

LAND TRUST NOTES



The Bethlehem Land Trust Inc, P.O. Box 322, Bethlehem, CT 06751
bethlehemlandtrustct.org

Fall 2013

The BLT Needs YOU!

Bethlehem's ratio of residents to acres is attractively low; there is an abundance of farmland, forest, and other open space. Help the Land Trust keep it that way: Use the enclosed envelope to join us. Every membership is valuable to us, assisting in land acquisition (discouraging dense development) and stewardship (providing peaceful, natural places and beautiful views for all to enjoy). The larger our membership, the stronger and more credible we are, as we are able to play a more viable and effective role in preserving and protecting the rural character of our town.

What does this mean in real terms? The newly acquired Canfield Preserve is mortgaged and awaiting the trails that will someday make it easy and exciting to explore. The Bellamy-Ferriday Preserve is regularly maintained so that you can wander leisurely through its various trails, with your dog trotting alongside. Two Rivers and Long Horizons Preserves are kept tidy; and we are hoping to add trees to the arboretum in the latter. We love it when land is donated to us, but that doesn't

happen often. Trails don't clear themselves, nor do stone walls. Dollars help, so please be as generous as you can: Open space is priceless in one sense, but requires an investment in another. Take advantage of the envelope. Thank you.

Meet the Board of Directors

We are your neighbors. You see us shopping and working in local businesses, walking the lovely roads, hanging out at the library. Our backgrounds and professions are diverse, yet we have a common belief that open space is of immeasurable benefit to our quality of life—worth our time to preserve. You can see from our stories that you, too, could make a difference and have fun to boot—please join us.

LYNN BAKER

I have always revered nature's wonders. I grew up in Southbury when it was still a sleepy town with dirt roads and Green's Store, to which I would ride my pony to get a candy bar! I loved growing up in the quiet country town and my walks in nature. I moved to Bethlehem in 1975; there is a lovely river behind my current home.

I have worked in retail, hospitality, and business management. For many years I was the innkeeper for The Litchfield Inn. Currently I am an of-

When my kids were babies, I took them through the Bellamy Preserve in a Snugli baby carrier; later, as toddlers, they would walk right along with me, collecting fall leaves or rocks along the way. Amazing things we discovered were the vernal pool filled with tadpoles in the spring, the squirrel's huge pile of pine cones from the pine forest, and the fox calling for a mate with a sharp "bark" that sounded more like a bird call. —Lynn Baker



WALK THROUGH THE PINE WOODS AT THE BELLAMY PRESERVE TO ADMIRE THIS RUBBLY STONE WALL; THIS AREA WAS RECENTLY CLEARED OF UNDERBRUSH BY STEWARD DOUG MAHARD.

fice manager for a children's sleep-away camp in the Adirondacks, working in a local office ten months of the year and up North for the two summer months.

My happiest times are when I can hike or ride horseback or just relax in nature as I take in all its wonders. I have seen Bethlehem grow a bit, with new homes going up and the dairy farms leaving, and hope it will never grow the way Southbury has. I hope to help preserve Bethlehem's farmlands and woods with their important wildlife habitat for future generations to enjoy and cherish as I have. It gives me great pleasure to work with fellow board members and volunteers to help achieve this goal.

MARY PRATT HAWVERMALE

I grew up in Bronxville, NY. My grandparents had purchased a farmhouse in Bethlehem in 1929, as their three sons were all going to school in the area. When I was growing up we came up to Bethlehem every weekend to enjoy the great outdoors and farm life. Bethlehem was very, very rural then, farms everywhere. I moved here full time in 1982; I went back to school to study biology and went on to get a masters degree from Southern Connecticut State University. I have been on the BLT board a few times, as time allowed. When I saw a piece of property for which I have great reverence go up for sale,

with my kids almost grown, I rejoined to help the Trust make its first land purchase: The Two Rivers Preserve. A few years ago my sister and I preserved 52 acres of our family property with an easement that is held by the Trust.

Being in the woods and observing nature is the greatest gift in life, it brings me great joy and comfort. I feel very passionate about saving as much open space as is possible. Once it's gone we'll never get it back. Given the demands that mankind is putting on the planet, farms and biodiversity are so important to our survival.

I can't state strongly enough how important saving the land is to me. —Mary Hawvermale

DOUGLAS MAHARD

I have lived in Bethlehem with my wife, Nancy McMillan, since 2000. By trade, I'm a piano technician and musician; I'm also in the process of getting my CT Certification in Home Inspection. I joined the BLT on prompting from Jack Nelson, a former board member who has moved from the area — we have a shared passion for preserving open space. I thought it would be a great way to meet some of my fellow citizens, which it has been. It's a pleasure working with the current board of directors.



THE BETHLEHEM LAND TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS, CAUGHT AT AN OFFHAND MOMENT. FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: SANDRA RUZICKA, RECORDING SECRETARY CAROL SPIER, CORPORATE SECRETARY LYNN BAKER, ANNEKE ROTHMAN, JEAN MELITA, AND BEVERLY MOSCH. BACK ROW: PRESIDENT MARY HAWVERMALE, STEVE SABATINI, VICE PRESIDENT STUART RABINOWITZ, AND DOUGLAS MAHARD. NOT PICTURED BUT ALSO SERVING ARE MARK MILLER, VERA ROSA, JOHN SWENDSEN, AND TREASURER BOB UEERBACHER. IF YOU SEE US AROUND AND ABOUT, PLEASE SAY HELLO, ASK QUESTIONS, OR OFFER TO VOLUNTEER.

I'm the steward of the Bellamy Preserve and would like to invite everyone to come and walk the trails. This town is so lucky to have 85 acres of open space making up half of its town center; add the 5 acres the Bellamy-Ferriday house and outbuildings sit on and it makes for one spectacular place to stroll.

JEAN MELITA

I was born in Bridgeport and raised in Trumbull, Connecticut, when it was really country, but I didn't actually think about land preservation until I moved to Newtown after I was married. My husband was elected to the planning and zoning commission, and it was then I was struck by how important open space is. Vacationing on Martha's Vineyard opened my eyes further to the fact that current land use is so important for the future, and overdevelopment can be catastrophic to places where land is at a premium. I feel so fortunate to have found a home in Bethlehem nine years ago. One of the first events we attended after moving here was the Bethlehem Land Trust Dinner-Auction. Meeting the committed people on the BLT board has inspired me to learn more about this beautiful area, what has been preserved, and ways to preserve even more.

MARK MILLER

I work by day in human resources; nights and weekends I compose and perform music, playing guitar solo and with friends at clubs and private parties throughout the region. I moved to Bethlehem 14 years ago because the open space was so appealing, and became involved in the BLT almost immediately. I grew up in Islip, on Long Island, and know how quickly a town like Bethlehem can become as densely developed as a town like nearby Oakville. I also believe everyone should do community service of some type. I consider that an obligation.

People tend take a thing like open space for granted until it's gone. —Mark Miller

BEVERLY MOSCH

I grew up in Woodbury when it had a population of less than 2,000. The arrival of I-84 changed everything. College in Ohio was followed by 3 years in Boston and Cambridge; then I was off to Greece for a year or so, and learned to speak enough Greek to get along. While there, I worked in film produc-

tion, and did the same in NYC when I returned to the States. Later, after I moved back to Litchfield County, I spent several years as the assistant director of the Connecticut Community Foundation and served on the boards of several historic preservation organizations, including the Bellamy-Ferriday House & Garden here in Bethlehem. Along the way I became a real estate broker, which gave me the opportunity to toot around the bucolic countryside that I love on a daily basis, drinking in a steady diet of pastures full of cows, sunlight through the trees and across meadows, and especially to appreciate the sculptural quality of the winter landscape and its subdued palette. Preserving that vista is what lured me to the Bethlehem Land Trust. I have been a resident of Bethlehem for 37 years, raising two children to appreciate its pastoral charm.

STUART RABINOWITZ

I was born and raised in Waterbury, and have lived in Bethlehem for 37-plus years. My degree is in photography, from Rochester Institute of Technology, and I spent 25 years operating a professional photography studio. In 2001, I took over as director of World Horizons International, an organization that arranges travel and community service trips for students and adults in both international and domestic locations. I am also a certified permaculturist and certified NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) land care professional; along with my wife Cynthia, a founding member of the BLT, I operate the Center For Sustainable Living here in Bethlehem.

When I moved here in 1976, there were more than 3,000 dairy cows on local dairy farms and only 1,600 residents. Now, in 2013, there are very few dairy cows and more than 3,400 residents. Preservation of open space and farmland is important to the character of our town and enables us to produce food now and in the future. By being a part of the BLT, I have the chance to help with this preservation and benefit generations to come.

VERA ROSA

Many people in Bethlehem know me; I work in the post office and pharmacy and volunteer with the ambulance. My first eight years were very carefree on a farm here in Bethlehem. We moved to the town center in 1960. My mother, Margaret Langlois, was



THE BLT RENTS ONE CORNER OF THE BELLAMY PRESERVE TO OUR GOOD NEIGHBOR MARCH FARM, WHO GROWS CORN THERE.

on the first Wetlands Commission and a charter member of the Land Trust—that happened during the years I was attending college in Hawaii and then living in California. In 1983 my husband and I, with our two kids, moved back to Bethlehem. At that time Miss Ferriday was still alive, and I helped my mother work on the Bellamy Preserve. We opened trails, planted new trees, and transplanted roses and various other plants. I joined the Land Trust board and we worked hard at acquiring the Bellamy property in order to preserve this gem for the town. My mother was a lifelong outdoors person. She knew every tree and plant. She taught all nine of her children a great appreciation for the land and instilled a great work ethic in all of us. I am very proud to be on the BLT board.

ANNEKE ROTHMAN

A native of the Netherlands, I studied physical education in Amsterdam and then taught it in municipal schools in that capital. After my arrival in the US, I lived and taught in New York City, got married, and spent 31 years as head of the Physical Education Department and Director of Athletics at Westover School, in Middlebury, CT. After receiving a masters degree in French, I also taught French at Westover. I came to live in Bethlehem in 2002 to spend my retirement, and enjoy walking my dog on country roads, woods, and fields. This has given me an appreciation of the beautiful area in which I live and of the importance of conserving as much land as possible for the next generations to enjoy as well.

SANDRA RUZICKA

I grew up in Woodbury and also Joliet, Illinois. I moved to Bethlehem about 4 years ago. I have

worked in healthcare and horticulture. Shortly after I moved here, a friend suggested I attend a Land Trust meeting and next thing I knew, I was on the board. I am also active with the Bethlehem Community Garden at the Swendsen Farm Preserve. Open space here might be considered our equivalent to a city park, necessary to our well-being. I feel we must honor the past and pass it forward.

STEVE SABATINI

I grew up in the suburbs of northern New Jersey, where the wonderful forest behind our home became tract housing before I turned 10; a mournful loss. I received a degree in biology from Rutgers, and a later decade moved to Connecticut, where I watched forests and farmlands in Ridgefield and then Woodbury disappear at a once again alarming rate: *déjà vu!* I have lived in Bethlehem for over a decade, work to proliferate green construction practices, and look to serving on the Land Trust board as an opportunity to help maintain the sanctity of Bethlehem's marvelous lands.

CAROL SPIER

My childhood was spent in a small town in rural Ohio, half farm, half college, where "greenbelt" was a grade school vocabulary term. I lived for 23 years on the East End of Long Island, where open space preservation is of vital importance and my husband was treasurer of a greenbelt "friends" association. I've been in Bethlehem eight years. I had a first career as a theatrical costumer On and Off Broadway; now I'm a freelance editor and writer. I work mostly on illustrated how-to books, especially interior design, crafts, and cookbooks. I love city life but I don't want it in my backyard, and there's not much I'd rather do than walk on a country road or through the woods, so it seems smart that I should do what I can to preserve the character of Bethlehem. Serving on the BLT board makes perfect sense for me. An added plus is the fellowship it provides.

JOHN SWENDSEN

I grew up on our family dairy farm in Bethlehem and attended the University of Connecticut School of Agriculture. I worked on the farm until 1986, when a large fire consumed our barns and changed my life forever. I worked several years for a farm equipment dealer and then for the State of Con-

necticut at the Southbury Training School Fire Department. Since I was already in the Bethlehem Volunteer Fire Department my training helped me start my new career as a professional firefighter and emergency medical technician. During my days off I ran a landscape business to help support my family; with my love for the outdoors and appreciation for maintaining property this was a perfect fit.

I have since retired from the State but it is my background in agriculture and working the land that has taught me the true value of preserving open space. I now own the estate and the house where I grew up. Some years ago my family sold 105 acres of our land to the town of Bethlehem and many people now enjoy the recreational benefits of the beautiful Swendsen Farm Preserve, where there are hiking trails and a community garden as well as local farmers still work the fields. I am now kept busy by maintaining the three cemeteries in town as well as my own property.

BOB UEBERBACHER

I grew up in Chicago but I could walk across the street into hundreds of acres of cornfields, swamps, and prairie. I worked for many years in the scientific and environmental fields. I have lived close to 30 years in Bethlehem, having moved here from overpopulated Fairfield County. After moving here, the first organization I joined was Bethlehem Environmental Council, which was founded to “Fight the

Pipe.” Many of the trees around the library, town hall, and other public places were the beneficiaries of BEC. I have also been an elected official on The Inland Wetlands Agency for more than 20 years.

I moved here because I liked the rural character of the town and I serve on the BLT board in order to protect Bethlehem from becoming another Fairfield County. —Bob Ueberbacher



WANTED: GOOD GOODS FOR AUCTION
IT'S FAST APPROACHING: The BLT annual dinner and auction will take place Saturday, November 23. Have you an item or service to donate that will keep the bidding hot? Past years have seen the crowds jostle during the silent auction to mark bid forms for the best homemade pies, essentials like heating fuel, hay, an oil change for your auto, or treats like a dinner at a local eatery or tickets to a film or museum. AND AFTER DINNER, THE PADDLES HAVE WAVED as attendees vied to obtain a hot-air balloon ride over Bethlehem's lovely landscape, theater tickets, works of art, a fresh local turkey for Thanksgiving dinner. Perhaps you would like to donate a weekend at your beach house, a gourmet dinner, a limousine ride, or your invaluable expertise? All donations are tax-deductible and the cause couldn't be better. This is an excellent way to help the Land Trust and, if you are a business, to gain or retain customers, so email us at bethlehemlandtrustct@gmail.com; we will follow up!

**** ❁ ** Save the Date — Book Your Place ** ❁ ****

Farms, Fields, and Forests

Bethlehem Land Trust

9TH ANNUAL DINNER & AUCTION

NOVEMBER 23, 2013 — SATURDAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING
celebrate the rural beauty of our town

TICKETS ARE \$65. CALL (203) 910-3836 TO RESERVE

**** wine, dine, bid, preserve ****

FUN FOR ALL. DO YOUR PART. MARK YOUR CALENDAR.

Quad lovers, take note

The Land Trust is the first to extol the virtues of outdoor recreation, but please, it is illegal to operate motorized vehicles on our properties (and for that matter, on any preserved property in Connecticut). ATVs do tremendous damage and spoil the land. There are significant financial penalties for this infraction of the law. Instead of risking them, why not expend some energy in the same fresh air by helping us clear trails in our preserves? Visit our website, bethlehemlandtrustct.org and submit the volunteer form you'll find there, or email us directly at bethlehemlandtrustct@gmail.com.



PHOTOS BY MARY HAWVERMALE

HELP THE BLUEBIRDS, HOW CAN YOU RESIST?

MANY OF US PUT UP HOUSES FOR THE BLUEBIRDS, BUT NOT SO MANY PEOPLE REALIZE THAT THEY AND MANY OTHER BIRDS LOVE TO EAT MEALWORMS AND THAT YOU CAN HELP THE BIRDS THRIVE AND GIVE YOURSELF HOURS OF ENTERTAINMENT BY FEEDING THEM. DRIED MEALWORMS AND FEEDERS TO HOLD THEM ARE AVAILABLE AT WASHINGTON SUPPLY. DURING THE BREEDING SEASON I COULD ACTUALLY CALL MY BLUEBIRDS IN WHEN I WAS FILLING THE DISH.

☛ MARY HAWVERMALE

Bethlehem Land Trust

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