
The Balance Sheet

Cheshire Land Trust

cheshirelandtrust.org

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Preserving Land as a Living Resource Since 1969

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mark Kasinskas 2016-2017

Why should you have interest in and support the Cheshire Land Trust?

The Cheshire Land Trust believes in the power of nature and open spaces to amaze, heal, teach, and inspire. We believe that open natural areas and working lands are needed as part of a healthy community. We believe such lands must be proactively preserved and maintained to ensure their existence here in Cheshire.

We do this by working to protect great local open spaces, by learning and teaching about them, and by encouraging everyone (including you) to visit and experience them. We want open space to help ever-improve the quality of life in the Cheshire community. This is challenging but important work. On the one hand, it requires steadfast focus on our mission statement (see our website homepage). On the other, it requires adaptation as social trends and scientific understanding change over time. It's a delicate balance.

Are we succeeding in our mission?

CLT owns over 465 acres around Cheshire, and holds conservation easements on another 116 acres. An accomplishment to be sure. As we've done for decades, we continue to protect these open spaces for wildlife and agriculture, hold periodic hikes, host educational programs, and maintain hiking and walking trails open to all. This fall, we're continuing a more recent tradition of A Day At Ives Farm (September 17th), and expanding into what we hope will be a new tradition, the Ives Farm Tractor



Trot 5K (October 29th). We continue to proudly produce The Balance Sheet newsletter, and now also connect with the community through websites and social media.

One thing, however, has remained constant - continued support from the community. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for having interest in the Cheshire Land Trust and for supporting CLT's work. In the end, a land trust is only as successful as the commitment of the people behind it.

But are we doing enough?

Don't just take our word for it that we're doing a good job. Instead, go by the Royal Society's motto - Nullius in verba. Translated (loosely) - See for yourself. Go explore some CLT lands, read-up on our materials (print and online), and come participate in some events.

Thank you again for the continued support, by way of interest, volunteerism, and financial donations, and see you out on the trails and at the farm.



See you there!

RUN OR WALK ...



Just don't miss out on the fun, Saturday, October 29th. The Tractor Trot begins at 9:30 a.m.

The course is *unlike any other* in Cheshire—a 5K entirely on a working farm. No paved roads. No asphalt. You'll traverse woodlands, circle vegetable and hay fields, and run along the banks of the beautiful Quinnipiac River, beginning and ending at a picturesque red timber-frame barn.

Enjoy the day:

- Awards ceremony follows the race
- Music with The Redliners
- Food, Sponsor vendors, Antique tractors
- Farming, Conservation, Wildlife, and Environmental displays



Sign up: www.RunSignUp.com
or link through CheshireLandTrust.org

Register **before** September 26th to guarantee a race shirt *in your size*.

Join our great sponsors!

**Feldman Orthodontics • Cheshire Herald
WPLR • Thomaston Feed • Road ID
Michael's Deli • FroYo • Sweet Claude's
Drazen Orchards • Road ID • Crystal Bees
Woodbridge Running Company • Fleet Feet
Barker Specialty • Wayback Burgers**

Want to be a sponsor?

IvesFarmTractorTrot5k@gmail.com

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Should a big yellow bus pull up to your house and discharge 40-some schoolchildren, their teachers, parents, and bucket after bucket of live fish, you might get nervous.

While it was a bit daunting for us, it was equally exciting to welcome Highland Elementary School for a "fish release" at the Quinnipiac River with Ed Albrecht from Trout Unlimited and Quinnipiac River Watershed Association. "Fish in the Classroom" is taught in elementary schools throughout the state. It's a hands-on experience for kids to learn and connect with nature.



CLT also treated the children to wagon rides, games and crafts. After a picnic lunch, each child and teacher took home a plant, courtesy of Mary Ann and Joe Arisco at T&D Ives Farmstand. The experience was a first and a perfect fit for CLT's Education and Outreach committee.

Continuing to build on a foundation of educating youth to have a healthy appreciation for nature and the environment, CLT recently accepted a request to become a community partner with UConn's Natural Resources Conservation Academy, Dept. of Natural Resources and the Environment.

High School students go to UCONN for a weeklong NRCA environmental boot camp. The kids learn about water quality and fish to wildlife and soils and more. A school-year long mentoring project follows, which culminates with a project presentation.

In August, NRCA Program Coordinator Laura Cisneros introduced us to "our" student, a Cheshire High School senior wanting to explore his interests in environmental sciences and biology. Expressing

enthusiasm with the recent Trout Unlimited fish release as well as an interest in floodplain ecology, we began to develop a plan.

It was the perfect opportunity to enrich the student's experience by asking QRWA, with their ongoing biodiversity and ecology education programs, to collaborate with us.

As we go forward in this joint venture, it truly is a win-win for all parties concerned. This experience will provide this bright young man with an in-depth, invaluable educational experience, one that well may ensure a lasting passion for the environment and help to ensure success in his future career.

MEMBERSHIP HAS MEANING

Who belongs to the Cheshire Land Trust? Neighbors. Friends. Co-workers. More importantly—why do people join? Kahnie and Steve Kaplita joined for the simple reason that they care about the preservation of fields and open spaces in Cheshire. CLT members Dave and Diane Calabro are members, because, “The Land Trust does important work and I feel it is my responsibility as a member of the Cheshire Community to support the Land Trust.” Karen Schnitzer became a land trust member, along with her husband, Mark, because, “We want to help keep Cheshire green, and to help preserve open space not only for people but for the wild critters that need a place to live.”



T&D Farmstand at Ives Farm

REAP WHAT YOU SOW

This summer's weather has been a challenge for farmers, but the news is upbeat from CLT's Jim Mertz, who shares the latest from 1585 Cheshire Street: “Mike and Joe and men have been busy working the fields. Ives corn is now available along with zucchini and yellow squash at the farm stand. Beans, radishes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, tomatoes, swish chard, eggplant and a variety of peppers are being grown, too. Before the recent downpours, the lack of rain delayed some produce from being harvested. Work continues to complete the barn and greenhouse with lamps and electrical switches being installed. The new greenhouse is nearing completion.”



Planting fall broccoli at Ives Farm in anticipation of the coming rains.

Credit: Jim Mertz

Join the Cheshire Land Trust

Open spaces provide habitat for wildlife, protect our water supply and offer countless benefits to the community. Cheshire's pristine wetlands, greenways, farmland and open spaces should not be taken for granted. Join us in our mission to preserve the town's natural character and beauty. Membership offers you the opportunity to *make a difference*. **Renew now!**

Become a member or donate when you go online to **cheshirelandtrust.org**

STEWARDS OF THE LAND



CLT's John Hilzinger gets down to business

CLT's stewardship work included "tidying up" around the Ives Farm barn. John Hilzinger brought out the big toys and with the help of a few volunteers made quick work of it. It was fun and the results look great. Thank you, John.

Stewards went to work in the Ives woodlands clearing trails in advance of October's Tractor Trot 5K. Stewardship was also done at Fresh Meadows (Cook Hill Road, next to Elim Park). What a difference at the entranceway! Overhanging bittersweet and multiflora are now thinned out to let in light and it looks inviting.

Steward lead Rick Marinaro went above and beyond to organize and host our summer CLT tag sale (bargains galore!) and he got the sheds in order and orderly. Great job, Rick.

If you can give some of your time to the cause of stewardship, please contact us. Whether you work on full-scale crews, or do a little hand-to-hand combat with invasive plants with your snipper or pruners, we would love to have you join us. You can reach us at CheshireCTLand@aol.com.

HOW WAS YOUR SUMMER?

The Cheshire Land Trust has had a great spring and summer season. Here are a few of the highlights:

A SUMMER NIGHT AT IVES FARM. The weather turned into a perfect summer night, and the red Ives

Farm barn was an idyllic backdrop for the musicians. Families with children in tow quickly filled the lawn space with picnics and camp chairs to enjoy the night.

HIKES & WALKS. As usual, we also logged a number of miles with a number of hikes for all skills so far this season. CLT partnered with Artsplace, the Cheshire Historical Society and the Cheshire Environment Commission in a Kensett-themed hike to the top of **Roaring Brook**.

At CLT's **Fresh Meadows** property, Audubon's Melissa Baston took a flock of birders to see bluebirds, hawks and other fine-feathered friends. CLT hosted a spring walk at the Cook Hill property as well. Alas, no vernal pools this year.

In June, our CT Trails Day hike along **Prospect Mountain** had an excellent turnout with adventurous hikers looking for a challenge. They were not disappointed.

As busy as it has been, there's so much more yet to come. Please come by any of the CLT events. We'll be glad to see you.



A great turnout for June's CT Trails Day Hike



The Balance Sheet is published by the Cheshire Land Trust twice a year.

Keep up-to-date with CLT news, Stewardship days, events and programs by visiting heshirelandtrust.org, our **Facebook page** or **follow us on Twitter**.

Contact us at CTLand@aol.com or 203-806-0258