



Winchester Land Trust

June 2018 Newsletter

Houlihan Woods and the Michael Giordano Tribute Area (MGTA)

Thank you!

With your help, the Winchester Land Trust purchased TorWin Farm in December 2017. WLT received major grants from Connecticut's DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program, the Highlands Conservation Act Grant Program, the William P. Wharton Foundation, and the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation. Businesses who contributed include; O&G Industries, Klebe Oil, Northwest CT Realty, R&M Insulation, Moore & Alvord Insurance, and Wesson Oil. Individual donations from the communities of Winsted, Torrington, and Lakeridge were essential to completing the purchase. WLT would also like to thank The Conservation Fund who provided a bridge loan until grant money became available.

WLT also sends its gratitude to property owners Cara and Ken Blazier, who sold their land at a "bargain sale," making it affordable for the land trust. The property is now known as the John and Virginia Houlihan Woods, honoring Cara's family, who created the TorWin airstrip in the 1940s and later used the property as a horse farm. The Torrington side of the property has been named the Michael Giordano Tribute Area which honors Michael J. Giordano who died in 2009 of ALS. Michael was the husband of major donor, Lynn Giordano.

Trails:



The Winchester Land Trust welcomes hikers to explore Houlihan Woods and the MGTA. We have been lucky to have experienced trail builders who laid out trails, then cut brush, and finally "blazed" trees along each trail. The Coe, Anvil and Hammer Trails represent countless hours of work on behalf of our trail crews. WLT would like to thank; Diane and Jeff Jakobsen, Lynn Giordano, Joe Grustas, and many students from Northwestern Regional High School #7 (NWR7). We hope to make trail maps available on our website and kiosks by early fall.

Houlihan Woods and the MGTA will each have their own parking lot and signs (see picture far right). The main entrance will be located on South Road in Winsted with a roughly three-car parking lot. The MGTA entrance is located on Saw Mill Road in Torrington. The

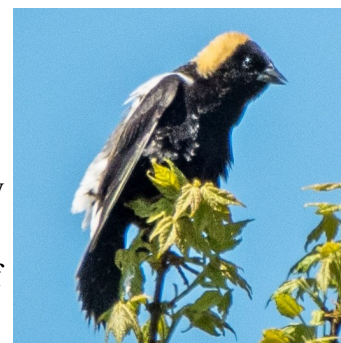


parking lot was built by volunteer Mark Cannavo of Cannavo Construction. The boulders protecting the MGTA sign were donated and placed by Paul _____ of J&J Excavating.

WLT thanks NWR7 instructor Keith Winegar and his construction class for building one of WLT's new kiosks.

Wildlife:

As Connecticut's farmland has returned to forest or become developed, grasslands have become increasingly rare. One species, the bobolink, depends on grasslands and builds nests on the ground. Farmers who mow the fields at Houlihan Woods and Hurlbut Field have adjusted their mowing schedule to mid-July to ensure newly hatched bobolinks have fledged. Bobolinks can be observed at Houlihan Woods and Hurlbut Field as can be seen in this wonderful photo by Carl Meisel, a friend of WLT.



Management:

WLT recently hired David Beers of Connwood Forestry, Inc. to write a Stewardship Plan for Houlihan Woods and the MGTA. The plan describes the flora and fauna on the property and advises WLT on how to care for the land in the future. WLT thanks the Farmington River Coordinating Committee who funded the Stewardship Plan.

WLT at Beardsley & Memorial Library

Beardsley Library was the scene of a fun educational experience for over 25 children and 20 adults this past April. Sunny Gelson, a wildlife rehabilitator for Sharon Audubon, introduced four different birds of prey to Winchester children. A Kestrel, Saw-Whet owl, Red-Tailed hawk and Red-Shouldered hawk all made

appearances on Sunny's leather-sheathed arm as she told her audience about birds of prey and how they live and hunt.

All the birds brought to Beardsley for this great show-and-tell were rehabilitated at Sharon Audubon, but unfortunately none of them will ever fly free again for reasons ranging from a missing eye to the misguided belief that, having been raised by a human, they were themselves human, and were unlikely to survive in the wild.

The chance to see these birds up close was a thrill for all who came, and we all left with a new appreciation for the great work done by wildlife rehabilitators.



Land Trust Partners with Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation

In the Spring of 2018, Winchester Land Trust established the Winchester Land Trust Fund at the Northwest Connecticut Community



Foundation. The fund is a flexible resource that supports the land trust's work to preserve the rural character and natural resources of Winchester and to educate the community about the benefits of land conservation and balanced growth.

As a fund of the Community Foundation, The Winchester Land Trust Fund is wisely invested with a pool of hundreds of funds established by like-minded organizations, increasing its capacity for growth and protecting its principal.

To give gifts of securities or other assets, visit www.northwestcf.org/donor-resources to download the Community Foundation's stock delivery form, or contact Community Foundation staff at (860) 626-1245 for assistance.

Ruez Property: New Kiosk, Trail Work, Boundaries Marked

WLT board members had the pleasure of working with Hunter Rego on his Eagle Scout Project in the fall of 2017. Hunter built a beautiful kiosk for the Ruez Property. He and his troop installed the kiosk and performed much-needed trail maintenance. Hunter's final project involved board members and his family, working together to find the boundaries of the 26-acre parcel and then affixing WLT markers to trees.



Thank you, Shelley:

WLT board members will soon be missing the amazing skills of longtime board member and past president, Shelley Harms. Shelley's talents of grant writing, land acquisition, and organizing fundraisers will be sorely missed. In fact, under Shelley's leadership, the land trust has grown from protecting about 30 acres (2004) to almost 500 acres! Not to mention Shelley's family members who have helped find property boundaries, build bluebird boxes and make pulled pork for WLT events. We wish Shelley the best as she continues her work with area land trusts and hope she has more time for mushroom hunting and attending the opera!

Board Members

Jennifer Perga, President
Doug Pfenninger, Vice President
Andrea Hitt, Treasurer
Louise Van Alstyne, Secretary
Susan Closson
Chuck Dmytriw
Shelley Harms
Joey Pierce

Stay in touch with the Winchester Land Trust

Winchester Land Trust's Facebook page is the best way to see the latest information regarding events such as our recent hike to the Danbury Quarter Cemetery. Our website is www.winchesterlandtrust.org. You can email us at winchesterlandtrust@yahoo.com or call us at 860.379.9622. We receive our "snail mail" at P.O. Box 10, Winchester Center, CT 06094.



**The WLT Annual Meeting will be August 26, 2018, at 4:00 p.m.
at the gazebo on the Winchester Center green.**

Winchester Land Trust
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