

# LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust

Number 5

August 2000



## **Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper to be Held Sunday, September 24**

Please join us for our annual get-together at the Wesleyan Church at 276 Crystal Lake Road in Ellington this year (1/4 mile east from Rt 83 on Rt 140). Social hour begins at 5:00 with soft drinks, with dinner at 6:00. Bring either a casserole or meat dish, salad, or dessert enough for 6 people; dishes that need heating should arrive by 5:30 please. **BRING YOUR OWN PLATE AND UTENSILS.** A short business meeting will follow at 7:00 to elect officers and directors and to vote on bylaw revisions. At 8:00 speaker Dr. Charlotte Pyle of Uconn will give an illustrated talk on "Vernal Pools - Small in Size, Large in Habitat Value". Everyone is invited - members and anyone else interested!

## **Officer and Board of Director Nominations for 2001**

President - Culver Modisette, Stafford

1st V. President - Karl Hasel, Vernon

2nd V. President - Lois Osier, Enfield

Treasurer - Jim Gage, Ellington

Recording Secretary - John Maulucci, Vernon

Corresponding Secretary - Fay Dresner, Vernon

Directors (3 year terms) - Whit Davis, Somers

Culver Modisette, Stafford

Arend Jan-Knuttel, East Windsor

Karl Hasel, Vernon

(1 year vacancy terms) - Virginia Patsun, Somers

Michelle Hayward, Somers

## **Proposed Bylaw Revisions to be Voted Upon at Annual Meeting**

The Board of Directors has proposed 3 revisions to the Trust's bylaws, to be voted upon for approval by the members at the business meeting during the Annual Meeting September 24 as announced above. They are:

1. Article II, Section 1: from "The property, affairs, and activities of the Corporation shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of not less than nine nor more than **fifteen** regular members...." to "The property, affairs, and activities of the Corporation shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of not less than nine nor more than **nineteen** regular members...".
2. Article II, Section 2: The statement "Each member town shall have one representative on the Board of Directors as a minimum." shall be deleted.
3. Article III, Section 1: from "All officers shall be elected by the Board at the Annual Meeting or whenever a vacancy occurs." to "All officers shall be elected by a majority of the members present at the Annual Meeting or by a majority of the Board of Directors whenever a vacancy occurs."

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## **News from McCann Family Farm**

Live rainbows! That is what you would find if you visited the McCann Family Farm property in Somers. With a splash of vibrant blue from the many Bluebirds living and breeding along the Bluebird Trail (we had 7 successful fledglings out of the 10 houses this year), the dash of yellow from the Swallowtails weaving over the swaying hay, to the dazzle of red sprinting thru the air as Damsel Flies danced over bobbing flowerheads, the array of plants and wildlife is overwhelming.

The Farm was part of the Somers Hiking Festival April 15, organized by Judy Snyder and the Somers Open Space / Trails Subcommittee. More than 50 people, ages 8 to 72, turned out for the series of hikes held all day along the Trust's Skyline Scenic Area, Bald Mountain, McCann Farm, and the beaver pond in the Shenipsit Forest. Patrice Carson, Somers Town Planner, said of the festival "We're trying to promote the use and awareness of our ever expanding non-motorized recreational trails system", and the hikes were successful in doing just that!



Thanks to Debbie Farnham at the Colonial Flower Shoppe on Main St. in Somers for her donation of plants used to beautify the Farm!

This spring, a portion of the southeastern trail was temporarily relocated due to a very protective Northern Goshawk, who very aggressively told us of her nest and young hawks. Several Directors were warned quite effectively just how protective these beautiful northern-forest loving birds can be, prompting the trail to be temporarily detoured until mid-June when the young left the nest. The Goshawk is a fairly large hawk, between 20-26 inches in height (similar to a Red-tailed Hawk), with short rounded wings, a long narrow tail, and bold white eyebrows. They are a beautiful blue-gray with a black crown and pale underparts finely barred with gray. Since these raptors are not a common sight, it was a treat to have them take up residence on the Farm this year.



### **Trust Acquires New Properties in Vernon, Bolton, and Andover**

Thanks to 3 sisters, 11 acres abutting Eckers Pond and other town property behind Vernon Center Middle School, as well as houses on Meadowlark Rd. and Glenstone Dr., is now protected from development. Eleanor Delson, Lois Keil, and Miriam Schwartz, with the help of Miriam's husband Sidney Schwartz, recently donated the property to the Trust to be held as open space in perpetuity. The land, left to them in their mother's will in 1997, is partially wetlands, and had not been attractive to developers. Mr. Schwartz approached Vernon's Open Space Task Force in January to determine whether the town or the Trust would be interested in the property, and it was decided that there would be less red tape in transferring the land to the Trust. The existing hiking trails in the area are already being extended into this parcel for the enjoyment of the public.

F. William Finley of Somers and his sister, Ruth Bell of Vernon, donated 26 wooded acres in Bolton as well as 6 acres on Andover just across the Bolton line. The larger parcel is located in the mostly undeveloped southeast corner of Bolton off of School Road. Both tracts will remain in their natural state for wildlife habitat. "The permanent protection of an additional 26 acres of open space complements the Town's plans to acquire the 100 acre Rose Farm for similar purposes" said Bolton Conservation Commission Chairman and Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Committee member Rodney Parlee. "We're happy to see the Northern Connecticut Land Trust expanding its interests into our area and hope we can work with them in the future to protect even more open space."

These acquisitions bring the total property owned and protected by the Trust to 247 acres.

### **Raise Money with No Work at All**

Through the SNET Community Connections program, the Trust has a simple way to raise funds. When our members or friends sign up with SNET for all their long distance calling - or confirm that they are already using SNET Long Distance- SNET will donate to our Trust 5% of their long-distance bill every month. There is no cost to the user or to the Land Trust, nor does it either raise or lower the monthly bill. How easy can it get?

To sign up, call 1-800-635-7638 and give the name of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust and our code number, 3178. It's a simple way to raise money!

## **Trust Receives \$5000 Grant for Property in Somers**

The Keeney Foundation of Somers, a private family foundation for public giving founded after World War I to help Somers area activities, recently granted a \$5000 gift to the Trust to cover the acquisition of open space adjacent to the Skyline Scenic property in Somers. The Trust had acquired the 10 acre property off Stafford Road in 1999 from the Kibbe estate using dollars from an existing stewardship fund, and had applied for the grant in order to replace the funds. The Foundation voted unanimously to award the gift at its annual administration meeting this June. Acquisition of this area allowed the existing hiking trails to be extended, adding to the Skyline Scenic property which was already a favorite spot for area outdoor enthusiasts.

## **Upcoming Programs**

**OCTOBER:** Christopher Modisette will talk on "The Positive Impact of Open Space on Town Financing" on October 12 at 7:30 PM in the Hazardville Fire Station on Rt 190 in Hazardville. Chris is the Executive Director of the Southern New England Forest Consortium and teaches at the University of Rhode Island.

**NOVEMBER:** Eric Thomas of the Water Control Section of the Department of Environmental Protection will talk about water management of some of the rivers in our area - the Willimantic, Natchaug, and Scantic Rivers. Meet at 7:30 PM on November 9 in the Stafford Springs Town Hall in the center of Stafford Springs near the monument.

## **DEP Grant of \$182,500 to Help Purchase Ellington Farm**

The Northern Connecticut Land Trust received one of 21 grants awarded under Governor Rowland's Open Space Acquisition Program in August. A total of almost \$4.5 million to purchase 995 acres was spread over 20 towns in Connecticut as part of the latest round of the matching grant program aimed at protecting 21% of Connecticut's land area as open space by 2023.

The Trust applied for the funds to purchase the Swann farm off of Reeves Road in Ellington. The property totals 56 acres, about 2/3 of which is prime farmland and 1/3 forest. The Trust is in the process of raising the remainder of the purchase price in order to complete the acquisition by this time next year. Once the purchase is completed, a neighboring landowner has promised the Trust that they will donate a conservation easement on their adjacent 36 acre parcel.

The winning of this award on the first grant application by the Trust is a memorable occasion, and we wish to thank George Grant and John Maulucci for their hard work in making it happen.

## **Somers Residents Approve Bald Mountain Purchase**

The town of Somers is buying a mountain. In May, voters approved the \$94,000 purchase of 75 acres, including the summit of Bald Mountain, which at 1121 feet elevation is the highest point in Somers. This will be the first section of the Shenipsit Trail owned by the town, and will insure that the hiking area leading from Ellington to Massachusetts will be protected from development. Plans call for creating some parking spaces along County Road, installing some picnic tables on the mountain, and clearing some brush from the summit to improve the view of the Connecticut River valley.

***Watch for announcements of hikes, programs, and other events of interest in your local newspapers. Further information available from Fay Dresner at 872-4120.***



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**Board of Directors**

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George Grant, Somers  
**1st V. President**  
 Culver Modisette, Stafford  
**2nd V. President**

Karl Hasel, Vernon

**Treasurer**

Albert Grant, Melrose

**Recording Secretary**

Jim Gage, Ellington

**Corresponding Secretary**

Fay Dresner, Vernon

**Directors**

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 Ed Dresner, Vernon  
 Ernie Boothroyd, Ellington  
 Jerry Stage, Stafford  
 Arend Jan-Knuttel, East Windsor  
 Lois Osier, Enfield  
 John Maulucci, Vernon  
 Don Smith, Somers

-----Dues for 2001 are payable anytime between now and January 2001-----

If you have a friend interested in joining the Trust and supporting the work of protecting our natural resources, please pass this newsletter on to them. Contributions are tax deductible.

**MEMBERSHIPS:**

Student - \$2.00	Individual - \$20.00	Family - \$30.00
Business - \$100.00	Life - \$250.00	Patron - \$500.00
	Benefactor - \$1000.00	

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Would you like to receive the newsletter by e-mail?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: Northern Connecticut Land Trust  
 PO Box 324 Somers, CT. 06071**

**If you would like to volunteer to work projects such as fund-raising, trail maintenance, newsletter, or others, please check YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_**