

CONNECTICUT **Woodlands**



ON THE TRAILS

CONNECTICUT
Woodlands

The Magazine of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association

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Christine Woodsidexx

Exploring the Mattabesett Trail on Mt. Higby.

Conserving Connecticut

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association is a private, non-profit organization dedicated since 1895 to conserving the land, trails, and natural resources of Connecticut.

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association is affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation, the National Woodland Owners Association, the American Hiking Society, and Earth Share.

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The Magazine of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association

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Contents

FEATURES

9 Out the Door in Guilford, to Southern New Hampshire. His lonely trek included the route of the proposed National Scenic Trail from Guilford to New Hampshire. *By David Bell.*

13 So, Who's Out There on the Trails? A seasoned hiker speculates. *By Scot Mackinnon.*

14 Rename the Mohawk Trail. His view is: remember a trailblazer. *By David K. Leff.*

16 Hundreds Run the Blue Trails. A competitive married couple's races. *By Scott Livingston.*

20 Trees, Shrubs, Sedges, and More — a Forest Story. A botanist's perspective on the John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom and Demonstration Forest. *By Thomas Rawinski.*

33 A Hundred Yards. A poem. *By Adam R. Moore.*



On the cover:

Robert Pagini's shot of the Metacomet Trail near West Peak.

DEPARTMENTS

4 Executive Director's Message. *The aroma of autumn.*

4 President's Message. *Dick Whitehouse's eight-year tenure ends.*

5 Trail Mix. Western Roving Crew active again. Diverse group of trail users joins to work in Cockaponset State Forest.

21 Tree Page. Black-gum, also known as the Tupelo or the Pepperidge.

22 From the Archives. *A natural resource inventory, 1929 style.*

24 From the Land. Why the Farm Bill matters. *By Jean Crum Jones.*

28 Obituaries.

30 Essential Facts of Life. The Lure of the Letterbox. *By Lori Paradis Brant.*

32 Reviews. A helpful book on trees. A new DVD on amphibians.

34 Fall Programs.

36 News of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association.

38 Development News. Recognizing CFPA donors.

42 Stumpage Report. Current prices for standing timber.

43 CFPA Store. Buy books, maps, and clothing.



*Correction:
On page 29 of the spring issue,
we named the wrong trail that is
adjacent to the 13-acre parcel
CFPA purchased in Eastford.
It is the Natchaug Trail.*

CONNECTICUT
**Forest
& Park**
ASSOCIATION

THE AROMA OF AUTUMN

By ADAM R. MOORE

Night is when the smells are strongest. It is at dark, especially when you emerge from a car that has encased you for hours, when the scents of our surroundings strike us so.



Ann Colson

Executive Director
Adam R. Moore

It was about midnight when we pulled into our driveway, home in Connecticut from a two-week vacation on Martha's Vineyard. I opened the door and was met, immediately, by lilies. I mean the sweet, musky perfume of the day lilies that crowd in unruly bunches atop a grassy bank above our sidewalk. The air was so scented that we practically swam through it, with sleeping toddlers in our arms and sleepy children stumbling to the back porch. Just a week or so later, the lilies had gone by, and that evocative smell was no more.

Autumn, too, has its aroma. The visual cornucopia of fall so bedazzles us that we often forget its bounteous smells, but they are present, and we ought to take notice. I clearly recall another nighttime drive back to Connecticut, this one in October. I opened the car door and met a wave of smell. This time, though, it was the sweet scent of decay – the fragrance of wet, fallen sugar maple leaves underfoot. There, on the ground, they lay in repose, their work complete, a summer's end with a sweet, satisfied sigh of aromatic decay.

Grapes, too, are a signal smell of autumn about to begin. When I smell ripe Concord grapes, my memory snaps back in an instant to training with my high school cross-country team. How strongly I recall those days of early September, running along the fences and the edges of woods with the smell of *Vitis* tantalizing me a few steps further. I ran by rough unkempt edges, where vines tangle themselves among wires, strangle the trees above, and dangle plump bunches of purple, there for the plucking. To me, grape is that smell of September, a smell of renewed purpose mixed with carefree running – running! – over meadow and field, a vintage only teenage years can yield.

Smell changes with seasons, just like the weather, just like the foliage. Is there not a smell to the stillness, just before snow is about to fall? There is the smell of wood smoke, curling about the chimney on a bare winter day. There is the smell of maple steam, billowing off a pan of boiling sap. There is the suburban smell of freshly cut grass, the smell of the woods after a rain, and, in a hemlock ravine, even shade has a smell. There are smells that are rank yet oddly pleasant: manure, for instance. At times, my entire town of Durham smells of manure, and as long as that happens now and then, I know that everything is going to be all right. There are

continued on page 18

A GREAT JOURNEY

By RICHARD WHITEHOUSE

It has been almost nine years since I first became president of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association Board of Directors. I was proud of the board's faith in me but humbled as I considered those who had preceded me in this position, starting in 1895.



CFPA President
Richard Whitehouse

This fall my leadership will come to an end. It has been an great journey. During this period, we have changed executive directors, restructured the board, added staff members and completed a strategic plan. We accomplished these goals with a formula that has worked for CFPA over many years: the combination of a dedicated board, staff, and volunteers.

Thanks also to Executive Director Adam Moore, a worthy successor to John Hibbard.

Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the efforts of our great staff; of Chris Woodside, editor of Connecticut Woodlands; and of our many volunteers, who do yeomen's service. We also must recognize that most important contribution of committee members and the support and involvement of our Board of Directors.

It has been a joy to work with such a wonderful staff that believes completely in the goals of our organization. I step down from my position with a feeling of accomplishment and turn over the reins of CFPA to David Platt. I have complete confidence that under his leadership CFPA will move on to a new level.

I will continue to be involved with this great organization, as a board member and as a dedicated volunteer on the trails, as I have been since 1969.

Let me leave you with a quote from a favorite author, Hal Borland.

There may be other times as good as late October to go out afoot and see the world, but there certainly isn't a better one. To walk with the scuffle of new fallen leaves, to feel the mild sun and see the autumn sky. ... Yesterday is all around you, last spring's growth and last summer's maturity and last month's ripeness. But tomorrow is there too, the sprout, the leaf, the blossom, waiting only for another spring. ... To walk in autumn is to be in the presence of forever.

I hope to see you on the trails.

Richard Whitehouse

Right, a 44-foot-long walkers' bridge was installed over the Shunnonk River at the Hewitt's Pond Dam on June 7, thanks to the work of volunteers for Connecticut Forest & Association and Trout Unlimited. The bridge cuts out the dangerous ford along the Narragansett Trail. Also working on the project were the Avalonia Land Conservancy and the state Department of Environmental Protection, which helped secure a federal recreational trails grant for the bridge.



CFPA to Count Hikers Using a Remote Sensor

Connecticut Forest & Park Association has bought two remote sensor devices that will use infrared light beams to calculate numbers of hikers on the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails. The devices, made by Cuesta Systems of San Luis Obispo, California, each include a sensor, which emits the infrared light beam, and a reflector. Each component is placed on opposite sides of a trail, at a minimum of 30 feet apart. Whenever anyone passes through the light beam, a liquid crystal display counter registers their movement.

The system is designed to count large objects like people. Large animals can register also. Falling leaves and flying birds will not be counted. The light beam need only be interrupted for one-eighth of a second in order to register that someone passed through. The person should be at least one foot away from the lens.

CFPA Executive Director Adam R. Moore said he acquired these devices because the Association does not know exactly how many hikers are on the trails. Hiker counts could be very helpful if the Mattabesett and Metacomet trails become part of the New England National Scenic Trail. Knowing how many people use a trail can determine how to maintain it, where to place signs, and other considerations.

The counter is designed with the following speeds in mind: Hikers and bikers, up to 7 miles per hour, and off-road vehicles (which are allowed only with landowner's written permission) 25 mph. (It seems that the designers of the device are speedy walkers.)

Western Roving Crew Active Again

After Doug McKain's departure for Vermont, the Western Roving Trail Crew was without a leader for the last few months. Now Bob Nodine has stepped forward to coordinate the crew, which handles projects too large for trail managers such as moving blown-down trees, building bridges, and relocating trail sections.

For the past several months, George Arthur and the Eastern Roving Trail Crew have done an outstanding job of keeping trails open and bridges secure in the whole state.

Mr. Nodine is looking for active and ad-hoc members of the western crew. To respond, call CFPA at 860-346-2372.

Cockaponset Trails Day Work Party a Huge Success

Trails Day, Saturday, June 2, found the commuter lot on Beaver Meadow Road in Haddam overflowing. Despite warm and muggy weather, 50 volunteers turned out for a work party, the first of its kind in the Cockaponset State Forest. It brought together many of the different forest user groups to work on a trail used by all.

Coffee and donuts were provided by the Connecticut Chapter of the New England Mountain Biking Association. Free insect repellent and other goodies were provided by the American Hiking Society. CFPA Cockaponset Trail Manager Rob Butterworth and Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Park Supervisor Alex Sokolow organized several work crews. Also in attendance was Laurie Giannotti, the state's recreational trails & greenways program coordinator.

The groups walked a quarter mile to the trailhead and then out to the various projects. Work was done on the orange blazed trail that is a major access point into the forest and is used by all the groups. The heavy work of emplacing three forty foot sections of turnpike was carried out with the assistance of machinery brought in by the Bridle Path

continued on page 6



Laurie Giannotti

Members of diverse groups gathered to work on trails in Cockaponset State Forest on June 2. They included hikers, mountain bikers, horse riders, four-wheel-drive-vehicle owners, and dirt bike riders.

continued from page 5

Conservancy and the Salmon River County Riders, as well as muscle from all of the groups. Materials, consisting of filter fabric, geogrid and crushed stone were provided by the DEP. The work crews, on these sections, were overseen by Dan Joesph (of the SRCR) and Brad Turley (of the Bridle Path Conservancy).

On the eastern leg of the orange trail, the workers armored two stream crossings with rock and drained a long boggy section. They cleaned out water bars and made new “grade dips” for drainage. The SRCR did much of that work.

The western leg of the orange trail also came in for its fair share of work. The workers replaced four water bars, (two log and two stone/dirt). They dug new grade drains. Mr. Butterworth oversaw this crew, consisting of folks from the Appalachian Mountain Club, CFPA, CTJeep.org (a group of four-wheel-drive vehicle owners), Bridle Path Conservancy, the Lower Connecticut River Valley Horse Club, and The Connecticut chapter of the New England Mountain Biking Association. This group worked so well together that they got their planned work along with the “extra hands/time” projects done ahead of schedule. They then broke up and went to assist on the other projects.

The final project under taken was also on the western leg of the orange trail. This project was lead by Jim Casagrande of the North East Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs and Nestor Barrezueta of the Deep River kids biking group, SprockKids. This, again, was a mixed group of volunteers. These folks had the unenviable task of digging out a boggy section of trail to improve drainage. This group did an outstanding job on what was certainly the smelliest work site.

Following the all the hard labor was a potluck cookout in an old sandpit at the southern end of the trail. Mr. Sokolow stopped by to enjoy a hot dog and to thank everyone for their efforts.

The crews send a big note of thanks to Melissa Evarts of the LCRVHC for coordinating a porta-potty for the event. Thanks also to the CFPA and LCRVHC for providing raffle prizes. A note of thanks goes out to all the volunteers for making this event such a success. A very special note of thanks to all the crew leaders for doing the site walks and putting up with a barrage of emails.

Volunteers and crew leaders all had a great time and accomplished a quite a number of projects. The common question, from the newest volunteer to the most experienced volunteer was, “When are we going to do this again?” The answer to that was, “Soon.”

—Rob Butterworth

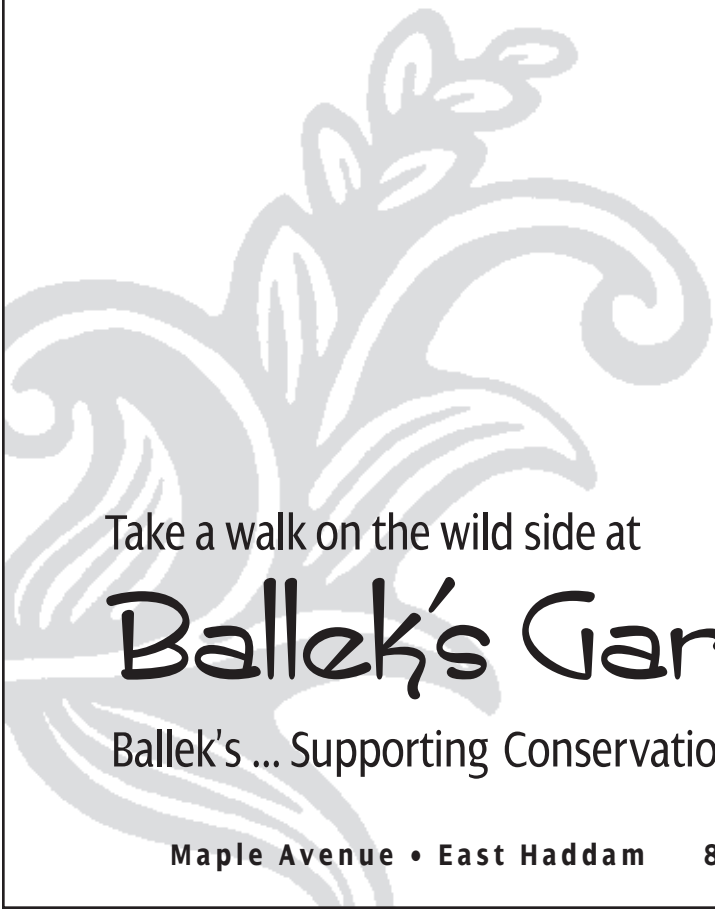
INTRODUCTION

ON THE TRAILS

People will not stop to be counted, as we know from the problems every 10 years taking the United States Census. How much harder it is to count people who hike on hundreds of miles of wooded trails. Still, it's an intriguing challenge to try to figure out how many and what kind of adventurers walk onto those Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails every day, every month, and every year.

Hikers in this issue talk about feeling alone in one of the most populous parts of the country. Anyone who has walked out of the woods at rush hour to find an indifferent line of shiny cars, the drivers' eyes on anything but a bedraggled trekker standing on the shoulder, knows this strange feeling of loneliness.

And yet—be surprised at the sorts of activity that bring those trails alive. Runners, breaking records, running for more than the length of a marathon. Walkers looking for hidden plastic boxes so that they may stamp their notebooks to show they've been there. Dog walkers. And in some areas — not the Blue Trails — horse-back riders, mountain bikers. Salamanders and frogs and deer and raccoons and bears and more. And lost items, like the drip-style coffee maker Scot Mackinnon saw while hiking.



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*Calculations for condo or small ranch in Connecticut based on fuel costs / rates as of 2006.
Estimates given for comparison purposes only.*



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*A 270-mile-long trek, part of it on a proposed
National Scenic Trail, was one for the history books*

HE WALKED OUT THE DOOR IN GUILFORD... TO SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE ... ALONE

BY DAVID BELL

On a warm July morning in 2004, I slung a pack over my shoulders, headed out the door of my Guilford apartment and began walking north. I kept walking until, three and a half weeks and 270 miles later, I stood atop Mt. Sunapee in New Hampshire – tired, dehydrated, and grateful to have just completed a hike along the Mattabassett-Metacomet-Monadnock and Sunapee Greenway trails. It was the realization of a dream that had plagued me since the early 1990s, when I purchased my first *Connecticut Walk Book* and began exploring the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails that crisscross the state.

My earliest exposure to camping and hiking had come at age 11, courtesy of the Boy Scouts. But my memories of those experiences are mostly of mildew, eating cold cereal, freezing in my cotton sleeping bag and, upon returning home, my mother sending me

continued on page 10

Merimere Reservoir from the Metacomet Trail in Meriden.

David Bell



Excerpts from Shenipsit Trail Registers

SHENIPSIT TRAIL - GARNET LEDGE REGISTER Book 1

*This registry book was placed here
June 12, 1948 by L. Morgan Porter.
Please sign, date, return to tin can
and put the cover on.*

NOV. 22

"and it's raining like hell."

Wallace Balkus,
Bolton Notch, Conn.

DEC. 25

"and cold as hell."

Edwin Albasi,
Birch Mts., Merry Christmas

MAY 15 1949

Chuck and Shirley Spaeth and Janie
age 15 mos.

"I'm not a bit tired."

-Janie

*HELP - I DIDN'T MAKE IT -
A.A.W.*

Boy what a short walk.

I never was so tired in my life.

My feet hurt.

Eileen Murphy,
Manchester, Conn.

FEB. 23, 1949

*All I gotta say what a nice day sun-
shine but what a hell of a hike.*



David Bell

Ragged Mountain.

270-mile-long trek

continued from page 9

to the bathtub to get rid of the stink.

The real introduction to the joys of back-packing occurred about a dozen years later, when a college friend took me on a climb up Mount Marcy, the highest point in New York. Since then, I had traveled to both the Adirondacks and the White Mountains of New Hampshire again and again, to do some solo trekking and "peakbagging." Then, in 1991, I walked a 450-mile stretch of the Appalachian Trail from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Damascus, Virginia. Although I still ate cold cereal at times and had that persistent stink about me, those six weeks changed my life, and I became hooked on long-distance hiking.

So, when I flipped through the pages of the *Walk Book* and noticed a trail snaking through the north end of Guilford, and read that it extended all the way to Mount Monadnock in southwestern New Hampshire, I had to investigate further. This route of connected trails has been proposed as a National Scenic Trail under the name New England Scenic Trail. Many have called them the MMM Trails. I call the route the 3M Trail.

The idea of being able to walk through the woods from my home town to

Monadnock, to know that the two places were connected in some way, fascinated me. I wanted to have the experience of being a nomad in my own backyard, as it were – to see Connecticut from a different perspective. Instead of careening down I-95, late for whatever detested job I was on my way to, I could stroll along the tops of the ridges as an outside observer, gazing down on the highways from the quietness of the woods – moving through the civilized world while being removed from it.

The First Attempt

In the summer of 1997, a friend dropped me off at the parking lot on Route 77 and I began the steep ascent towards Bluff Head, hoping to reach Monadnock in about three weeks. Unfortunately, I ended that hike in Plainville just five days later. The main problem was one of loneliness – I had naively expected to have an experience similar to the one I'd had on the AT, where there were hundreds of wanderers like me, all trying to reach Katahdin. But the 3M Trail is remarkably different from the AT. Since it is mostly used for day-hiking, no infrastructure exists to serve long-distance backpackers. There are no shelters or legal campsites until you reach northern Massachusetts, no hostels or "trail angels" (people who aid hikers by leaving food and water along the trail,

offer rides into town, etc.) and very few amenities (Guida's Restaurant on Route 66, the hotel in Plainville, and the village of Tariffville are some notable exceptions).

In fact, many of the people I met didn't know the trail even existed, or that it extended as far as it did. The irony was that, even though I was never more than a mile or two from civilization, I felt isolated and freakish. These feelings were intensified during road-walks, or when I had to go into town. I would get strange looks from motorists. One group of teenagers shouted epithets out the window as they sped past. At such moments, I felt less like a rugged individualist and more like a hobo who would be apprehended by the police at any moment and escorted to the town line. Regretfully, I gave in to these feelings that first time and went home, feeling like the stupidest person alive. I chalked the hike up to being one of those failed experiments. I tried to put it out of my mind.

But dreams die hard. I couldn't seem to shake thoughts of my aborted hike or of the Blue Trail that still wound its way along some of the most spectacular cliff walking in New England. Finally, seven years later, I was ready to try again. I had reached the age of 40 and wanted to give myself a special birthday present. I was planning to return to the AT in the near future and thought that hiking the 3M would be a good warm-up hike to see how my aging body handled the many small ups and downs of the traprock ridges. And I had those demons of 1997 to exorcise.

*I wanted to have the experience
of being a nomad in my own
backyard, as it were –
to see Connecticut from
a different perspective.*

I also had another itch to scratch. Near my home is Westwoods, a 1,000-acre forest preserve with an extensive network of hiking trails I regularly visit for short walks or jogs. For some time I had had the romantic notion of walking from my home, through Westwoods, up the west side of Guilford, and connecting to Bluff Head and the Mattabassett Trail. I therefore spent much of the winter scouting out the open spaces in town, seeking out existing trails and quiet roads, until I had put together an off-road route to Bluff Head. Wanting to extend the hike even further, I looked at maps of Monadnock to see if there were any trails heading north, perhaps even connecting with the AT near Hanover, New Hampshire. While doing an online search, I found a website for the Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway, a 51-mile trail that linked the summits of Monadnock and Sunapee. I couldn't find any routes that went beyond Sunapee, so I contented myself with making that my destination, and started planning the hike.

I purchased some new lightweight gear,

continued on page 12



David Bell

A weary David Bell points to the marker on Sunapee, the end of his journey.

Old Shenipsit Trail Registers

Robert H.,
Manchester Conn.
MOOSE PATROL
APRIL 11, 1949
Troop 25 Manchester.
Adrian Schmidhauser, Larry
Heavisides
*What a g**d*** of a hike this is.*

*The white birches, trailing arbutus
and sparkling stream competes with
Vermont. Nice trail!*
Florance Randall

MAY 8, 1949
(MOTHERS DAY)
*My wife and I certainly enjoyed the
walk up and the view is perfect today.
The weather is really ideal for it.
My husband and I thank the Conn.
Forest and Park Association or pro-
viding such a picturesque trail and
free for all to enjoy – Lets have more of
them –*
Mr. and Mrs. John Robaths,
Manchester

*Hall Linoleum Co. free estimates
reasonable rates all types of floor
covering Oak St. Manchester
PS We have garnet stones in our out-
door fireplace at home, some as large
as ¼ inch in diameter.*

Double PS – So what!
E.P.A.

JUNE 15, 1949
*Super weather, but my feet are killing
me – damn ants*
E.L. Anderson

*I never got to Europe, but this is just
as good!*
June Stevenson
OCT. 2, 1949
*Perfect fall day. Air clear and cool.
Trail ideal.*
Norman and Philip Reuter,
Manchester

Old Shenipsit Trail Registers

Buddy Orella

it was a long walk but I liked it

JANUARY 15, 1950

*What no skiing! – Lets hike –
The Michelitsch's,
Manchester, Conn.*

Mark Solomon

MARCH 26, 1950

*you have to be a hell of a good channel
swimmer to cross the brooks.*

John Whitman, Manchester, Conn.
Tel. 6841

APRIL 7, 1950

*the guy that put up the trail signs
must have been drunk.*

We were here before Kilroy.

Marie and Bob Richardson –
what a hell of a hike

*Bob Richardson was here you lucky,
lucky people*

FEBRUARY 4, 1950

*Clear, cold, cloudy; can't climb clumsy
corners on cold choppers. - C.I.B.,
Rockville, Conn.*

*No wildlife here! No females allowed
"Entrid Verboton"*

Al Zanetti better known as Bugs,
Cleveland, Ohio.

*Swell day for hiking but not for work-
ing that's why I'm here.*

APRIL 6, 1950

sunny but still cold.

SHENIPSIT TRAIL GARNET LEDGE REGISTER Book 2 (placed 5/6/50)

*Garnet Ledge elevation 750 ft. above
sea level. The garnets will be found on
west face of ledge about 40 yards south
on the trail.*

270-mile-long trek

continued from page 11

hoping to lighten my pack weight. The only poor decision I made in this regard was choosing to use a tarp instead of a tent. Although it was half the weight of a tent, the tarp allowed all kinds of bugs in, and during rainstorms I would often awaken to find myself surrounded by puddles. The tarp did bring me "closer to nature" as advertised.

To combat the possibility of another attack of loneliness, I made arrangements with Glen Ward, a longtime friend and frequent hiking partner, to meet me on weekends so that I could re-supply, and to hike with me when he could. I also reconnoitered the entire route by car, stopping at every road crossing to see what existed in the way of grocery stores, restaurants, post offices and the like.

Finally, on the morning of July 27, I set out from home and within a few minutes had entered the quiet sanctuary of Westwoods. I was on my way.

'You're hiking where?'

Trouble came along only a few hours later, as I was traversing the Sugarloaf Recreation Area in North Guilford. This is one of several parcels owned by the South Central Regional Water Authority, which are open to permit holders for recreational use. Although I had a permit, I suppose my pack made me look a bit suspicious to the neighboring residents who had smile and waved hello. While on a rest break I heard the sound of rumbling engines, and two SUV's driven by RWA policemen came barreling down the path and halted where I sat on the ground enjoying some wild raspberries. I pulled the permit out before the officers had spoken a word. Questions were asked: "Are you carrying any weapons? Where are you going? Where did you come from?..." They stared rather blankly at me as I explained that I was hiking to New Hampshire, and had started from downtown Guilford that morning. More questions followed: "You're hiking where? And you started this morning? You're going to New Hampshire?"

They couldn't seem to comprehend what I was telling them. After warning me not to camp on the property, they departed, leaving me with my raspberries.

As they drove away, I recognized some changes that had occurred in me over the last seven years. Instead of feeling embar-

*I can only guess what the
waitress thought when a sweaty
unshaven customer handed her a
moldy \$10 bill and then asked if
he could fill his water bottles.*

rassed or self-conscious, I found the whole encounter rather amusing. I knew who I was and why I was out here, and it no longer bothered me what other people thought about it. Rather than feeling like a freak, I felt more like a pilgrim marching to his own drumbeat. I got up and started walking again, totally at peace.

That night I camped on top of Bluff Head, having stocked up on water from the stream at its base. Finding water in Connecticut is a challenge in late summer, as most of the smaller brooks and streamlets run themselves dry by the end of June. Only the larger streams and rivers flow year-round, and the reservoirs, untreated, can be of questionable quality.

Though I had a good filter in my pack, I relied on spigots and other treated sources wherever possible. At times I was forced to carry the night's supply of water a mile or two to the intended campsite. Dehydration proved to be the single biggest issue I faced along the way, and it caused me some difficulties later in the hike.

I spent the second evening on Besek Mountain, overlooking a Wallingford subdivision, and began a practice which became customary throughout the hike – litter patrol. This particular site was obviously a regular partying spot. Hundreds of empty cans and bottles dotted the area, as well as a cooler, part of a lawn chair or two, and various other items. I spent the better part of an hour gathering what I could see, and piled it all in the fire ring, hoping perhaps someone would come along later with a trash bag. I reasoned that, since I was camping illegally on private property, it was the least I could do in return. A little bonus came my way in the form of some cash found neatly folded at the base of a tree. This I happily stowed away and used to buy lunch at Guida's the following day. I can only guess what the waitress thought when a sweaty unshaven

continued on page 23

BY SCOT MACKINNON



So, Who's Out There on the Trails?

*A seasoned hiker speculates
how many use the
Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails
Pondering the "Apparent
Loneliness Factor"*

Continental Divide, all huge systems thousands of miles long running through some of our most popular national parks — it is anybody's guess how many hikers go through. The rangers know that millions of people visit the parks because they can count noses at the gate. How many of those visitors get out of their cars and hike on the trails?

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the University of Georgia are collaborating on a pilot program to determine the average number of visitors on a 109-mile section of the AT. Based on these results, they will then use the same techniques to calculate hiker numbers for all 2,175 miles of the A.T. (To read the Appalachian Trail Visitor Use Study, www.srs.fs.usda.gov/trends/AT.html.) These statistically valid methods will, no doubt, help trail officials around the country get a better idea of who is out there. I don't see very many hikers on the Connecticut Blue Trails, mostly the occasional dog walker. Nevertheless, I am happy to continue basing my personal hiker count on tracks, rumors and lost appliances.

Scot Mackinnon — former Appalachian Trail thru-hiker, plant experimenter, former town selectman, and family man — lives in East Haddam.

Tips on Way-Finding

Just because we are surrounded by millions of people here in the Nutmeg state does not mean that we cannot get lost or hurt in the woods. Our Blue Trail system is one of the best-kept secrets in the Northeast. It's accessible and offers plenty of remote and seriously challenging sections.

If you think you could give Daniel Boone's way finding skills some competition, here is a classic test. (It's best to try this with a companion watching, so you can make them do it after you, if they laugh.) Find a nice, flat open area — the bigger the better. Close your eyes. (A blindfold is better.) Then set off for a destination glimpsed previously in the distance. You will walk in a circle, clockwise or counter-clockwise. Guaranteed. One leg is always stronger than the other. The dominant leg drives you inexorably off target. My right leg is so persuasive that I can do a blindfolded circle of my kitchen when I mean to head straight for the icebox.

Superbly conditioned athletes, without blindfolds, sometimes get in the worst fixes in the woods. Their confidence (and embarrassment) drives them to push harder than most, exhausting and dehydrating themselves by frantically hiking in big circles.

All too often, strong hikers, lost for over 24 hours, will die... even in relatively mild weather. Counter-intuitively, little kids can last for days in the woods. When they know they are lost, they sit still and wait.

Therefore:

Carry a compass and know how to use it. I carry a basic survival kit too, enough stuff to keep me alive in the woods overnight if something goes wrong on a day hike. It wouldn't hurt to carry a map and let your loved ones know where you are headed, either. Try to maintain a healthy respect for the power, as well as the beauty, of Connecticut's woodlands. See you on the trail, hopefully without the blindfold and hopefully with others around to keep us company.

I have made so many dumb mistakes on trails that I am usually grateful to see other hikers, if for no other reason than to cross paths with a potential rescuer. Yet, when I do set off on my own, even on the Connecticut Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails, I rarely encounter other hikers. If we allow for the typical hiker's need for relative solitude, this makes some sense. But we are a densely populated, if diminutive, state. So what's up?

It is a pleasantly confounding fact that as Connecticut's overall land area shrinks, our woodlands are as empty of hikers as ever — or so it would seem. In 1960, the Land of Steady Habits was credited with 5,009 square miles. Over the years, geographers have chiseled us down to 4,845 square miles by subtracting our bodies of water. While we remain 48th in the United States in our land area, we rival larger, less populous states in an undocumented category: ALF, or Apparent Loneliness Factor.

It's not easy to understand why Connecticut's Blue Trails are so ALFed. We have little hard data. Connecticut Forest and Park Association Executive Director Adam Moore says, "We have no idea how many people use the Blue Trails." Because of this, CFPA will install two electronic monitoring stations on trails to count people. (*See the article on the remote sensor portable traffic counter on page 5.*) In the meantime, I am left with my own guesswork based on what hikers leave behind.

Tracking Dropped Objects

Hikers drop more stuff in the woods than Hansel and Gretel. Once, I found a drip coffee maker next to a well-traveled trail and the grateful owner a half-mile later. Ding! There's one hiker. But, most woodland visitors are unlikely to mark their passing with abandoned appliances. Watching for hiker's footprints can give you a rough idea who is out there on less-traveled paths. And the trench-like appearance of over-loved routes tells its own story. All of these methods are as unscientific as it gets.

On the busy National Scenic Trails — the Appalachian, Pacific Crest and the

Old Shenipsit Trail Registers

AUGUST 13, 1950, at 5:00 pm,
3 feet east of here a toast was drunk to
the famous mountaineer L. Morgan
Porter who at this minute is on top of
an Adirondack.

E.A.B.

At the same time a toast was drunk to
his wife who is no doubt in a chair,
waiting.

Sammie B.

NOV. 5, 1950

O.K. Ed, I probably was on an
Adirondack. A new register box was
placed here today.

L.M. Porter, CFPA

Gerry Janssen,

MAY 31, 1952,

11 Avondale Rd., Manchester
5'10 1/2", 155 lbs., brown hair brown
eyes

Well here we are again. Neil got one 4
1/2" trout. What luck! We shoulda stood
at home. Nice day for a vacation. Bugs
by the 1,000,000's. We're heading for
the Notch pond after we eat. Exactly
12 minutes and 5 seconds after 9:00
Bob Richardson, Neil Jones

Emil Schulz,

147 Spruce St., telephone 8962
please call me up.

Bumpsey Walker,

86 Ash St. Manchester, Conn.

telephone 20429

if any pretty girls read this please call
me up and make a date. Love Bumpsey.
If you're pretty 20429

SHENIPSIT TRAIL GARNET LEDGE REGISTER Book 3 (placed 8/31/52)

DEC. 2

Troop 25 Peter Hansen, Dick
Morrison, Milton Shaw, Charles
Dougan, Harry Maisment
No garnets cheapskates fake

RENAME THE MOHAWK TRAIL

Remembering a Trailblazer

The smith a mighty man is he

— Longfellow

BY DAVID K. LEFF

As time goes on fewer people remember walking the rugged Mohawk Trail when it bore the white blazes of that archetypal footpath in the wilderness, the Appalachian Trail. When the AT was moved to the west side of the Housatonic River in 1988 because of landowner opposition to National Scenic Trail status, its traditional route on the east bank from Cornwall Bridge to Falls Village was reintegrated into the blue blazed trail system from which it originated. The "abandoned" AT was renamed the Mohawk Trail, according to former CFPA trails chairman Dick Blake, in keeping with the "custom of memorializing Indian tribes with trail names."

Inasmuch as the state forest through which the trail passes already commemorates the tribe, it may be time to revisit this moniker and name the trail after Seymour R. Smith who almost single handedly maintained this section of the AT for three decades during the period following World War II. "One of the superstars of this era of trail work," according to Guy and Laura Waterman's epic history of northeastern trails, *Forest and Crag*, he was a tireless advocate and maintainer whose dedication inspired many a young hiker, including me.

I was 16 years old on a warm summer day in 1971 and it was love at first sight. No, it wasn't a girl in a sundress or a sports car in British racing green, though I was as interested as any teenage boy in both. Instead, a lifetime romance with the outdoors was kindled as I hiked up Dark Entry Brook on what was then the Appalachian Trail. It seemed like twilight beneath the thick hemlock dominated canopy, and the stream leapt in a boisterous rush down the steep mountain in a series of falls and pools. The rocks were cushioned with emerald moss and the

air was dank and damp. After going by an old stone dam, the trail headed through beech and glossy leaved laurel passing the ruins of charcoal burners' shacks.

Before the day was out, I'd hiked beneath enormous hemlocks, through the lost village of Dudleytown with its many decrepit fieldstone foundations, and into the hushed grandeur of Cathedral Pines. The "route is devious; use care to follow blazes" my borrowed 1963 first edition trail guide warned.

In poor shape from watching too many television reruns, I rested frequently and drank copious amounts of water against the heat. While sitting on a moldering log or a lichen pocked rock, I'd whip the trail guide from my daypack and devour every word of the trail description, unfolding the map, tracing and retracing my finger along the route. Scrutinizing every object and word of the simple, hand drawn cartography, I soon noticed the name S. R. Smith in the lower left hand corner. It was the same Seymour Smith who, the guide indicated, maintained this section of trail, almost 23 miles long.

Born in 1899, Seymour Smith was a life-long resident of Watertown, Connecticut and began his trails work clearing the close-to-home Mattatuck Trail following the 1938 hurricane's devastation. In addition to his work on the AT, he also helped maintain portions of the Blue-Blazed Trail system and served on the CFPA Trails Committee for more than 50 years.

Smith was an engineer with the Connecticut Light & Power Company for three decades, but was also involved in a generations-old family business manufacturing garden pruning and cutting tools. Here he designed and produced heavy loppers meant specifically for trails work. He also invented the swizzle stick, a rapier-sharp blade stretched between the forks of a Y-shaped handle that was particularly effective at clearing ferns, grasses and light brush. Active in the Appalachian Trail Conference

and the Appalachian Mountain Club, in the 1950s Smith created the AMC's Connecticut roving trail crew, whose work ranged all the way to the White Mountains. Involved in the full panoply of issues, he was known to keep close contact with private owners whose land was crossed by trails. "Such a pivotal figure was he during the quarter-century following World War II," wrote the Watermans, "that one could do worse than to call those years, for Northeastern trails history, the Age of Seymour Smith." He died in 1992 at the age of 93.

My first afternoon along the AT so assiduously cared for by Smith blossomed into a full blown passion for the outdoors, a lifetime of hiking, and a career in environmental conservation. Within

a few years I had joined the Appalachian Mountain Club's Connecticut Chapter and was engaged in trail maintenance myself.

On a couple occasions I had the pleasure of working with Smith on the Riga plateau near Bear Mountain in Salisbury. Then about 80, he was a burly man with a shock of white hair who despite his advanced years could climb up hill easily and swing a swizzle stick with a vengeance. I remember helping him clear a blowdown with a bow saw on the Undermountain Trail, and clip laurel with his patented pruners on Paradise Lane. He exhibited great patience with a novice, offered encouragement, and eagerly let me in on the "tricks of the trade." He had a dry wit and we had quite a few laughs over complaints he'd received that the Bog Trail leading to AMC's Northwest Camp was too wet. "How do people think the trail got its name?" he shook his head and chuckled.

Every year there are fewer of us who worked alongside Seymour Smith. Those who knew him remember an indefatigable maintainer and inspiring leader who could

Born in 1899, Seymour Smith was a lifelong resident of Watertown, Connecticut and began his trails work clearing the close-to-home Mattatuck Trail following the 1938 hurricane's devastation. In addition to his work on the AT, he also helped maintain portions of the Blue-Blazed Trail system and served on the CFPA Trails Committee for more than 50 years.

named for Indian tribes, there are notable and well deserved exceptions which honor individuals. These include the Henry Buck Trail in American Legion State Forest, the Agnes Bowen and Elliott Bronson Trails in Peoples State Forest, and the John Muir Trail in Torrington.

With deepest apologies to Shakespeare, it may well be true that a trail by any other name would be as rough on the feet, but names also invest our landscape with meaning. A trail sign bearing Seymour Smith's name will beg inquiry from hikers and passers by, creating a living memory. If over the years his story invigorates a few youthful hikers or heartens a veteran trail maintainer, the Blue-Blazed Trail system and the hiking community will be well served.

David K. Leff of Collinsville is a writer, avid hiker, and the former deputy commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

also be possessive of the AT and somewhat autocratic at times. Most hikers today don't even recognize his name, let alone know of his towering accomplishments in building and keeping-up trails that have been enjoyed by millions. A few sentences in trail history books and some dry references in old trail guides are the last testament to his lifetime of dedication.

The Mohawk Trail should be renamed for Seymour Smith, less as homage to the man, than as inspiration to trail builders and maintainers everywhere. The high bar he set may never again be equaled, but there cannot be a more worthy yardstick by which to measure our own accomplishments and energize future trail workers to greatness. Although blue-blazed trails are most often

Old Shenipsit Trail Registers

Kilroy has hit the trail!!

10/16/53,

72 paces to the east of this tree you will find not garnets, but diamonds! Help yourself!!

SHENIPSIT TRAIL GARNET LEDGE REGISTER Book 4 (placed 11/11/53)

Big Jack Donze

DEC. 28, 1953

and Richard J. his honorable cousin.
Made on bike and scooter. Got fractured skull on way up.

We hiked up here for the fun. We had a new hiker so we didn't go too fast. We didn't find no garnets.

Lewie Haskell, Ron Gustafson, Ernie Wetscot, Raymond Lepak

John Schultz
I hate to walk

SHENIPSIT TRAIL LOOKOUT JUNCTION Book 3 - 1950 (placed 4/30/50)

Mr & Mrs E Richardson,
Manchester Conn.
10-15-50

Carl Balkus, Jimmy Balkus
OCT. 27, 1950
Treasure Hunting

APRIL 1ST, 1951
We three - Art, Bea, Taffy

SHENIPSIT TRAIL BALD Mountain Book 1 - (Placed 5/20/50)

William Osofsky, "Hiker" Manchester,
Conn.
JUNE 6, 1952
Trail too short!



At left, Debbie, Shep, and Scott Livingston after a race. Below, runners rest on the tower steps after running the Soapstone Assault, a grueling run that climbs Soapstone Mountain five times.

Courtesy of Scott Livingston

BY SCOTT LIVINGSTON

The 2007 trail running season started differently than past years. Debbie and I cannot jump on the trail and take off as used to. Our son Shepard, our first child, was born in August 2006, and he has tried to slow us down ever since. This year, Debbie is making her “comeback” and I am devoting much of my energy to supporting her quest to race a season full of ultra-marathon trail races (events that are longer than the traditional 26.2-mile marathon distance) while attempting to remain fit myself. We have been fortunate that family and friends have joined us at all of the races to watch our son while we have run. Despite taking a back seat this year, I can’t help but point out — I’ve maintained my standing goal of beating Debbie to the finish of every trail race we run.

Connecticut is blessed with several amazing trail races. Many of the events are part of the New England Grand Tree Trail Running Series. This year, the Grand Tree kicked off with the Northern Nipmuck Trail Race. The start/finish of the race is just outside Bigelow Hollow State Park at the Rt. 171 junction in Union. The course travels the Nipmuck Trail through the Yale Forest for 8 miles south to Boston Hollow Rd. in Ashford, then 8 miles back. Northern Nipmuck is known for challenging terrain and this year, we even had to traverse some frozen snow at the low points of the course.



Hundreds Take to RUNNING THE BLUE TRAILS

This chronicle of a competitive married couple shows how speed and brute strength find their matches in Connecticut’s challenging trail races

16 miles of pain

Traditionally held the Saturday before Easter, the Northern Nipmuck is 16 miles of pain because it is so early in the season. Debbie and I use this race as training, because in early April, our legs aren’t used to rocky, rooted, and rugged trails. I always struggle at Northern Nipmuck, which was held for the eighth time this year, because I forget to save a little something for the final 4-mile stretch from Barlow Mill Road to the finish. Debbie and I have had some memorable battles here, but I got the best of her this year.

Next up on our running tour of Blue Trails was the Soapstone Mountain Trail Race in May, a 14.5-mile jaunt through Shenipsit State Forest. A portion of the course is on the Shenipsit Trail. The race starts and finishes at Reddington Rock Riding Club in Stafford Springs. Debbie is

president of the Shenipsit Striders Running Club and co-directs the race with Jerry Stage, who was the longtime club president and is an active member of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust. Soapstone, which was held for the 23rd year in a row this year, is a real family affair for us. Many of our relatives run the short version of this race, the 4-mile Soapstone Sampler open to both runners and walkers. The Sampler uses a clever handicapping system based on age and gender. The older you are, the bigger head start you get. The winner is the first person across the finish line. The Dipsea Race in Stinson Beach, California, uses the same formula.

Both of these races bring back memories for me. The Sampler was one of the first trail races I ran. After I moved on to the longer race, I faced its brutal challenges. For instance, two years ago, I took a memorable wrong turn while leading Debbie at the 12-mile mark. Three victims followed me off trail, and she slipped by. She was surprised when she finished and I was nowhere to be found. I limped into the finish with my ego bruised. This year, I exacted some revenge. We had heavy downpours and I capitalized on her maternity-leave-impacted fitness level to score the Livingston Family win.

A slim lead over Debbie

Two weeks after Soapstone is the granddaddy of New England trail running, the Nipmuck Marathon. Technically, slightly more than a marathon, the 26.4-mile Nipmuck is the oldest Grand Tree trail race; it will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2008. The race starts and finishes on Perry Hill Road in Ashford, in the heart of Natchaug State Forest, and is run entirely on the Nipmuck Trail. The course first heads 6.2 miles southwest to a turnaround at the Rt. 74 junction in Mansfield. Part of this section of the trail is along the beautiful Fenton River. You then reverse direction and return to the starting line on Perry Hill Rd., continuing straight across to run northeast on the Nipmuck for 7.5 miles into Ashford. Here, you make the second turnaround in the Yale Forest at Boston Hollow Road before returning the way you came back to finish at Perry Hill Road.

This year, it rained, so the trail was muddy and slick. Despite the wet conditions, I observed a lot of runners enjoying themselves. Nipmuck grinds you down and most

runners find that it takes an hour longer than their typical road marathon time. With 4 miles to go, the course had not only ground me down; it had nearly ground me to a halt. I was hurting badly but hanging on to a slim lead over Debbie. I had never beaten her at Nipmuck until this year. At the Boston Hollow turnaround I had a 6-minute lead on her. I finished the race with less than a minute to spare and some very sore legs. If the race had been another quarter mile longer, I would have been dead meat.

Five Ascents of Soapstone Mountain

The Shenipsit Striders host a second trail race at Soapstone Mountain each year. This year, the Soapstone Assault took place in July. The 5.5-mile race is aptly named. It is not part of the Grand Tree series because of the short distance, but, mile for mile, it's one of the most challenging in New England. The course circumnavigates the mountain and ascends to the top five times on five different trails, including the Shenipsit Trail. Each time you reach the top, you descend the same trail that you climbed up. The sixth and final ascent is up the infamous "Killer Hill" and the race finishes on the platform at the top of the fire tower.

Like the Soapstone Sampler in the spring, the race is run with the same handicapping system, which gives older runners a good chance of winning, while presenting everyone with an opportunity to chase their friends on the course. I saved my legs for a bicycle race in Naugatuck later in the day; I hiked to the top with our son, Shepard, and we watched Debbie and the other runners go up and down and up—again and again—until their knees ached.

Besides these there was the People's Forest Trail Race in Barkhamsted in August. Also in the Grand Tree Series, this 7-mile course is tricky and rocky. The start/finish is located near the Mathies Grove Pavilion on East River Road. The course is shaped like a lollipop and traverses the Blue, Yellow, and Orange trails. As of this writing, I was training hard because Debbie was preparing to exact her revenge on me. The relatively short distance makes the race blazing fast, but the summer heat is usually a factor to contend with and can add to the suffering.

Runners can find trail races of varying distances in all of the New England states and

A Blue Trail Runners' Census

Here are how many runners finished the four major trail races in Connecticut in the past year:

Soapstone Mountain Half-Marathon: 140 for the 24k and 74 in the 4-miler

Northern Nipmuck 16-Mile: 112 runners

Nipmuck Marathon (26.4 miles): 186 runners

Peoples Forest (figures for 2006): 54 runners

For more information, see the web page of race results from the "Grand Tree" series: www.runwmac.com/gt2007/gt07-races.html.

New York. We love them all, but our favorites are those closest to home. Debbie says that she likes running Connecticut's Blue Trails because they are well maintained, easy to follow, rugged, and diverse. I agree with her and also think that it is a great network that is easily accessible. So, if you are "tired" of walking the Blue Trails, try running. You just might like it.

Scott Livingston is president and CEO of Horst Engineering & Manufacturing Co. in East Hartford. He and his wife, Debbie, live in Bolton with their baby. He is an avid cyclist, trail runner, hiker, kayaker, and photographer. If he had it his way, he would ride or run all day long.

For more information on the New England Grand Tree Trail Running Series and for a calendar of events with trail races in your area, please visit the Western Massachusetts Athletic Club website at www.runwmac.com and the Shenipsit Striders website at www.shenipsitstriders.org.

For several years, a friend and I have gone armchair bicycling on some of the great converted rail trails in Vermont and Pennsylvania and Prince Edward Island. You know the routine:

Me: *Gee, I'd like to ride that rail trail I heard about in (pick a place) (fill in the tantalizing details: length, trail surface, natural features).*

Her: *Yeah, give me some dates and let's go!*

Me: *Yeah, let's go ...*

The End of Armchair Bicycling

BY KATHLEEN GROLL CONNOLLY

Connecticut's own Air Line Trail from East Hampton to Windham ended my armchair cycling this summer when, on Sunday, June 30, on one of the prettiest days of the year, we finally made real wheels go round. I had ridden the Air Line Trail ten years ago when the longest completed sections were less than two miles. I didn't know if anything more had happened in a decade, but it seemed worth a try given all the bicycling I wasn't doing in faraway places.

What a pleasant surprise I got.

We parked beside the old Colchester Train Station on Route 116, which is now converted to retail use. This sent us north on the Colchester spur for about three miles, then onto the smoothly surfaced, delightful 22.7 mile stretch. The Colchester spur has a number of uneven surfaces, but just when we were about to judge the quality of the trail on this section, we turned west to East Hampton and found rail trail heaven.

Our 26-mile round trip took us from Colchester to one of the trail's entrances at East Hampton, through deep, moss-covered rocky cuts, along the Salmon River, over the Jeremy River, over beautiful footbridges, along cranberry bogs and marshes, and over the old rail viaduct and its

unbroken views of abundant summer hillsides. The trail crosses a number of car roads, but none of them is a major thoroughfare and crossings are well identified with gates.

I love rail trails for the absence of vehicles and the absence of sudden, steep hills. The Air Line Trail has gentle grades ranging from 3 to 8 degrees, which we found entirely manageable on our 26-mile round trip. The trail was heavily used that day, but the bicycle traffic combined easily with walkers of all types — families with baby strollers, couples holding hands, dog walkers, runners, walkers with alpine poles—because the trail designers had made it wide enough to accommodate everybody.

My friend commented at the end of that happy day, "I think I've found my new favorite place in Connecticut." I'd second that.

Kathleen Groll Connolly is a writer, organic gardener, and Internet marketing specialist who lives in Old Saybrook. See www.PagesOnPages.com.

Find the Trail:

The Air Line Trail is well documented on the Internet. The complete trail is actually 50 miles long, but it is not yet continuous. My ride was on the southern section. The northern section, which is said to be less well developed, is on my list of places to visit. According to the web site, the complete trail has views of the Goodwin State Forest and Conservation Center, Beaver Brook State Park, the Hampton reservoir, the Salmon River State Forest, and Grayville Falls Park.

The home page is updated with trail news and surface conditions:

<http://pages.cthome.net/mbartel/ARRhome.htm>

If you're looking for entrances, visit

<http://pages.cthome.net/mbartel/ARRdirections.htm>.

The Trail has a lot of history, which you can read about at

<http://pages.cthome.net/mbartel/ARRhistory.htm>.

Executive director's message

continued from page 4

unusual smells – who would guess that the true first smell of spring, that blossoming, beautiful season of love and promise, is the reek of the skunk cabbage in the swamp?

There is, indeed, a whole landscape of scent about us. Scent is fleeting, just like the blossoming of an apple tree, the ripeness of a blueberry. Fragrance is here, then it fades, and if we've failed to take nasal note we've missed it. Let us

then open the window, close our eyes, and let a scent, here and there, stir our passions, our excitement, and our memories.





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Starling Childs, MFS; Anthony Irving, MES

Old Shenipsit Trail Registers

I bin here before OK.

Glenn Wiley, Somers, Conn. 5 year old.

Ed McIntyre, Everett Wright

We'll make it on our motorcycles yet.

2/11/54

2/13/54

Don Parker, Everett Wright

We made it today. Phoom!

Thomas Galbraith

FEB. 13, 1954

Harold Galbraith, Somers, Conn.

I chopped a road to bring my tractor up on top but there are too many trees on the ground. I do not know if I will get up here with it or not.

FEB. 14, 1954

We made it! The first four wheeled contraption on the top of the mountain. It was quite a battle. Our motto is a quotation from the bible – put your shoulder to the wheel and never turn back. This is a thing Henry Ford would like to see as it was a Model A ford that first made it.

Harold Galbraith

Thomas Galbraith

NOTICE!!!! The Navy has landed and has the situation well in hand!!!! U.S.O. – 10 yards to the left. Head that-a-way.

H.I. Smith, Lt. U.S.N.R.

Edmund Bannon

DECEMBER 19, 1954

West Stafford

I ain't seen a better trail since the last time I climbed one in 1947. That was a jolly year for climbing. 68 years old. If you believe that I'll tell you another one!

TREES, SHRUBS, SEDGES, AND MORE — *a Forest Story*

A botanist's perspective on the John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom and Demonstration Forest

BY THOMAS RAWINSKI

Every forest has a story to tell. Unfortunately, with the exception of some “whispering” pines, the trees aren't talking, so it's left to us to ask the questions, gather the facts, and communicate the story as best we can. If we get the story right, we've done right by nature.

Over the past year I've had an opportunity to spend some quality time at the John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom and Demonstration Forest at the Connecticut Forest & Park Association headquarters in Middletown and Middlefield. This beautiful forest offers something special to all who visit; a memorable outdoor learning experience for students, the peaceful solitude of a woodland walk, and a rich variety of wildlife and plants.

My particular objective was to catalogue the plant life of the forest. While a forest is so much more than the sum of its parts, a plant list does at least identify many of the actors in the grand production. As Aldo Leopold instructed, intelligent tinkering does so often necessitate attention to the smallest details. In all, I found 248 species.

The Camp Forest covers more than 200 acres. The topography is gentle, and the soils are derived from basalt till. Decades of forest stewardship activities have yielded attractive, well-formed trees—oak, hickory, sugar maple, red maple, and tulip poplar. Sadly, as with so many other forests of the region, the woolly adelgid is attacking the hemlocks, and the flowering dogwoods have suffered from dogwood anthracnose. Conifer plantations, vernal pools, brooks, clearings, a small pond, and a fine system of walking trails also are found here. Each environment contributes its own specialized suite of species to the total flora. I am certain that additional species await discovery.

Here is a breakdown of the 248 species.

There are 40 tree species, 36 shrubs and woody vines, 29 sedges, 28 grasses, and 12 ferns. The remaining 103 species are broad-leaved herbs (such as forbs) and other herbaceous plants. Exotic species are 38 in number, representing 11 percent of the flora. Some of the exotics grow throughout the forest, while others are restricted to clearings and the sides of trails.

Like many people, I enjoy the thrill of discovery, and my most exciting find was Willdenow's sedge (*Carex willdenowii*), a state-endangered plant known at three other Connecticut locations. I first noticed it in some plots that were established to test different methods of controlling invasive plants. Evidently, the control of winged euonymus increased the amount of sunlight reaching the forest floor, which benefited the sedge. A second rarity was squarrose sedge (*Carex squarrosa*), which is quite the beauty, at least among sedges.

I mapped the locations of the rare plants and provided the information to the Connecticut Natural Diversity Database. The rarities are doing well, but they might benefit by additional invasive plant control. Sedges are not the kinds of plants that people tend to pick, so there's little need to keep these locations top secret. In fact, visitors to the forest might be thrilled to see them, to gain a deeper appreciation for Connecticut's biological diversity.

A good reason for taking a plant inventory is to detect early incursions of invasive species. “Early detection—rapid response,” is a slogan of invasive species control. Find them quickly, and control them while it is still easy to do so. As an example, I found just one mature, fruit-bearing glossy buckthorn in the Camp forest. It is growing in full sun near the pond. Because this buckthorn is highly invasive, I have recommended

continued on page 29

Black-Gum, Black Tupelo (Pepperidge) (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

The Black-Gum or Black Tupelo, often called Pepperidge, finds footing in many types of soil and conditions of soil moisture throughout this region. In the lowlands it is occasionally found in year-round swamps and in the hills and mountains on dry slopes with Oaks and Hickories.

The leaves are alternate, simple slender stalked, two to five inches long, oblong-obovate to oval; entire or sometimes wavy margined; shiny, and dark green in color. The leaves turn a most brilliant red in the early fall.

The bark on younger trees is furrowed between flat ridges, and gradually develops in to quadrangular blocks that are dense, hard and nearly black.

The greenish flowers on long slender stems appear in early spring when the leaves are about one-third grown. They are usually of two kinds, the male in many-flowered heads and the female in two, to several, flowered clusters on different trees.

The fruit is a dark blue, fleshy berry, two-thirds of an inch long, containing a single hard-shelled seed, and is borne on long stems, two to three in a cluster.

The wood is very tough, cross-grained, not durable in contact with the soil, hard to work, and warps easily. It has been used for crate and basket veneers, box shooks, roller, mallets, rough floors, pulpwood, and fuel. In pioneer days, the hollow trunks were used as bee hives, and so were called bee-gums.

The black gum, or tupelo, is one of Connecticut's sylvan links, along with the tulip poplar, the American chestnut, and the sweet gum, to the central hardwoods of the Appalachians. Black gum is best known as a swamp tree, although it can also be found on dry soils. One common feature of swamp soils and dry soils is a paucity of available soil



BLACK GUM
Two-thirds natural size.

oxygen. Hence, a tree capable of living through occasional inundation, such as red maple, can also tolerate similarly limiting dry soil conditions. A jar of tupelo honey in my pantry also indicates that the tree is favored by bees, and some beekeepers have taken to marketing the fact that their honey comes exclusively, or perhaps predominantly, from the nectar of the tupelo.

With leaves of brilliant scarlet, the tupelo in fall brings bright color to the edges of swamps and wetlands. The tupelo has another common name used in southern New England, in particular on Martha's Vineyard, and that name is "beetlebung." "Beetle" is another word for "mallet," and "bung" is a word for the round piece of wood used to plug holes in barrels. Hence, the wood of the beetlebung was used to make hard, sturdy mallets – beetles – with which to hammer "bungs" into barrels.

– A.R.M.

Today we hear of plant and animal inventories on land plots large and small around the world. Species inventories aren't modern products. From the CEPA files emerges a letter dated February 28, 1929, in which Gifford Pinchot and others invited Connecticut State Forester Austin F. Hawes to sign a letter that would ask President Herbert Hoover to promote an inventory of the world's natural resources.

Committee to Promote an Inventory of the Natural Resources of the World

Major George P. Ahern
Prof. John Dewey
Hon. Clarence Phelps Dodge
William Green
Charles P. Howland
Bishop Francis J. McConnell
Gov. Dan Moody
Dr. Parker Thomas Moon
Miss Ruth Morgan
Hon. George C. Pardee
Amos R. E. Pinchot
Hon. Gifford Pinchot
Jackson H. Ralston
Dr. John A. Ryan
Rudolph Spreckels
I. B. Sutton
Henry Wallace
Dr. Stephen S. Wise
Dr. Mary Wooley
B. F. Yoakum

1617 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.,
February 28, 1929.

Mr. Austin Foster Hawes
1244 N. Main St.
West Hartford, Conn.

Dear Mr. Hawes:

On behalf of the Committee to Promote an Inventory of the Natural Resources of the World, whose members are listed on this sheet, I have the honor to invite you to join in signing a letter upon this subject to President Hoover, a copy of which is enclosed. When approved, the letter and the names of the signers will be presented to him at the outset of his administration, and letter and names will be made public.

Several hundred eminent men and women throughout the United States are being invited to sign.

Since time presses, may I ask you to notify me by wire or air mail at your earliest convenience whether I may include your name among the list of signers? It will not be necessary to return the copy of the letter enclosed herewith.

May I ask you also in consideration for the President to hold this matter as confidential until the letter has been delivered.

Very sincerely yours,

Gifford Pinchot

You may use my name for a letter. A. F. Hawes

270-mile-long-trek

continued from page 12

customer handed her a moldy \$10 bill and then asked if he could fill his water bottles.

My friend Alyson met me for lunch and then joined me for the hike over Mount Higby. It was nice to have someone to talk to on the trail for a change. Her friend Mary Beth met us at Country Club Road and gave me a ride all the way to Guiffrida Park. I was grateful for the lift – I had walked this stretch in the mid-afternoon during the '97 hike and still had dismal memories of the heat and hard pavement.

I took advantage of the park restroom to wash some clothes and take a sort of sponge bath. Then, after resting by the drinking fountain for a good while, I hiked partway up Lamentation Mountain and camped under the “bus-stop,” a sort of shelter that had a wooden bench inside. Though the bench was too narrow to sleep on comfortably, there was just enough room on the ground for a mattress, so I called that my home for the night. A curious deer came by for a look as I made supper in the twilight.

The next day's hike brought me to the end of the Mattabassett Trail (guarded by a fierce German shepherd) and the tedious road walk to the Metacomet Trail. I stopped for lunch at Subway and made use of my cell phone (which proved to be a good companion when no others were available). As I watched various people coming and going from the deli, all looking and smelling clean, some of the old “social pariah” feelings returned. But as I caught bits of their conversations and heard the kinds of things they were concerned about, I felt like I'd been given a gift – freedom from the mundane, from the petty issues of daily life in suburbia. Once again, I strapped on the pack and started walking, happy to be in my own little world.

That night, I camped in the woods above Route 71. To get water from here, I had to walk about a half-mile ahead to Elmere Reservoir. Bits of litter floated on the surface, which had an oily look to it. I hesitated and considered searching elsewhere, but I was tired and it was getting late, and since there were no springs or streams nearby that I knew of, I had no choice but to start filtering. More than once on the hike I was obliged to take water from a less than desirable source, but I never suffered any ill

effects. I always filtered my water. Also, boiling water for two minutes will kill just about anything living in it.

An Invitation

The Hanging Hills of Meriden comprise one of the most scenic – and more difficult – sections of the Metacomet Trail. I spent the better part of the next morning lingering over the views from East Peak and Castle Craig, then took a lunch break on the wide open slabs of West Peak. At 1,024 feet of elevation, West Peak protrudes out over one of the most dramatic vistas in Connecticut. Some haze on the horizon and a shift in the breeze hinted at a possible storm, so I got moving. I was forced to follow the trail down to Edgewood Road. Since 1993, the area north of West Peak has been closed to hikers; over the years various detours have led to Route 364, where the trail resumes near Timberlin Golf Course. This one led gradually northeast off the ridge, then along an endless logging road out to the paved Edgewood Road, which I then had to follow north for some way through a heavily settled area.

I kept glancing at the ridgeline, wishing I had chosen to walk the old route and stay in the woods. The afternoon was hot and humid, and I was running low on water. I thought about knocking on someone's door and asking for the use of the garden hose but decided to push on to the woods near the golf course, where I knew of a good stream.

By dusk I had reached the top of Small Cliff, a huge traprock monolith that sits like a giant block at the southern end of Ragged Mountain. A local minister and his friends were up there making some sort of documentary movie for their church. I stayed away while they filmed, then eased over to the cliffs for the requisite view. The minister introduced himself as Ron and we struck up a conversation. As it turned out, he and his family lived right at the base of the mountain and their property line actually touched the spot we were standing at. Ron extended an invitation to have supper at his house and to camp in the backyard, an offer that I politely declined. He smiled and said, “Well, if you change your mind, come on down.” I started to search for a suitable camping spot, but soon became distracted by thoughts of a home-cooked meal. I quickly caught up

continued on page 27

Old Shenipsit Trail Registers

Howard D Crandall
likes the hunting up here also a hunting partner
Amos Pease, Somers
Keep the good work up.

Russell Turgeon, Newington, Conn.
Are you sure it is only 3 miles form Soapstone Mtn.?

Yes. We measured it with a wheel.
Signed, trail crew

Warren Nyborg, Newington, Conn.
lets get a grub station up here.

AUG. 26, 1951

Ruth Bridge, Buffalo NY
Keep on going for 1/3 mile a little west of north and you will come to the edge of a pasture and one of the finest views in the area.

You will have to blaze a trail.
W.L. Hayes

G. McDonald, D. Quinn, R. Rinner,
W. Neff, Rockville, Conn.

OCT. 20, 1951 10:15 PM
Anyone see our bound?

4/16/55

Jeanie Connell, Somers, Conn.
“Get a new pencil”

*“This is harder than climbing Mt. Monadnock” Pete Whitaker 4/16/55
Made it up in 5 min. Got any rope? I want to hang somebody. Guess who!?*

R.T. Barron, US Geological Survey,
1109 N. Highland St., Arlington, Va.
*“look for the Shenipsit Trail on the new edition of U.S.G.S. topographic map of Ellington Quad. 8/7/53
What a spot for a Dairy Queen!”*

SEPT. 8, 1953

12 year old. School tomorrow – OH!!
Michael Wiley, Somers, Conn.

Why the Farm Bill Matters to Connecticut

“To speak of the farm’s bill’s influence on the American food system does not begin to describe its full impact—on the environment, on global poverty, even on immigration. ... And though we don’t ordinarily think of the farm bill in these terms, few pieces of legislation have as profound an impact on the American landscape and environment. ... And then there are the eaters, people like you and me, increasingly concerned, if not restive, about the quality of the food on offer in America. ... Doing so starts with the recognition that the “farm bill” is a misnomer; in truth it is a food bill and so needs to be rewritten with the interests of eaters placed first.”

— Michael Pollan in
“You Are What You Grow,”
The New York Times, April 22, 2007

BY JEAN CRUM JONES

The Farm Bill, which the U.S. Congress is debating this year, is a massively complex piece of legislation which, when last renewed in 2002, authorized the spending of almost \$274 billion over six years. Generally, the legislators who guide this bill through Congress are from the “farm states,” that geographic band down the middle of our country, from Texas and Mississippi up through to the Dakotas east to Wisconsin. In Connecticut, most people tend not to pay attention to the legislation, because they assume it deals with farm issues not relevant to them. That is just what the bill’s architects desire.

The 2007 Farm Bill is different from farm bills of the recent past, which generally come up for reauthorization every five to six years. This time around, many special interest groups not generally associated with agriculture are outraged with the direction of recent farm policy. These new farm lobbyists

seek to change farm priorities to focus on healthy foods and healthy lands for all U.S. citizens and to end the excessively costly system of guaranteed subsidies to big farmers producing certain commodities.

Here is some history of farming and hunger in our country:

The first farm bill was the Agricultural Assistance Act. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Henry Wallace initiated this program during the Great Depression, in 1933, to aid desperate farmers and hungry Americans. During World War II and the years of postwar prosperity, the federal government deemed food relief assistance unnecessary and eliminated it. However, the federal School Lunch program began in 1946 because 40 percent of military draftees had to be rejected due to poor health. “A

A cornfield, mid-harvest. Federal farm laws have for half a century made small-scale farming onerous.

istockphoto.com



malnourished nation threatens national security,” was the philosophical basis used to launch our largest public food assistance program. The government made available a wide range of farm surplus. When John F. Kennedy ran for president he encountered people in the Mississippi Delta who were going hungry. After becoming President, he signed into law a coupon program for food assistance — Food Stamps — that was similar to the aid in the 1933 bill. President Lyndon B. Johnson initiated social programs to provide nutritious foods to those in need.

I first ran into the complexities of the Farm Bill in the 1970s, when I worked as a public health nutritionist with senior and preschool feeding programs. Later, I worked as a nutritionist with a Women’s, Infants and Children food program. This USDA coupon plan provided specific nutritious foods for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and their young children. The strength of this program was that women obtained the coupons at health facilities so those families at risk could also receive medical care and nutrition education. It was during this era that the “hunger bloc,” a coalition of urban legislators and community activists, formed. To their great credit, farm bill after farm bill since then, this lobby has heroically defended the country’s hunger safety net, attaining the necessary votes to maintain food assistance programs. About half the spending in the farm bill is budgeted for nutrition programs.

The politics of it

But farm bills started out as political and economic tools and they have stayed that way. Political survival for the anti-hunger camp has pivoted around an ongoing alliance with the farm bloc lobby and their interests. Initially the purpose of the temporary Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 was to raise farm prices and to establish conservation measures to eliminate soil erosion that had resulted in the Dust Bowl. The first concept to help farmers out was called the Ever Normal Granary. The government would purchase and stockpile surplus crops and livestock during good years as a protection against dwindling supply in lean times. The government’s involvement with farm and food policy was broad under Henry Wallace’s direction. His vision included a range of departments and programs that combined to make up an integrated food,

farming, and stewardship system. He attempted to enact policies that brought balanced abundance to the people, protected against shortages, and buffered farmers against losses with loan and insurance programs. However, Henry Wallace moved on to become Vice President and World War II began, which strained the productivity of American farms.

After WWII, the farm bills gradually became institutionalized. Agribusiness along with an alliance of legislators from the Southeast and upper Midwest learned to manipulate the system. The small farmer was ignored without any advocates, although mythic images were created during bill passage times. Through the decades, more and more small family farmers left the land, which was developed or folded into larger farms.

In the 1970s, Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz encouraged high yield farming systems that favored crop payments based on maximizing yields. He encouraged industrialized operations, farming from “Fencerow to Fencerow” and discouraged environmental stewardship. Another famous rally cry of his was, “Get Big or Get Out.” By the early 1980s, large grain handlers were essentially writing the farm bills. Their mission was to ensure a steady supply of cheap commodity crops that could be traded internationally and processed into value-added products. This situation has continued to balloon to monumental proportions despite an attempt in 1996 to get the farm bloc states off the subsidy sloop wagon. Small farms continue to be disadvantaged by lopsided support for large corporate farms and survive primarily because of off farm earnings.

Many of our farm’s customers believe that the tens of billions of dollars the government spends on agricultural subsidies support family farms. We tell them that it is not so. Three out of every five farms receive no subsidies at all, while the richest 5 percent average almost half a million dollars each. Programs reward the largest producers, regardless of need, income or exposure to risk. Nearly \$10.5 billion—almost 50 percent of all commodity subsidies—went to 5 percent of eligible farmers in 2005. Even landowners who don’t farm under our

Byzantine subsidy system get payouts. Eighty-four percent of commodity support spending now goes to the production of just five crops: corn, cotton, wheat, rice, and soybeans. Half of that money goes to seven states that produce the most of these commodities. Between 1995 and 2005, the state of Iowa received \$14.8 billion in subsidies; during the same period, Connecticut, with a similar size population, received \$59.1 million. Subsidies do not go to fruit and vegetable farmers, generally located in the Northeast, Florida, California, and the Northwest.

Farm bills started out as political and economic tools and they have stayed that way.

Supporters of subsidies say they have kept food affordable for Americans. Critics disagree and say the subsidies lead to cheap snack foods and soft drinks, made from ingredients like high fructose corn syrup and partially hydrogenated soybean oil. Meanwhile, the lack of subsidies for fruits and vegetables makes them expensive by comparison. Health professionals believe calories from the subsidized foods are partly responsible for the epidemic of childhood and adult obesity and the increased incidence of diabetes. The U.S. Surgeon General reports that Americans are spending \$100 billion annually on illnesses caused by obesity. Unfortunately, our current dietary crisis disproportionately affects children, people of color, and the poor. The bitter irony of the alliance of the farm lobby and the anti-hunger lobby is that the nutritional benefits of the “nutrition” programs have been hugely compromised. Hungry bellies are filled with low-nutrient, high calorie foods that leave those recipients susceptible to an early death.

Aside from the nutrition programs and subsidies (about 35 percent of Farm Bill spending), the farm bill also directs and funds an additional range of other “titles.” These programs include trade and foreign food aid, conservation and the environment, forestry (forests and woodlots were traditionally important components of farms and

continued on page 26

Farm Bill

continued from page 25

should remain so), agricultural credit, farm water supply, research and education, marketing, food safety, animal health and welfare, and more recently, energy. It is these areas of the Farm Bill that are of greatest concern and usefulness to the Connecticut agricultural community. The national debt means that these programs are the most vulnerable to being reduced or eliminated.

Consider the Conservation Security Program, or CSP. This initiative was started to reward sound stewardship practices rather than direct payments for maximum yields and maximum acreage. It was the main concession offered to an alliance of conservationists and sustainable farming advocates during the 2002 Farm Bill negotiations. The CSP has been heralded as the best way to bring about a new era of U.S. farm policies. Essentially a green payment program, it meets the requirements of the World Trade Organization rules on agricultural subsidies and potentially lifts the standards for farm supports by “rewarding the best and motivating the rest.” Qualified participants must actively prevent manure from polluting waterways, limit fertilizers from entering streams, minimize or eliminate pesticide use, improve energy efficiency, and set aside habitat for wildlife. The 2002 Farm Bill promised that the Conservation Security Program would receive as much funding as commodity programs, and that all farmers across the country would have access to it. That has not happened. The government has funded only \$489 million of the CSP, a shortfall of 82.5 percent.

Valiant attempts are under way to protect Connecticut’s remaining farmland. Since 1984, our state has lost 21 percent of its farmland to development and urban sprawl, one of the highest rates of agricultural land loss in the country. As farmland disappears, Connecticut residents increasingly lose access to locally grown foods, wildlife habitat, and scenic farm landscapes. Federal funding for the purpose of permanently preserving farmland was authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill. Yet, Congress has delayed releasing the funds.

Connecticut now has some newfound agricultural muscle in the person of U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, a Democrat representing the Third District (25 cities and towns

that include New Haven, Middletown, Waterbury, Stratford, and Guilford). She is the new chairwoman of the crucial Agriculture Subcommittee on Appropriations. This subcommittee determines spending levels and the availability of the discretionary farm bill programs on a yearly basis. This subcommittee can also approve yearly changes in funding to the “mandatory” programs. Connecticut agriculturists hope that we will be able to get a healthier slice of the farm bill pie. In the current farm bill, Ms. DeLauro has been supporting more money for the food stamp program, a sizeable increase for the Farmer’s Market Nutrition Promotion Program and more local fresh fruits and vegetables in schools. She is very interested in food safety issues and FDA oversight. She has also pledged that there will be mandatory “country of labeling” on foods by 2008. This program, known as COOL, was enacted as part of the 2002 Farm Bill—but opponents (the corporate farm system) have managed to block all but seafood labeling from taking effect. That means that here, in this apple-rich region, we can’t tell if our apples are grown in New Zealand, Chile, or China. How about tomatoes, peppers, salad greens or hamburger patties? All of these could be produced more widely in New England with consumer knowledge and support. The political pressures that have stalled this program are so numerous and complicated that I don’t have the time to go into them here.

Which brings us to the newest Farm Bill. The House passed its 2007 Farm Bill—the Farm, Nutrition, & Bioenergy Bill—on July 27. It calls for the commodity subsidies to remain “status quo” without any real reform. The bill would increase funding for conservation, healthy diets, local foods, specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, nuts) and socially disadvantaged farmers.

The Senate plans to begin committee work on its version of the Farm Bill in September. Two Midwestern senators have introduced a “Farm Safety Net Improvement Act,” which is an attempt at real commodity reform and could transform American agriculture if successfully adopted. Once the Senate passes its bill, a Conference Committee will work out the differences. Then the House and Senate will make their final votes. The 2007 Farm Bill should be completed by year’s end.

We need a better Farm Bill that promotes

healthy foods, lands and people. It requires the willingness to stand up and demand a better environment to feed our children and ourselves a sustainable diet that meets the nutritional and energy challenges of the 21st century. We need to speak up and let our legislators know now is the time to change our current farm policy and get it right.

Jean Crum Jones is a registered dietician who with her husband, Terry, runs the Jones Family Farm in Shelton.

Helpful Websites:

**www.farmpolicy.com:
Inside the Beltway.**

**www.ewg.org: Environmental
Working Group Subsidy
Database.**

**www.farmland.org:
American Farmland Trust.**

**www.healthyfarmbill.org:
Farm and Food Policy Project.**

**www.agobservatory.org:
Institute for Agriculture and
Trade Policy.**

**www.foodsecurity.org:
Community Food Security
Coalition.**

A Helpful Book:

***Food Fight: The Citizen’s Guide
to a Food and Farm Bill***

**by Daniel Imhoff
(Watershed Media, distributed
by the University of California
Press, 2007) For more, see
www.watershedmedia.org.**

T

270-Mile-Long-Trek

continued from page 23

with Ron and followed him home, where I was welcomed by his wife and three children. After eating a fabulous dinner, taking a hot shower (the first in five days), and even doing some laundry, I felt like a new man. The only thing I could do in return was to play a few songs on the piano for Ron, who was a big James Taylor fan. I ended up sleeping on the living room sofa, very thankful for this short respite from trail life. The next morning, after eating another wonderful meal, I went on my way, feeling overwhelmed by their hospitality.

While walking along the top of Ragged Mountain, I spotted a couple of rock climbers who were working the cliffs. They smiled and greeted me as I passed. Up to this point I had seen few hikers, except at such popular places as Castle Craig and Guiffrida Park, and those were of the “get-out-of-the-car-and-look-at-the-view” variety.

That day I reached Plainville, where I had arranged for Glen to pick me up. He drove me to his home in Windsor, where I spent the night and resupplied the pack with food for the next week. Glen kept all of my pre-purchased food in the back of his station wagon so that he had it with him wherever we met along the Trail. It really helped to have this support. From Route 372 northward, the Metacomet ceases its meandering course and begins to head more directly north. I was able to make it to Avon before nightfall, and I camped in the woods above Albany Avenue. As I was pitching the tarp, I noticed a 5-foot long snake skin, brownish in color, lying on the ground a few feet away. I scanned the area but didn't spot the owner. I said a quick prayer and continued setting up the tarp.

Glen met me in Tariffville the next evening, and we enjoyed a meal at a restaurant in the village. Tariffville reminded me of some of the trail towns along the AT— it was small and quiet, yet it had a post office, two restaurants, and a laundromat. The only things it lacked were a convenience store and lodging. While waiting for Glen to arrive, I soaked in the Farmington River. Later, I camped on the ridge overlooking the village. I awoke in the morning to views of the sunlight on the river.

I made it to the state line that afternoon, and continued on into Massachusetts, where further adventures awaited me, including two nearly sleepless nights in a row (one due to unrelenting mosquitoes, and another due to a storm that flooded the ground under the tarp, forcing me to move to a different spot at 3 a.m.). Dehydration finally caught up with me on Mount Tom in the form of a bladder infection, and I was obliged to leave the trail and seek treatment. I spent a few days with relatives in the Amherst area, and then returned to the hike.

Unfortunately, because of the time lost, I had to skip the Seven Sisters and jump ahead to Mount Norwottuck in order to stay on schedule. (I had day-hiked Mount Holyoke the previous year). Though I could no longer in good conscience call myself a thru-hiker, I decided to complete the trek anyway. Glen and his dad joined me for the climb up Mount Monadnock; the three of us stood on the summit while the

continued on page 29



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Richard Goodwin

Richard H. Goodwin, land preservationist, past president of the Nature Conservancy and professor emeritus of botany at Connecticut College, died on July 6 at the age of 96. Dr. Goodwin was an early leader in the field of land preservation, and he served as the president of the Nature Conservancy from 1956-58 and again from 1964-66. In 1960, he negotiated the then-largest deal in the organization's history, protecting 6,500 forested acres on the California coast.

Goodwin led the effort to create and then expand the Burnham Brook Preserve in East Haddam, which today totals more than 1,200 acres. He himself donated his home and property on Dolbia Hill to add to the preserve, which is now used specifically for scientific research.

Dr. Goodwin served as professor of botany and chair of the botany department at Connecticut College from 1944 until 1976, and he helped the college create one of the nation's first environmental studies programs, then known as human ecology, in 1969. He oversaw the growth of the college's arboretum from 90 acres to more than 400 acres. (Today the arboretum comprises more than 750 acres.)

At Connecticut College, Goodwin was actively involved in research on the physiology of root growth, the florescent compounds in plants and the effects of light on plant growth. He published numerous articles and regularly gave speeches about his research and his work in land conservation.

The Connecticut College Goodwin-Niering Center for Conservation

Biology and Environmental Studies was founded in 1993 and renamed in 1999 in honor of Dr. Goodwin and the late William A. Niering, professor emeritus of botany at the college. Dr. Niering and Dr. Goodwin co-founded the Connecticut chapter of the Nature Conservancy. Dr. Goodwin also established the Conservation and Research Foundation, an independent venture launched in 1953 to offer seed grants to scientists and others seeking to study and preserve the natural environment.

Goodwin's autobiography, *A Botanist's Window on the Twentieth Century*, was published in 2002 by Harvard Forest in Petersham, Massachusetts. In it, Goodwin describes growing from a sickly child into a young man with an insatiable passion for the environment. He studied botany and zoology at Harvard University, graduating with a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in biology in 1933 and 1934, respectively. He went on to earn his doctorate degree in biology with a concentration in botany, also from Harvard, in 1937.

Goodwin had a profound effect on his students. David Foster, who studied under Goodwin at Connecticut College and now teaches at Harvard, said Goodwin had a way of "putting small things into a very large context in a way that dealt with issues that really matter."

He leaves his wife of 71 years, Esther Bemis Goodwin; his daughter, Mary Linder Wetzel; his son, Richard H. Goodwin, Jr.; four grandchildren; and two great grandchildren. A memorial service at Connecticut College was to be held in the fall.

Source: Connecticut College

Walter Landgraf

Walter Landgraf, who was noted for his efforts in the 1993 reopening of the Stone Museum at Peoples State Forest, died on July 23 while on vacation in Nova Scotia. He was 66 and lived in Pleasant Valley. Mr. Landgraf, a retired teacher at Norwest Regional District 7 High School, traveled the state giving his slide show, "Fire in the Hills," about the iron industry in Connecticut.

For more than 30 years Mr. Landgraf was a popular teacher of biology and environmental technology at Northwestern Regional High School in Winsted. In his retirement he gave many lectures at the Stone Museum, and he led nature walks in Peoples State Forest, where a trail is named for him.

As president of the Barkhamsted Historical Society, Landgraf was involved in research and hands-on restoration of the Squires Tavern. His interest in history extended beyond the Colonial charcoal and iron industry to the story of the Squires Tavern in Pleasant Valley. He was also instrumental in the restoration of the Beckley Furnace in Canaan.

Mr. Landgraf leaves his wife, Linne Fenn Landgraf; a daughter, Kyli-Jill Streinz of Hersey, Maine; a son, Erik of East Hartford; a sister, Irene Rodgers of Nimrod, Mississippi; and six grandchildren. The funeral was held on August 1 and a memorial service took place August 4 at Northwestern Regional High School. Donations in his memory may be directed to the Barkhamsted Historical Society, P.O. Box 94, Pleasant Valley, Connecticut, 06063.

Source: The Hartford Courant, CFPA

John Barrett

John Joseph Barrett, 76, of East Hartford, a co-editor of the 18th edition of the *Connecticut Walk Book*, died June 8 at St. Francis Hospital. Mr. Barrett was retired from the Hartford Courant, where he worked for many years as an editor. A native of Boston, he began his career at the New Bedford Standard Times and the Worcester Telegraph. After his 1995 retirement, he edited the American Catholic, a Farmington, Connecticut-based newspaper published by lay Catholics. He leaves his wife, Gail Curran Barrett; two daughters, Anastasia Edmonston of Baltimore and Rachael Barrett of Brooklyn, N.Y.; two sons, Adam Barrett of Guilford and Julian Barrett of Atlanta; four grandchildren; and a sister, Earlene Lown of Atlanta. Donations may be sent to the Interchurch East Hartford Food Bank, 710 Main Street, East Hartford, 06108.

Source: The Hartford Courant

John Mitchell

John G. Mitchell, an early advocate of open space in the Northeast, the retired environment editor of National Geographic Magazine, and a friend to Connecticut Woodlands magazine, died July 7 at the age of 75 in Albany, N.Y., enroute from the high peaks of the Adirondacks to his home in Old Lyme.

Mr. Mitchell, who was a Mellon fellow at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, had a long and noted career in environmental journalism. Before his decade at National Geographic (1994-2004), he served as editor-in-chief of Sierra Club Books, field editor and writer for Audubon Magazine, and science editor at Newsweek. He wrote for many magazines, and his several books included *Losing Ground*, *Dispatches from the Deep Woods* and a comprehensive, compact trail guide to Redding, *The Book of Trails*.

He is survived by his wife Alison; two daughters, Katherine and Pamela; and three grandsons.

Sources: interviews with Mr. Mitchell, The Day and the Los Angeles Times

A Forest Story

continued from page 20

its removal. I was happy not to find Japanese stilt-grass. If detected in the future, this invasive grass should be immediately controlled.

Winged euonymus is the worst invasive at the site. It is locally abundant and casts dense shade. Here is where white-tailed deer enter the forest ecology equation. The deer eat the tops of the young euonymus plants, keeping them suppressed. This is a good thing. But deer represent a double-edged sword in the forest. Their numbers are now so high that their browsing mimics the effect of a hedge-trimmer positioned at the height of one's ankles. Even the lowbush blueberries are too low and stressed to produce a berry crop. In much of the forest, the only woody plants that I saw growing taller than my knees in the understory were those plants the deer avoid: Japanese barberry, wine raspberry, and multiflora rose. There is reason to suspect that the spread of these thorny exotics is symptomatic of the larger problem of deer overabundance.

While I was pleased to document the rare sedges, I was nevertheless concerned that Pennsylvania sedge, Swan's sedge, and other common species dominated so much of the forest floor. The reason is that sedges and woodland grasses have low digestible content, and deer avoid eating them. These plants are then able to exploit the niches left vacant by the forbs and woody plants that deer eliminated or suppressed. A forest understory dominated by sedges and grasses is all too often diagnostic of a forest afflicted with way too many deer.

There are plenty of large saplings in the

forest. As mature trees die or are harvested, these saplings will dominate the forest canopy in the future. I estimate that most of the saplings are between 15 and 20 years old. This indicates that 15 to 20 years ago, the deer population did not appreciably interfere with tree regeneration here. The present situation is much different. At some point in the recent past an ecological tipping point was reached. The deer herd became large enough to suppress nearly all tree regeneration. What's occurring in this forest is occurring across much of the Northeast, and it has become a serious problem. What can be done to bring the forest back to a healthier place? For starters, I would recommend that land owners and land managers take a look at an important report on the subject; "Managing White-tailed Deer in Forest Habitat from an Ecosystem Perspective: Pennsylvania Case Study," by the Pennsylvania chapter of the National Audubon Society and the Pennsylvania Habitat Alliance. To read it, visit http://pa.audubon.org/deer_report.html.

There may be a new role for the John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom and Demonstration Forest. For example, deer exclosures are being considered for the site, as a way to better understand the impacts of deer. Stay tuned for further developments.

Thomas J. Rawinski is a USDA Forest Service botanist based at the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Field Office in Durham, New Hampshire. He works primarily with invasive plants in the New England-New York region.

270-Mile-Long-Trek

continued from page 27

remnants of Hurricane Charley swirled around us.

I continued alone down the north side of the mountain on the Sunapee Greenway to begin the final leg of my journey. Around this time the infection returned, and I spent the last three days of the hike in misery — determined to make it to Sunapee but anxious to finish. Finally, on the evening of August 18, I put my finger on the summit disk and breathed a sigh of relief. The odyssey was over at last. I stayed

the weekend with friends in New Hampshire, where I drank a lot of cranberry juice and watched DVDs.

Since returning home I have become involved with CFPA, and have spent a great deal of time along the trail, trying to find new routes that would shorten or eliminate the roadwalks and breach some of the other gaps. Should the trail receive National Scenic designation, it will become more important to have as continuous a route as possible. I hope to hike the route again someday as a true thru-hike, and perhaps find that missing link to the AT and keep heading north. Connections seem to be very impor-

tant to me, particularly when it comes to recreation. If we can drive across the country, why should we not be able to walk across it as well, in a safe and beautiful environment?

David Bell is a professional musician who lives in Guilford. In addition to logging more than 1,500 miles on the Appalachian Trail, he has also completed major portions of the Long Trail in Vermont and currently is attempting to summit all of the 4,000-footers in the Northeast.

THE LURE OF THE LETTERBOX

The formerly British-only pasttime acts as trail magnet in Connecticut

BY LORI PARADIS BRANT

The RedJ's. Bluebird. Hez, Grumpy and Mona. Swamp Yankee & Sunshine. Robbo. Mountain Girl. Fish-or-Man. And there's even a Cool Dude.

These are some of the trail names groups or individuals adopt in a new way of hiking based on an old sport that started in the mid-19th century in England—letterboxing.

I've read on several websites that Connecticut has the largest number of letterboxes in the nation. Letterboxes were already hidden here when, in 1998, the writer Chris Granstom wrote an article for Smithsonian Magazine that is credited with bringing the letterboxing bug across the "pond" to North America. Mr. Granstom wrote about "boxers" in Dartmoor, England and told the story of this sport. In 1854, a tour guide of the moor left his card in a glass bottle, which he hid for others to find and contact him. Walking the moor was quite an accomplishment and the bottle was a way for those successful in walking through the wet, spongy ground of peat to announce their triumphs. After a time, the rambles would leave postcards in the bottle, in the hopes that the next visitor would place them in a "letterbox" – the word the English use for mailbox – when they left the moor. After many years, personal and unique stamps replaced the postcards and letters.

Today, letterboxing is an inexpensive, outdoor treasure hunt that attracts people of varying backgrounds, interests, and ages. With a personal stamp, journal or similar logbook, and a sense of chance, adventure-seekers follow clues along wooded trails and in open parks to find a hidden box behind a rock, in a tree crevice, or other natural hiding place. They open the box and make an

ink mark in the journal inside, using their personal stamp. They use the stamp inside this box to make a mark inside the personal journals they carry. Many letterboxers add notes about their explorations along the way.

Letterboxes are as varied as the seekers who place and search for them. While one letterbox may consist of one container, another might be composed of a series of boxes in which the first holds clues to the next. Others decode clues written in riddles or rhymes, others tell stories and celebrate birthdays or other important dates.

Only the imagination limits the themes and the personal stamp designs. Dragons, fairies, wildflowers, maps, birds, names of places, faces, dogs, paw prints, and various figures have all been carved onto various pieces of foam or rubber to be inked by fellow letterboxers and recorded in journals. Some boxes even hold several colored stamps to create monochromatic stamp impressions in the journals.

Letterboxing also brings forward the "collector gene" many people seem to have inherited. Locating the next box can become a lighthearted obsession. The collector often speaks letterboxing vernacular: for example, "P79F235X42" means this letterboxer has placed 79 boxes, found 235, and exchanged 42 with other letterboxes. There are clubs, gatherings and events during which fellow enthusiasts meet and exchange clues, stamps, and stories. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection placed 30 letterboxes and offers a patch to those who find a minimum of four boxes and a hiking stick to those who find all 30.

The most straightforward letterbox is found by following a series of clues that are traditionally posted online. Other types pose challenges. For the person who likes to solve puzzles, finding a "mystery box" is akin to solving a riddle using coded clues, vague descriptions (or none at all), and often no listed starting point.



*Education Coordinator
Lori Paradis Brant*

"Hitchhikers" are surprise stamps that don't belong in any particular letterbox. Letterboxers who find and record the hitchhiker stamps then quietly remove them and place them in another box to surprise someone else.

Many letterboxers use their passion to visit and explore different locales near and far. Many will hunt for letterboxes while vacationing in other states. Some people travel in groups to hunt for the hundreds of letterboxes in Dartmoor, the birthplace of the sport. The outdoor enthusiast can discover that letterboxing provides another enjoyable reason to explore many of Connecticut's trails and natural areas.

Guess Who Placed a Letterbox?

CFPA has been lured into the letterboxing adventure. We see this as a novel approach to connecting people to the outdoors. During the previous school year, high school volunteer Rachel LaMontagne carved eight themed stamps for CFPA. This past summer, Andrea Seymour, a student at Whitmore College in Washington, volunteered as the Education Intern and worked to continue CFPA's new letterbox program. Ms. Seymour researched trail and site locations by hiking and examining drawers of files. She gained the permission of landowners and wrote a letter of agreement CFPA and the landowners sign. Ms. Seymour wrote creative clues that both incorporated the site's unique characteristics and would appeal to families. She arranged for her letterbox clues to be piloted by others as a way to field test the program.

We have two letterbox series: Connecticut Trees, placed in the Field Forest in Durham, and Hiking, placed along the Nipmuck Trail. For the clues, please visit www.ctwoodlands.org.

Finally, CFPA found itself the host of a new letterbox placed by "Hez, Grumpy, and Mona" in July. Inside this box, which is accessible during our business hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, you will find a beautiful stamp of the CFPA logo. Anyone visiting this box must supply a 4-by-6-inch photo of themselves in the outdoors.

While letterboxing is an exciting adventure, it is also one that has potential for disturbing an area. To prevent damage, letterboxers follow a code of conduct when placing, seeking, and advertising the boxes. They do not hide boxes in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas. They encourage following the principles of Leave No Trace (see the link under "Helpful Web Sites") and to practice safety and respect of other people and the land.

To begin your adventure of letterboxing, join CFPA on Saturday, October 20 from 3-5 p.m. in Middlefield. For more information, see the Education Program listing in this issue.

Helpful Web Sites

www.letterboxing.info

www.letterboxing.org. This site posts the 1998 Smithsonian magazine article at www.letterboxing.org/Smithsonian.htm.

www.atlasquest.com

Letterboxing Northeastern is an East Lyme family's site holding many clues to Connecticut and other New England sites:
www.members.aol.com/_ht_a/drewclan/index.htm

Leave No Trace: To learn the principles of walking lightly on the land, visit www.lnt.org.

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A HELPFUL BOOK ON TREES, REISSUED

A Natural History of North American Trees, by Donald Culross Peattie. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007, 490 pgs.

BY ROBERT M. RICARD

If there is one book on the natural history of trees you should own, this is it. Donald Culross Peattie (1898-1964) wrote *A Natural History of North American Trees* a half century ago; it was first published as two books in the 1950s. Houghton Mifflin has now merged these two classics into one-volume as a new release. Simply put, this almost 500-page book is the most eloquent and entertaining account of American trees ever produced.

It is much more than just a collection of information of the growth characteristics, ecology, biology of a selection of trees. It is, most important, a glimpse of the nation's history and the role played by some specific tree species—a story told of the economic, social, and psychological contribution of American wood from and through the colonial era, to the founding, and then development of the republic.

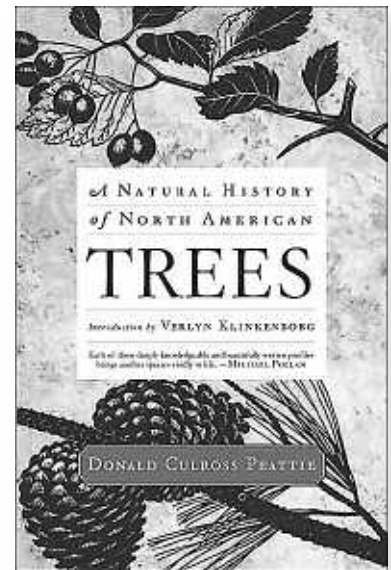
This is not a book a forester, botanist, or ecologist would use for work purposes; there are many more scientifically reliable, current books to use. This is a book you pick-up on a cold, snowy December night and, along with a warm or warming drink, read leisurely in front of a fire glancing occasionally at the storm outside. Mr. Peattie's writing is imaginative and lyrical and this prose is combined with his sweeping historical and botanical knowledge. Regarded as one of the best of American nature writers, his style may be due to his college career first studying French poetry at the University of Chicago, then switching to botany at Harvard under the tutelage of America's greatest botanist, Merritt Fernald. Following graduation, Mr. Peattie did field work throughout the United

States, mostly in the South and Midwest, and worked for the Bureau of Plant Introduction at the Department of Agriculture, all the while writing articles, columns, and books often infused with his sharp first-person observations and insights.

Work such as his would be hard to produce today. Ever the plantsman, Mr. Peattie was most fascinated with trees. "The American sylvia," he tells us in *American Heartwood* (1949) "has lain upon the rim of my mind like a blue landfall, raised twenty years ago, when I first schemed how I might come up to it." This passion translated into him gathering not only volumes of botanical references, but historical evidence – and many fanciful, mythological tales – of trees and Mr. Peattie applies his vast knowledge by combining scientific rigor with folksiness.

On Connecticut's great White (American) elms, Peattie has much to say. He talks of the Great Elm at Wethersfield ("is 102 feet high, with a spread of branches about 150 feet, is 41 feet about at breast height (the correct place for measuring the girth of an Elm, by the way") and the Whipping Post Elm at Litchfield ("used as a place of chastisement as late as 1815; today no culprit's arms could be tied around its doughty girth"). You almost see Mr. Peattie smiling mischievously as he writes the following passage:

When Sarah Saltonstall came from New London to be the bride of David Buck of Wethersfield, she intended to bring, after an old Connecticut custom, a bridal tree to plant, but ice on the river prevented the transportation of any gift except herself. Next spring she encountered an Indian bearing an Elm sapling in his hand, and after a powwow in sign language, secured it in exchange for a quart of rum. Perhaps more impressive than the fame and stature of Sarah's Elm is the mystery of how such a



church-going lady would have a quart of rum about her!

In addition to Mr. Peattie's writing, the reader will fall in love with any one or more of the 100 exquisite scratchboard etchings made by Paul Landacre (my favorite is the western white pine on page 56 showing the trees lower trunk, one branch, and set in a low valley with snowcapped mountains as a backdrop). Botanical illustration is an old art that remains relevant even in today's world of digital cameras and computer drawing software, and Mr. Landacre is one of the best at it. His pictures are so well done they tempt you to remove, frame, then hang them on your wall.

Houghton Mifflin has done a great service in reissuing these marvelous books as one. Get this classic and learn such combined botanically and culturally important things as "The French Canadian woodsman has – or used to have – his own opinion of the jack pine. He believed that a women who passed within 10 feet of its boughs would become sterile, her womb closed – an analogy suggested perhaps by the way the cones remain on the tree for years, obstinately unopened, never to shed their seeds." Donald Culross Peattie never disappoints.

Robert M. Ricard is a senior extension educator for urban forestry at the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System in West Hartford. Contact him at 860-570-9257.

VISUAL STORIES OF CONNECTICUT AMPHIBIANS

Connecticut is home to 22 kinds of salamanders, frogs and toads. Most remain hidden in the forests, swamps and streams that share our neighborhoods – until now. Naturalist Brian Kleinman has captured some stunning images on a DVD (produced by Perry Heights Press of Wilton) that brings the world of Connecticut’s amphibians into your home or school.

The DVD joins Brian on his quest to document the seasonal lifecycles of these fascinating creatures. We get to experience the sights and sounds of his amphibian safari and share in his excitement with each discovery. The first capture of the “purple salamander” along a gurgling forest brook in summer, a deafening midnight chorus of treefrogs, the cold, rainy night march of the spotted salamanders, the springtime aquatic dance of the newt, and much more.

The close-up video images provide a truly unique look at these often misunderstood animals. You will be amazed at the range of patterns, colors and behavior on display in the amphibian world and will discover new things with each viewing.

However, the thing that I like most about this DVD is that after viewing it, you want to go right out to the local forest or swamp and start looking under logs to see what new neighbors you might find. An activity that I suspect Brian would wholeheartedly endorse!

For more information, call Nancy Hanrahan at 203 767-6509 or visit cctrips.com.

Hank Gruner, a herpetologist who coordinates the Connecticut Amphibian Monitoring Project. Gruner is the interim director of the Children’s Museum of West Hartford. He wrote this at the request of Perry Heights Press.

A Hundred Yards

I found it on a winter day
 An orange leaf, to stem attached.
 The others’ hue had gone away
 And dull there on the ground they lay,
 But this one’s color - quite unmatched.

Another leaf? I looked around
 And off about a hundred yards
 There in the underbrush I found
 A second leaf, stem in the ground,
 Posted there like border guards.

I lined these two up in my sight
 Into the woods I deeper peered
 And saw a row of shining bright
 Orange leaves in the fading light
 Plants with a purpose, they appeared.

To stem below I gave a yank,
 It had no roots, and slipped out fast.
 I stared at orange file and rank
 And then it was that my heart sank,
 And knew this woodland would not last.

This orange leaf on wooden stake
 Each hundred yards spaced evenly
 Will boundary mark and forest break
 And ever, always in its wake
 A hundred yards is what will be.

— Adam R. Moore

FALL PROGRAMS

For more information, or to register, please contact CFPA at 860-346-2372. For updated program information, visit www.ctwoodlands.org/EdPrograms.html

FOR FAMILIES

WALKCONNECTICUT FAMILY GUIDED HIKES

Last weekend of every month

Want to bring your family in the outdoors but not sure what to do? Join us for fun family hikes on the trails led by education staff or volunteer Family Hike Leaders trained by CFPA. Enjoy walking in the woods, traipsing through wetlands, sensing the coolness of streams and fern gullies, and much more! Each guided hike will introduce the beauty of Connecticut's lands to you and your family. We'll learn about safety, how to stay found and not get lost and find out what to fill in that day pack. Guided Family Hikes are offered at no cost as a public service to Connecticut's children and families as part of CFPA's WalkConnecticut initiative, creating healthy families by connecting them to the land.

Pre-registration is suggested for hikes; for locations and details, see www.ctwoodlands.org.

Join us November 24th for our first bilingual Family Guided Hike – led in English and Spanish by Jose` Landin and Lori Brant.

OCTOBER

Saturday, 10/27;

GILLETTE CASTLE STATE PARK, 10 AM – Noon, East Haddam/Lyme; 6 years+

Enjoy this nearly 3 mile hike along trails, old carriage roads, a former railroad bed, and along the waterfront in what many consider one of our most scenic state parks. Bring water and snack to eat at river's edge. Steady rain cancels; if unsure, call leader at 860-342-4564. Directions: From junction of RTs 82 and 151 in E Haddam, drive E on RT 82 for 1.2 mi, turn right onto River Rd for 1.5 mi, right into park to main parking area, meet near concession stand.

Saturday, 10/27; 10 AM – Noon

MCLEAN GAME REFUGE, Granby; all ages

Join us for a fun hike on a two-mile loop of easy trails through pine groves and oak forests. A lava outcrop will be the perfect place to rest and enjoy a snack. Meandering brooks and a small pond will be fun to explore along with the many rocks and plants along the way.

Ducks, herons, and other animals might be spotted at the pond.

Directions: One mile south on route 10/202 from junction with Route 20; main entrance to the Game Refuge is located on Route 10/202 in Granby

Sunday, 10/28;

THE FIELD FOREST, Durham; 2 PM – 4 PM; 6 years+

Come explore this gem of the woods in central Durham and explore this wonderful forested area. We'll look for animal homes, interesting trees, plants, rocks, a stream and perhaps explore a vernal pool. Figure out the clues to find a letterbox (bring your rubber stamp and pad). Feel the fresh air and enjoy quality time outdoors together.

Directions: From RT 17 in Durham, turn onto Maiden Lane, then onto Pickett Lane. Meet in parking lot between Coginchaug Regional High School and athletic fields.

NOVEMBER:

ÚNETE A NUESTRO PRIMER BILINGUAL "FAMILY HIKE" EN INGLÉS Y ESPAÑOL, con Lori Brant y Jose Landin, para más información, visita www.ctwoodlands.org

Join us November 24th for our first bilingual

Family Hike – led in English and Spanish by Jose` Landin and Lori Brant. For updates, visit www.ctwoodlands.org

INTRODUCTION TO LETTERBOXING

Saturday, October 20, 2007, 3-5 p.m.

All ages welcome

Join us for a fun-filled afternoon. We'll learn all about letterboxing, the adventurous treasure hunt of the trails. Bring a simple design (or we'll supply you with ideas) in order to create your own family letterbox stamp for use on the trails and take home for other letterboxing jaunts. Venture on the John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom & Demonstration Forest to find your very first letterbox after following a series of clues. \$10/family to help cover cost of materials. Pre-registration required; space is limited

FOR ADULTS

WALKCONNECTICUT'S FAMILY HIKE

LEADER VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Advanced training session, Saturday, October 13, 9 a.m.

CCC Museum, Shenipsit State Forest, Stafford Springs

Become a trained **Family Hike Leader** and share your enjoyment of the trails and the outdoors with children and their caregivers. This advanced session will focus on the Civilian Conservation Corps of the Depression era with an introductory tour of the museum to see photos of the work projects. Immediately following the museum tour we'll enjoy a guided hike around Nipmuck State Forest to learn how to identify these cultural finds in the forests and discover how to identify them while leading WalkConnecticut Family Guided Hikes. Reservations required; for those interested in becoming, or currently, a volunteer Family Hike Leader

FOR EDUCATORS

THE ENVIRONMENT FROM A TREE'S PERSPECTIVE

Grade 4-8 grade educators, Thursday, October 11, 2007, 9-3
Connecticut College, New London

Teachers who attend will discover learning experiences for their students that meet the expectations of the new *Core Science Curriculum Framework*. Studying the environment can develop children's abilities of inquiry, provide opportunities for them to collect and use evidence to build scientific explanations, and motivate them to pursue science-related careers such as forestry and wildlife management. The study of trees in local parks and on school grounds will be encouraged through engaging activities. Through Project Learning Tree, students learn environmental content that correlates to standards in science and strengthen their critical thinking, team building, and problem-solving skills. Participants will receive the Project Learning Tree Activity Guide 0.5 CEU's; \$65 to Connecticut College Arboretum. Fee includes breakfast, lunch, and refreshments.

CT Science Framework Standards: 4.2, 6.2 Matter and Energy in Ecosystems

5.2 Structure and Function; CINQ7 Scientific Inquiry; 8.2 Heredity and Evolution

FOREST INVESTIGATIONS

Grade 3-5 educators

Wednesday, October 17, 2007, 9-3

Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby

Discover information and hands-on activities for exploring the forested environment with children and students. Encourage your students to learn outside through inquiry-based conservation and forestry management activities. Participants will receive the Project Learning Tree Activity Guide. 0.5 CEU's; \$35.00; Financial assistance available through the Paul F. Pikula Education Fund.

CT Science Framework Content Standard: 3.4 – Earth materials provide resources for all living things, but these resources are limited and should be conserved, 4.2 – All organisms depend on the living and non-living features of the environment for survival, Scientific inquiry grades 3-5: A thoughtful and coordinated attempt to search out, describe, explain and predict natural phenomena.

CONNECTICUT SCIENCE EDUCATORS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Elementary level teachers

Saturday, October 27, 2007, 8:45-9:45 a.m.

New Britain High School

Unleash the naturalist in your students. Discover ways to challenge them to explore grade-appropriate environmental issues – from the inside to the outside. Project Learning Tree (PLT) activi-

ties suit different learning styles, meet education standards and teach through experiences in nature. All activities feature science as well as reading and technology connections, clear objectives and assessments strategies. While this one-hour workshop will be an introduction to PLT, it will be completely hands-on in that the participants will learn how to use inquiry skills to examine and measure components of different habitats. We'll investigate a variety of factors of an environment, such as sunlight, temperature, wind, soil, plants, and animal life. Participants must be registrants of the Connecticut Science Educators Professional Development Day; visit www.csta-us.org

PLACES WE LIVE

For high school educators and talented & gifted middle school educators

Tuesday, November 6, 2007, Election Day, 9-2; CFPA, Middlefield

Engage your students in the signature role of Connecticut in the birth of U.S. environmental history. Bring environmental debate into the classroom and help your students understand the implications of land policy that is part of our Connecticut heritage. This workshop will illuminate three important historic figures in the conservation movement of the 19th century: Theodore Roosevelt, John Muir, and Connecticut native Gifford Pinchot. This workshop will help prepare you and your students for "Forces of Nature" on November 9, 2007, CFPA's staged dramatic reading about these conservationists at the Bushnell Center for Performing Arts in Hartford. Places We Live also will help students become responsible citizens who can apply their knowledge and understanding of land use to current issues. Participants receive Project Learning Tree's "Places We Live" curriculum; CEU's. The first 10 educators to register receive free tickets to "Forces of Nature." This workshop meets the following Connecticut Social Studies Content Standards: Local, United States and World History, and Human and Environmental Interaction. \$35/participant. Call 860-346-2372 to register.

FOR SCOUTS

Bring your troop or den to these fun and hands-on workshops; activities help earn the following badges or pins. Programs can also be scheduled per your schedule/calendar. Pre-registration required; \$5/scout. The following workshops will be held at the Connecticut Forest & Park Association in Middlefield.

Brownie Scouts – Eco-Explorer, Thursday, October 18, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Cub Scouts – Forester, Thursday, October 25, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Junior Girl Scouts – Finding Your Way, Thursday, November 29, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Northeast Utilities to Grant Easement for 70 Acres

Northeast Utilities will grant the Connecticut Forest & Park Association a conservation easement on more than 70 acres of wooded land, including 2,500 feet of shorefront on the Connecticut River, in Middletown. The property includes a sloping hardwood forest well-stocked with sugar maples, the Scovill Rock outcropping, a freshwater pond and streams, and undeveloped river frontage. No trails go through this land, although it is located not far from the Mattabesett Trail.

The easement deal came about because CFPA granted the power company an easement on a very small area of a 7-acre tract it owns in Haddam, and NU set out to reciprocate. “The reason it got so big is we wanted to have a good natural boundary on it,” said Jeff Borne, a senior scientist for NU. “We really haven’t identified any particular uses for it. We just thought that if we are going to give this conservation easement, let’s not just do the minimum.”

The company, meanwhile, was disturbing 2.4 acres of wetlands in the Middletown-Norwalk power line project and was legally required to rebuild a small wetlands elsewhere. But that new wetlands will be established in Milford, Mr. Borne said.

Adam R. Moore, CFPA executive director, said he was delighted that the tract near the river would be protected. NU will continue to own and care for the land. The NU staffer who was managing the land until his death a few months ago was J. Stanley Watson, who was also a CFPA Board member. The land is under the management of the consulting forestry firm Ferrucci & Walicki. Recently the forest was thinned and bittersweet vines cut and controlled.

“Stan had a keen eye for the historical uses of the landscape. When we walked the land in August, he showed us where granite had been slid down the hill to a river barge, showed us old house foundations, and showed how streams may have

been used on this land historically,” Mr. Moore said. The tracks of the Connecticut Valley Railroad (which operates a tourist railroad between Essex and Chester) cross the NU property. A path under the tracks allows walkers to reach the riverfront at the point across from George Dudley Seymour State Park.

Mr. Moore noted that trails could conceivably be established on this land but that it would be at NU’s discretion. While the easement guarantees that no development can take place, it does not convey rights of access.

WalkConnecticut: Let’s Get Moving

A Note from Leslie Lewis, CFPA’s Newest Staff Member

BY LESLIE LEWIS

By now many readers of Connecticut Woodlands will have heard about CFPA’s WalkConnecticut initiative, which was envisioned as a holistic approach to promoting walking and other non-motorized activities along trails and sidewalks around the state. WalkConnecticut will bring together recreation, health, tourism, historic preservation, and economic development interests to promote, preserve, and expand these opportunities.

I was recently hired by CFPA to serve as the WalkConnecticut Coordinator. Over the past 29 years I worked in several capacities for the CT Department of Environmental Protection, including implementing the Bottle Bill, developing Household Hazardous Waste programs, and serving as the DEP’s liaison to a variety of environmental groups. For the last ten years I served as the State’s Trails and Greenways coordinator, where I had the pleasure of working with many towns and organizations to enhance trails all across Connecticut. I retired this spring and jumped at the chance to join the CFPA team in this important effort.

One of our first tasks will be to devel-

op a WalkConnecticut website where the public can find information on trails and routes, with a specific emphasis on organized events. From nature walks in local parks to tours of historic areas to longer hikes, even walking for a “cause,” the goal is to list the wide array of choices available to people. I will be relying on folks like you to keep me up to date on what is going on out in the field.

Over the next few months I will be contacting old friends and making new connections to bring a broad coalition of interests together to promote WalkConnecticut. Please let me know if you have any ideas regarding this effort. You can reach me via email at llewis@ctwoodlands.org. Hope to see many of you as I am out and about!

Indexing Project Complete in Camp-Ellsworth Library

The year-and-a-half long project of organizing CFPA’s Camp-Ellsworth Library was completed in June. Approximately 2,000 books, brochures, and pamphlets reflecting CFPA’s mission were assigned Library of Congress classification numbers and arranged by call number.

The entire collection has been indexed and placed into three Microsoft Excel files on a library computer: a catalog of books, pamphlets and brochures; a listing of current periodicals; and one of videos and DVDs. The catalog can be searched by call number, author or by key words that appear in the title of the book, pamphlet or brochure.

The indices will be updated as materials are added. The Camp-Ellsworth Library depends on donated items. Lack of shelf space prevents us from accepting large numbers of materials; but the occasional monograph, report, scrapbook and the like always are welcome and will be treated with tender, loving care.

Materials do not circulate, but CFPA members and the public may do research during normal business hours. Assistance is available.

Pikula Fund Helps Programs

The Paul F. Pikula Education Fund was created in 2006 in loving memory of Paul by his family. Mr. Pikula, a Connecticut native, was a volunteer for Connecticut Forest & Park Association for 29 years. As a trail manager for the Naugatuck Trail, he was often found on the trail with his backpack and tools, ready to keep the trail safe and clear for fellow hikers. Mr. Pikula's love of the land inspired him to travel around the world to hike and see places of natural beauty.

The fund assists children, teachers, educators, and students of all ages to become engaged in learning about Connecticut's land and natural resources. It has been created to provide assistance in getting outdoors and experiencing the natural beauty of Connecticut to those who may not otherwise have the opportunity. Applicants from disadvantaged economic backgrounds and communities have received financial assistance in order to participate in CFPA's education program.

Those benefitting from this assistance so far include New Haven's Barnard Environmental Magnet School's Earth Fair and Family Science Night; the Northern Middlesex County YMCA school vacation and after-school programs; and Middletown's 6th grade Kiegiwin Middle School class' participation in the Forest Forensics program.

Ed Intern Had Busy Summer

Andrea Seymour, CFPA's college intern for the summer of 2007, helped establish a letterboxing program at CFPA as well as assisting with education programs. Andrea helped to set up two letterbox series, one about trees and the other about hiking. These boxes are hidden in the Field Forest in Durham and along the Nipmuck Trail in Eastford and Ashford. Visit www.ctwoodlands.org for the letterbox clues.

CFPA Receives Two Grants

Project Learning Tree has awarded the Association a grant from MeadWest vaco to work with the DEP on correlating Connecticut's education standards to the PLT curriculum. This was the second grant from MeadWest vaco in two years. New to Connecticut, the REI company awarded CFPA a grant to create Family Adventure Packs in collaboration with the Connecticut Library Consortium.

Education Coordinator participates in BioBlitz 2007

During the BioBlitz in Middletown, Lori Brant sat on a panel along with Carmen Cid, Dean of Arts and Sciences from ECSU and MaryAnn Butler and Liz Buttner, both science consultants with the State Department of Education. The panel's purpose was to discuss environmental education in Connecticut's schools and the national Leave No Child Inside movement and how it affects communities.

Forest Forensics

For the second time, CFPA has partnered with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection to provide middle school students the Forest Forensics program, a field-based science program in which students study a "crime" of missing trees in the forest. DEP forester Rob Rocks and DEP wildlife biologist Jane Seymour worked with the students as guest scientists. It provided a great opportunity for 6th grade students to learn more about careers while working side-by-side on an investigative activity. Teachers first attended the Forest Forensics professional development workshop in order to provide activities in the classroom prior to visiting the John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom & Demonstration Forest with their students.

CFPA Education Committee Writes Resolution on Children and Exercise

Ruth Cutler and Caroline Driscoll, both CFPA board members and representatives to the National Wildlife Federation, wrote a resolution for NWF on the importance of children getting into the outdoors. The federation has accepted the resolution.

The resolution notes that children are increasingly isolated from the outdoors, spending more than 40 hours per week watching television or connected to electronic media, and increasingly perceive the outdoors as dangerous. It notes that children who spend time outdoors reap benefits of physical and emotional health, and that the state of Connecticut has recognized the problem of "nature deficit disorder" as coined by the author Richard Louv. It also notes that the state has initiated a program, No Child Left Inside, and "the Great Park Pursuit," of which the Connecticut Forest and Park Association is an active partner. The resolution concludes that the National Wildlife Federation urges all states to acknowledge the problem and to secure educational and political support to help children get outdoors, and that the NWF encourages a national network of state affiliate organizations to work towards connecting more people with nature. It also resolves to support national programs on outdoor learning for all children and families.

"National Wildlife Federation believes that for nature deficit to be reversed, children need to develop a positive relationship with the outdoors in a manner that is age-appropriate and begins with discovery and wonderment," the resolution concludes. "The use of technology and media is encouraged as tools for learning, but not as substitutes for outdoor experiences."

Welcome, new members

We are delighted to welcome you to CFPA. Thank you for your support of our programs. We hope you will enjoy being part of our community and that you will find your membership experience engaging and informative. Your thoughts and suggestions are valued and we welcome your voice alongside ours in sounding the call for conservation.

Includes new members from April 30 through July 31, 2007.

Robert William Andrew	Stuart and Donna Clark	Carol Finnigan	Damon McWalters	Peter Tiziani
Sandra Barnes	Connecticut Agricultural	Chris and Kerrie Flanagan	Joseph A. Morris	Clement and Alicia Watson
Donald Bell	Experiment Station, Dr.	Margaret Hynes	Allen A. Raymond	Stephen and Kathleen
Larry Black	Robert E. Marra	George Jafferis	Jennifer Reidy	Wilmes
Joseph Bukowski	Lorraine F. Conway	David A. Lees	Gary E. Storms	David and Victoria Yolen
Peg Carlson	Beth DePietro	Louis Mangione	Larry and Helen Stowe	
Joseph J. Chambers	Karen Brand and Ed Cox	Judith Martignetti	Alan Tinti	

A special welcome and thank-you to the following new and renewing members

Benefactor \$250

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 Spring Glen Garden Club,
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Connwood Foresters, Inc.
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Supporting \$100

Cynthia L. Abrams
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 OF NEW ENGLAND

Donations

It is with gratitude that we recognize the following individuals, businesses, organizations and government agencies that have, through their generosity and volunteer help, supported the work of CFPA to conserve the natural landscape of Connecticut. We value the opportunity your support provides to help keep this agenda before the people of Connecticut.

Includes contributions made from April 30 to July 31, 2007.

The Annual Fund 2006

Thank you to the final contributors to the 2006 Annual Fund for their generous support

Patron

\$100 to \$249

Eleanor R. Adair

Sponsor

Up to \$99

Mr. and Mrs. Stephen T. Drury

Elizabeth K. Harvey

The Annual Fund 2007

The 2007 Annual Fund will be reported in the spring 2008 issue. Our thanks to the following early contributors for their generous donations.

Founders' Circle

\$5,000 and up

Elizabeth H. Carabillo

Patron

\$100 to \$249

Ann M. Cuddy

S. Lee Laplante, M.D.

The Hibbard Trust for Land & Trails

The Hibbard Trust was created to support the Association's topmost priority – conserving the land and trails of Connecticut. Thank you to the following donors who have made contributions to the Trust in honor of Paul Mei's 70th birthday.

Linda A. Biese

Diane L. Carney

David B. Colbourn

Peter and Nancy Freeman

Renata Goodwin

Henry Kluppelholz

Lisa A. Randi

Other Donations

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Congregation B'nai Israel in honor of Ed Richardson

Note: For gifts in honor of Paul Mei, see Hibbard Trust for Land & Trails

Matching Gifts

Aetna Foundation

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Aaron Barriger

Gifts to the Connecticut Forestlands Council Fund

The Association is accepting donations on behalf of the Connecticut Forestlands Council and is pleased to make disbursements to meet its needs in promoting forests and forestry in Connecticut. Our thanks on behalf of CFC to the following contributors.

AMC – Connecticut Chapter
Connecticut Forest & Park Association
Connecticut Motorcycle Business Association

continued on page 40

Donations of Gifts and Services in Kind

Bernard Noonan for posters and prints

Linda Cunningham for donation of refrigerator, for proceeds from recycled cans and bottles, and for donation and installation of printer

David Fink, Donald Ponko and David Trykowski of Permatreat for providing bases for the amphitheater in CFPA's John R. Camp Outdoor Classroom and Demonstration Forest

Vance Kent for recyclable bottles and cans

Paul and Deb Valvo for CFPA letterbox

Robert Pagini for his beautiful photographs that grace so many CFPA publications

Foundations, Corporations, and Government Grants and Sponsorships

American Forest Foundation - Project Learning Tree

Environmental Education and Training Partnership

Mead Westvaco

REI

Volunteers

For their valued assistance in the Library and the office, we extend our thanks to the following individuals

Mal Bochner

Linda Cunningham

Jose Landin

James Little

Sophie Makuch

Andrea Seymour

Connecticut Trails Day 2007

Special thanks to the 2007 Connecticut Trails Day Committee for its hard work in putting together another excellent Trails Day brochure with a variety of trail-related activities for all interests and ages. Committee members included **Chuck Sack, Dick Sweetnam, George Arthur, Birge Dayton, Bob Schoff, Joe King, Bob Morrison, Fran Zumpano, Dick Blake, and Allen Crepeau**. Funding for the 2007 Trails Day brochure was provided by **American Savings, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Crosswicks Family Foundation, Connecticut Water, Federal Highways Administration, Tilcon Connecticut, and the National Recreational Trails Program**. More than 125 events celebrating Connecticut's trails took place June 2-3, thanks to the volunteer efforts of the 2007 Connecticut Trails Day Event Leaders statewide. Congratulations on a record-setting event that was enjoyed by thousands!

Special Recognition

CFPA has the distinction of being one of the first conservation organizations in the nation to take up the cause of the land. As a member-supported Association, we recognize the determining value of our members to the very existence of the organization. It is in this spirit that we have the pride and honor to acknowledge those individuals who have been members of the Association for 25 years or more. Your long-time support has helped shape the Connecticut landscape as we know it today, and you may take ample credit for creating a climate where stewardship of the land is a fundamental value in our state. We also note with gratitude the contributions of those who came before us, upon whose legacy today's Association has been built. Our heartiest thanks!

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Dona Z. Wohlert, 29 years
Dr. Bethia S. Currie*, 28 years
Dale O. Hackett, 28 years

continued on page 42

STUMPAGE REPORT

Current prices for standing timber

This table summarizes 42 voluntary reports by foresters, loggers, and sawmills of prices paid for timber between April and June 2007 in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Prices are in dollars per thousand board feet using the international quarter-inch scale. Pulpwood and fuelwood are reported in dollars per cord. The Cooperative Extension Services of the University of Connecticut and the University of Massachusetts compile these quarterly reports, warning that these prices offer only a guide to prices, which can fluctuate due to many factors. See the Web sites http://www.canr.uconn.edu/ces/forest/price_sht.htm, or <http://forest.fnr.umass.edu/snes-tumpage.htm>.

SPECIES	EAST OF CT RIVER			WEST OF CT RIVER		
	no. of reports	median	range	no. of reports	median	range
Red oak	24	220	100 - 300	7	200	150 - 250
White oak	20	80	25 - 150	2	83	75 - 90
Other oaks	18	105	50 - 200	1	100	-
Ash	18	63	40 - 150	5	75	65 - 125
Cherry	7	250	250 - 350	6	350	250 - 450
Sugar maple	12	200	200 - 300	6	263	180 - 400
Red maple	22	48	25 - 100	5	45	25 - 150
Tulip poplar	2	50	-	3	30	0 - 40
Yellow birch	14	50	40 - 160	4	60	35 - 120
Black birch	22	50	40 - 160	4	60	35 - 60
Paper birch	7	50	-	3	25	0 - 50
Beech	1	50	-	2	23	20 - 25
Pallet hdwd	9	25	25 - 50	5	10	0 - 25
Other hdwd	6	45	30 - 50	1	10	-
White pine	21	90	33 - 175	5	65	50 - 100
Red pine	7	20	20 - 120	0	-	-
Hemlock	13	25	20 - 30	6	20	5 - 25
Spruce	6	25	-	2	53	30 - 75
Other sfwd	1	20	-	0	-	-
Poles, hardwd (\$/lin.ft)	6	5	-	0	-	-
Poles, stfwd (\$/lin.ft)	0	-	-	0	-	-
Fuel wood (\$/cd)	14	5	0 - 8	4	5	3 - 20
Pulpwood (\$/cd)	4	0	0 - 1	1	0	-
Biomass (\$/ton)	1	0	-	0	-	-

continued from page 41

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 Mr. David C. McClary, 28 years
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*denotes Life Members

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Books, etcetera



Forest Trees of Southern New England

a 56-page paperback publication of the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. This manual is a simple description in accurate and nontechnical terms of the forest trees common in southern New England. It is intended for the general public to meet a pressing demand for a pocket manual which is easy to use and understand.

\$2.00 (plus tax and \$1.50 shipping)



Connecticut Woodlands

A Century's Story of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, by George McLean Milne, published by the Connecticut Forest and Park Association in 1995. A fascinating history, not so much of the Connecticut Forest and Park Association as it is of the dedicated men and women who have cared about Connecticut's forests and fields, hills, valleys, and parklands. Scattered through these pages are inspiring accounts of courageous struggles to protect the rich and varied natural environment of the state.

\$25.00 (plus tax and \$5.00 shipping)



A Shared Landscape

A Guide & History of Connecticut's State Parks and Forests, by Joseph Leary, published by Friends of Connecticut State Parks, Inc. in 2004. Richly illustrated in four-color with maps and photographs, this 240-page guide offers an intimate look at Connecticut's public lands and tells you everything you need to know about where to go if you love to hike, bike, camp, fish, swim, hunt, watch birds, learn about ecology or cross-country ski.

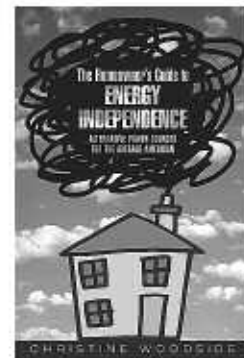
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The Connecticut Walk Book, WEST, and the Connecticut Walk Book, EAST, provide a comprehensive guide to hiking throughout the state. Published by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, the two volumes are the 19th edition of the guidebook first released more than 75 years ago. Both volumes include the Metacomet and Mattabesett Trails of Central Connecticut. Both volumes include detailed two-color topographic maps that are crisp, clear, and easy to read. Complete trail descriptions accompany the maps.

Each volume **\$19.95 members** (plus tax and \$5 shipping)

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The Homeowner's Guide to Energy Independence

by Christine Woodside. Lyons Press, 2006. A book for ordinary Americans who want to move away from fossil fuels. Learn about the most viable and affordable alternatives such as solar panels, wood, hydroelectric, hybrid cars, and more.

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Hanes Beefy Ts - 100% cotton, heavy weight, double needle hems, taped shoulder-to-shoulder, Sizes: S-M-L-XL, WHITE ON FOREST GREEN / FOREST GREEN ON KHAKI. **\$15.00** (plus \$4.00 shipping)



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A staged dramatic reading in three acts

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Gifford Pinchot



Throughout history there have been moments of elevated vision and accomplishment when the convergence of great men, bold ideas and high purpose has resulted in action of historic dimensions. Such was the case during the first decade of the 20th Century when John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt and Connecticut-born Gifford Pinchot grappled, to great effect, with the disposition of the vast American wilderness, setting in motion an impassioned debate that continues unabated today.

On **November 9, 2007, at the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts**, Pinchot, Muir and Roosevelt will play out this story of conflict and high drama in a staged dramatic reading of a play by Stephen Most commissioned by CFPA. We invite you to be a witness as these visionary men square off on how to best manage America's forests. Find out what happened at the White House in the dark of a night that changed the face of the American landscape.

A gala reception prior to the performance, with food and drink provided by Max Restaurants, will benefit the Connecticut Forest & Park Association's Education Program.

For information about tickets and invitations, call or email CFPA at (860) 346-2372 or info@ctwoodlands.org.

This project has been made possible in part by the generous support of the Connecticut Humanities Council and by Astrid and Fred Hanzalek. It is also supported by:

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