



ANNUAL REPORT

LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

2008-2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Land Trust used to measure success by the amount of land protected, the number of new members attracted and attendance at our events. To be sure, these criteria are still important, but there are new yardsticks we must also apply.

An ongoing easement dispute has reminded us just how important detailed and thorough stewardship is in protecting and defending our properties and easements. It has validated our ongoing efforts to more carefully organize and safely protect valuable Land Trust records using modern digital methods.

This past year we made enormous strides digitizing our records; the year ahead promises further progress with the acquisition of new software for Stewardship and Membership.

In 2008, we embarked on an annual budgeting and planning process. Going forward we will be able to track our financial performance against plan and align our resources to our best opportunities—a particularly important goal in this challenging economic environment.

We believe the budget exercise is critical for our future success. We have always been circumspect with Land Trust moneys, but managing a property portfolio the size of ours is becoming increasingly expensive. More and more, some of the skills we will need may not be available from volunteers. We must watch what we spend money on, and make sure we can grow our cash reserves while spending prudently to realize our objectives.

We count on your membership dues and generous added donations to aid us in our ongoing work.

It is a pleasure to serve as President with such a talented and dedicated board, involved and supportive members and tireless volunteers.

Sincerely,

George Moore
President

THE REPORTS

As always, the Lyme Land Conservation Trust is a group of neighbors working together to preserve our own town. And we are grateful that so many of you continue to support this aim.

That said, we, like many other non-profit organizations, have felt the negative impact of the ongoing recession, and have experienced a dip in our memberships for the 2009 calendar year.

Membership Report

Tom Shoemaker,
Committee Chair

So far, we have around 400 new and renewing members, down from over 500 members in the 2007/2008 membership year.

We are continuing our efforts to build up our membership. If you've already joined us for the 2009 year, our thanks goes out to

you. And if you haven't already done so, please consider joining us today. We need your help.



The primary responsibility of the Stewardship Committee is to monitor and care for the properties the Land Trust owns or on which it has conservation easements. We oversee a total of 2,660 acres. The Land Trust owns 30 properties and monitors easements on another 60, including the 235-acre Pleasant Valley Preserve under agreement with the Nature Conservancy. Fifteen Directors and 17 other volunteers serve as stewards, assigned two to five properties each. At a minimum, each property is visited once a year; the property steward checks the boundaries for encroachment and ensures any activities occurring on the property conform to applicable easements, restrictions or agreements. Work parties are periodically scheduled for the creation and maintenance of trails, the removal of invasive species, and attempts to deal with destructive beaver activities where they affect fish ladders, dams and adjacent properties. The Land Trust also operates and maintains three fishways in Lyme at the dams at Joshua Pond, Moulson Pond and Ed Bill's Pond.

During the past year (2008--2009), stewardship activities were focused on several areas: addressing violations and disputes; evaluating requests for permitted activities; documenting and preparing management plans for new properties; evaluating, managing and repairing dams and fishways; organizing work parties, locating and posting boundaries;

In 2008, the Land Trust continued its financial commitment to the preservation and conservation of open space in the Lyme community. In addition, we took steps this year to strengthen the organization's financial controls. We have purchased and installed a general ledger software package to track and report our financial results. We have also established a formal budgeting process which will improve our ability to support long range planning and thereby sustain the support of the Land Trust's mission.

recruiting and training stewards; and converting records and maps to electronic versions and other cyberspace upgrades.

Our goals for the coming year are numerous! We need to do a better job recruiting and training new property stewards. We will continue to pursue remediation of easement violations; complete renewal

of the Pleasant Valley management agreement with TNC; obtain final sign-off on Baseline Documentation Reports for three recent easements (Ingersoll, Elgart and Lewis); and continue to evaluate potential stewardship issues on prospec-

tive new properties being explored by the Preservation Committee. We will also organize more work parties (or otherwise manage a process) to remove invasive species (barberry, bittersweet, Phragmites, autumn olive, etc.) from several properties; locate and post boundaries at Trust-owned properties and easement properties with the owners' permission; and continue to monitor and maintain the fishways.

The Lyme Land Trust thrives because of the diligence, energy and commitment of its 80 volunteers: board members, additional property stewards and members of the community who have stepped up to join work parties, monitor fish ladders, or sit on committees to plan events and publications. We also thrive because of our loyal members who enthusiastically contribute financially to support our efforts. We are grateful!

Stewardship Report

Emily T. Fisher, Chair,
Stewardship Committee

Our financial commitment to the stewardship of properties has been increased. The responsibility that attaches to stewarding all the properties

which have been entrusted to the Land Trust is a serious one, and it will require continued financial support.

As we go forward, we will continue to be circumspect with Land Trust monies, but it will also be important

for us to grow our cash reserves while spending prudently to realize our objectives.

Treasurer's Report

Andy Baxter, Treasurer

The Education and Communications Committee's focus is to build and strengthen links between the Lyme Land Conservation Trust and its members and the surrounding community, and to raise awareness of the natural resources and history of the Trust's lands.

This year we continued our "Second Saturday" hike program highlighting preserves and points of interest in town. These hikes help introduce the protected properties to the public as well as educating them about the vast natural habitats and resources these properties help to protect. With the dedicated and generous assistance of volunteers and joint committee efforts, the trail maps for these properties were expanded to include our most ambitious mapping effort to date: the new River to Ridgeway trail map, which includes five contiguous preserves. This singular trail map includes more than a mile of high quality tributaries of the Connecticut River as well as parts of the Wild and Scenic Eightmile River, spanning 1200 acres from the Pleasant Valley Preserve through the Jewett Preserve to the ridgeway in the Mount Archer Woods, and down the west facing slope in the Eno and Pickwick's Preserves toward Joshua Creek. Our Second Saturday event for the month of May celebrated this new trail map with a hike through all five protected properties. This year the LLCT is scheduled to participate in the Connecticut Parks and Forest state-wide Connecticut Trail Days to bring attention to the opportunities for free and healthy recreation close to home-made available by these properties protected for public use.

We also continue to schedule an annual winter program which is free and open to the public. Last February, an enthusiastic, capacity crowd flocked to the Wind Over Wings presentation with Hope

In 2008, the Land Trust acquired a conservation easement on just under 10 acres of property owned by Ralph and Leslie Lewis along Ferry Road and Route 82 in Hadlyme. This acquisition was made with the use of a generous gift from an anonymous benefactor. Also acquired was a roughly 3.5 acre parcel owned by Roberta and Mark Velez in conjunction with a subdivision of their property fronting Joshuatown

Douglas and her very popular winged friends.

To ensure that our members and community are well informed on Land Trust matters throughout the year, a Quarterly Bulletin is produced with the assistance of dedicated and talented volunteers for distribution to all members near and far, as well as all Lyme Postal Patrons. This year we increased our mailing to include those who get their mail at the Hadlyme post office as well.

In addition to hosting an information table at the Hamburg Fair which gives us further opportunity to visit with members and our community, we hosted a Land Trust-themed display at the Lyme Library.

Our website continues to offer trail maps, a schedule of upcoming events, the award winning photographs from the co-sponsored photo contest and other information of interest. This year the committee hired a professional service to

assist with expanding and updating our website and we are most pleased with the assistance and results. Please visit us at www.lymelandtrust.org.

This year the Lyme Land Trust is very excited to be attending the Lyme Consolidated School's Salmon Release Program at the Pleasant Valley Preserve and Eightmile River. We look forward to working more closely with the school to promote programs that educate and inform students about the importance of preserving the quality of life for Lyme residents by protecting natural, scenic and historic land and water resources.

The Education and Communication Committee wishes to thank members and volunteers who make our work possible through their generous participation and support. We also wish to acknowledge the generous support from private donations to the Rufus Barringer Resource Education and Protection Fund.

Road. Currently, committee members are making a concerted effort to set up the mechanics for identifying all potential land conservation possibilities that still exist in Lyme. The ultimate objective is to talk with individual property owners about any future plans they might have for their land and to offer information on different ways to preserve the land by using conservation easements on all or part of it.

Education and Communications Committee Report

Penny Smyth, Committee Chair

Land Preservation Committee Report

Templeton Brown, Committee Chair



photo contest

The Lyme, Old Lyme, Salem and East Haddam Land Conservation Trusts have announced the winners of their jointly sponsored amateur photo contest. The purpose of the contest was to focus on the celebrated and scenic countryside of these towns. There were over 400 photos submitted from photographers all over Connecticut. The ages of the photographers were from 8 to 83.

The three independent judges were **William Burt**, a naturalist who has won acclaim for his books of wildlife photography: *Rare and Elusive Birds of North America*, *Shadowbirds*, and his recently released *Marshes: The Disappearing Edens*; **Amy Kurtz Lansing**, Curator at the Florence Griswold Museum and a Yale University doctoral candidate in the History of Art. She is also the author of *Historical Fictions: Edward Lamson Henry's Paintings of Past and Present*; and **Rudy Wood-Muller**, a photographic illustrator and designer whose first large exhibition was at the New York World's Fair in 1964 was followed by numerous other shows, including a one-man show at the Rochester Institute of Technology. A group of his photographs have been selected to be part of the Permanent Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

"There is an additional award given out to honor one of our prior judges, John G. Mitchell, who recently passed away," said Sullivan. "John dedicated his career to writing about the environment and conservation, so the award was for the best picture reflecting that subject."

All the winning photographs will be available for public viewing at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library at 2 Library Lane in Old Lyme during the month of May and during the following months at the public libraries of Lyme, Salem and East Haddam. The photos can also be seen on the conservation trusts' web sites at www.olct.org, www.lymelandtrust.org, www.salemlandtrust.org and www.ehlt.org.

The categories and names of the winners are:

John G. Mitchell Environmental Award

Carl Buschmann, East Haddam

First Place

Wildlife – Cheryl Philopena, Salem

Cultural/Historic – Skip Broom, Hadlyme

Youth Under Age 15 – Kristen Wicander, Moodus

Landscapes/Waterscapes – Carl Buschmann, East Haddam

Plants – Jeff Sims, Waterford

Second Place

Wildlife – Diana Atwood Johnson, Old Lyme

Cultural/Historic – Michael Cathcart, Hadlyme

Youth Under Age 15 – Annie Bolduc, Old Lyme

Landscapes/Waterscapes – Carol Giese, East Lyme

Plants – Larry Reitz, Salem

Third Place

Wildlife – Jennifer Sabatelli, East Lyme

Cultural/Historic – Skip Broom, Hadlyme

Youth Under Age 15 – Tess Buschmann, East Haddam

Landscapes/Waterscapes – Skip Broom, Hadlyme

Plants – Emil Tillona, Moodus

Honorable Mention

Wildlife

Hank Golet, Old Lyme

Cynthia Kovak, Old Lyme

Stephanie Clayton, Old Lyme

Cultural/Historic

Robert Bowman, New London

Haldan Block, Old Lyme

Tony Sullivan, Lyme

Maureen Hartzell, East Haddam

Youth Under Age 15

Ellie Wiese, Old Lyme

Daisy Winkel, Old Lyme

Megan Marie Aldrich, Salem

Landscapes/Waterscapes

George Fellner, East Haddam

Halden Block, Old Lyme

Emil Tillona, Moodus

Plants

Stephanie Clayton, Old Lyme

Linda Waters, Salem

Skip Broom, Hadlyme

This contest was made possible by the generous financial support provided by Lorensen Toyota, the Oakley/Wing Group at Smith Barney, Bank of America, Evan Griswold at Coldwell Banker, Essex Savings Bank, Chelsea Groton Savings Bank, and Pfizer, Inc.

1st Place Winners



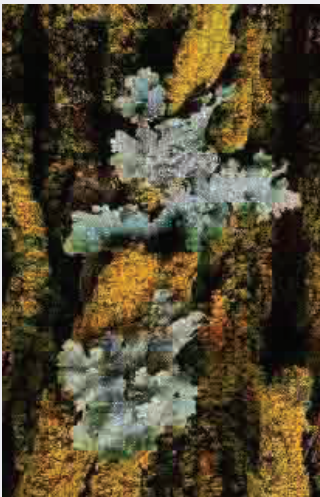
Landscapes/Waterscapes—Carl Buschmann, East Haddam



Wildlife—Cheryl Philopena, Salem



Youth Under Age 15—Kristen Wicander, Moodus



Plants—Jeff Sims, Waterford



Cultural/Historic—Skip Broom, Hadlyme



Lyme Land Conservation Trust
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ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING
Friday, June 5
6 pm, Lyme Public Hall

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Second Saturday Series

Our Second Saturday Series includes walks led by directors of the LLCT board, LLCT members and other community members on their favorite trails in Lyme. All walks are held rain or shine. In the event of severe weather, please contact the number below for confirmation of event. For further information about location of properties, see Trails and Properties page on our website at www.lymelandtrust.org.

Friday, June 5, 6:00 pm

Member's Annual Meeting, Lyme Public Hall

Please join us for a reception and a short business meeting followed by a program on photography and the outdoors, including discussion of composition, lighting and photographic examples. Questions may be submitted in advance to sullivanantony@yahoo.com.

Saturday, June 6, 10:00 am

(note: this is the FIRST Saturday of the month)

Connecticut Trail's Day hike at Honey Hill Preserve with George Lombardino.

Guided 1-mile, light to moderate hike. Trail maps will be available with a partial list of species seen on this property. Terrain includes glacial erratics formed 10,000 years ago. Please meet at the parking area 0.5 mile from Route 82 on Clark Road. (Clark Road is west of the Route 82 and Route 156 intersection.)

Saturday, July 11, 10:00 am

A guided hike at Selden Preserve with Matt Elgart.

This 394-acre preserve is located on Joshuatown Road with parking 1.4 miles NW of the intersection of Joshuatown Road and Mitchell Hill Road. One of the most biologically significant sites on the lower Connecticut River, the Selden Creek Preserve provides vital habitat for many plants and animals, and a site for wintering bald eagles. Spectacular vertical cliffs provide dramatic vistas of the marshes and the creek.

For further information contact Penny Smyth, 860 867-6621

Saturday, August 8, 11:30 am

(note: start time adjusted for the tide)

Kayaking in Lord's Cove with Emily Fisher and Evan Griswold.

Please join us for a beautiful paddle around Lord's Cove. Bring a picnic lunch. There is a limit of 15 participants for this event. Please contact Emily Fisher at 434-8850 or ospreys@sbcglobal.net to pre-register, and for directions and further information.