

Land Trust News

The Newsletter of the Westborough Community Land Trust

Summer/Fall 2006



Kyle Strachan, Ben Feldman, Christina Buffo, and Matthew Buffo wait on a Charm Bracelet trail while mothers and younger Hiking Club members catch up with them.

Moms and Kids Hit Local Trails

Committed to leading their ten children, aged 1 to 9, away from computer games, television, and stuffy interiors, five moms have spent the past two years exploring the Charm Bracelet trail network maintained by the Westborough Community Land Trust.

Dubbing themselves the Hiking Club, these moms and their kids walk different trails every other week in all seasons for about an hour, after a nutritious snack. They proceed at a comfortable pace, often set by the younger children.

The kids know the Hiking Club rules: Make sure you can always see a grown-up. Stay on or near the trail. And watch out for poison ivy. They have memorized, "leaves of three, let it be!"

Encouraged by their moms, the older kids lead the way, looking for Charm Bracelet markers. At trail intersections, the kids figure out which way to go.

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Kim Simpson Receives Pepper Award

The Westborough Community Land Trust is proud to present Kim Simpson with the 2006 Jack and Ellie Pepper Award. The Pepper Award recognizes an individual in the community who has done outstanding work in land preservation and advances the WCLT mission.

Hiking is Kim Simpson's passion, and for nearly 30 years Kim has strived to create and protect hiking trails across the country. He has held leadership positions with the Green Mountain Club, Appalachian Mountain Club, Mid-state Trails Committee, and most recently, the American Hiking Society.

A native of West Springfield, Kim grew up fishing in the Holyoke Reservoir system. His love for the outdoors evolved into a 37-year career with the Division of Water Pollution Control and then the Department of Environmental Protection, working to improve water quality in Massachusetts. With a degree in civil engineering from Lehigh University and a master's from UMass, Kim was one of the first generation of

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Adopting a Trail on the Charm Bracelet

WCLT members and Westborough residents are giving back to their community while enjoying the outdoors by adopting sections of the Charm Bracelet trail. They regularly walk their sections, keeping an eye on trail conditions and doing light upkeep.



Hank Rauch, retired from engineering and management, brings gloves and a pruning shears when he walks between Adams Street, Gilmore Pond, and Isaac Miller Road.

"Westborough has been good to me and my family," Hank explains. "I enjoy making open space available to others, so they can walk trails and not get hit by branches."

Marge Fisher, a recent convert to local trails after hiking all over northern New England and beyond, adopted a section between Mass Fish and


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First WCLT Scholarship Awarded

The first \$500 WCLT Scholarship is awarded to graduating senior Rebecca Danis, who wrote about the problems of invasive bittersweet along local roads. Her Earth Day essay was chosen from those submitted addressing one of three topics: an environmental issue affecting Westborough, stewardship of the town's natural resources, or protection of Westborough's natural heritage.

Ben Gitkind received an Honorable Mention for his essay on air quality and the burning of fossil fuels.

"WCLT is happy to recognize Rebecca's effort and sensitivity to the environment," says Allison Gergely, chair of the WCLT Scholarship Committee. "With this scholarship, WCLT hopes to inspire the youth to become keen observers of our natural spaces, as well as reflective thinkers regarding the impact of human activity on our environment." 

Trail Adopters – Continued from page 1

Wildlife and the Little Chauncy fisherman's access, near where she grew up.

"You develop a relationship with it," Marge says, "and a pride of possession." She even skied her route one winter night under a full moon. "It was beautiful."

Cub Scout Pack 33 (sponsored by St. Luke's), under Cub Masters Bill Buress and Andy Koenigsberg, adopted the Bowman West loop. The Scouts fulfill their conservation requirement by picking up trash while their parents or leaders trim branches.

"The kids learn from what they see," Bill notes. "When a trail is clean and passable, they know they should leave it that way."

Beyond walking their sections once a month and reporting problems to the WCLT Stewardship Committee, adopters take on different responsibilities as they choose.

"If I do some weed whacking and lopping, it's because I like to do it," explains Marge.

"If I see something I don't like," Hank says, "I fix it or report it."

Besides a sense of accomplishment, trail adopters enjoy glimpses of wildlife, such as deer and birds. Marge watched a beaver at work. The Cub Scouts discovered snails inside old beer cans.

Eight individuals or groups have adopted parts of the Charm Bracelet. Several sections remain available, so anyone interested should contact Don Burn: burn@acm.org.



Join us! I would like to help protect Westborough Open Space by joining WCLT.

- \$35 Individual
- \$50 Family
- \$100 Sustainer
- \$250 Benefactor
- Other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____ Telephone _____

- My employer matching gift form is enclosed.
- I am interested in making a gift of land or real estate. Please contact me.

Make checks payable to the Westborough Community Land Trust
PO Box 838, Westborough, MA 01581




Joining the storm drain stencil teams were (l-r) Tanya Borgaty, Tom Porada, Ziggy Porada, and Lauren Maistros.

Stenciled Fish Warn against Storm Water Pollution

To keep people from dumping waste materials into storm drains, volunteer teams stenciled fish and the message "Do Not Dump – Drains to River" next to 125 storm drains this spring. The volunteers from all generations included Tom and Ziggy Porada, Maureen Johnson, Mary Tribe, Allison Gergely, Dick Passler, Scott and Miles Henderson, Kris Allen, Tanya Borgaty, and Lauren Maistros.

"As a kid growing up, I saw people using the storm drains all the time as the natural depository for liquids, especially automobile oil," notes Tom Porada, an avid fisherman. "I hope today we are a lot more aware that the storm drains empty back into our environment, either into the rivers or into the aquifer where our drinking water comes from."

The Stenciling Project is a collaboration between Westborough's Department of Public Works and WCLT. It advances WCLT's goal to protect local watersheds. 

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Westborough Community Land Trust

The *Land Trust News* is published by the Westborough Community Land Trust. Westborough Community Land Trust is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization working to preserve open space in Westborough.

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environmental engineers to work in a new area: building wastewater treatment plants under the Clean Water Act.

“I always enjoyed working in the field, and I oversaw the construction of the first wastewater treatment plants in many communities across the state,” says Kim.

Kim has been a dedicated volunteer in the Green Mountain Club for three decades. He has served as the Club’s president, treasurer, and since 1983, board member and trail maintainer. As chair of the Long Trail Protection Committee since 1985, he has also worked to protect nearly 70 acres of the Long Trail in Vermont.

In 1999 the American Hiking Society (AHS), a national umbrella organization, tapped Kim’s expertise. He became an AHS director and currently serves as treasurer. “The American Hiking Society’s goal to have a trail within a few miles of where people live is reflected perfectly in Westborough’s Charm Bracelet,” says Kim.

According to WCLT Stewardship Chair Don Burn, “Kim Simpson is always ready to do the hard work in clearing trails on the Charm Bracelet. He also has been a leader in our negotiations with state agencies to get an agreement to allow public hiking trails on the more than 1,000 acres of state property in Westborough. Kim acts as the Charm Bracelet’s national spokesperson: telling of our plans and accomplishments with the trail, and bringing in representatives from larger hiking groups for hikes on the trail.”

For his outstanding service to the hiking community and to land preservation, WCLT is pleased to honor Kim Simpson.



Earth Day 2006



Among the 45 volunteers at the Earth Day 2006 Town-wide Clean-up were (back, left to right) Rich Strecker, Scott Henderson, Pauline Sciarappa, Ian Johnson and Liam, and (front) Jimmy Rogers, Miles Henderson, Corinne Sciarappa.

Calendar of Upcoming WCLT Events

For meeting places and details about these events, check the WCLT web site at www.westboroughlandtrust.org

Monday, June 19 • 7:30 PM

Wild Beauty of Mill Pond

See slides by nature photographer Dave Griffin. Library Meeting Room. Co-sponsor: Westborough Public Library

Sunday, June 25 • 1:30 – 2:30 PM

Tour of Heirloom Harvest Organic Farm

Meet farmer John Mitchell. Next to St. Luke's Cemetery, Hopkinton Road. Contact: Craig Richov Craig.Richov@state.ma.us

Saturday, July 1 • 10 – 12 AM

Butterfly Walk

Follow Dolores Price, Massachusetts Butterfly Club. Fish & Game Headquarters, North Drive, off Rt.135. Contact: Kathy LeBlanc kandgleblanc@mindspring.com

Wednesday, July 19 • 7 PM

WCLT Willows Concert

Outdoor concert to benefit WCLT. (Bring lawn chairs). The Willows. Donation.

Sunday August 6 • 1:30 PM

Late Summer Gambol

Join Botanist Barbara Muise. Headwaters Conservation Area. HCA parking lot, Andrews St. Contact: BMUISE2@aol.com



Friday, September 8 • 7:30 PM
Family Campfire and Songfest

Sing with folk singer LuAnn Crosby. Bowman Conservation Area amphitheater, off Bowman Street. Rain date Sept. 15. Contact: Andy Koenigsberg amk@charter.net

Sunday, September 17 • 1:30 PM
Cedar Swamp Orienteering Trek

Follow woodsman Bob Brown. Bring compass & boots. St. Luke's Cemetery, far back. Contact: Bob Brown 508-366-7834.

Sunday, October 8 • 1:30 PM
Crane Swamp and Cedar Hill Hike

Hike 4.5-miles from Haskell Street ballfields, upper parking lot. Rain date Oct. 15. Contact: Don Burn burn@acm.org

Sunday, November 5 • 1:30 PM
North Shore Adventure

Explore north shore trails from Mill Road boat ramp. Contact: Kris Allen krisallen@charter.net


Mom and Kids

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These youngsters have discovered the endless entertainment of the woods. They find walking sticks, rocks to climb, and fallen tree trunks to ride like horses. They imagine that small mossy nooks are fairy houses.

A small stream offers the magic of running water. Everyone steps on stones to cross, but small hands soon dip into the water to feel how cold it is. The kids float twigs and pieces of bark on the current as a frog plops into the water.

Together, moms and kids notice the first wildflowers of spring. They listen and look for birds to identify. The dee-dee-dee of a chickadee often warns of the group's approach. The ramblers sniff skunk cabbage leaves and spice bush twigs.

The idea for the Hiking Club originated with Margaret Giacobbe, who walks with her daughter, Olivia, age 9. The other regular hikers are Lisa Harrison and her sons, Malcolm Strachan, 2, and Kyle Strachan, 6; Leslie Buffo and her children, Christina, 8, and Matthew, 6; Beth Terhune and her children, Grete Feldman, 5, and Ben Feldman, 7; and Shona Plunkett and her children, Matthew, 7, Becky, 4, and Will, 1. 

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