

## **Speech by George Lombardino, Lyme Land Trust Board Treasurer December 1, 2018 - Moore Trail Opening Ceremony**

Welcome to a day long in the making and a celebration well deserved. We're here to honor George Moore, former Lyme Land Trust Executor Director, President, and now Director Emeritus; and Rosemary Moore, the real power behind the scenes.

First, I want to thank Lyme Land Trust Executive Director Kristina White, President John Pritchard and Director Wendy Hill for their efforts towards this lasting gift to the Moores.

We've seen other tributes to George - in publications, on our website, in newspaper articles, at the Annual Meeting and, most recently, as George accepted a Distinguished Service Award from the Rockfall Foundation. Each included a list of George's impressive accomplishments:

- the protection of hundreds of acres of open space during his tenure
- accreditation by the national Land Trust Alliance
- the expansion and systemization of our stewardship program
- the defense of our 68 conservation easements, resorting to litigation only when absolutely necessary
- enhanced communications with members through our website and FB page
- our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and production of a nationally-aired video for PBS
- and importantly, new initiatives to instill a respect for nature in the next generation

When George was elected President, the Land Trust had just experienced a period of remarkable growth. Our acreage conserved and number of properties had increased by more than 30%. Leading the trust during these years were Tony Irving, Ralph Lewis and Linda Bireley.

While George built on the many achievements of his predecessors, he also left a personal mark. He brought a slightly different skill set rooted in his successful corporate career. Unlike prior Presidents he was largely self-taught in the fields of biology and land conservation. But George specialized in strategic and operational business sciences, which he relentlessly applied to drive progress and eliminate inefficiencies. Additionally, he improved oversight and corporate governance, and strengthened relationships with key supporters and foundations, especially as Federal and State grants declined.

Throughout, George used his knowledge of leadership and organizational behavior as well as anyone I've known. He inspired, coaxed, sometimes coerced and often got his hands dirty to ensure we met our goals. And he recruited new directors to fulfill specific needs, including hiring our first Environmental Director.

This is a quick peek behind the curtain to an area invisible to outsiders. More apparent is the extraordinary success of the Land Trust and associates in preserving and restoring our region's natural resources. Last Spring a photo circulated on Facebook showing a scene just downriver from us. On a piece of driftwood floating between Old Lyme and Old Saybrook, a bald eagle is seen perched on one side as a harbor seal suns himself on the other. Turn the clock back 60 years, to a time when on the floor of the US Senate the CT River was called "the best landscaped sewer in the nation", and such a sight would be unimaginable.

It took visionaries like Rachel Carson and Roger Tory Peterson to stem the tide of destruction and redirect our focus to conservation. On a local level I think George Moore displayed some of the same courage and foresight in protecting Lyme and guiding your Land Trust towards the future.

Congratulations, George and Rosemary, and thank you