

Board Members

Shelley Harms, President

Jen Perga, Vice President

Jay Martin, Treasurer

Chris Royer, Co-Secretary

Louise VanAlstyne, Co-Secretary

Sue Closson

Doug Pfenninger

Winchester Land Trust
PO Box 10
Winchester Center, CT 06094

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 on the Waterbury Turnpike. Our website is www.winchester-landtrust.org. You can email us at winchesterlandtrust@yahoo.com or call us at 860-738-2811. We receive our "snail mail" at PO Box 10, Winchester Center, CT 06094.

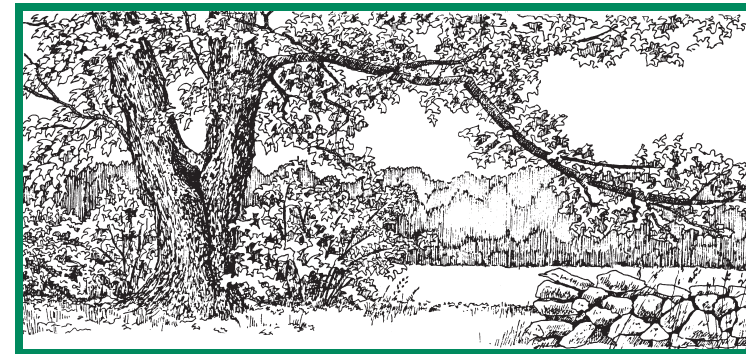


**The WLT Annual Meeting will be August 28 at 4 p.m.
at the gazebo on the Winchester Center green.**

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
WINSTED, CT
PERMIT NO. 11



Pen and Ink Illustration by Margaret A. Race



Winchester Land Trust

June 2011 Newsletter

Amphibians and Reptiles at the Library!

On Saturday, January 22, 2011, more than 55 children and their parents filled the stone-lined basement of Beardsley & Memorial Library. The program we had all come to see was Brian Kleinman of Riverside Reptiles on "Amphibians and Reptiles."

Do you know how to distinguish an amphibian from a reptile? It turns out that reptiles have scales, lack eyelids and most lay their eggs on land. Brian taught us about the unique

characteristics of many animals and encouraged everyone to touch them. The program began with small salamanders, frogs and turtles and ended with a giant python. Judging by the enthusiastic crowd of smiling kids, everyone enjoyed the show and learned a great deal.

This Winchester Land Trust program was paid for by a grant from the Connecticut Society of Women Environmental Professionals.

At right, Brian Kleinman and his python



Fundraising – Paying for Hurlbut Field

The Winchester Land Trust is still working hard to pay back the \$180,000 loan we took out to purchase Hurlbut Field, and we're doing great, thanks to your support!

So far, the Land Trust has paid down \$65,000 on the loan. We have paid back the Norcross Wildlife Foundation in full, and have re-financed the \$115,000 balance at a low interest rate.

Here's how we did it: Starting on Earth Day 2010, we had our first challenge grant – we had to raise \$20,000 by July 31 in order to get the match-



Charlene LaVoie with her painting by Victor Leger

ing funds – and we did! Victor Leger donated his beautiful painting of Hurlbut Field in autumn as an

incentive, and Charlene LaVoie was the lucky winner!

We also held a big benefit performance on Columbus Day weekend – Ralph Nader, Aztec Two-Step and the Northwestern Region 7 High School Jazz Band performed at Infinity Music Hall and Bistro to raise money for the Land Trust. It was an amazing evening, really fun. Hearing Ralph with Aztec Two-Step and the entire audience singing "This Land Is Your Land" at the end was just incredible.

Recently we had two more fun events – a dinner at The Green Room where everyone enjoyed the organic, vegetarian cuisine, then a lively afternoon of Zumba Latin

(continued inside)

Winchester Selectmen Vote to Decline Watershed Funding

Well, we were all over the newspapers for awhile there. Maybe you heard that the State awarded the Winchester Land Trust \$500,000 to preserve 510 acres of beautiful watershed land?

Unfortunately, the funding to preserve town-owned watershed land at Crystal Lake and Highland Lake will not come to the WLT and the town after all. After solidly supporting the project in July 2010 and January 2011, the Board of Selectmen by a 4-3 vote decided to block it in February 2011. The vote did not change even after we brought back a modified proposal to address the concerns the four selectmen had expressed. An amazing petition drive and 492 citizen signatures forced a town meeting to try to overturn the BOS vote, but under the Town Charter, the overwhelmingly positive town meeting vote of 213 to 13 didn't count.

In the face of strangely virulent opposition from a vocal minority, we soldiered on as hard and as long as we could, trying to satisfy the ever-changing concerns that were raised. Finally, it became clear there was nothing we could do to change the mind of even one of the four opposing selectmen.

With regret, we informed the town that we were withdrawing our offer of funding to help the town implement goals set in its Plan of Conservation and Development. It is unfortunate that this win-win-win conservation project turned into a nasty political issue.

We sincerely thank everyone who supported the Winchester Land Trust in trying to make this wonderful project a reality. The amazing outpouring of support from so many people is truly appreciated!

Native Shrubs for Hurlbut Field

For Earth Day 2011, the Winchester Land Trust joined forces with the Northwest Conservation District and ALCOA Howmet to plant native shrubs at Hurlbut Field.

Between the farmed field and the woods at Hurlbut is a grassy, shrubby area that was being overgrown by invasive species. Last summer, farmer Sherman Weigold brush-hogged the area, cutting down most of the invasives.

Now, after a hard days' work on May 2, 2011, native shrubs and flowers are growing in several beds along a future trail, thanks to the generosity of ALCOA Howmet, which provided 5 employees and a \$1500 grant to help the Land Trust begin to re-colonize the area with native species.

The native shrubs and flowers were purchased at the Northwest Conservation District's annual Earth Day plant sale. Many thanks to ALCOA and to the NCD!



Louise Van Alstyne with NCD Executive Director Jean Cronauer picking out perennials

Ways to Support the Winchester Land Trust

- Try our new online donation button – go to www.winchester-landtrust.org, click on Donations then on the Donate button. You can use your credit card or Paypal to donate to WLT!
- Set up automatic withdrawals – you might not even notice \$10 (or \$100) a month, but it really helps!
- Instead of birthday or Christmas presents, ask for donations to WLT in your name.
- Put WLT in your will – you'll never miss it and WLT will appreciate your bequest!
- Spare a dime – set up a piggy bank for your spare change. When it's full, go to the Northwest Community Bank, west branch and watch the machine count it. Bring the slip to the counter and tell the teller you want to donate it to WLT, then email and let us know so we can thank you!
- Volunteer – be a monitor for WLT property, work on our website, help with fundraisers, come pick up trash on clean-up days.
- Donate your office furniture – WLT is working to set up an office. A generous grant from the Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut is covering office supplies and printed stationery and brochures; now we are looking for a conference table, bookshelves and chairs.
- Attend our fundraisers! They are fun!
- WLT is an all-volunteer organization. Our work depends on your support!



Hard-working ALCOA employees

Fundraising – Paying for Hurlbut Field

(continued from front page)

dancing with Christine Royer, where we worked it off and then some.

So, join in the fun! Our next fundraiser will be our second occasional Auction Party, October 8 at 6:30 p.m.

at Whiting Mills. Roland Clement has donated his best watercolors for this event, we'll have wine-tasting and a wide selection of fantastic nature and art items. Save the date!



Ralph Nader singing This Land Is Your Land with Aztec Two-Step