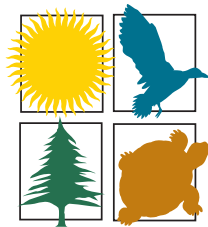


# 2024 Annual Report



PHOTO/LORENA ALTAMIRANO



**Westborough Community Land Trust**

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

# President's Letter by Lorena Altamirano



26 years ago, the WCLT, a private, member-supported, and volunteer-led non-profit was formed by a visionary group of Westborough residents to preserve the land as open spaces to be enjoyed by everyone. Today, WCLT owns 206 acres in town and maintains more than 60 miles of hiking trails.

This year, the WCLT wants to connect with you. Becoming active as a member to learn how the organization is run is critical to maintaining the mission of the WCLT. It is also inspiring to learn from its wonderful and passionate volunteer leaders.

I want to invite you to share your enthusiasm and skills to perpetuate the vision that drove the WCLT founders 26 years ago. There are opportunities to learn, to lead, and to contribute.

- Continue connecting the Charm Bracelet through land donations and acquisitions.
- Continue engaging and educating property owners in town to establish easements.
- Help design, maintain, construct, and enhance town trails
- Assist with indoor and outdoor fun and educational activities for all ages.
- Help administer the Earth Day town clean-up.
- Become a member of a committee
- Assist with reviewing the Earth Day scholarship essays.
- Represent the organization in community initiatives.
- Collaborate with town educators and government in nature-oriented projects.

I encourage you to reach out to [volunteers@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:volunteers@westboroughlandtrust.org) to learn more.

Looking forward to another great year!

Lorena Altamirano

## Board of Directors

### Officers

Lorena Altamirano – President  
Peter Dunbeck – Vice President  
Karen Yeowell – Secretary  
Vincent Servello – Treasurer  
Steve Rowell – Vice-Treasurer

### Exec Committee

Lorena Altamirano – President  
Peter Dunbeck – Vice President  
Karen Yeowell – Secretary  
Vincent Servello – Treasurer

### Board of Directors

Lorena Altamirano  
Pete Dunbeck  
Vincent Servello  
Steve Rowell  
Karen Yeowell  
Janet Anderson  
Brian O'Keefe  
Michelle Scerbin



PHOTO/LORENA ALTAMIRANO



# WCLT Scholarships

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The Westborough Community Land Trust (WCLT) awarded three \$1000.00 scholarships and two honorable mentions to graduating Westborough High School (WHS) seniors. These awards were made on the basis of student essays written for the WCLT's annual Earth Day Essay Contest.

**Michelle Hung** received the WCLT scholarship for



describing a more sustainable future for our planet and for Westborough. Her leadership in organizing events and leading a group of young students to share their opinions on climate issues shows her care and concern for our planet. Michelle's essay

explained the "...importance of collaboration, effective communication, the impact of grassroots efforts, and the various ways we can drive sustainable change together." Very impactful words. Michelle plans to attend Tufts University with a double-major in Environmental Studies and International Relations.

**Katelyn McCarthy** received the WCLT scholarship for



describing her experience in first grade at Bowman Conservation. Her love of nature guided her to work with young girls on hiking excursions that included safety training and getting girls out on local trails. Katelyn's leadership in developing a program to teach young

girls about "...the joys of outdoor activities" which inspired her Girl Scout Gold Award is truly a rewarding endeavor, bringing more young people to nature and off screens. This is a wonderful way that Katelyn gave back to the community. Katelyn's essay ended with the Girl Scout Law, stating a "...promise that we will try our best to make the world a better place." Katelyn's essay exemplified this sentiment. Katelyn plans on attending either UMass Amherst or Boston University to double major in psychology and education.

**Elizabeth Fallon** received the WCLT scholarship for



her essay describing her experience collecting 85 pounds of trash while in the fourth grade. This inspired Elizabeth's love of helping the environment and hiking along the Gilmore Pond Trail that is part of the

Westborough Charm Bracelet. Elizabeth even supported others as they earned their Eagle Scout award by removing invasive species at Gilmore Pond and making the trail accessible to all. A quote from Elizabeth's essay showing a commitment to "...live sustainably as an adult and leave each place I visit and work cleaner than when I first visited" is an inspiration for us all. Elizabeth plans to become a nurse.

**Myeisha Patnaik** received an honorable mention for her essay describing the time spent with her grandfather at Lake Chauncy. Myeisha's love of her grandfather and nature was evident in the beautiful essay. Myeisha plans on attending Wesleyan University and majoring in Political Science on a pre-law track.

**Kaylie Strong** received an honorable mention for her essay describing her role in helping to keep parks like Veteran's Park clean. Kaylie's work with WHS's Engineering Club is impressive and the committee loved Kaylie's passion when it comes to keeping our water systems clean and safe. Kaylie plans on attending the University of Maine for Mechanical Engineering with a concentration in Aerospace Engineering.

# Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee and helpful volunteers around town conducted the annual trail check program covering sixty-five trail segments all over town. Issues were reported and fixed or added to the project list. No need to wait for the Spring, reports are appreciated any time of year. We owe a huge thanks to the chainsaw crew who often clear an obstruction within days of notification.

**Indian Pond Bridge Work Party** – Several bridge sections were installed on a few Saturday mornings in the Indian Pond property by volunteers including WCLT members and local volunteers. We also had tremendous help from the Westborough Department of Public Works. Thanks to David Fredman, Rich Lelacheur, Scott Cusson, Ken DP and Mike Reitsma.

**New Kiosk display cases** – Big thanks to Mark Fox, and also to Scott Henderson and David Fredman for the new display cases at all our kiosks.

**New Roofs on the kiosks** – We have two more to go, but the Mill Road and Gilmore Pond kiosks now have new roofing.

**Stair replacement at Bowman** – Thanks to Troop 100 Scout Ben H. and his helpers for their work replacing stairs at the Piccadilly Brook bridge area at Bowman Conservation area.

**Planning has begun to add interpretive stations to our All-Persons Trail at Gilmore Pond** – This work was made possible by a generous Silver Anniversary donation and will enhance the site with educational material that will be accessible to everyone, including those with sensory impairments. This work continues WCLT efforts to make our trails accessible and enjoyable for all.

We have welcomed new members to the Committee, and to the trail work volunteer list. We are looking forward to another great year of maintaining and enjoying Westborough's wonderful open space!

Brian O'Keefe, Chair  
Scott Henderson



*Several bridge sections were installed in the Indian Pond property.*



*New Roofs on the kiosks at Mill Road and Gilmore Pond kiosks (before and after pictures)*

*David Fredman, Rich Lelacheur, Scott Cusson, Ken DP and Mike Reitsma building new bridge at Indian Pond*



*Burt Oaterweis and Hank Rauch leading the construction of the new bridge at Bowman with Scott Henderson and a group of Scouts.*



# Education Committee



*Wildlife App Walk, Earth Day Litter Cleanup, and Despres Property Winter Walk, three events put on by the Education Committee.*

Education Committee had another full year of events. We also welcomed a new member, Sam Plummer, to our committee.

In September, 24 people attended an informative tour of Westborough's American Chestnut orchard with Bill Davis. October's tree ID walk educated 24 participants. In November, WCLT had an information table and a trail event to support Westborough Connects' Kindness Week.

Our Winter Walk in January drew 22 people. A tour of MassWildlife Headquarters in February brought in 120 attendees. And two live owl shows in March by Eyes on Owls delighted a record-breaking 465 people!

April's Litter Cleanup was another record-breaker, with 650 volunteers. This included a record 36 clubs and businesses sending out teams. Participants signed up online and had a week to clean their area, and Westborough can be proud of their efforts. Thanks to Rachel Radin for the online signup, the Westborough DPW for supplying cleanup bags and picking up the full ones, and Mugford's Flower Shoppe for donating flowers to the volunteers.

Read about the cleanup here: <https://patch.com/massachusetts/westborough/litter-cleanup-success-nodx>

In early May, Marge Fisher's family walk at MacCallum Wildlife Area was WCLT's contribution to Westborough Unplugs Week. In late May Sharon Dankwardt led a wildlife ID app walk. Our June Annual Meeting presenter, Mass Audubon's Sheryl Pereira, spoke on "Birding by Ear."

In addition, this year we co-sponsored nine bird walks with the Forbush Bird Club.

Based on our annual essay competition, we gave out three rather than our usual two scholarships to high school seniors, as well as two honorable mentions, due to an unusual number of quality submissions.

Annie Reid continues to write monthly Nature Notes articles. All 300-plus articles can be viewed at <https://westboroughlandtrust.org/nn/nnindex>.

*Education Committee members: Janet Anderson, Chair; Kris Allen; Sharon Dankwardt; Paula Kirk; Kathy Leblanc; Sam Plummer; Rachel Radin; Michele Ramirez; Annie Reid*



PHOTO/LORENA ALTAMIRANO



# Membership Committee

From May 2023 through April 2024, WCLT received 168 memberships, membership renewals, and annual appeal contributions. Responses to the WCLT membership drive and annual appeal are a critical source of funds. Membership and annual appeal contributions totaled over \$21,000 for the 12 months ending April 30, 2024. Our email list has increased to over 800 active recipients.

We continue a strong relationship with our business partners EMSEAL Corporation, Pearson Advisory Investor Relations, Thomas Financial Associates, Arturo's Ristorante, Julio's Liquors, and Servello CPA. We thank them for their support.

Please encourage anyone you know who may have recently discovered Westborough's natural bounty to join WCLT. Check our calendar and participate in WCLT-sponsored events or get involved in WCLT committees and stewardship projects.

Several WCLT committees have requested supplementing their present make-up with fresh members: education, nominating, land acquisition, and membership. Any WCLT member can serve on these committees. Time commitment is minimal, usually only one meeting and one other event per month. To get involved, contact the appropriate committee chair at <http://westboroughlandtrust.org/contact>. Please volunteer!

*Warren Anderson, Chair*

*Lorena Altamirano*



*Nature hike for Westborough Unplugs week.*

## WCLT values our business partners

We thank our business partners for helping WCLT preserve and protect more land and offer trails and educational programs: **Servello CPA, EMSEAL Corporation, Pearson Advisory Investor Relations, Thomas Financial Associates, Arturo's Ristorante, and Julio's Liquors.**

How can your organization join WCLT as a business partner? Find out by contacting [bizpartners@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:bizpartners@westboroughlandtrust.org).



ARTURO'S  
RISTORANTE



Julio's  
LIQUORS

# Land Preservation Committee

The 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 206 acres of the property, we currently own.

We are continuing our effort to protect the open land in the 123-acre Orchard Swamp area (between Route 9 and Haskell ballfields). The committee is in the process of renewing our relationship with a number of landowners who would like to see their resources protected. We also are working to establish more structured relationships with the town and several state agencies holding land in town.

We continue to work toward finalizing the Charm Bracelet easements in order to establish a 28-mile continuous loop trail, plus a potential 40 miles of side trails that will connect the various open space areas and neighborhoods throughout the Town. At present, we are

***If you would like to talk about planning for the future of your land, please contact the Chair of the Land Preservation Committee or WCLT President. We will be happy to help you plan for the future.***

working on fourteen easements that we hope to acquire expanding trail opportunities on the east and west sides of town.

As always, we continue to seek the involvement of other WCLT committees in our work and we commit to working to further the goals of WCLT 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 the committee's efforts.

*Respectfully submitted, LPC,*

*Don Burn (Chair), Rob Connor, Craig Richov, Jim Tashjian*

## THE 25-MILE TRAIL CHALLENGE!

Hike 25 miles of the 60+ miles of Westborough trails and earn a badge to proudly wear!



Go for a hike and keep track of your mileage. You are welcome to complete the 25 miles any way you wish, but we encourage you to try some new trails.

After you reach a total of 25 miles, email [25miles@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:25miles@westboroughlandtrust.org) with your contact information so we can add you to our list of 25-milers and send you a cool commemorative patch.

Not sure where to start? A list of suggested hikes of varying distances and difficulties is on our website <https://westboroughlandtrust.org/trail-challenge>.

Different hikes have been periodically highlighted on the WCLT Facebook page. Please post selfies or favorite trail photos to encourage others to try a new trail.



Westborough Community Land Trust

PO Box 838

Westborough MA 01851

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Westborough, MA

## 2024 Annual Report

## Calendar of Events

For more info on events go to [www.westboroughlandtrust.org](http://www.westboroughlandtrust.org) ☀ For questions contact: [events@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:events@westboroughlandtrust.org)  
Before leaving check <https://westboroughlandtrust.org/> for cancellations.

### Wildlife of the Meadows Walk

**Sunday, October 6, 2024, 1 – 3:00 pm**

Come spend some time appreciating and identifying the wildflowers and insects in the meadows at Westborough's Zwicker Farm open space area. If we are lucky, we will see dragonflies gathering to migrate. Walk leader Garry Kessler is an experienced naturalist and nature photographer.

Walk length less than one mile on mostly level meadow and woodland terrain.

Free, open to the public, no reservation needed.

**Location:** Zwicker Farm Conservation Area. The entrance is across the street from 27 Belknap Street, Westborough. Park in a row along the left side of the open field.

Check [www.WestboroughLandTrust.org](http://www.WestboroughLandTrust.org) for weather cancellations.

Trail map not yet available.

**For questions contact:**

[events@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:events@westboroughlandtrust.org)

### Tour Westborough's Newest Open Space

**Sunday, October 20, 2024, 1 – 3 pm**

Come tour Westborough's most recently protected open space with Mark Silverberg, Chair of Westborough's Open Space Preservation Committee. Familiarize yourself with the public trails there, and learn about what makes this property special and the process by which it has been protected. About 2 miles on uneven woodland terrain.

Free, open to the public, no reservation needed.

**Location:** Drop off any passengers at the garage between 89 and 93 Bowman Street, where the walk will begin. Then park at the Bowman Conservation area, 72 Bowman Street. We will run shuttles to bring drivers to the trailhead. Do not park along Bowman Street.

Check [www.WestboroughLandTrust.org](http://www.WestboroughLandTrust.org) for weather cancellations.

Trail map not yet available.

**For questions contact:**

[events@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:events@westboroughlandtrust.org)

### Full Moon Walk

**Saturday, November 16, 2024, 4:15 – 6 pm**

Watch the sun set over the water and the nearly-full supermoon rise over Lake Chauncy. Experience the light of the moon and the magic of darkness. Will we hear an owl? This will be a leisurely 1-2 mile walk on mostly level woodland paths.

Free, open to the public, no reservation needed.

**Location:** MacCallum Wildlife Management Area north of Lake Chauncy. Directions: Take Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller Way [formerly Hospital Road] off Lyman Street in Westborough. Go straight up the hill, past the soccer fields on your left. Then take the last left turn before the parking lot for the condo building. Go toward the lake, and where that road meets the lakeshore, park in the lot near the yellow gate.

Check [www.WestboroughLandTrust.org](http://www.WestboroughLandTrust.org) for weather cancellations.

**Trail map:** <https://westboroughlandtrust.org/maps/WMA>

**For questions contact:**

[events@westboroughlandtrust.org](mailto:events@westboroughlandtrust.org)

