



The Lyme Land Conservation Trust

2012 Summer Newsletter

“Extraordinary” Family Generosity Preserves Key Gungy Road Lands For Future Generations

On the beautiful Saturday morning of July 14, members of the family of the late David C. Sargent gathered at Lyme Land Trust’s newest preserve on Gungy Road to dedicate it in his memory and name it “Walbridge Woodlands.”

Announced publicly the week prior to the dedication, the purchase of the 46-acre forested parcel on the east side of Gungy was enabled by donations from the Sargent family to honor Mr. Sargent, an avid naturalist who lived all his life in Connecticut and helped with natural preservation initiatives along Connecticut’s shorelines.

During the private dedication ceremony, family members explained the significance of the name “Walbridge Woodlands.” While it was the name of a street on which their childhood home stood, they recounted, to the family “Walbridge” captured the essence of the preserve on a number of levels in several different contexts.

On their initial walk through the wooded upland, the family admired the stone walls, especially a graceful curved wall that appears to have been a specialized animal enclosure.

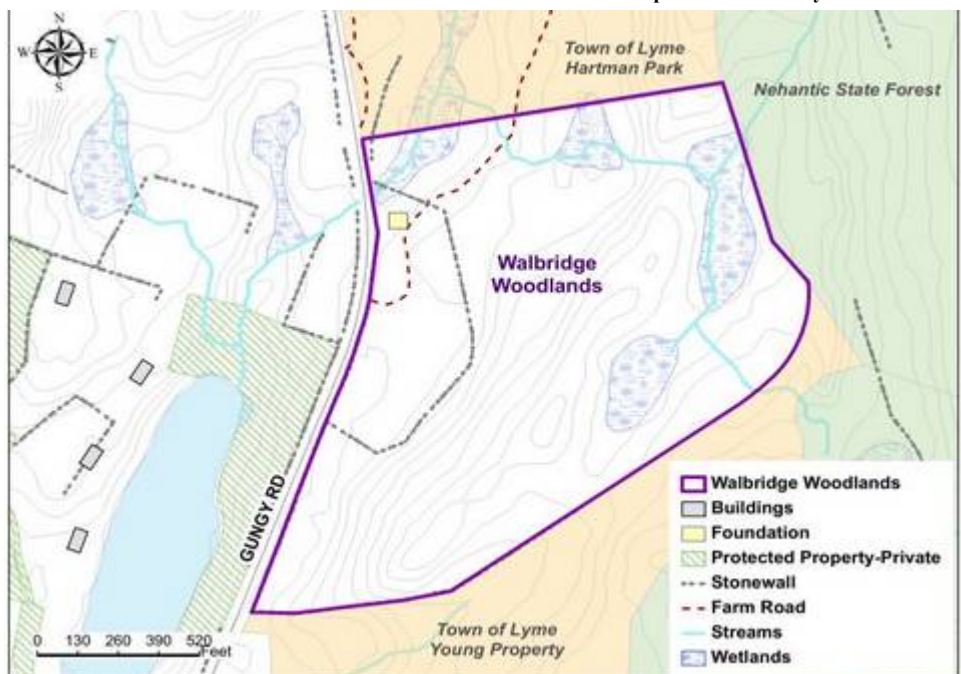
Additionally they likened the preserve to a “bridge” that serves two functions, one physical and another spiritual.

Physically Walbridge Woodlands is a “bridge” that forms a link between existing east-west and north-south corridors of protected land, they explained, and spiritually it will be a “bridge” connecting Mr. Sargent’s love of Connecticut’s woodlands and wildlife to future generations who will
(continued on next page)



David C. Sargent’s family at the July 14 dedication of Walbridge Woodlands: left to right; Jake Sargent, (grandson), Tom Sargent (son), Mark Lewchik (son-in-law), John Sargent (son), Anne Lewchik (daughter), Linda Sargent (daughter-in-law)

Map below created by Lisa Nicolai



Walbridge Woodlands

(... continued from page one)

be able to visit the preserve and share his love of the forests and the world of nature.

Land Trust President John Pritchard recounted at the dedication the unusually good timing of the Sargent family's decision to pursue preservation of the property.

At the time the Sargent family approached the Land Trust with an indication of their interest in preserving what is now Walbridge Woodlands, he said, the property was at the top of the Land Trust's "must preserve" list. Pritchard thanked the family for making it possible for the Land Trust to realize this important objective.

"We know we speak on behalf of our entire Lyme community in thanking the Sargent family for their extraordinary generosity in preserving this important property," Pritchard told the family members at the dedication.

"While the Land Trust board members did not know David Sargent during his lifetime, judging by his wife and family, he must have been a wonderful man," Pritchard continued. "His values, including his passion for conservation and his charitable involvement, are abundantly evident in his wife, children and grandchildren, all of whom have contributed toward the purchase of Walbridge Woodlands. Family members have contributed, as well, to the creation of a stewardship fund to ensure the proper maintenance of the preserve and to support educational programs involving the Woodlands. This has been an extraordinary gift from an extraordinary family."

Pritchard said the Land Trust looked forward to working with Sargent family members to use the Woodlands as a classroom where young people can learn to appreciate the natural world with the hope of promoting conservation mindedness in the future generations.

The Walbridge Woodlands Preserve features a dramatic ridge with seasonal views of the surrounding forests, striking stone outcroppings and ledge rock, quiet wetlands, and a unique stone wall livestock enclosure that hints of the land's pastoral history.

During the dedication, Land Trust Director George Lombardino, who had spearheaded the negotiation of the pur-

chase of the property with its former owners, spoke of the history of the area, its use as grazing lands, and its current importance to the survival of many species that need wide expanses of forest lands and the diversity of wetlands to survive.

Pritchard said that Walbridge Woodlands will remain in its natural state as for-

ested uplands and wetlands and that the Land Trust plans to open the preserve to the public for hiking and nature appreciation as soon as it can develop trails and pathways.

Public access to the Woodlands will be through Hartman Park which bounds it immediately to the north. An official opening ceremony has been set for Nov. 18.

David C. Sargent's Poetry: Inspired By Mother Nature, the Treasured Past & A Changing World

Among David C. Sargent's hobbies was writing poetry. A number of his poems, which family members have published in two volumes, were inspired by his love of nature.

His poems, composed in heroic couplets of iambic pentameter, were familiar to residents of Essex Meadows where he lived toward the end of his life.

At the dedication ceremony for Walbridge Woodlands, family members remembered their father and grandfather by reading four of his poems. With their permission, one of those recited at the dedication is reproduced below:

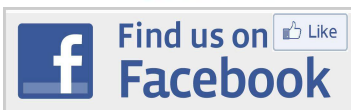
NOSTALGIA

We all remember favorite haunts
We roamed through as a child
A meadow or a mossy nook,
A scene forever wild.
The mysteries of a woodland trail,
The waves upon the sand,
And all those things that go to make
A nature wonderland.
Whatever and whenever- they
Were part of nature's plan,
Which somehow had escaped the oft
Destructive hand of man.
The years have intervened and now
We find much ugliness
As concrete malls and urban sprawl
Replace our wilderness.
I worry for the kids today
Who sit around and fret,
Instead of searching secret haunts
They seek the Internet.
We grew up in a lucky time;
We had a war 'tis true;
As well as a depression, but
Our values carried through-
And now we have our memories
Of how things used to be
When one could walk a city's streets
Without anxiety-
The world will never be the same
No matter what we do.
'Tis fitting we accept with grace
The best of what is new.

By David C. Sargent (1915-2007)

The Lyme Land Conservation Trust Newsletter

Published by The Lyme Land Conservation Trust, Inc., PO Box 1002, Lyme, CT 06371 info@lymelandtrust.org Tel: 860-434-4639



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The publication of this newsletter is underwritten by a generous grant from



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Would You Like to Support the Lyme Land Conservation Trust?

← Use the convenient envelope bound into this newsletter to mail in your donation today.

Do you appreciate and enjoy Lyme's open space?

Preserving our community's open space is the mission of the Lyme Land Trust.

The scenic vistas created by connected corridors of open space help to create that special "Lyme feeling," which is the result of decades of work by the Land Trust, our conservation partners, scores of volunteers, and of course generous donors. Contributions are essential for us to preserve and maintain open space in permanent conservation for all to enjoy.

Unlike many conservation entities, we open almost all of our properties to the public. The many trails provide you and your family with an unparalleled opportunity to get outdoors and explore nature so close to home.

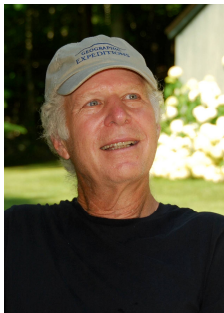
However, like most things in life, there are costs attached, and if you can help the Land Trust with a donation, we would be grateful and will put it to good use.

Thank you.

If you are already a member or donor, be assured we appreciate your support.

President's Message

Generosity Energizes Land Trust's Agenda



John Pritchard
President

We all have much to celebrate and much to look forward to. Walbridge Woodlands, the Land Trust's latest acquisition, is the second major property in a row that the Land Trust has

been able to preserve through major gifts by conservation minded donors. Last year the HJ Promise Foundation and the State each provided half of the purchase price of Chestnut Hill Preserve at the top of Sterling Hill Road. This year the family of the late David C. Sargent provided the entire purchase price of the beautiful Walbridge Woodlands on Gungy Road and established a stewardship fund for the property. In our feature article we thank the Sargent family on all of our behalves.

It is heartening that the urge to preserve our unique landscape has prompt-

ed such generous gifts for that purpose. Our Lyme community, our beautiful rural landscape and the environment are the direct beneficiaries. Thanks also to the many of you who have given generously over the years to help protect and preserve our heritage!

In this Newsletter we also announce that the Land Trust will be hosting its first annual fund raising bike ride which we are dubbing the "Tour de Lyme."

Lyme's scenic country roads provide some of the best cycling – dare I say it? – in the world. Our first event will be next Spring when Lyme will be at its verdant best. As we explain in the article, the Land Trust is the only area not-for-profit institution that has not held annual fund raising events. The yearly gap between our costs and our contributions from members makes it imperative that we no longer hold this distinction.

Uniquely designed for both road and mountain bikers, we believe that the

Tour de Lyme will attract support from cyclists throughout the region. As with other walks/runs/rides, riders will be urged to form fund raising teams and to appeal to non-biking supporters. We feel that the event is especially appropriate for the Land Trust as cyclists will be biking through the very landscape that their contributions will help to preserve.

Much attention has been devoted lately to the relationship between art and landscape. And it is hard to think of another place where they are so inextricably linked than Lyme. That is why we have been so pleased to team up with the Lyman Allyn Art Museum and the Lyme Art Association to host artists attracted to our annual "Paintout," held this year on the Land Trust's Clucas Preserve on Brush Hill Road. Be sure to read Molly Turner's interesting article on the topic (see page 6).

Finally, please pay special attention to the events calendar (see box below). The Land Trust will be putting on programs focusing on bats, Lyme's beavers and other fascinating topics. The program on the beavers promises to be especially riveting!

Calendar Of Upcoming Land Trust Events

All events subject to change. Dates & times will be announced by press release, e-mail, and will be posted on the LLCT website and Facebook pages. Please consult the Upcoming Events page at www.lymelandtrust.org for the latest information. To receive email notification of events, please send email to: info@lymelandtrust.org with request to be added to events email list.



Trekkers logo = Kids Event

Saturday, September 8 - 3 p.m.

Bat Chat



Where - The Bjornberg's Barn at 59 Brush Hill Road, Lyme. An opportunity to get to know our most misunderstood allies. Bats have been around for 50 million years, yet we have only studied them over the last six decades. With the help of a bat named Buggy, Gerri Griswold from the White Memorial Conservation Center in Litchfield will explore the bat biology, ecology, and sonar, as well as the threat of White Nose Syndrome to our local bats. Gerri and her bats have presented hundreds of programs to community organizations and has produced a segment about bats for The Late Show with David Letterman. Please stay to enjoy a grilled hot dog after the program.

Saturday, October 6 — 10 a.m.

The Lyme Beaver Walk



Come walk with us for about 2 hours. See details on page 9. This will include sites near Tantamorum and Mitchell Hill roads. The starting point is yet to be determined. Sturdy waterproof shoes are recommended. Check our website (lymelandtrust.org) or Facebook page for details. Or email info@lymelandtrust.org for details.

Saturday, October 20 — 10 a.m. - noon

Managing Invasives & Other Woodland Scourges

Where - Call Diana Boehning to make a reservation at 860-434-2336. A special members-only event. Join us for a guided walk through a magnificent privately managed Conn River estate that will include; deer enclosures in 2 different stages of growth, extensive control of invasive species, timing of mowing of fields, tree harvesting done several years ago, walk up to top of ridge to see a new managed Pitch Pine Plantation. About a two hour walk, pretty easy on woods roads, with some hilly spots. Lovely views. Members and their guests only: limited space. No dogs please; older children welcome.

Sunday, November 18 — 2 p.m.

Walbridge Woodlands Preserve Opening



Where - Park at Hartman Park on Gungy Road. Walk the new trails on this newest LLCT preserve. (See story page 1). Let us introduce you to this 46-acre parcel of land that completes an unbroken east-west greenway corridor running across a long swath of southern Connecticut. The program will be about 2 hours. No dogs please. More information to come.

Tour de Lyme, An Annual Cycling Event To Benefit The Lyme Land Trust

The Lyme Land Trust will be hosting its first annual fund raiser - the *Tour de Lyme* cycling event - next spring.

The Land Trust's mission to protect Lyme's landscape has helped preserve a cycling paradise, which is enjoyed by the many cyclists who regularly ride the town's lightly traveled rural roads. The Land Trust will seek their support and ask them to ride in *Tour de Lyme*, scheduled for May 11, 2013.

"As we have been informing our members, the acreage of preserved properties under our care and management has grown dramatically over the last decade or so," explained LLCT President John Pritchard. "At the same time, so have the associated costs. As a consequence, the Land Trust has long had a sizable and growing gap between membership dues and contributions and its operating and stewardship expenses – even though many of you have increased your annual contributions significantly, for which we thank you!"

The Land Trust doesn't charge admission fees, and unlike other area nonprofits, until now has had no regular general fund raising events. "The *Tour de Lyme*," said Pritchard, "will be a means of raising needed additional operating and stewardship revenue while providing riders a quality biking experience - all the while showcasing a landscape that the Land Trust, with help from its community supporters and partners, has helped preserve."

The Tour will also enable LLCT to reach beyond its membership base to raise money for the Land Trust.

Most fund-raising bike rides are organized for either road or mountain bikers. Parks and preserves in Lyme boast some excellent mountain biking trails, Pritchard pointed out, so the *Tour de Lyme* will offer top riding experiences for bikers of both persuasions.

"One consequence of our mission to



Tour de Lyme — Registration & Volunteers

Registration will begin in October. Visit www.tourdelyme.org for updates and more information. Suggestions, ideas and/or concerns you may have regarding *Tour de Lyme* are welcomed and encouraged. This

event will need volunteers to assist along the routes and at the start/finish site. Please contact george.moore@lymelandtrust.org with your questions, suggestions, concerns and offers to volunteer.

preserve and maintain Lyme's rural, scenic and natural landscape has been the preservation of Lyme's quiet country roads and off road trails that bikers like," said Pritchard.

"We believe that road and mountain bikers will turn out in considerable numbers to provide generous support -- individually and through their friends and supporters -- to the Land Trust while at the same time enjoying an unparalleled biking experience," he said. "Because of that we are confident we can attract commercial sponsors to help

us with the event costs."

Bikers will be able to choose rides of various lengths (see box below) along Lyme's quiet country roads and lanes. All the routes will get bikers out for a morning of exercise in Lyme's lovely natural landscape.

Start times for the various rides will be set so that all riders will return to the staging area in time to enjoy a picnic lunch with fellow riders, volunteers and sponsors that will close the event.



Menu Of Rides At All Challenge Levels

Road Cyclists

The Family Ride: 10 miles over beautiful, quiet and gently rolling country roads.

The Valley Ride: 21 miles through the Eight Mile River Valley and its tributaries.

The Classic Ride: 26 miles through Lyme's most beautiful countryside.

The Challenger: 55 miles of beautiful and demanding country riding.

Mountain Bikers

Mountain bikers will have equally enticing options in Lyme's famously rugged backcountry.

Lyme's Preserved Open Space: Art & Landscape

Before it can ever be the repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock. —Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory

By Molly Turner

Secretary, LLCT Board of Directors

The mission of Lyme Land Conservation Trust (LLCT) is to conserve Lyme's natural, scenic, and historic land and water resources, including ... landscape painters.

Yes, it's true—artists are resources, and we're doing everything we can to keep them on LLCT properties.

The forested hills and meadows surrounding our homes are filled not only with maple and hickory, schist and granite, foxes and fieldmice, cardinals and hawks, but also with the visions of earlier Lyme residents, most notably the well-known American Impressionist painters of the Lyme Art Colony such as Henry Ward Ranger, Guy Wiggins, and Willard Metcalf.



“The Green Meadow” by Willard L. Metcalf. From the Lyman Allyn Art Museum; Reprinted with permission.

We humans are creatures of culture and history, even when we are communing with nature. When we look at a summer meadow we see more than the waving grasses and nodding wildflowers before us. Our sense of place is an evolving montage of individual experiences informed by the interpreta-

tions of artists and scientists and authors, bit by bit over time.

Lyme Land Trust's Annual Paintout, now in its second year, brings painters from all over New England to recreate and reinterpret our landscape. The resulting exhibition, “Celebrating Lyme's Beauty,” is a wonderful opportunity for Lyme residents who don't know ultramarine blue from cerulean to think about our relationship to the land from the artist's point of view.

The Paintout also represents a significant new direction for the Lyme Land Trust in terms of community outreach and education, because we have developed it in partnership with two significant local cultural institutions, the Lyman Allyn Art Museum and the Lyme Art Association.

From the point of view of community and education, landscape painting is a vibrant example of how individuals can interact with nature in positive ways. One of the functions of a land trust is to make peo-

Second Lyme Paintout Draws Plein Air Artists To LLCT

Last spring the Lyme Land Trust again partnered with the New London's Lyman Allyn Art Museum and the Lyme Art Association (LAA) to sponsor the Second Annual Lyme Paintout at the LLCT's Clucas Field property on Brush Hill Road.

Artists came from all over Connecticut and Massachusetts to participate, and when they arrived, they were greeted by a Land Trust welcoming tent staffed by volunteers and stocked with refreshments.

Susan Ballek, the LAA Executive Director said about the event: “This

is a fantastic partnership between three local non-profit organizations, each with a connection to Lyme's landscape. The Land Trust's commitment to preserving Lyme's open space made the Paintout in Clucas Field possible, the ability of the Lyme Art Association's artists to capture the landscape's beauty through plein air paintings, and the magnificent setting at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum for an exhibit and opening reception, all truly make this a spectacular event.”

Below: “Breath of Spring” by Barbara Maiser of Niantic captures the rocky copse in the center of Clucas Field.



Paintout Works On View & On Sale At LAA Until Sept. 7

Many of the painting of Clucas Field and its surrounding forests were first hung in The Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, where they were featured at an opening reception in early June.

The exhibit has moved to the Lyme Art Association, Old Lyme, where the works will remain on view until Sept. 7 and are offered for sale.

Below: truck tracks in Clucas Field provide distance perspective in “May Meadow” by Patricia Seekamp of Guilford.



Time Entwined In Brushstrokes Past and Present

ple aware that their individual decisions have an impact on their community and environment, and the Lyme Land Trust has been unusually effective in engaging local individuals, whether or not they are land-owners, in protecting and conserving for the future.

While often human impact on the environment is perceived as an overall negative--our garbage, our carbon footprint, etc.--the LLCT's organizational history shows that individual human decisions can have a tremendously positive ecological effect, and contribute to the common good. The paintings are valuable testaments to this fact, and they show how the land can become different, new, perhaps even enhanced, by its filtering through the human mind/eye.

Our Paintout project shows that land conservation is about much more than ecology and recreation in a place like Connecticut, where our landscapes can rarely be



“Church on the Hill,” Guy Wiggins’s iconic 1900 painting of Lyme’s Grassy Hill Church. From the Lyman Allyn Art Museum; Reprinted with permission.

called feral, let alone wild. Our domesticated landscapes reflect human history in a myriad of ways, and it's difficult to walk through Land Trust properties without taking into consideration the history of each property and its meaning to different facets of community life over the years.

Thanks to the work of the Land Trust, its community supporters and its conservation partners, Lyme is and always will be a very special place. Now that so much land has been protected, the Land Trust is in an enhanced position to help the community create a new narrative about our collective landscape.

During a time when civic engagement is on the wane, and rural/suburban communities have fragmented, our town in some ways has become more cohesive and intertwined because of the Land Trust properties that connect all the points on the map.

We're reviving our history through landscape, and remaking it at the same time. By acknowledging and celebrating different kinds of human interaction with the land, in the past, present, or future, whether it's farming or gardening, hiking or boating, hunting or fishing, painting or poetry--or the work of conservation itself--we build a stronger web of caring in Lyme that will encourage better use in the future.

LLCT's Clucas Field



Above: Margaret Nowak of Medford MA pauses while painting the scene at Clucas Field. Below: Land Trust hosts greeted artists with refreshments.



Lyme Art Association Director Recounts Impressionists' Ties With Lyme At Land Trust Annual Meeting

The featured speaker at the June 15 Annual Meeting of the Lyme Land Conservation Trust, Inc., at the Lyme Public Hall was Susan Ballek, executive director of the Lyme Art Association.

Ballek traced the history of the American Impressionist School and its deep-rooted connections in Lyme, starting in 1899 when Henry Ward Ranger visited Old Lyme and stayed at a boarding house run by Florence Griswold.

Ranger returned the next year with other artists, she recounted, and within a few years there were enough artists gathering in Old Lyme each summer to support an annual exhibition of their works at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library, which soon attracted dealers from as far away as Chicago.



It was not long before they formed The Lyme Art Association for the purpose of building the gallery, which was designed by Charles Adams Platt and opened its doors in 1921.

Ballek described how the LAA continued to flourish and expanded its gallery in 1938. The Association now offers almost 60 classes and workshops by 50 well-recognized art instructors reaching over 500 students each year and organizes 12 art exhibitions per year displaying more than 2,000 paintings.

Beavers In Lyme Are “Keystone” Species Creating Habitat That Supports A Biodiverse Wildlife Population

By Melvin Woody

As we all know, some neighbors can be more difficult than others, such as the beaver family that moved in next to the Land Trust’s Beebe Preserve last year. Without applying to the Inland Wetlands Commission, they cut down enough trees to build a dam across Beaver Brook, thus creating their own swimming pond – and built a home without a building permit.

Still, you can’t help admiring them. Beavers are proverbially eager and industrious, stubbornly persistent in repairing and maintaining their homes and waterworks. They are astonishingly effective hydrological engineers who reshape the environment to suit their own needs by transforming landscapes into waterscapes. Only humans do more to shape the land than beavers, and the beavers have been at work on the land much, much longer.

No wonder they don’t recognize Lyme’s wetlands and building codes. They were here first, millions of years before humans invaded their environment. Given that their only tools are their teeth and paws, the scale of their achievements is astounding. One dam in Canada’s Buffalo National Park spans 2,800 feet, twice the width of the Hoover Dam. Remains

of dams up to 4,000 feet long (three-quarters of mile) have been found.

When the pilgrims landed, there may have been two hundred million beavers in North America, perhaps the most successful mammal species on the continent. Yet by the middle of the 19th century, none remained in Connecticut. The fur trade had trapped them out and the farmers had turned the forest into pastures for cattle, sheep and goats.

Beginning with relocation of a single pair to Union in 1914, beavers have been reintroduced into Connecticut, and as farmland has reverted to forest, the beavers have returned in force, especially to places like Lyme where they arrived in the mid-1980s.

If they have flooded your drive or lawn or cut down your prize trees or shrubbery, you may not welcome them back. But now that they have spread throughout Connecticut you can no longer get the state to move them elsewhere. So we will just have to learn to live with them – and appreciate their value to the land.

Biologists call beavers a “keystone species” because their hydrological engi-

neering clears a space for dozens of other species, both vegetable and animal. Fish and fowl, frogs and flies that soon flood into the fertile wetland the beavers create.

The beavers themselves need water deep enough to allow them to swim under the winter ice to reach the stockpiles of food they store on the bottom of the pond, which also serves as a protective moat around the home lodge that they construct in the middle.

They build a platform of sticks and mud a few inches above the water, then a pile of sticks as much as ten feet high which they proceed to hollow out from beneath to form a room or two. They make at least two entrances under water and an air hole above. Although the lodge just looks like a pile of brush, the beavers plaster it with bottom mud as the weather cools and it freezes hard.

The next generation – from two to six “kits”- are born in early spring and remain in the family until they are two, helping to maintain the lodge and dam. So the typical lodge may house a family of eight to twelve beavers.

Since a single pond can only support a limited number of beavers, the two-year-olds leave to seek promising pond sites of their own.

Meanwhile, as the pond matures, it further enriches the environment. Sediments that would otherwise wash away drop to the bottom purifying the water that flows downstream.

The pond and surrounding wetlands serve as a sponge that protects against flash floods in the major streams and rivers. Slowed by the dam, the pond water warms and fosters more plankton and microbes that feed fish in turn.

Meanwhile, the beavers have to delve deeper into the landscape in search of food and building supplies.

Supple swimmers in the water, they are awkward pedestrians. They may create

(Continued on facing page)

Beaver Facts: *Castor Canadensis*

Castor Canadensis, the North American or Canadian beaver, is actually a rodent, somewhat related to squirrels, and is primarily nocturnal, preferring to gnaw down trees and build dams and their houses at night to avoid predators.

Habitat: along streams, tributaries and brooks, usually foraging no more than 30 yards from shore with a total range of about a mile.

Diet: beavers are herbivores. In the summer they eat primarily roots of water lilies, pickerweed, and cattail. In the winter they eat primarily inner bark of willow and poplars (aspen, cottonwood) stored underwater near their houses.

Predators: coyotes and domestic dogs, and occasionally bear (which tear apart lodges to get at the beavers inside). Kits (young beaver) are the prey of small fur-bearers (otters, mink, & fisher cats) and of large predatory birds (owls and eagles). Humans also prey on beaver for their pelts (where & when legal). Two-year olds are often killed by automobiles when dispersing to build their own lodges.

The Lyme Beaver Walk

Open Air Seminar on Lyme's Beavers

Come Meet Some of Your Most Industrious Neighbors — Saturday, October 6

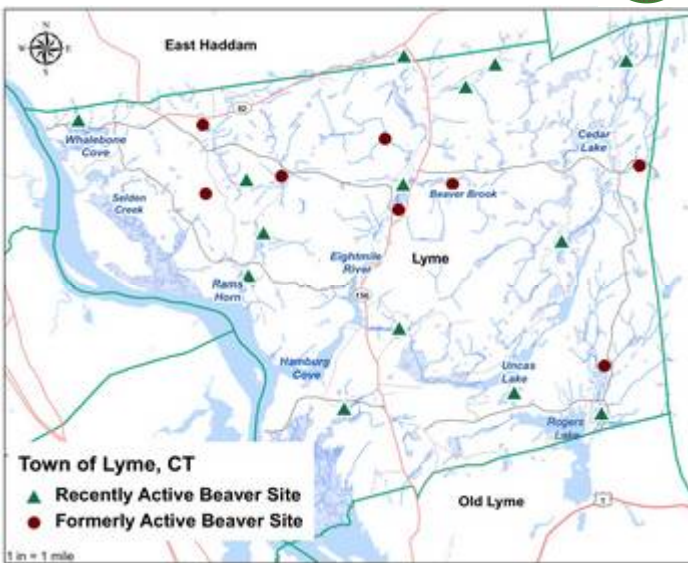
The Lyme Land Trust is sponsoring a special walking tour of several beaver activity sites in town on Saturday Oct. 6 starting at 10 AM. Come walk with us for about 2 hours, and we will learn as we go.

Seminar leader Ann Kilpatrick, district wildlife biologist from the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, will teach us everything we want to know about beavers, their habitat, and the many other flora and fauna that depend on their industrious woodlands engineering for survival.

We will visit dams, dens, ponds and the final-stage meadows left when the beavers abandon a pond and move on.

This "Lyme Beaver Walk" will include sites near Tantamorum and Mitchell Hill roads. The starting point is yet to be determined. Sturdy waterproof shoes are recommended. Check LLCT website (lymelandtrust.org) or Facebook page for details. Or contact us at info@lymelandtrust.org for more information.

Map created by Lisa Nicolai



Bob MacDonnell, Nature Photographer

The photos below were taken by Bob Macdonnell of Niantic, a commercial photographer and photojournalist whose hobby is nature photography (www.bobmacdonnell.zenfolio.com). He is seeking opportunities to photograph wildlife in Lyme. If you know of locations where there are opportunities for animal pictures, contact him at: bob@macdonnellphoto.com. He will respect your privacy & the location's confidentiality.



Active Beavers In Lyme

A beaver lodge above in a pond created on the headwaters of Roaring Brook between Mitchell Hill and Brush Hill roads. Below a close-up of a beaver in the lower pond in Hartman Park on the headwaters of Beaver Brook.



(..... continued from facing page)

canals into the wetlands to facilitate transportation of limbs, twigs and saplings back to their lodge and stockpiles, but eventually, they eat themselves out of house and home – or lodge and pond - and abandon the site. That may take decades, depending upon the local environment. Or, a severe flood may breach and destroy their dam, as happened

in our Ravine Trail Preserve last summer. But even a sound dam will not long remain if the beavers leave.

Without their vigilant maintenance, the stream washes its way through and the pond empties, leaving behind an enlarged wetland to be exploited by the frogs and other species living at the pond's edges. As the wetland dries out, it leaves a rich, fertile bot-

tomland and a clearing open to sunlight.

That creates the conditions for the final stage of the changes in the landscape for which we have to thank the beavers: the emergence of a beaver meadow. In due course, riverine trees such as aspen and willow will spring up in the meadow, inviting the return of beavers to start the cycle all over again.

A Family Heritage of Stewarding Connecticut Lands For Four Centuries

By Rich Melchreit

Saving precious conservation land — as important as that is — is just the beginning of the vital work of the Lyme Land Conservation Trust.

Once preserved, land needs monitoring and management by volunteer stewards.

The title “steward” has a long and distinguished history, testimony to the importance of the role. It derives from the Old English “Stigward” meaning “keeper of the house,” dating from the 9th century. Stewards were high officials in medieval royal and noble households.

Their management of the various affairs of these great houses were vital to the success and even the survival of their noble overlords. In the higher reaches of the nobility, the stewards too were nobles; a steward founded the Scottish royal family, the “Stuarts,” which eventually claimed the throne of Scotland, England and Ireland from the 14th to the 16th centuries.

Lyme Land Conservation Trust may not have fancy titles or riches to bestow on its stewards, and doubtless Lyme Land Trust stewards will not found the next royal dynasty in the USA, but the LLCT stewards are paid in things more precious than gold. They are given an opportunity to affirm their love of the land, and they have the joy of knowing they are just as important for success of the endeavor as any in a castle keep.

A good way to find out if you would like to be a “stigwear” is to talk to one - let’s talk to two of the best: Les and Marta Cone.

Les and Marta are longtime residents of Lyme. Les was born here – delivered by Dr. Julian Ely. The Cones have a long history with the lower River Valley, they go back to the 1600’s, and one of Les’s ancestors founded Haddam.

Les and Marta met in New York City and lived there several years, but came back to Lyme to raise their son because they wanted him to experience the freedom and closeness to the land here.

Their son grown, Les and Marta de-



Marta & Les Cone

cidied to get involved in the Land Trust because they see what would be lost if Lyme fell prey to insensitive development.

Les never forgot his boyhood experiences growing up in this place where he spent most of his time outdoors. He could walk through vast fields, which before reforestation, stretched in every direction.

Marta tells how he remembers the locations of many treasures hidden in the woods - foundation of abandoned houses, springs and waterfalls, romantic hideaways...but I digress.

On their stewardship tours they get to see the amazing richness of the forests, the shrubs and trees, and wildlife. Lyme is more than the Lyme most of us know, the Lyme we see whizzing by the windows as we zip around in our automobiles on daily business. The Lyme the steward sees is Lyme in full flower, as beautiful and inspiring as that is.

The Cones monitor five conservation easement properties. Stewards may monitor easements or Land Trust-owned properties. They walk the properties once or twice a year and take a map to check for boundary markers and to see whether anyone has built anything they shouldn’t.

It takes about a half day to visit most properties. They find the owners of ease-

ment properties appreciate the work of the stewards, because the stewards walk the land when sometimes the owners can’t - they may be unable to tramp the uneven terrain in the woods, or live out of town.

The relationships between owner and steward, like those of the medieval nobles and their stewards, are mutually beneficial.

Owners can feel comfortable that the sacrifices they make to give property or easements to the Trust are being respected and are worthwhile.

In addition to walking properties, Marta joins in work parties that clear trails or mark boundary trees with those familiar little diamond-shaped Land Trust signs.

You don’t have to be handy to join a party, though there is definitely a place for people with manual skills like carpentry or use of the chainsaw.

Stewardship is a great way to socialize. Marta, who served on the Land Trust Board of Directors from 2001 to 2007, says it’s a great way to meet extremely interesting and nice people, especially for someone who is relatively new to the area.

You will find people with common interests to share good times, accomplishments, and good conversations, which lead to enjoyable acquaintances and fast friendships.

If You Want To Be A Volunteer Open Space Steward, This Is What's Expected And How to Join

Though the Lyme Land Trust has many stewards, there is always need for more. Stewardship is a great way to participate in the Trust and to do something essential to its success.

If you are interested in learning more about volunteering to be a LLCT steward or to join a work party, or to learn more about how you can participate in Land Trust, contact Don Gerber at 860-434-7477 or donsturning@att.net .

The LLCT depends on volunteer stewards to be its eyes and ears for each of the properties it stewards to ensure that the properties are being protected and used as required by deeded and legal requirements. Stewards have an opportunity to represent the hard work of the Land Trust to the Lyme community and the general public that benefits from protected open space.

Property Steward Qualifications:

- Willing to “adopt” an LLCT property and gain a thorough knowledge of the property.
- Willing to participate in ongoing educational workshops necessary to learn about land stewardship practices and training programs related to land management.
- Able to walk the property at least once a year.

General Responsibilities of a Steward:

- Monitor property annually, preferably more frequently if public access is allowed.
- Fill out an annual report of general observations regarding the condition of the property.
- Remove small trash and debris.
- Conduct basic trail maintenance (only properties with marked public trails).
- Walk boundaries of easement or conservation restriction area (with permission from the landowner) or property boundaries for fee owned land.
- Maintain boundary markers with fresh flagging or paint and add LLCT signage where appropriate and with owner permission.
- Assist LLCT staff and volunteers with trail design and construction where appropriate.
- Meet with and act as a liaison to owners of properties on which LLCT holds a conservation restriction (easement), neighbors, property users (where permitted) and other members of the community to build positive relationships.

Three Dozen Stewards Looking After Almost 3,000 Acres of Lyme Open Space

Sue Ancil
Moe Ancil
Linda Bireley
Emily Bjornberg
Sherry Block
John Block
Diana Boehning

Temp Brown
Carl Clement
Marta & Les Cone
Beverly Crowther
Jeb Embree
Angie Falstrom
John Falstrom

Emily Fisher
Don Gerber
Evan Griswold
Mary Guitar
Fred Harger
Wendy Hill
Anthony Irving

Prescott Littlefield
George Lombardino
Louise Lynch
Chuck Lynch
Bill Martin
Sarah McCracken
John Pritchard

Mike Richardson
Kathy Rowe
Tom Shoemaker
Penny Smyth
Molly Turner
Keirnan Wholean
Melvin Woody



LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST STATISTICAL STEWARDSHIP DATA POINTS

2,912 Acres — Total acreage under LLCT stewardship
99 Parcels — Total properties under LLCT stewardship

MADE UP OF:

619 Acres — Total acreage owned and stewarded by LLCT
33 Parcels — Total parcels owned and stewarded by LLCT
2,058 Acres — Conservation easements held and stewarded by LLCT
65 Easements — Conservation easements held and stewarded by LLCT
235 Acres — Acreage in Pleasant Valley Preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy and stewarded by LLCT
36 Volunteers — Number of LLCT members who donate their time to steward property for which LLCT is responsible



The Lyme Land Conservation Trust

PO BOX 1002, Lyme, CT 06371

Address Service Requested

Eightmile “RiverFest 2012” Oct. 13 At Devil’s Hopyard

The Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee has announced that it will hold its popular biennial RiverFest at the Devil’s Hopyard State Park on Saturday, Oct. 13.

The 2010 event, also held at the Devil’s Hopyard, attracted almost 500 visitors.

They were treated to the twangy sounds of the Eight Mile River Band, the tastes of chili and chowder from the Moodus Sportsmens’ Club, and visits with local wildlife from Meigs Point Nature Center and and the well-known Wind Over Wings.

The Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee promises that the 2012 event will bring back old favorites and offer a few



newcomers, including a falconry demonstration with Skyhunters (which provided thrills for the attendees at the 2011 Lyme Land Trust Annual Meeting) and wildlife cartooning for kids with artist Wild Bill Taylor.

The Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee sponsors this free family event to celebrate the Eightmile River Watershed and the communities and organizations responsible for preserving its resources

for all to benefit.

More information will be available in September on the Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee website at www.eightmileriver.org

