



# NORWALK LAND TRUST NEWS

Spring 2016

## Little West Cedar

We parked near Little West Cedar, one of Norwalk Land Trust's 27 properties, walked along the sidewalk over a charming stone bridge, and arrived at the entrance to the trail that winds through the property. Within ten paces, the sound of cars whizzing by on West Cedar Street completely melted away. The reality once inside the preserve is a soft sense of tranquility. One realizes that getting back into nature is always a cure for whatever concerns one had before.

Wandering along the trail, we paralleled the bank of a beautiful part of the Five Mile River making its way to the Sound. The creatures that visit or make their homes along the river left telltale signs everywhere we looked, or the

creatures themselves made themselves known to us. Most notable were the birds—seemingly hundreds of song birds singing their hearts out with joy for spring. A pair of mallards swam peacefully on the river until the female noticed us and gave us an earful, signaling that she must have had a nest nearby.

We soaked in the beauty of this 2.5-acre gem — shadows of trees that seem to vibrate on the flowing water, pure white fungi growing in a way that makes them look like salad plates extending out from the sides of decomposing trees, chipmunks darting among the trees and rocks, lime green moss softening the river bank, and footprints that let you know that deer and raccoons have foraged there.

Little West Cedar is a beautiful place for a walk in nature. Visit, and see for yourself.

— *Connie Bennett*

▼ A view of Five Mile River from the Little West Cedar property.





## Update: Hoyt Island

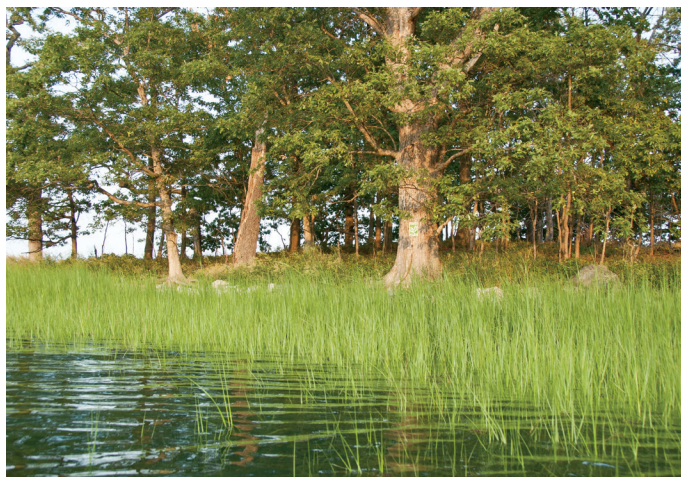
**Property Background:** Hoyt Island, a three-acre island located in Long Island Sound, lies between the Village Creek and Wilson Point neighborhoods. Hoyt Island was acquired by Norwalk Land Trust in 1976.

In 2014, NLT commissioned an expert from the Audubon Society to provide a plan for improving the natural habitat on the island. The resulting plan recommended that, with removal of invasive plant species and protection from browsing deer, there is the potential for appropriate food and protective habitat for nesting and migrating song birds. Over 150 species of birds have been tallied in the vicinity of Hoyt Island, including a pair of bald eagles regularly roosting in the trees.

**Remediation Background:** Hoyt Island contains the remains of a former residential structure, built in the late 1800s or early 1900s, that had been abandoned before it was destroyed during a fire in 2008. Structures left relatively intact include the foundation, a concrete slab floor and a brick fire place and chimney. Within the structure are remains of electrical wiring, plumbing, a boiler, vinyl floor tiles and an insulated burning unit.

**Remediation Investment:** In 2015, Norwalk Land Trust retained HRP, a highly recommended environmental consultant, to research potential hazardous material associated with the remains of the structure, and to recommend a remediation plan to bring the site to the safety standards required by state and federal environmental agencies. To date, NLT has invested approximately \$12,000 in the Phase I and Phase II studies conducted by HRP.

**Next Steps:** NLT is now in the process of weighing its options to ensure the most cost-effective and appropriate remediation plan to bring the site to the safety standards required by state and federal agencies.



## Annual Meeting, 2016



▲ Peter Reid of Wildlife in Crisis with a photo display of the organization's efforts healing injured creatures.

At the Norwalk Land Trust annual meeting, John Moeling, NLT President, thanked retiring Board Directors Henry Huse, Blanca Paccha, Anna Speed and Kat Pratt, and NLT Board members elected Vickie Bennett, Lee Levey, JoAnne Jackson and Midge Kennedy to new Board terms.

Wildlife in Crisis leader Peter Reid described the Weston-based animal rescue organization which has healed thousands of injured creatures. Reid emphasized the importance of protecting open space for natural habitats. Visit [www.wildlifeincrisis.org](http://www.wildlifeincrisis.org) for further information.

## White Barn Property

The 15-acre White Barn property contains Norwalk Land Trust's 5-plus-acre White Barn Preserve, an easement purchased with grants from the State of Connecticut and the City of Norwalk in 2008. The remaining land is owned by Jim Fieber, a New Canaan developer with plans to demolish the existing White Barn Theatre building and the Lucille Lortel House to build 15 homes.

The White Barn Foundation, a 501c3 organization established by Waldo Mayo, the grandnephew of Lucille Lortel, wants to purchase the property, restore the buildings and reactivate the summer theater. Additional goals include historic preservation, arts education outreach and protection of more open space. The deadline to raise funds to purchase the land is July 31, 2016. A major loan is pending, and all contributions are welcome.

The Norwalk Historical Society and the Norwalk Preservation Trust support the White Barn Foundation's efforts, as does NLT. To learn more please visit [whitebarntheatre.org](http://whitebarntheatre.org).

◀ Hoyt Island shoreline.

## President's Letter

### SO MUCH ahead in 2016...

And we're well under way! There are new assignments and responsibilities for your Board members, and you will see our cleanup signs and orange vests throughout Norwalk while we assess and steward our properties. In addition, we are preparing for a new butterfly garden property in West Norwalk and will bring this year's Norwalk Public School 4th-graders to NLT's "Outdoor Classroom" at Schoendorf Preserve at Farm Creek.

It's all important work, and we enjoy doing it. Why not join in? Projects accommodate any schedule, and all volunteer help will make 2016 a better, cleaner, healthier Norwalk.

Speaking of the butterfly garden, your efforts and ours to expand the Farm Creek milkweed meadow may have helped the monarch butterflies: Mexico reports that **FOUR TIMES** as many monarch butterflies were counted in the latest migration, as compared to the year before. We mailed milkweed seeds locally and as far as California! Habitats were enhanced with great results, and yes, we'll do it again this coming fall.

Want to get in touch? Volunteer? Help us pay for tools, cleanup supplies, accountants and everything else? Log on and join in!

Everything we do is posted on the NLT website: [www.norwalklandtrust.org](http://www.norwalklandtrust.org).

Best regards,  
John Moeling



## Don't Just Stand There... MARCH!

We need volunteer marchers for the two Memorial Day parades in May. The Rowayton Parade will be on Sunday, May 29th, and the larger Norwalk parade will be on Memorial Day, May 30th.

More details will be posted on the NLT website, as the date nears. Our wonderful puppet, Harry the Heron, will lead us. It really is a lot of fun, come join us.



▲ NLT members and supporters marching with Harry the Heron on Memorial Day, 2015.

### Join us for fun and/or a little work:

#### Earth Day Clean up:

April 23, 10 am-12 pm, White Barn, 78 Cranbury Road

April 23, 10 am-12pm, Farm Creek, 34 Sammis Street

#### Memorial Day Parades:

May 29, Rowayton Parade - meeting on Highland Ave. near the library, 11:30 am.

May 30, Norwalk Parade - for meeting location, visit [www.norwalklandtrust.org](http://www.norwalklandtrust.org).

#### Discovery Day:

September 24, 1-4 pm, Schoendorf Preserve at Farm Creek - Save the Date!



## NORWALK LAND TRUST

### Directors

John Moeling  
*President*

Peggy Holton  
Charles Taney  
*Vice Presidents*

Louise Flax  
*Secretary*

Rich Baskin  
*Treasurer*

D. Seeley Hubbard  
*President Emeritus*

Connie Bennett  
Victoria Bennett  
Laure Dunne  
Louise Flax  
Sarah Graber  
Joanne Jackson  
Midge Kennedy  
Tammis Lazarus  
Mary Verel  
Bob Welsh

### Advisory Board

Miki Alicastro  
Lawrence F. Cafero Jr.  
Bob Duff  
Henry Huse  
Diane Keefe  
Chris Perone  
Michael Poler  
Kat Pratt  
Amy Rowe-Smith  
David Shockley  
Marny Smith  
Roger Willcox  
Terrie Wood

For more information and volunteer opportunities, please visit our website:  
[www.norwalklandtrust.org](http://www.norwalklandtrust.org)

Norwalk Land Trust  
News is published  
twice a year by  
Norwalk Land Trust.

Laure Dunne  
*Editor*



P.O. Box 34 Norwalk CT 06853

Non-profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Permit No 207  
Norwalk CT 06856

Address Service Requested



Spring 2016

## Our Mission

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, or join on our website, [www.norwalklandtrust.org](http://www.norwalklandtrust.org).

### 2016 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  
\_\_\_\_\_ Please use my dues for Hoyt Island Remediation

Norwalk Land Trust does not share member information.

All membership contributions are tax deductible.

For corporate/professional memberships, please email  
[info@norwalklandtrust.org](mailto:info@norwalklandtrust.org) or visit [www.norwalklandtrust.org](http://www.norwalklandtrust.org).

I am interested in: Volunteering as a nature guide \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteering for cleanup work \_\_\_\_\_ Property Donation \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please use my e-mail address to send me electronic newsletters and other communications: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ F16