



Norwalk Land Trust NEWS

Spring 2015

Marny Smith Made a Difference!

One of the hardest working volunteers that the Norwalk Land Trust has ever had stepped down from our board of directors at the annual meeting held on February 9th, 2015. After twenty years, Marny Smith decided to spend her considerable energies on a few other things in her life. The success and growth of the Norwalk Land Trust in the past few years has in large part been due to her vision and hard work on behalf of the environment and the need for open space in urban areas such as Norwalk. As President for the period 2005-2009 she oversaw the two largest and most active acquisitions for the Land Trust: Farm Creek and White Barn.

The 2007 acquisition of the 2.2 acre piece of land, now known as the Schoendorf Preserve at Farm Creek, along with the 10-acre easement for the Hart Peninsula, also at Farm Creek, created a contiguous 16 acres of preserved tidal estuary shoreline. Removing the old home on the property and reworking/updating the 1907 stone barn resulted in a property large enough for trails and exhibit space. The changes helped put into action the education plans Marny always had.

A champion of the concept of *No Child Left Inside*, Marny was instrumental in creating the Norwalk Land Trust Education Program which now is firmly established in Norwalk Elementary Schools. Matching up the earth science taught at the 4th grade level, she and other directors created a program of teaching in the schoolroom and then having a wonderful half-day field trip at Farm Creek. The program is now gearing up for its 7th year.

A second property which was secured during Marny's presidency was the 5.1 acre easement at White Barn, located in the Cranbury section of

Norwalk. This acreage is a beautiful section of the property which Lucille Lortel, the theatrical impresario, owned until her death. Securing this portion of an 18 acre site was a collaborative but long effort among the neighborhood, the State of Connecticut and the City of Norwalk. Marny was never hesitant to call on the phone and ask or to put her eloquent words on paper seeking funding, permission or endorsement.

Her passion for helping the environment grew from many years working at several area Land Trusts and being a very knowledgeable gardener. Her 'can-do' spirit and willingness to do whatever needs doing makes her our finest volunteer. We will miss her on the board, but know she will show up when asked and will continue to help steer the Norwalk Land Trust into being a better organization.

Thank you Marny. You made a difference!



Marny Smith, smiling and satisfied!

Tree Festival May 16

The Norwalk Land Trust will again have a booth at the Tree Festival on May 16 from 10-3 at Cranbury Park green. We are planning an exhibit on common invasive plants and their native alternatives. The featured invasive plants are asiatic bittersweet, burning bush and barberry with suggestions for alternative native plants. We will have pictures of both invasive plants and their native alternatives and lists of those alternatives. We will also have milkweed plants and seeds, seeds of native perennials, and "seed bombs" to toss into sites where wildflowers will grow. Come join us at the Festival!



Milkweed seeds ready for harvesting.

NLT by the Numbers

27: properties protected and managed by NLT.

649: fourth-grade students took part in the NLT Education program in 2014.

10,000: milkweed seeds given to monarch butterfly lovers.

50%: of NLT memberships are \$100 and more.

Scheduled Events

- Saturday, April 7:** Science Fair Awards/Brien McMahon HS 5:00-7:00 PM
- Wednesday, April 11:** Cleanup/Nursery Road & Rte. 123 9:30 AM
Field Guide Briefing/Farm Creek Stone Barn 1:00 PM
- Wednesday, April 22:** Earth Day - NHS Students Cleanup/Farm Creek 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
- Saturday, May 16:** Tree Festival/Cranbury Park 10:00 AM-4:00 PM
- Sun/Mon, May 24/25:** Memorial Day Parades
- Saturday, Sept. 26:** Estuary Day Celebration and Cleanup/Farm Creek*
DPW Open House/Smith Street Yard*
- Saturday, Oct. 10:** Wildlife in Crisis/Fodor Farm*

*Please check Web site, norwalklandtrust.org, for time schedules.

CLC Conference

More than 420 people attended the annual Connecticut Land Conservation Conference in March to find ways to make their own land trusts run better, share ideas, and in general to become inspired and reinvigorated. For the Norwalk Land Trust, 3 new and 2 seasoned board members spent the day at Wesleyan University attending workshops.

Newly elected board member Connie Bennett attended a workshop entitled Connecting Kids & Nature. She is on the NLT Education Committee and wanted to understand and find successful programs that can be introduced in Norwalk. Midge Kennedy attended workshops on using the Web and today's communications technology and said, "We need to do better using social networking, and there were so many great suggestions."

"It's really a wonderful day that enriches us all," John Moeling said; adding, "I have more than a dozen new ideas."

President's Letter

Spring has been a long time in coming, but here it is and we're off.

A crowd of members fought the weather and attended our Annual Meeting in February. Dave Winston, president of Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary in Stamford, rewarded their efforts with a terrific presentation. Dave packed in habitat enhancement – specialty gardens, feathered areas alongside trails, brush piles, rock piles and mounds, and more – management of meadows and woodland resting/feeding areas for migratory birds, and stewardship. It was a year's worth of material in a Norwalk-tailored, colorful slide array. One clever example: post-holiday Christmas trees can make useful property borders and habitat sites!

Each year NLT directors devote a full morning's retreat to issues of concern during the coming months. This year the board reviewed stewardship practices, resolved to better canvass underrepresented areas, and discussed events and speaker opportunities at our new Fodor Farm site.

As always, please keep an eye on the NLT Web site for more information about upcoming events and on-going news.

See you soon!



Sincerely,
John Moeling,
President

Stewardship Continues

There is a constant need for maintaining NLT open-space properties. Trash of all kinds – including plastics, metal, tires and more – is collected, invasive plants are removed, and this year the project to transform Hoyts Island into a wildlife preserve continues with work under way to remove or bury the foundation ruins on the property.



Last fall, volunteers were hard at work cleaning up trash at Oyster Shell Park.



A sample of trash collected from Little West Cedar by a group of board members and dedicated volunteers.



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For more information, please visit our Web site:
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Norwalk Land Trust

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Our Mission

The Norwalk Land Trust seeks to balance nature and development by acquiring land and preserving it in its natural state for the benefit of Norwalk residents and future generations.

Please clip and mail to: Norwalk Land Trust, PO Box 34, Norwalk CT 06853

2015 Annual Membership

You are supporting continuing preservation of Norwalk open spaces. Thank you!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

_____ \$30 Individual

_____ \$50 Family

_____ \$100-\$249 Supporting

_____ \$250+ Trees and Trails

_____ Other (all gifts appreciated)

_____ Matching gift form enclosed

_____ Check enclosed to: Norwalk Land Trust

Norwalk Land Trust does not share member information.

All membership contributions are tax deductible.

For corporate/professional memberships, please email
info@norwalklandtrust.org or visit www.norwalklandtrust.org.

I am interested in: Volunteering _____ Property Donation _____ Other _____

Please use my e-mail address to send me electronic newsletters and other communications: Yes _____ No _____

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