

TRIBUTARIES

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE OLD LYME CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.

Incorporated 1966

www.olct.org

Summer 2007

New Acquisitions in our Town

by Mike Kiernan, President

Well, summer is definitely here, and once again the Old Lyme Conservation Trust invites everyone in town to get out and enjoy the wonder of this season on one of our many preserves. Why not go fishing at the Elizabeth "Bunt" Karter Watch Rock Preserve, take a quiet stroll along the peaceful pathways of the Mile Creek Preserve, or take a refreshing kayak trip around Calves Island on the Connecticut River?

Whatever your preference, you'll find the right place for it on one of the Trust's preserves, and the list of these on our website can help you to get there.

In our newsletter last year, we stated our objective of acquiring as much new acreage as possible over the next few years to balance the rapid residential development taking place in town. Now is the time to protect what we can so that it will remain as open space forever, helping to preserve the rural character and precious natural resources of Old Lyme. Fortunately, we've been very busy with new acquisitions this year, and are pleased to be able to give you the following brief update on our progress.

■ Upper Three Mile River

Located in the northwest corner of town, this secret oasis of ledge and wetland remains one of our main focal areas for acquisition. This wild and solitary woodland is a veritable "font", with water flowing north (into Rogers Lake and the Lieutenant River) and south (into Channing Brook and the Three Mile River). Since the beginning of this year, OLCT has purchased nearly 36 acres along the Upper Three Mile from Nancy Griswold and the Filosi Family. We are under contract to purchase 16 more adjacent acres and are holding conversations with several parties on another 40.

If our acquisition efforts are successful, we will have created a new preserve of almost 100 acres in this area, and this is just the start – our ultimate goal is to eventually double the size of even that, making this one of the largest natural protected areas in town.

For the time being, access to the area is still a problem, so we have not yet built trails nor opened the area to hiking, but we continue to work on this and are confident that some form of access can be provided in the not too



Some OLCT Board Members at one of the newly acquired parcels in the Upper Three Mile River area.

distant future. Meanwhile, watch our website for more news on this major initiative.

■ Lieutenant River

The Trust is also pleased to announce the recent acquisition of nearly five acres, located on the banks of the Lieutenant River just north of Halls Road and adjacent to the old Bow Bridge site. Purchased from Amanda Blair, this marshland parcel is a natural complement to the adjacent 18 acres held by OLCT directly to the north.

Our objective in acquiring this new parcel is to investigate the potential for providing a launching site that would make it easier for kayakers to explore the upper Lieutenant River. Again, we will keep you posted on this effort through our website and other communications.

Another timely wetland acquisition came to OLCT from Mr. Malcolm Speirs, who donated 0.75 acre on the Lieutenant River, just at the start of Shore Road. This small triangle, reported to be the site of an old shipyard, was a missing piece of the puzzle for OLCT.

Thanks to Mr. Speirs' thoughtfulness and generosity, it has now been united with other wetlands owned by the Trust to the south and west. In the process, one of our town's most signature scenic vistas has been permanently preserved.

(Continued on page 3)

Trust properties open to the public – where are they in Town?

NOTE: Directions to each preserve are available online at www.olct.org

1. George & Woodward H. Griswold Preserve (51 acres)

A forest preserve next to Lower Millpond with a fish ladder that has fish running in the spring. There are a number of easy, wide trails that take 20 – 40 minutes to walk.

2. Jericho Preserve (50 acres)

The Jericho Preserve is a hilly preserve in the woods. There is a loop trail with a total distance of about a mile. Views from the ridge tops are dramatic and there are two or three vernal pools. The walk takes about an hour.

NOTE: The house is a private residence and no trespassing is allowed around the house or on the driveway to the house. Parking is only allowed in the designated area next to Whippoorwill Road .

3. Lohmann Buck Twining Preserve (46 acres)

The Lohmann Buck Twining Preserve is located along the Lieutenant River. It has a hilly trail (a few steep slopes) which follows the river as well as goes through the forest. The walk takes about 40 minutes.

4. Mile Creek Preserve (44 acres)

A wooded, level property with a loop trail that is about a mile. The walk takes about forty minutes.

5. Goberis Chadwick Preserve (25 acres)

A wooded property that includes a brook, wetlands, rock ledge, huge boulders and stone walls. The loop trail has moderate changes in elevation and takes about 45 minutes to walk. There are also some shorter interior trails.

6. Elizabeth B. Karter Watch Rock Preserve (25 acres)

Also called “the park by the Connecticut River”, Watch Rock has a number of level and easy trails that takes 20 – 30 minutes to walk. Beautiful views of the mouth of the Connecticut River.

7. Hoffman Preserve (24 acres)

The Hoffman Preserve is a wooded preserve north of Lower Millpond. It has a well marked loop trail taking about 45 minutes to walk. Wild life includes beaver, swans, ducks, deer, and song birds.

New Easements Laws

Generous landowners who donate voluntary conservation agreements, also known as conservation easements, to the Old Lyme Conservation Trust are inspired by many things: they love the Town of Old Lyme, they feel connected to their land, and they wish to leave a legacy for future generations. This inspiration is at the heart of our work to permanently protect valuable natural resources. But for almost all of our donors, donating a conservation easement is a major financial decision, and the federal income tax deduction that comes with a donation helps make easements possible for landowners in our community.

Congress recently passed a new law that *enhances* the tax benefits of protecting private land for many landowners. The legislation improves the tax incentive for conservation easements by allowing conservation easement donors to:

- Deduct up to 50% of their adjusted gross income in any year (up from 30%);
- Deduct up to 100% of their adjusted gross income if the majority of that income came from farming, ranching or forestry; and
- Continue to take deductions for as long as 16 years (up from 6 years).

Congress also passed tighter appraisal standards for such gifts, and stronger penalties for appraisers who violate the standards.

The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) led the effort to get Congress to approve this new law. LTA is a national organization that sets national standards for conservation organizations like ours, provides training and networking opportunities, and represents the land trust community in Washington, DC. The Old Lyme Conservation Trust has been a member of LTA for three years.

Each day we are touched by the generous and inspired landowners who work with us. The new law will make it easier for others in our community to build on their love of the land and permanently protect The Town of Old Lyme.

The information in this article is based on info from Land Trust Alliance, LTA. To learn more about these new developments, visit www.olct.org or www.LTA.org.

Upcoming Events

Fall Walks: September, October and November

Join us for walks on our preserves in the fall.

September 29: Help us find Bigfoot.

October 27: Halloween special!

November 24: Walk off that turkey...

Check www.olct.org and local bulletin boards for details.

Tips to Help Your Local Wildlife

If you have not already done so, cap your chimney! Wood ducks will head down chimneys looking for nest sights, become stuck and die. Squirrels – both red and gray - will climb down chimneys, squeeze around dampers, and end up in living rooms. Mother raccoons love to nest in chimneys. If something should happen to her after the birth of her babies, you might end up with a chimney of crying, starving youngsters, requiring an expert to remove them. If you haven't already, please consider capping your chimney soon.

Wanted: Photos from our Preserves

The Trust is working on a slide show that will be used for presentations and education about nature here in Town. If you have photographs of local flora or wildlife you can contribute, please visit www.olct.org for a detailed photo wish list or contact susanecoltencarey@old-lymeconservtrust.org. Your help is greatly appreciated!

2007 Photo Contest Open

The 2007 Photo Contest is now open! The contest is open to amateur photographers only, and the submission deadline is January 31, 2008.

Photos can be in color or black & white using film or digital cameras. There is a separate youth category for those 14 years and younger. Prizes will be given for the best artistic composition in the following four categories in addition to the youth prizes:

Landscapes/Waterscapes, Plants, Wildlife, Cultural/Historic. Please visit www.olct.org for detailed contest rules and contest entry form.

Sponsored by Essex Savings Bank, Karen Conniff and Evan Griswold of Coldwell Banker, Pfizer, Inc., Lorensen Toyota, Tom Wing and Harry Oakley of Smith Barney's and Citizens Bank.

Scholarship Information

The Old Lyme Conservation Trust, Inc. is pleased to be able to provide scholarship support to college students who are graduates of the Lyme-Old Lyme High School and who are pursuing college degrees in **environmental science, environmental studies, ecology, conservation biology, or related areas.**

The Trust will provide one \$1,000 scholarship per year for a qualified student on a competitive basis. Application forms are available on our web site, www.olct.org, or by writing to the Old Lyme Conservation Trust, Inc., PO Box 163, Old Lyme, CT 06371. All application materials should be sent to the address listed on the application form no later than August 31, 2007.

New Acquisitions in our Town *(Continued from page 1)*

■ Connecticut River

And speaking of thoughtfulness and generosity, it's difficult to match that of John Lohmann, one of the founders and major benefactors of OLCT who passed away two years ago. As part of his estate, Mr. Lohmann left a preserve of 40 acres on the Connecticut River that is likely to be deeded to OLCT before the end of this year.

As you can well imagine, preserves on the Connecticut River are not easy to come by in this day and age – we owe it to John's love of the land and his commitment to land preservation for the public benefit, as well as to his family and executors, who are also committed to conservation. Once again, we will keep you posted on this acquisition later in the year.

The Trust also wishes to acknowledge a major donation by the estate of Evelyn O. Walker, that helps us build funds for future acquisitions.

In sum, we're doing our best to acquire as much new land for protection as we can – while we can. Land acquisition can be a slow and complicated proposition in a town that's been settled for hundreds of years, but we'll keep plugging away.

Parallel to this, we would very much like to talk with other landowners about how they could help the Trust to acquire land in our targeted areas. New IRS rules may make it possible for land and easement donors to take advantage of very beneficial tax breaks through the end of this year. We'd be happy to provide anyone who is interested with more information on request.

Meanwhile, please do get out and enjoy our preserves during this beautiful summer. For the volunteer Board Members and Stewards of the OLCT, that's what ultimately makes it all worthwhile!

OLD LYME CONSERVATION TRUST MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please join us in preserving Old Lyme's Open Space!

Complete this form and return to: Old Lyme Conservation Trust, Post Office Box 163, Old Lyme, CT 06371

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

Note: If you are employed by Pfizer, J.P. Morgan Chase or Merrill Lynch, the company may match your contribution if you fill out their matching gift form and send it along with your donation.

Tax-Deductible Membership:

_____ Single (\$25)

_____ Family (\$50)

_____ Additional donation

Matching gift from company.

YES, I would like to volunteer! Please call me.



Old Lyme Conservation Trust, Inc.

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Photo Contest 2006

The winners of the 2006 Amateur Photo Contest jointly sponsored by the Lyme Land Conservation Trust, Inc. and the Old Lyme Conservation Trust, Inc. were officially announced at a ceremony at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library on May 4. "There were so many wonderful pictures submitted that the judges had a difficult time selecting the winners" said Tony Sullivan, spokesperson for the two Conservation Trusts. Photos below are from the photo contest, view a full list of awardees and their photos online at www.olct.org or www.lymelandtrust.org. Special recognition goes to Tony Sullivan of the LLCT for organizing the contest each year.



Caught! by Diana Atwood Johnson



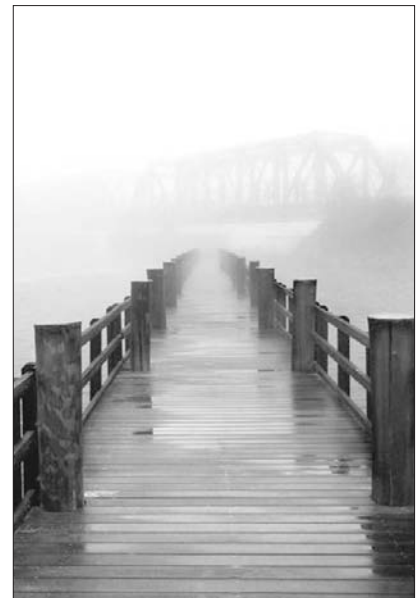
Monarch Migration by Alice Depret



American Bittern by Hank Golet



Green Darner Dragonfly by Jeff Sims



Boardwalk and RR Bridge by Skip Broom