

The Warren Conservator

Spring 2012



In This Issue

Letter from The President.....	1
Appreciation for a Refined Lady.....	1
Accreditation Process Update.....	2
Warren Land Trust Fall Festival Booth.....	2
New Conservation Easements.....	2
WLT Board of Directors Welcomes New Members.....	2
WLT Annual Meeting Summary.....	3
Spotlight on Land Trust Holdings.....	4
Annual Town Clean-up and Swap Meet.....	4

Warren Land Trust Board

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From The President's Desk



The second half of 2011 was marked by a whirlwind of positive activity, challenges, and visualization of what the Land Trust can accomplish in this and in forthcoming years. We are pleased to announce that Dr. and Ms. Adil Mulla honored the Trust with a 38-acre conservation easement with beautiful views behind their home off Melius Road. Similarly, in December Jim and Rebecca Neary eased a pristine 74-acre field across from their Melius Road home. Sincere thanks for the stewardship and care shown by Jack Baker and Tom Sarsfield, who worked tirelessly with Attorney Denise Trevenan to make certain that all legal obligations were met and documented.

We were fortunate to add the skills of Tim Clew, Nancy Morse and David Schneiderbeck as new members of the Land Trust Board. Each will be making significant contributions to our work. A separate article on the new Board members appears below.

Under the leadership of Dan Hulseberg, the quest for Accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance continues. It is a fruitful but time-consuming effort: Dan has assigned various tasks to working committees who report back on their progress monthly. Jack Baker chairs the Land Stewardship and Acquisition Committee, which oversees all fee properties and easements. Barbara Page chairs the Finance Committee, while Rebecca Neary directs matters concerning Governance. This past summer Laura Moore Brown, Ms. Neary and Tom Sarsfield performed a thorough appraisal of our by-laws, and our hope is to have them completed for approval by the 2012 Annual Meeting.

Many of us have enjoyed joining Jack Baker and Tim Angevine for site inspections of our properties. They are instructive, revealing the character and quality of the land in Warren, and necessary for us to document the quality of and changes to the terrain over a period of years.

Finally, we face the challenge of raising sufficient funds to support the maintenance of our properties and the expenses associated with applying for Accreditation. We have worked assiduously to follow the land conservation priorities expressed in the Town Plan, and rise to the challenge of new government and IRS requirements demanding clarity, documentation and hard evidence that organizations such as ours are effective, professional, and serve the public trust. The citizens of Warren have been steadfastly supportive and we truly are appreciative. We also are very conscious of the fact that the next generation should be educated to realize that the world of tomorrow will need a fresh group of participants who will enthusiastically carry on our work.

Ted Morse
Ted Morse, President

Appreciation for a Refined Lady

For years the Warren Land Trust Board took for granted the quiet, dignified, competent contributions of our Board Secretary, Carolyn Brau. Her pleasant disposition, meticulous attention to detail, and sense of order were hallmarks of her five years on the Executive Committee.

For 20 years, Carolyn and Henry Brau traveled to Warren for summer vacations and days off while Henry was serving as Pastor of churches in Elmsford and Syosset, New York, and she was a teacher. They were smitten by the natural surroundings. Their children worked at the Inn on Lake Waramaug when they became teenagers. Carolyn and Henry retired in 1991 and became full-time residents of Warren.

Over the years, their passion for gardening became obvious to anyone traveling on Curtiss Road. Henry and Carolyn are Master Gardeners, and it is pleasurable to pause and consider the growth of their flowers, shrubs, ornamental grasses and vegetables. Without question,

their work blends harmoniously with the environment and emerges as a natural depiction of the surrounding area.

As with many members of the Land Trust, Carolyn was compassionately recruited by Ann Martindale, and after a time she succeeded May Brawley Hill as Secretary. Carolyn also served as Secretary of the Lake Waramaug Task Force, a position she has held for the past ten years. Carolyn noted that both organizations have complimentary roles, one dedicated to the clarity and preservation of the lake, and the other devoted to retaining the natural surroundings of this unique town.

Ms. Brau discussed at length some of the changes she has witnessed over a forty year period. She pointed out that the community must develop "to some extent," but



Cont. on page 3

Warren Land Trust Booth Popular Stop at Fall Festival

Columbus Day Weekend 2011 felt more like August than October, and brought crowds out to enjoy the sunshine and the numerous attractions at the Warren Fall Festival. One popular stop, alongside the lumberjack exhibition, roast beef sandwich counter and retrospective of Eric Sloane and his work (organized in large part by our own Tim Angevine), was the Warren Land Trust booth. Visitors came by to peruse the booth's placard display featuring pictures of and information about our properties and easements, to pick up land trust FAQ sheets and laminated maps of Warren, and to visit with volunteers staffing the booth. But most of all they came to admire the kayak that that we were offering as a raffle prize. Back by popular demand for the second year in a row, the kayak raffle was a big success and is poised to become an annual tradition. Tickets were offered at five dollars a chance and raised close to \$1500. This is a significant increase over last year and given that the kayak was donated by Clarke Outdoors along with John Liu and Barbara Page, all of the money raised will go directly to our annual fund. Many of those who purchased tickets were from outside of Warren – after all, the Fall Festival draws attendees from all over Litchfield County and beyond. The lucky winners, however, came from right in town: Zarinna and Dr. Adil Mulla of Melius Road. Keep an eye out for the raffle at next year's Land Trust Fall Festival booth – 2012 could be the year that you are the winner!



Tom Sarsfield at the Land Trust Booth

Land Trust Accepts New Conservation Easements

The Warren Land Trust was pleased to assist in two new conservation easements in December 2011. The first consists of over 38 acres owned by Adil and Zarinna Mulla. Located behind Melius Road, the forested parcel of land abuts the Shepaug reservoir, used by Waterbury as a water source. The Mulla easement thus further protects this important watershed area and extends the wildlife habitats that are sheltered there. The second easement comprises approximately 74 acres of fields and woodlands on Melius Road owned by Rebecca and Jim Neary. The property backs up to our Douglas and Melius Preserves, and so will create a protected "green belt" near the center of town. We deeply appreciate the Mullas' and the Nearys' conservation efforts. Look for more details on the properties, as well as photos, in a "Spotlight on our Land Holdings" in a future issue of this newsletter.

WLT Board of Directors Welcomes New Members

The Warren Land Trust Board of Directors was delighted to welcome three new members at the November 2011 Annual Meeting. The newcomers bring a diverse set of skills and talents to the Land Trust, all of which will be appreciated by our very busy existing board members.



New member Tim Clew is the co-founder and now co-managing partner of TWT Investment Partners, a specialized investment fund. Tim has an extensive background in investment banking and management consulting. As such, he is a valued addition to the board's finance committee. A former weekend resident, Tim recently moved to Warren as a full-timer along with his wife Jaime and their two young children. Of his decision to become more involved with the Land Trust, Tim says "my family and I have come to love the rural nature of Warren. Warren is unique, even among surrounding towns, in the extent of its open space, fields and woodlands, and its timeless character. We have both an opportunity and a responsibility to help preserve these special qualities and I hope that I can play a small part in doing so by joining the Land Trust board."

A second new addition to the board, Nancy Adams Morse, is replacing retiring Secretary Carolyn Brau. Nancy has served as Secretary for numerous organizations from her school days onward – most recently, for the Kent Singers (she is a music-lover and has sung in choral groups for most of her life). Professionally speaking, Nancy has worked in computer programming and other capacities in the computing field – a boon to the Land Trust as we work to make our records ever more accurate and accessible. A longtime Connecticut resident, Nancy and her husband Ted moved to Warren several years ago. Commenting on her new role, she observes, "I have had a lifelong interest in nature and the environment and am a passionate supporter of wildlife and land conservation causes. The Land Trust offered me the opportunity to put these into practice in my town. 'Think Globally, Act Locally' has been a motto of mine for a long time."



Last, but far from least, new board member Dave Schneiderbeck is joining our land stewardship committee, whose very active members are grateful for his assistance and are availing themselves of skills he gleaned from years as a wilderness leadership instructor and former board member of Sherman's Naromi Land Trust. After living in Sherman, where he owns and operates Rizzo's Garage, Dave relocated to Warren with his wife Amy. He enjoys hiking, swimming, mountain biking, working in the yard, playing sports, weightlifting, and cheering on the Red Sox. Of his membership on the Land Trust board, he notes, "I am looking forward to working with such a great, like-minded and capable group, with so much potential to preserve our beautiful corner of Connecticut and educate the next generation of environmental caretakers."

Update on the Accreditation Process

Progress toward accreditation has continued at a steady pace. As previously reported, the Warren Land Trust has performed and completed a thorough review of existing policies and procedures. Based upon this review, a work plan has been developed to ensure compliance with the "Land Trust Standards and Practices" as established by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and recently adopted by the Warren Land Trust.

This work plan outlines various recommendations and actions to be implemented by the Warren Land Trust to improve our performance as a non-profit organization, as well as to support accreditation. Particular attention is directed at policies and procedures related to governance, finance, acquisitions and stewardship. Respective committees have been assigned responsibility for these recommendations and actions, and meet regularly for continued progress.

Additionally, the Warren Land Trust has been awarded a coaching grant from the Connecticut Land Conservation Counsel ("CLCC") in further support of its accreditation efforts. The CLCC has graciously assigned an experienced representative to assist the Warren Land Trust with the preparation and revision of policies and procedures, such as by-laws, governance policies, land selection criteria, and land stewardship and protection guidelines.

In parallel with the review of policies and procedures, the Warren Land Trust has completed its regular inspection of all available properties under its protection. The land inspection efforts were led by Jack Baker, with the support of various other board members. These inspections not only allowed the Warren Land Trust to ensure proper compliance of land use and easements, but also provided an opportunity for board members to personally experience the splendor of Warren in its natural state.

**The WLT currently holds over 650 acres under permanent protection.
IF YOU AREN'T A MEMBER OF THE WARREN LAND TRUST,
WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN NOW!!**

Becoming a Member of The Warren Land Trust is easy. Simply cut off this page and send it to our mailing address below, along with your check. We will send you a receipt along with our thanks for your generous, 100% tax deductible contribution. Please include your name, address and email so that we may include you in our email updates. Choose the type of membership you would like:

Family Membership \$25

Land Protector \$100

Land Caretaker \$300

Land Conservator \$500

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Please make checks payable to: The Warren Land Trust, Inc.

MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK TO: The Warren Land Trust, Inc. 140 Town Hill Road, Warren, CT 06754

**Please make any necessary corrections to your name and address
on the mailing panel and submit to the WLT.**

November Annual Meeting Summary

The Land Trust held its annual meeting on November 19th, 2011. The vast majority of the Board of Directors was in attendance, along with a number of guests. After welcoming comments, President Ted Morse expressed appreciation to Directors who had completed their service and would be stepping down: Carolyn Brau, Bill DeSeta, Ann Martindale, Tom Paul and Dave Scofield.

The first official order of business was voting on the slate of Directors up for re-election: Rebecca Connor, May Brawley Hill, Rebecca Neary, Barbara Page and Tom Sarsfield. In addition, new candidates were proposed for election to the Board of Directors. These included Tim Clew, nominated by Barbara Page; Nancy Adams Morse, nominated by Tom Sarsfield; and Dave Schneiderbeck, nominated by Jack Baker (more information on our new Directors can be found in an article in this issue). All nominations were approved.

Mr. Morse and others then summarized Land Trust's activities for 2011. Treasurer Barbara Page provided the annual financial report. Individual donations in 2011 totaled \$29,060, as opposed to \$17,810 for the same time period last year. 2011 expenses were \$12,407, compared with \$12,940 in 2010. The Land Acquisition and Stewardship Committees reported next: Tim Angevine described a forestry management seminar he attended, and Jack Baker noted that inspections of all easements and other properties begun in December 2010 had been completed. Dr. Adil Mulla reviewed progress on a 38-acre conservation easement to be placed under the Land Trust's protection. Dan Hulseberg updated those present on our accreditation preparation process, noting the completion of an organizational assessment and delegation of tasks according to a Standards and Practices compliance workplan. In addition, the Land Trust has been working to improve its website and community outreach.

Annual meetings are typically held in November; details are announced in the Fall issue of the Conservator. All Land Trust members are encouraged to attend. To become a member of the Land Trust, fill out and mail in the form included in this newsletter, or visit www.warrenlandtrust.org.



Appreciation for a Refined Lady (Con't.)

hopefully will do so with regard to the natural surroundings. At the same time, Carolyn felt that we are fortunate to have people who support the perception that Warren is and should remain a special repository for the early values of rural New England. She lauded the "public-spirited people who are thoughtfully helping to preserve what we have." We at the Land Trust thank you, Carolyn, for being one of those "public-spirited people."

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**We're on the web:
www.warrenlandtrust.org**

**Warren Land Trust
Mission Statement**

The Warren Land Trust is an advocacy group dedicated to the preservation of the rural character of Warren. Its mission is to preserve farmland, open space, natural and endangered resources such as wetlands, forests and wildlife habitats, to encourage outright gifting of land for permanent protection and the use of conservation easements to preserve open space.

SPOTLIGHT ON LAND TRUST HOLDINGS

The Skidmore Preserve

By: Bill DeSeta • Photo: Bill DeSeta

On March 31, 1999 the Warren Land Trust received a gift of 63.8 acres from the estate of the late Lorraine Skidmore. The gift was arranged by Sharon and Robert Skidmore, executors of the estate. The property lies at the convergence of Milton Road, Warren and Blue Swamp Road, Litchfield.

The beauty of the Skidmore Preserve is not only its exceptional conservation value due to a large variety of habitat types but its location, which is directly adjacent to the City of Waterbury's Shepaug River reservoir system, the two parcels creating a huge ecological landscape of protected, road free area.

A 3-acre tract bearing the family homestead has been retained by Mrs. Skidmore's descendents for their personal use.

At the intersection of Blue Swamp Road and Milton Road there is a gated access point to an old logging road. It is the only relatively open area along the sole public road abutting the property.

The single most visually interesting site is located south of the logging road, where a series of large boulders, or table rock, are surrounded by large Eastern White Pine.

The southeastern corner of the property has several large fields that act as a support for the more forested areas they abut and create habitat for an even more diverse group of fauna.



**Join Us and Celebrate Earth Day
at the Annual Town-Clean up
and Swap Meet**

Come celebrate Earth Day with the Warren Land Trust and Warren Parks & Recreation. We are teaming up to help keep Warren clean and naturally beautiful. This year's event will be held on Earth Day, Sunday April 22nd, from 11:30AM to 2:30PM (rain date is 4/29). Come to the Community Center (old Town Hall) parking lot (alternative location will be the firehouse parking lot), where you can enjoy a cup of coffee and some goodies while you decide which stretch of road to clean up. Trash bags and rubber gloves will be provided. Don't forget to wear old clothes and sturdy shoes.



A swap meet will take place in the parking lot during the same hours as the town clean-up. Bring new or gently used items (toys, sports equipment, kitchen or other home goods – the possibilities are endless) and see if your neighbors have something you might need or enjoy in return. Tables for item display will be available. We are excited to partner with Parks & Rec for this worthy event and hope you will join us. It's a great way to get outdoors and welcome spring, say hello to friends and neighbors, and commemorate Earth Day by keeping our corner of the planet litter-free. We hope to see you there!