



February 2012

Volume 8, Issue 1

New Hartford Land Trust

preserving our community's natural resources and rural heritage

President's Message

As I write this, I am musing about the old adage that the only thing we can truly count on in life is change. With the sudden death of our long-time Board member and former President, Ron Eigenbrod, the NHLT is experiencing significant change. I think of Ron in two ways - smiling and solid. With great enthusiasm and a deep commitment to our mission, he was an integral part of the NHLT's core identity and helped shape the underlying values and foundation of the organization. He was also a philosophical guy. I remember one President's Letter he wrote about cycles and balance in nature and how we must seek balance in the way our town grows as well.

The NHLT Board will miss Ron and we will continue to work for that balance between development and land preservation. Please read the article on page four about Ron and two other former Board members and close friends of NHLT who passed away in 2011, Donna Brooks and Murray Gibson. All three made lasting contributions to preserving key pieces of our natural landscape.

Congress Unified on Land Conservation

Land conservation is apparently one thing upon which Congress agrees. At a time when news of bitterly divisive politics and gridlock in Washington is the norm, it is heartening to know that conserving land has broad, across-the-aisle support in Congress. As we go to press, 301 U.S. Representatives (a majority of both parties in the House), including Representative Chris Murphy (5th District, CT) and the rest of our delegation, had co-sponsored the Conservation Easement Incentive Act. This bill, H.R. 1964, was to make permanent a recently expired tax incentive that helps land trusts work with modest income landowners to conserve important natural or historic local resources.

Landowners can retire the development rights on their land by donating a conservation easement to a land trust like NHLT—keeping farm, ranch and forest lands in productive use, protecting important fish and wildlife habitat, and conserving our scenic and historic heritage. Since the enhanced incentive expired at the end of 2011, landowners with modest incomes now receive a reduced tax benefit from restricting what may be their family's most valuable asset. By allowing donors to deduct a larger portion of their income over a longer period of time, H.R. 1964 was drafted to help family farmers, ranchers, and forest owners afford to conserve their land.

The full list of co-sponsors is available at www.lta.org/easementincentive/cosponsors. They include the Chairman, Ranking Democrat and 32 of 37 members of House Ways and Means Committee. A broad coalition of sportsmen, outdoor enthusiasts, farmers, ranchers and national conservation groups are working together to make this incentive permanent. Please join us in thanking Representative Murphy for championing this effort.

Madeline McClave, President



Photo courtesy of Gordon Elmers

NHLT Annual Meeting Sunday, March 11th at 4 p.m. Learn How to 'Help Save Our Wild Areas, One Yard at a Time'.

Please join us on Sunday, March 11th at 4:00 p.m. for the New Hartford Land Trust (NHLT) Annual Meeting at Town Hall. This is your chance to learn more about the Land Trust and our current activities and hear naturalist Margery Winters speak on 'Saving Our Wild Areas, One Yard at a Time'.

Margery is Assistant Director at the Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton and one of our most popular presenters. She will help us reconsider how and why we garden and landscape our yards as we do and discuss ways that we can help promote wildlife diversity at home and in our wild areas by how we manage the water, plants, links for habitat and other features on our own properties. Active in land and natural resource conservation in Simsbury, Margery is also the former Director of Programs and Research with the Rivers Alliance of Connecticut. Before moving to Connecticut in the mid-1980s, she was an Environmental Scientist at Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago.

(continued on p.3)

What's Inside:

Harmony Hill Road Property Acquired.....	p. 2
Invasive Plant Feature.....	p. 2
Challenge Award for Property Reports	p. 3
Trust Loses Three Good Friends in 2011	p. 4
Update on the Alfred Sabolcik Property	p. 5
Your Land Trust Needs You! Join NHLT	p. 6



New Hartford Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 272
New Hartford, CT 06057

E-mail: newhartfordlandtrust@yahoo.com

Board Members (12/31/11):

Madeline McClave
President

Caren Ross
Secretary

Jeff Ollendorf
Vice President

George Durstin,
Treasurer

Tammy Casey
Eloise Farmer

Lynn Charest
Peggy Grohs
Karen Meares

Roger Dietlin
Tom Klebart



Photo courtesy of Madeline McClave

Harmony Hill Road Property Acquired by NHLT

Last December, the NHLT became the owner of a lovely wooded parcel of nearly ten acres at the southern end of New Hartford. Donated by the Noel family to Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) in 2009, this rear lot is accessible via a 30-foot right-of-way that crosses an undeveloped parcel off of Harmony Hill Road. With the Noels' blessing, CFPA transferred the property to NHLT so that it could be monitored and protected by a conservation organization focused locally. The parcel will be known as the Ken Eric Noel Property in memory of the Noels' son.

Dominated by oak and hemlock intermixed with black cherry, maples, American beech and black and yellow birch, the woods surround a pond and wetland complex where beavers are active. The property is close to large, undeveloped tracts of forest and agricultural land so can support a wide variety of animals, amphibians and reptiles. It also contains important agricultural soils.

In April, the NHLT will lead a walk on the Noel property to view the pond and hear the peepers. Sign up for our e-News to get periodic bulletins about walks and talks!

Invasive Plant Feature: Spotlight on Barberry

Japanese barberry infestations negatively affect our environment and our wildlife populations as well as human health. Barberry forms dense stands that alter the soil chemistry, displace our native plants and provide a favorable environment for the tick that carries the Lyme disease bacteria. Scientists from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station have found a positive correlation between the degree of barberry infestation and the incidence of Lyme disease. You can read about this study at the USDA Research, Education and Economics Information System (REEIS) web site at www.reeis.usda.gov/web/crisprojectpages/224920.



*Barberry leafs out very early
in spring*



Barberry with fall fruit

Japanese barberry is a thorny, umbrella-shaped bush. These plants are among the first to leaf out in spring so are easy to identify at that time. They were planted widely as ornamentals and thrive in a variety of light and soil conditions. Birds eat the red berries dispersing this invader far and wide. To remove, pull or dig the plant from the ground (making sure to remove the entire root system) or mow or cut the stems repeatedly.

In 2008, lead staff from the CT Experiment Station came to town and trained several members of the NHLT Board and the New Hartford Conservation and Open Space Preservation Commissions in techniques for burning barberry's basal buds as an eradication technique for large patches of the invasive. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about this.

For more information, visit the CT Invasive Plant Working Group web site at www.hort.uconn.edu/cipwg or the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England site at <http://nbii-nin.ciesia.columbia.edu/ipane/>.

NHLT Receives Challenge Award to Produce Property Reports

Thanks to newly awarded support that will help pay for expert contractor services, the NHLT is moving ahead to complete current conditions reports (or baseline documentation reports) for the four properties on which we hold conservation easements. Getting these assessments completed will improve the quality of NHLT stewardship efforts and will help us develop a model template for these reports that is consistent with national Land Trust Standards and Practices.

The award will cover \$2,000 of the cost of the project. NHLT is responsible for the remainder. With a target completion date of July 15th, these reports will help satisfy the eligibility requirements for NHLT to insure our easement properties through a new conservation defense program created by the Land Trust Alliance.

This project is funded in part by an award from the Connecticut Land Trust Challenge Fund, administered by the Connecticut Land Conservation Council in partnership with the Land Trust Alliance. This collaborative effort to increase the pace and quality of land conservation is made possible by the generous support of the Connecticut Community Foundation, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Lead Trust. We are grateful for this investment to enhance our ability to effectively protect and steward our easement properties.



The Cub Scouts did a great job removing invasive garlic mustard from NHLT's Riverview Park under the direction of Board member and Park steward Peggy Grohs. Dave Holcomb provided a discount on tree work at the Park after Storm Alfred.

Annual Meeting *(continued from pg.1)*

The 2012 Annual Meeting is dedicated to the memories of three New Hartford Land Trust leaders who died in 2011: Ron Eigenbrod, Donna Brooks and Murray Gibson. Please bring your memories to share as we pay tribute to these individuals who were leaders in land preservation in our community and members of the NHLT Board.

The Meeting will also include a brief update on Land Trust activities and our annual election of Board members. All current NHLT members can vote in the election. If you have not joined yet this year, please send in your check as soon as possible. A membership form is on the back page of this newsletter.

Come out on a late winter Sunday afternoon to hear an interesting talk, see colorful slides, learn about what's happening with the Land Trust and spend some time with neighbors and friends!



Volunteers Roger Dietlin and Priscilla Marshall hug (hug?) a file cabinet donated by the Northwest Conservation District. NHLT is an all-volunteer organization and can use all kinds of help!

Sign up for the NHLT e-newsletter!

Send us a message at

newhartfordlandtrust@yahoo.com

to let us know you would like to receive periodic alerts about walks, talks, work days and other events.

Trust Loses Three Good Friends in 2011

The New Hartford Land Trust (NHLT) lost three of our most loyal advocates last year with the deaths of Ron Eigenbrod, a former Board President and a Board member at the time of his passing on December 24th, and former Board members Donna Brooks and Murray Gibson. All three were community leaders who contributed a great deal to bettering life for all in New Hartford over the years.

Ron joined the NHLT Board in 2000 and served as President from 2002 until early 2009. Remembered by his colleagues on the Board for his 'can-do attitude' and for being instrumental in moving the NHLT from an informal to a more structured organization, Ron was an enthusiastic leader who helped drive the NHLT to become more proactive in searching for land acquisition opportunities.



*Ron enjoying the NHLT
2008 Swamp Stomp*

Ron practiced what he preached by donating a conservation easement on 41 acres of his own land to the NHLT in 2004 to permanently protect it from development. He was a generous volunteer and donor to the Land Trust and was a solid source of moral, financial and 'on-the-ground' support for the organization for many years. A car and equipment enthusiast, Ron often showed up at NHLT events on a tractor equipped with whatever machinery was needed to get the job done on our properties. Ron owned and led his own company, Lightstat, Inc. just over the border in Barkhamsted

and leaves his wife, Ginger, who has taken over his role as CEO of the business.

As a Board member of the Land Trust for several years until 2004, Donna Brooks gave generously of her time and talent and also provided invaluable pro bono legal services on several property transactions. Just after her death on June 30th, NHLT Board member and former President, Tom Klebart, commented "Donna was a very important member of the NHLT Board. In her quiet, unassuming manner, she was one of the driving forces in creating an effective Board and revitalizing the Land Trust." Donna had a keen wit and intelligence and was a passionate advocate for habitat conservation and open space preservation. As an avid birder, she truly understood the value of the services our ecosystem provides. Attorney Brooks also served as Town Moderator for some years. She is survived by her husband, Bob Miller.

Murray Gibson joined the NHLT Board in the late 1990s and was Vice President from 2000 to 2002. Prior to his service as a Board member, he donated a lovely parcel of 26+ acres in 1994. A noted architect who formed the very successful firm Russell Gibson von Dohlen with two colleagues in 1954, Murray retired in 1998. Murray also raised and showed Morgan horses, winning national championships in the early 1990s. He and his wife, Nancy, spent a great deal of time working outside on their property and gardens. Murray was a very civic-minded gentleman who thoroughly enjoyed his large extended family.

The NHLT will greatly miss these three who gave so much of themselves to advance land conservation in New Hartford. We remember their steadfast commitment to the Land Trust and our mission to preserve and protect the community's key natural resources, working lands and open spaces.

Photo Courtesy of Madeline McClave



2011 view from the eastern edge of the Gibson property donated by Murray in 1994

Update on the Alfred Sabolcik Property: A Year of Progress in Photos

The NHLT continues to clean up and plan the management of our Alfred Sabolcik Property. Our primary focus now is fundraising to meet the mortgage payments that begin later this year and pay for other expenses associated with preparing the land for public access such as baseline documentation,

surveying, and signage. A brochure with details about the Campaign for the Alfred Sabolcik property will come your way soon. Please give generously so we can open up this property for hiking as soon as possible!

Last May 14th, more than 80 volunteers came together to plant, water and fence 200 native shrubs and trees to



enhance a 50-foot streamside buffer on the NHLT's Alfred Sabolcik Property. That planting and a second one planned for this coming May are activities partly funded through a Wildlife Habitat Incentive

Program (WHIP) grant award from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). More than 40 Northwest Regional #7 High School students got up earlier than usual on a Saturday morning and were key to getting the planting accomplished as part of a community service initiative. Thank you to all the students and their teacher, Gordon Ross!

A full complement of adults led the planting and fencing teams and made the day run smoothly. The NHLT is grateful to the New Hartford Conservation Commission and its Chair, Alison Murdock, for working with us closely on this project. Special thanks go also to Commission member, Paul Mahoney, who rigged up a system to water the new plants from the stream and provided



technical assistance and equipment.

The planting design included nearly 20 native specimens including Elderberry, Shadblow, the shrubby dogwoods, Viburnums and Black

Gum. Bill Cullina of the New England Wildflower Society calls these 'biopositive' because they provide native wildlife of all kinds with nectar, pollen or berries for food, or with cover to raise young. As invasive species such as Multiflora rose and Barberry take over our fields and woodlands, opportunities for our local web of native creatures to survive diminish. The Northwest Conservation District supplied many of the shrubs at a discount.

Prior to the planting in 2010 and early 2011, volunteers removed invasive Barberry, Multiflora rose and Autumn Olive from the 12-acres covered by the WHIP grant.

This photo shows the old sand and gravel area coming up free from invasives last spring. Mowing occurs in the late fall.



The CT DEEP brought their super-duper seeder out and sowed our Little Bluestem warm season grass seed in the sandiest areas of the WHIP grant area last June.

The NHLT is grateful to the local fire departments and

their volunteers who responded to a fire at the house on the property in April of 2011. In September, a demolition contractor cleaned up the remains of the house, and long-collapsed barn and shed.



Photos Courtesy of Anne Bailey and Madeline McClave



New Hartford Land Trust
P.O. Box 272
New Hartford, CT 06057

U.S POSTAGE PAID
NEW HARTFORD, CT 06057
PERMIT #18

Upcoming NHLT Events

Mark Your Calendars!

Sunday, March 11 at 4 p.m.

*NHLT Annual Meeting and Slide Lecture
'Saving Our Wild Areas, One Yard at a Time'*

Saturday, April 21

Earth Weekend Work Day

Saturday, May 5 or May 19 (TBD)

*Native Shrub Planting - Alfred Sabolcik
Property*

Sunday, June 3 at 9:30 a.m.

CT Trails Day Hike at Phillips Farm

Thursday, June 7 at 6:00 p.m.

Riverfront Invasives Workshop

Postal Patron

Your Land Trust Needs You!

There are many ways to get involved after you send in your annual gift to NHLT!

- Lead a walk or talk – let us know your ideas!
- Take photos for us
- Encourage your friends and neighbors to join and volunteer
- Help plan our next fundraiser
- Write a feature for the NHLT e-Newsletter
- Advocate for state and federal policies that promote conservation
- Help maintain our properties and open them to public access
- Spread the word about our work!

Please e-mail us at newhartfordlandtrust@yahoo.com, call 860-626-0301 or drop us a note on the membership form below. Whether it's for a few hours a year or a few hours a week, we can use your help!



New Hartford Land Trust 2012 Membership Form

☐ Yes! I support the permanent preservation of key open space, farmland and forests in New Hartford.
I will join the New Hartford Land Trust for 2012.

☐ Junior: \$10.00 ☐ Individual: \$20.00 ☐ Family: \$35.00 ☐ Sustaining: \$50.00 ☐ Patron: \$100.00 ☐ Benefactor: \$250.00+

☐ I will provide support for ongoing stewardship and acquisition with an additional gift of \$_____.

My check payable to NHLT in the amount of \$_____ is enclosed.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

e-mail (for e-news): _____ Phone: _____

NHLT is a 501(c)3 organization. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Please contact me about volunteering. The activities that interest me are:

☐ Spring Cleanup ☐ Fundraising Event ☐ Land Maintenance ☐ Stewardship ☐ Walks & Talks ☐ Membership

New Hartford Land Trust • P.O. Box 272 • New Hartford CT 06057

www.newhartfordlandtrust.org