year in Review *Continued from page 4*

some of the projects identified as critical to the ongoing future success of CLT. Janice is familiar with all aspects of Land Trust management and is able to hit the ground running.

2008 was a very productive year for the Cheshire Land Trust and the continue support of the members, other donors and the community is very much needed and appreciated.

Kevin J. Wetmore Sr., President



A Long Winter's Walk – A Hiking Tour of Ives Farm

By Janice O'Neill Yusza

To kick off a year long celebration of our 40th anniversary, the CLT hosted 'A Long Winter's Walk' through the woods and fields of the Ives Farm property.

On January 3rd, a crisp and cold winter day, with a fresh blanket of snow and amidst light flurries, Bob Davis and Rick Marinaro served as guide for more than 40 folks of all ages, enjoying a brisk hike through the forest, along the Quinnipiac River, and over fields to the barns. People gathered at the farm shortly before 10:00 am, and began their two hour hike shortly thereafter. The property has managed trails throughout, having been carved out by young Eagle Scouts as part of their project work. So the walk, although in several inches of snow, was well accomplished.

The hikers traipsed along the paths, up the hills, over the small streams to the river, back through the woods and over to the barns. Seeing the barns there, conversation was held regarding their condition. Kevin Wetmore, CLT President, talking about future plans for the farm operations, discussed the need for repair of the barns. The Trust is currently working to raise funds to ensure they

remain in good working condition as part of the active farming operation.

The hike ended with an offering of hot chocolate for all, provided by Tim Casey, Ives Farm Manager. All in all, it was a beautiful to enjoy the farm, and everyone had a wonderful time.

Election of Officers & Directors

The slate of officers and directors will be placed in nomination at the annual meeting of the Cheshire Land Trust March 19th. Four officers and three directors are up for election. Officers serve one-year terms and Directors serve three-year terms. Nominees are listed in bold type.

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President	Kevin Wetmore
Vice President	Eleanor DeVane
Treasurer	David Schrumm
Secretary	Tim Slocum

Jeanné Chesanow	2007-2010
Andrew Knott	2007-2010
Bob Davis	2007-2010

Jim Mertz	2008-2011
Rick Marinaro	2008-2011
Janice Bryden	2008-2011

Kristina Blackwell	2009-2012
Larry Pivrotto	2009-2012
Sam Waldo	2009-2012

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Larry Pivrotto and **Sam Waldo** have been nominated to again serve as directors through 2012. We welcome **Kristina Blackwell** as a new director. Kristina was raised here and she owns and operates Cheshire Frame & Art Gallery. She brings youth and enthusiasm to the board. She has promised to help us preserve Cheshire's open spaces and its small town feel.

TO OUR READERS

The first edition of **The Balance Sheet** was published in the winter of 1973. The one sheet format was mailed 2 to 3 times a year. This year marks 37 for the newsletter. Today CLT news is also constantly updated on our website, cheshirelandtrust.org. The Balance Sheet has been edited by Tim Slocum since 1989.