



Westborough Community Land Trust

2017 Annual Report



WCLT preserves, protects, and promotes Westborough's open space.

WCLT Scholarships Awarded

In its 20th anniversary year, the Westborough Community Land Trust (WCLT) awarded \$1,000 scholarships to John O'Connell and Kaleigh Wright and honorable mentions to Nicole Bates and Joseph Liebert. Awards were made to these graduating Westborough High School (WHS) seniors on the basis of essays written for WCLT's annual Earth Day Essay Contest.



John O'Connell

John O'Connell described his Eagle Scout experience of building a section of trail and two bog bridges. He plans to attend the University of San Diego after taking a gap year doing volunteer trail conservation in the national parks and hiking the Appalachian Trail.



Kaleigh Wright

Kaleigh Wright wrote about walking Westborough's trails, introducing a Styrofoam recycling initiative, and promoting wildlife safety as her Girl Scout Gold Award project. She will attend Stonehill College.

Nicole Bates focused on her childhood experience of discovering Indian Pond and becoming connected to nature. She plans to attend the University of Massachusetts-

Amherst.

Joseph Liebert described his appreciation of the Charm Bracelet trail system and his work to improve it, including his Eagle Scout project building bog bridges. He will attend the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

WCLT Welcomes Business Partners

The Westborough Community Land Trust (WCLT) is proud to welcome our inaugural business partners as members of the Land Trust. Their membership helps us on our mission to enhance the quality of life in Westborough through the protection, preservation, and promotion of our open spaces.

Legacy Society Member

EMSEAL Corporation

Conservators

Pearson Advisory Investor Relations

Thomas Financial Associates

Protectors

Arturo's Ristorante

Julio's Liquors

Our business partners enjoy a variety of benefits, including: free family memberships to give to employees or customers (quantity

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President's Letter WCLT Needs You



I have served as a Westborough Community Land Trust (WCLT) Director for 11 years, four of those as President. It has been a pleasure working with the Board and various committees. None of the accomplishments of my tenure as president would have been possible without the hard work of dozens of WCLT volunteers. I initiated a membership drive that recruited 71 new members, held a Bowman Conservation Area celebration attended by 80 people, launched a business partnership program that I hope will continue to grow beyond its current five members, and honored ten of our volunteers with President's Awards. I also take credit for picking the color of the yellow t-shirts.

As I worked with the Nominating Committee to search for the next president, I heard people say, "You know so much and do so much work – I can't possibly do that." To which I reply, "Balderdash!" I have 20 years of experience accumulating knowledge about open space in Westborough...but I started from nothing. I chose to put in the time because I decided that WCLT was one of my main priorities. I believe I have an obligation to give back to my community. To someone who says, "I can't possibly do that," I ask, "So, what can you do?" As 19th-century Unitarian minister Edward Everett Hale said, "I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

WCLT is a small but growing community organization run totally by volunteers who do what they can to make our Land Trust work. We need to maintain the momentum and build an increasingly engaged membership. Let's remember the prophetic words of anthropologist Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Don't take for granted that the wooded lot or wetland that enriches your life just because it is there will remain untouched forever for all to enjoy. We need to work to protect open space, to promote its use and enjoyment, and to teach others to appreciate it. This will not happen on its own. That's why the world needs organizations like WCLT. At the same time, WCLT needs people like you to carry out its mission.

I'll close with the words of baseball legend Jackie Robinson, "Life is not a spectator sport. If you're going to spend your whole life in the grandstand just watching what goes on, in my opinion you're wasting your life." WCLT has helped add meaning to my life and does so every time I walk on a trail. It's time for me to go take a hike. I hope to see you on the trails.

Scott Shumway, President

Committee Reports

Land Preservation Committee

The Land Preservation Committee (LPC) continues its involvement in various support activities to ensure the protection of open space throughout the town. We have worked with the Stewardship Committee on the construction of new trail projects and the maintenance of existing trails, and in support of the protection of 173 acres of property the Land Trust currently owns.

We are working with Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) on several potential land protection projects. We are continuing our effort to protect the open land in the 123-acre Orchard Swamp area (between Route 9 and Haskell ballfields). We are in the process of acquiring 22.5 acres of property along the Assabet River. This, along with land the Land Trust owns at Indian Pond, will be the core of a new effort known as the Assabet River Corridor. The committee maintains an amicable relationship with a number of landowners who would like to see their resources protected. We also communicate with builders,

developers, and property management firms in our community to evaluate or expand protection and use opportunities. Finally, we are working with various Town boards and committees to provide input on the protection of open space.

We continue to work toward finalizing the Charm Bracelet easements in order to complete a 28-mile continuous loop trail, along with a potential 40 miles of side trails, which will connect the various open space areas and neighborhoods throughout the town.

As always, we seek the involvement of other WCLT committees in our work, and we commit to working to further the goals of the Land Trust and to protect the natural resources of the town for the enjoyment of all. Additionally, we welcome any thoughts or recommendations WCLT members may have to further our committee's efforts

Don Burn, Chair; Adam Last, Craig Richov, Jim Tashjian, Randy Waterman



Stewardship Committee

The role of the Stewardship Committee is to maintain and manage WCLT lands as well as to develop and maintain trails on other town lands, encouraging public enjoyment of our open spaces while preserving habitat for our native plants and animals.

During the past year, we have again benefited from a number of Eagle projects that have been completed or are in progress. Completed projects include more steps at Bowman Conservation Area (BCA), a trail reroute at Sawink Farm, and continued trail reclamation and bog bridging on the Blue Flag Trail. Sadly, new policies promulgated by Mass Wildlife Management now require that those bridges be removed from that trail, but there is already an Eagle candidate ready to reverse engineer the bridging and begin the process of reinstallation along the Malley Trail at Mill Pond. The work of all involved on the Blue Flag will not be for naught, even as we must abandon the trail. Other projects in the pipeline include trail rerouting and other improvements along the Malley Trail, and improvements to the Fox Hill Trail and at Gilmore Pond.

The Girl Scouts, too, continue to work on projects with the Land Trust. There is a Gold Award project in progress and a Silver Award,

too. These projects are intended to have a legacy, different from the Eagle projects which focus on leadership. We are ever grateful for the interest these young men and women show in working with WCLT and for their considerable effort.

Clearly, upgrading the Malley Trail is a top priority for Stewardship this year. With the leadership of Jeff Steinberg and Burt Osterweis in both design and construction, a new bridge was installed over the brook at the southeast corner of Mill Pond last summer. It now behooves us to bring the trail up to that standard.

The "Westborough Walks" meet-up group ran several walks in town and in Northborough to investigate segments of the planned Boroughs Loop Trail (BLT) which will connect all four boroughs. Stay tuned for this summer's offerings: join the group on [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)—a link is on the WCLT home page.

Marjorie Fisher, Chair; Jerry Breecher, Don Burn, Peter Dunbeck, Mark Fox, Guido Lonardo, Keith Martin, John Metzger, Brian O'Keefe, Hank Rauch, Al Sanborn, Scott Shumway.

Committee Reports

Membership Committee

Almost 100 members celebrated WCLT's 20th Anniversary at a special wine tasting at Arturo's Ristorante on April 9th. WCLT has more than 350 memberships, including over 500 individual members and 17 new memberships. Membership renewals, in June of each year, are a critical source of funds and human resources. Membership dues totaled \$8,115, an increase from last year. Membership continues to grow. The Annual Appeal, which raised \$10,310 in 2016-2017, is another way members support WCLT. Company matching gifts are a great way to increase your contribution. In addition to those funds, WCLT received very generous memorial gifts in the amount of \$7,626 in honor of the late Mark O'Connell, a very generous and loyal WCLT member.

This year our Business Partnership program, inaugurated last year, expanded as our first business partner, EMSEAL Corporation, was joined by four new members: Pearson Advisory Investor Relations, Thomas Financial Associates, Arturo's Ristorante, and Julio's Liquors.

Active members – individuals, families, and businesses – are crucial to our success in protecting open space and preserving the natural beauty of Westborough. We encourage everyone to participate in WCLT-sponsored events and to get involved in committees and stewardship projects.

Membership renewal letters have been mailed. The Annual Appeal will take place in November to coincide with year-end giving. Thanks to all WCLT members, business partners, and friends for their loyal support.

Maureen Johnson, Chair

WCLT Welcomes Business Partners, continued



ARTURO'S
RISTORANTE

Julio's
LIQUORS

varies by membership level); employee outing experiences; recognition on our website, in our publications, and at events; sponsorship listing on our trail maps; trailhead sponsorship plaques. Please contact bizpartners@westboroughlandtrust.org to find out how your organization can benefit from a corporate membership in WCLT.



Education Committee

This year has been Education Committee's most successful ever, as our programs have grown in popularity and new features have been added. Our Nourse Farm Ramble in early September, enjoyed by 35 people, was historic and delicious. The Fascinating Fall Fungi walk in late September was filled to its 18-person capacity. October's Sandra Pond hike taught 30 walkers about forest management. In January, 36 people came to see Garry Kessler's amazing butterfly photographs. February's Local Loon presentation informed 35.

Our March annual live animal program featured Owls of New England and the World. Two shows drew a record 375 children and adults who delighted in the owls presented. Thanks to the Westborough Cultural Council, Newcomers Club, and Knights of Columbus for their support.

April saw a rainy but record-breaking Earth Day Clean-up. Over 240 volunteers collected more than 400 bags of trash, doubling last year's numbers. New features this year were an online sign-up and a very successful volunteer picnic lunch at our new Bay State Commons Green location. We thank all individual clean-up volunteers as well as those from the Westborough Civic, Lions, and Rotary Clubs; Armstrong School; Cub Scout Pack 33; Explorer Post 85; WHS National Honor Society and Student Council; CCR Wealth Management; Crossfit Prototype; Energy Federation Inc; E.L. Harvey; EMSEAL; Koman Government Solutions; and the Westborough Fire Department. Thanks to our donating businesses: Arturo's Ristorante, Dunkin' Donuts on Route 9, Roche Bros., both Westborough Stop & Shops, and Mugford's Flower Shoppe. Thanks also to the Westborough Department of Public Works.

Our May program was a Lake Chauncy bird walk. The Annual Meeting in June featured Jon Way speaking about eastern coyotes/coywolves. Our regular offerings, including "Nature Notes" in the Westborough News and the Earth Day Essay Contest leading to two WCLT Scholarships, continued as usual.

Janet Anderson, Chair; Sue Abladian, Kris Allen, Gillian Beamer, Paula Kirk, Kathy Leblanc, Jerry Lyle, Elaine Moore, Rachel Radin, Annie Reid, Chris Sassetti, Eric Waite