

January 2008



www.westfordconservationtrust.org



Editor - Diane Duane

WCT Annual Meeting Recap - 'Westford Wildlife' with Guest Speaker Marian Harman



Thanks to our guest speaker and Trust President **Marian Harman**, for a wonderfully informative and descriptive presentation on the last seven years of wildlife reports in Westford. The meeting was well attended by members of the community. We were treated to an informative presentation on local wildlife trends, excellent wildlife photos submitted by local residents and interesting sightings. A special

thanks to Mau and Murilio Fernandes for analyzing and formatting this data. This presentation and the photos can also be seen on our website.



Guest Speaker WCT President Marian Harman

Conservation Trustee of the Year - George Fletcher

The Westford Conservation Trust is proud to announce that **George Fletcher** has been awarded the Conservation Trustee Award for 2007. George Fletcher has lived all of his life on Plain Rd., in the same house which his grandfather, Joseph Willard Fletcher, built. The house and the Stoney Brook Dairy Farm were later passed on to George's father, Walter W. Fletcher, and then on to George. George served on the Middlesex County Conservation Board for ten years, the Middlesex County Farm Bureau, and for many years served as a delegate to the Agri-Mark Annual Meetings. After his father, George became caretaker of East Boston Camps, a position he continues to love and work at many hours each day.



George receiving award from Trust Director Frank Winters

Besides farming, George has had a long career of service to the Town of Westford. He worked for the Westford Fire Dept. for forty-three years, and was Deputy Fire Chief for over twenty of those years. He served as the Animal Control officer, the Animal Inspector, and the Sealer of Weights and Measures. He was on the original Master Plan Committee in the 1960s, and served on the Highway Garage Building Committee. George served as a Westford Selectman for three years. Somehow, George has also found time to work enthusiastically to protect Westford's environment. He served on the Westford Conservation Commission for five years. He was a founding board

member of the Westford Conservation Trust. He was a member of the Stony Brook Land Acquisition Committee. And most recently, he served as a member of the East Boston Camps Master Plan Committee. He continues to farm part-time, and to lovingly care for East Boston Camps.

The Westford Conservation Trust applauds George Fletcher for his tireless efforts to serve and protect the beautiful Town of Westford. His boundless energy and enthusiasm for Westford is contagious to all around him. We look forward to working with George for many more years of service to Westford and to the protection of Westford's environment.

Special Presentation. Marian Harman made a presentation to Alan Emmet in honor of Dick Emmet and in recognition of the many things Dick did for the Trust. Marian presented a memory book of photos and writings by Trust directors and others. As an example, Marian read one of the contributions, which was an essay by Leonard Palmer. It described Lenny's experiences when he and Dick went together to see and hear woodcocks in the spring.

Trails Report. Kate Hollister described the trail activities during the year, and presented some photos showing bridges and other recent projects.

Treasurer's Report. Shelagh Brady described the financial conditions of the Trust, referring mainly to a one-year period. Shelagh's report indicated that the Trust's financial condition is under control and stable.

Nominations. Directors and Associate Directors were elected for their three and one year terms.

The Annual Meeting was adjourned after enjoying a lovely collage of music and local wildlife photos taken by contributors to Westford Wildlife Watch.

Our next meeting will be held on February 28th at 7:30pm - Call Marian at 978-692-3907 for more info.

WCT Annual Summary by William Harman, Clerk

EDUCATION

The Trust continues to follow the school bird feeder program developed by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, now known as the Bird Sleuth Program. Along with classroom instruction for all Westford 4th grades, the students make observations and enter these into a nationwide database. During the current year, we provided the financial support to continue the Cornell program. We monitored feeders and made repairs or supplied seed as needed. We made presentations to all fourth grade classes (teachers and students). Many thanks to members Shelagh Brady, Bill Morton, RoseMarie Koester, Bill and Marian Harman for their participation in this program.

The Trust supported the Living Lab (annual donation), MA Envirothon (\$1000), Science Fair (helped as judges), and provided three Scholarships to Westford Academy seniors totaling \$2250.

The Trust Calendar is in its third successful year and is directed by photographer and Trust director Frank Winters.

Did you know?



The Trust awards several scholarships to graduating high school seniors. Interested students can fill out a standard scholarship application (available at Westford Academy Guidance office), write a short essay about their interest in the environment, what they have already done (projects/classes) and what is their major of interest for college. Please check with WA for upcoming deadline.

LAND STEWARDSHIP AND TRAILS

Trail activities remained strong during this past year, with several trail projects involving trail maintenance as well as bridge and sign construction.

Bill Harman has completed a new version of the Trails Booklet. Our next version is now in the planning stages - we welcome new maps and trail description or other related info.

The Trust continues to be involved with Eagle Projects, especially relative to coordination with abutters, trail easement documentation and project support. We also have a list of ideas for future projects.

Invasive plants have been an ongoing issue with trail maintenance. The Trust has recently adopted a policy on Invasive Species to prevent the introduction and control the spread of invasive species on Trust properties.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

The Trust continues to provide newsletters to members as well as an informative and up to date website (thanks to our webmaster Mike D'Antuono).

The Trust continues to support **Water Quality Testing**. Trust members participate in early morning water quality measurements at 10 sites in Westford each month from May-October. Dissolved oxygen and other characteristics are measured. Funding for testing was approved by the ConsComm and Selectman and data was compiled and shared with the Organization for the Assabet River (OAR), using their protocols and making our work DEP and EPA certified.

We also support the **Bay Circuit Alliance** (Bruce Freeman rail trail). We are regular members of the **Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition** and of the nationwide **Land Trust Alliance (LTA)**.

Roudenbush Trail



A new sign located at the edge of the Town

Hall parking lot tells everyone about this inviting woodland trail right in the center of Town. This trail connects Town Hall with the Roudenbush Community Center. Boy Scout **Michael Dee** did this project as part of his Eagle Scout qualifications, along with a number of other scouts from **Troop**

437, whose efforts were all coordinated by Michael. In addition to this main trail, Michael and his team also constructed a footbridge over a small brook, cleared and marked another trail that also takes a similar route, and installed the sign pictured as well as one at the other end of the trail.

Walking these trails, one can appreciate the large area of natural land that is owned by the Town, right behind Town Hall and the Police Station.

WCT Winter Walk with Kate



We had a really great turnout on Saturday, January 5th for the WCT Winter Walk on the Parker Village conservation land with 22 people in attendance. The Highway Dept. graciously plowed the parking area on Friday so we could accommodate all the cars. We walked from Trailside Way to the pond, then back to the parking area through the MA Audubon land and Wilson land. Several cub scouts from Pack 102 and their parents came to earn part of their forestry badge. Lenny Palmer and I pointed out deer tracks, trees, bushes and other plants used by wildlife and people.

Everyone was smiling at the end!

-Kate Hollister



by Kimberly Macey

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC), through its Clean Energy Choice program, has offered to provide the Town of Westford with matching grant money to invest in clean energy projects, such as buying solar panels or hiring energy consultants. Other towns, such as Acton and Lexington, have already earned significant dollars through this program. Now it is Westford's turn. Here's what you can do to help Westford win its matching funds:

Sign up for National Grid's Green-Up program. As a Green-Up participant, you choose to have your electricity kilowatts generated by "clean" energy sources such as solar, wind, biomass and small hydro resources, instead of "dirty" sources such as coal, gas and nuclear energy. This will cost you an additional fee of \$7.00-\$12.00/month depending on your electricity usage and will show up on your National Grid bill as a renewable energy charge. Your money supports the development of renewable energy suppliers, supporting a cleaner environment for us all. For every dollar you give via Green-Up, MTC will match up to 80% for the Westford Clean Energy Choice Account. Westford currently has 79 participants and has earned over

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\$15,000 through this matching program. On top of this grant, Westford will receive an additional one time bonus of up to \$15,000 if 150 new households or businesses sign up by 4/30/2008. That's half of our Trust membership!

For more info or to sign up, visit www.nationalgridus.com/masselectric/home/energychoice/3_renewable.asp or contact Kimberly for a sign-up card at WestfordCleanEnergy@comcast.net

Alternatively, you can make a one time donation of \$100 to the New England Wind Fund at www.newenglandwind.org

The Trust encourages you to consider adding this 'action' item to your list of things you can do to address Global Warming. Check out our website under 'Hot Topics'.

Join the Trust

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (optional)/
Email _____

Check here if interested in volunteering for trail maintenance



Check here if interested in volunteering for educational efforts



Please make tax deductible check payable to : **Westford Conservation Trust**

Please mail to : **Westford Conservation Trust P.O. Box 255**

Westford, Ma. 01886

Or join online at www.westfordconservationtrust.org

____ \$25 Individual

____ \$40 Family

____ \$100 - \$500 Friend

____ \$500 - \$1000 Patron

____ \$1000 Supporter

____ Other



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