

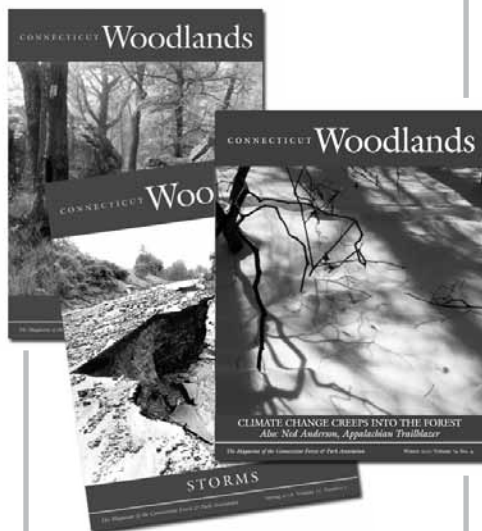
CONNECTICUT Woodlands



JOHN HIBBARD SAYS: REFLECTIONS ON LAND AND POLICY

ALSO: A CENTURY OF FOREST FIRE

About Connecticut Forest & Park Association and Connecticut Woodlands Magazine



Connecticut Woodlands is a quarterly magazine published since 1936 by CFPA, the private, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving the land, trails, and natural resources of Connecticut.

Members of CFPA receive the magazine in the mail in January, April, July, and October. CFPA also publishes a newsletter several times a year.

For more information about CFPA, to join or donate online, visit our website, www.ctwoodlands.org, or call 860-346-TREE.

Give the gift of membership in CFPA. Contact Marty Gosselin at 860-346-TREE.

Advertising Rates for Connecticut Woodlands

Half page: \$180 per issue / \$600 yearly (four issues)

Quarter page: \$90 per issue / \$300 yearly

Eighth page: \$60 per issue / \$200 yearly

Design services available for a fee.

CONNECTICUT
**Forest
& Park**
ASSOCIATION



Steve Broderick

Last summer, members of CFPA's Friends of Goodwin State Forest built a new wildlife viewing platform on Governor's Island in the forest. See the story on page 26.

Connecting People to the Land

Our mission: The Connecticut Forest & Park Association protects forests, parks, walking trails and open spaces for future generations by connecting people to the land. CFPA directly involves individuals and families, educators, community leaders and volunteers to enhance and defend Connecticut's rich natural heritage. CFPA is a private, non-profit organization that relies on members and supporters to carry out its mission.

Our vision: We envision Connecticut as a place of scenic beauty whose cities, suburbs, and villages are linked by a network of parks, forests, and trails easily accessible for all people to challenge the body and refresh the spirit. We picture a state where clean water, timber, farm fresh foods, and other products of the land make a significant contribution to our economic and cultural well-being.

Connecticut Woodlands

Published quarterly by the
Connecticut Forest & Park Association,
16 Meriden Road,
Rockfall, CT 06481-2961
Indexed in the Connecticut Periodical Index,
ISSN 00106257
Telephone: 860-346-TREE
Fax: 860-347-7463.
E-mail address: info@ctwoodlands.org
World Wide Web site:
<http://www.ctwoodlands.org>

Annual Membership

Individual	\$ 35
Family	\$ 50
Supporting	\$ 100
Benefactor	\$ 250

Life Membership \$ 2500

Corporate Membership

Club	\$ 50
Non-profit	\$ 75
Sustaining	\$ 100
Landmark	\$ 250
Stewardship	\$ 500
Leadership	\$ 1000

Member of
EarthShare
New England



Printed on recycled paper



MIX
Paper from
responsible sources
FSC® C084282

CONNECTICUT Woodlands

The Magazine of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association

WINTER 2012 Volume 76 No. 4

CONTENTS

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS



6 JOHN HIBBARD SAYS.

The former executive director of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association talks about environmental movements, land protection, forests, and CFPA's quiet but persuasive influence.
By Christine Woodside.

14 A CENTURY OF FOREST FIRE IN CONNECTICUT.

From reality to myth, and back again.
By Lloyd C. Irland and Meredith A. Cowart



On the Cover

John Hibbard, second from left, John Camp, left, George Milne, and Clyde Fisher, break ground in Middlefield for the CFPA headquarters in 1985.

Photo by from CFPA Archives

4 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Forest changes since 1963.
By Eric Lukingbeal.

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE.

Playing the Lorax after the storm.
By Eric Hammerling.

18 FROM THE LAND.

Wintertime on the farm, time for fireside stories.
By Jean Crum Jones.

19 FROM THE ARCHIVES.

CFPA Board votes to hire John Hibbard: 1963
By James Little.

20 TRY THIS HIKE.

Appealing Prospect: Variety and views on the Prospect Mountain section of the Mattatuck Trail.
By Diane Friend Edwards.

22 WALKCT.

John Hibbard, a fixture.
By Leslie Lewis.

24 LETTERS. On hunting.

26 ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Culprit found in bat-killing disease. When you see this mean vine, call the state.

27 OBITUARY

Belton Copp.

CONNECTICUT
**Forest
& Park**
ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Forest changes since 1963

BY ERIC LUKINGBEAL



CFPA President
Eric Lukingbeal

John Hibbard's long tenure as our executive director gives him a perspective few others have on forest conservation in Connecticut. Read John's thoughts starting on page 6, in Christine Woodside's interview.

I'd like to reflect a bit on the changes the forest has gone through and what Connecticut Forest & Park Association faces today.

In 1963, when Mr. Hibbard began his 37-year tenure at CFPA, Connecticut's forest coverage was just past its modern peak of around 60 percent in about 1950. In the late 1800s, when CFPA was founded, Connecticut had lost much of its forests for farms and development.

In one sense, Connecticut is quite remarkable. It is the 4th most densely populated state, but it is 13th in its percentage of forest cover. We all live very near a lot of forest. If we were to measure CFPA's success since 1895 by forest cover, we could declare victory.

But the Connecticut forest habitat of today is quite different from the forest Mr. Hibbard knew in 1963. Saw timber stands, where the logs are big enough for saw logs, have increased, to around 70 percent of the forest land. The size of the trees has also increased. Pole timber stands have decreased to about 25 percent. Saplings and seedlings—so important for wildlife—have decreased from about 30 percent in 1950 to only around 5 percent today. Forests with balanced stand-size classes supply habitat diversity, forest products, and perhaps even greater resistance to insect outbreaks and pathogens. The small size of the saplings and seedlings class is worrisome to wildlife biologists. The biggest change during the past half century is in the sheer volume of wood in the trees; from 1953 to 1998, volume increased from 799 cubic feet per acre to 1995 cubic feet per acre. So, our forest inventory is impressive, even if not perfect. But, there are some clouds on the horizon.

In 1963, the concept of climate change was almost unknown to the general public. Today, the changes are evident. There is little doubt that warmer, and wetter, days are ahead for Connecticut. The impacts on forest health are uncertain.

One thing we do know is that the Connecticut forest, with its abundance of oak species, was created by disturbances: frequent fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, clear-cuts, the chestnut blight, and agriculture. These openings allowed shade-intolerant species—the oaks—to get started. These disturbances are unlikely to be repeated at such a large scale. Add to this the overabundance of white-tailed deer that browse seedling oaks, and the result is that in many places, our oak forest is giving way to more shade-tolerant species, such as maple and birch.

The most visible threat to forest health is fragmentation resulting from development. As a general rule, habitat quality goes down as the contiguous forest is fragmented. Because Connecticut's 169 towns each rely on local land-use regulations, it is difficult to address the impact of development on forest health. Finally, insect invaders such as the emerald ash borer and the Asian longhorn beetle threaten tree health.

All of this gives CFPA plenty to work on. We intend to do that work, through advocacy, education, and of course, maintaining and expanding the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails.

Eric Lukingbeal lives in Granby.

THE CONNECTICUT FOREST & PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT, **ERIC LUKINGBEAL**, *Granby*
VICE-PRESIDENT, **WILLIAM D. BRECK**, *Killingworth*
VICE-PRESIDENT, **DAVID PLATT**, *Higganum*
VICE-PRESIDENT, **STARR SAYRES**, *East Haddam*
TREASURER, **JAMES W. DOMBRAUSKAS**, *New Hartford*
SECRETARY, **ERIC HAMMERLING**, *West Hartford*
FORESTER, **STEVE BRODERICK**, *Eastford*

DIRECTORS

RUSSELL BRENNEMAN, *Westport*
ROBERT BUTTERWORTH, *Deep River*
STARLING W. CHILDS, *Norfolk*
RUTH CUTLER, *Ashford*
LAURENCE DIAMOND, *Coventry*
CAROLINE DRISCOLL, *New London*
ASTRID T. HANZALEK, *Suffield*
JEAN CRUM JONES, *Shelton*
DAVID LAURETTI, *Bloomfield*
MICHAEL LECOURES, *Farmington*
DAVID K. LEFF, *Collinsville*
SCOTT LIVINGSTON, *Bolton*
LINDA MACARY, *Clinton*
LAUREN L. MCGREGOR, *Hamden*
GEOFFREY MEISSNER, *Plantsville*
JEFFREY O'DONNELL, *Bristol*
DEBORAH C. SPALDING, *Guilford*
RICHARD WHITEHOUSE, *Glastonbury*

HONORARY DIRECTORS

GORDON L. ANDERSON, *Glastonbury*
HARROL W. BAKER, JR., *Bolton*
RICHARD A. BAUERFELD, *Redding*
GEORGE M. CAMP, *Middletown*
ANN M. CUDDY, *Ashland, OR*
SAMUEL G. DODD, *North Andover, MA*
JOHN E. HIBBARD, *Hebron*
PHILIP H. JONES, JR., *Shelton*
EDWARD A. RICHARDSON, *Glastonbury*
L. P. SPERRY, JR., *Middlebury*
SALLY L. TAYLOR, *Mystic*
HENRY H. TOWNSHEND, *New Haven*
SIDNEY VAN ZANDT, *Noank*

STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **ERIC HAMMERLING**, *West Hartford*
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, **JENNIFER BENNER**, *Roxbury*
EDUCATION DIRECTOR, **LORI PARADIS BRANT**, *Rockfall*
TRAIL STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR, **CLARE CAIN**, *Niantic*
FOREST & PROGRAM DIRECTOR, **GOODWIN FOREST CENTER**,
STEVE BRODERICK, *Eastford*
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT,
LINDA CUNNINGHAM, *Portland*
MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING DIRECTOR,
MARTY GOSSELIN, *Durham*
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, **JAMES W. LITTLE**, *Hebron*
WALKCT DIRECTOR, **LESLIE LEWIS**, *Lyme*
OFFICE MANAGER, **TERESA PETERS**, *Durham*
ADVANCEMENT ASSISTANT, **KARA MURPHY**, *Guilford*

EDITOR, **CHRISTINE WOODSIDE**
GRAPHIC DESIGNER, **KAREN WARD**



EDITOR'S NOTE

A cold, rainy night: JOHN HIBBARD DAY

John E. Hibbard has pushed, quietly but persistently, for forests, open space, and the public's safe access to both since the 1960s. He built the foundation of the modern Connecticut Forest & Park Association, which he directed for most of a half-century. In October, I went to Mr. Hibbard's house in Hebron, where we recorded hours of talk about those years (see page 6).

On December 7, only days before this magazine went to press, my husband and I watched Mr. Hibbard's friends and colleagues come together to honor him. They'd driven through a cold, lashing rain. While people arrived, Mr. Hibbard stood quietly to the side, towering over all of them in his tweed jacket. He has a way of deflecting attention away from himself to other people. An outsider might have wandered into the fluorescent-lit meeting room of the Gilead Congregational Church and concluded that it was another of thousands of committee meetings Mr. Hibbard had led in his hometown of Hebron. In fact, this was a celebration. Governor Dannel P. Malloy had proclaimed this particular Pearl Harbor Day as John Hibbard Day.

Mr. Hibbard sat down with a row of elected state and municipal officials, plus CFPA President Eric Lukingbeal, at a long table. They faced an audience of more officials, friends, and admirers. A dozen or so of them stood up, praised, roasted, and reminisced. Everyone had worked with him in some way. Also there was a clearly affectionate State Rep. Pamela Z. Sawyer, the 55th District Republican of Bolton, who'd spent many an hour discussing conservation policies with Mr. Hibbard in her office.

Just as he worked on state legislators to expand open space and limit landowners' liability, Mr. Hibbard worked with Hebron residents, on pretty much every town committee, for good budgets, open space, and a fair town charter. "Do you have your ear to the ground? What are you hearing?" he'd ask one of his fellow Hebron volunteers. Their gratitude and affection radiated.

Scott Russell Sanders wrote, in his book *Staying Put*, "I believe we can only be adequate to the earth if we are adequate to our neighborhoods." John E. Hibbard has done that. No problem in his community was too small or too big for his energies.

—Christine Woodside, Editor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Playing the Lorax after the storm

BY ERIC HAMMERLING



Eric Hammerling

After the surprise October storm Alfred, when the power was out, school closed, and Halloween about to be canceled in West Hartford, I took my kids to the movies. Before the movie (*Puss in Boots*), the theater at Blueback Square showed a preview for the remake of the 1971 Dr. Seuss classic book, *The Lorax*. Danny DeVito's gravelly Lorax voice returned me to my childhood, when my parents ensured that I would be among the first wave of readers exposed to the Lorax's environmental message.

Just a few days later, I was asked to testify on the Two-Storm Panel assembled by Governor Dannel P. Malloy. They needed a well-respected organization that would "speak for the trees." Of course, they thought of Connecticut Forest & Park Association to serve in this important role because of many decades of groundbreaking work by John Hibbard, Adam Moore, and many other conservation luminaries on whose broad shoulders we stand. During their outstanding careers as CFPA executive directors, John and Adam went to great lengths to ensure that lawmakers and the public would know the many values we all derive from healthy, sustainably managed forests.

The public can have a short memory. These recent power outages have resulted in a widespread and unfair vilification of trees. Although I was prepared to speak for the trees on the Two-Storm Panel, I wanted to be more successful than the Lorax was in defending the truffula trees and all that depended on them—the barb-a-loots, swomee swans, and humming fish.

So, I put on a jacket and tie determined not to be "shortish," "oldish," "brownish," or "mossy," and I tried not to speak with "a voice that was sharpish and bossy." I testified about the many benefits of well-managed, healthy trees to all of Connecticut. I mentioned the following reasons we need trees (of course, this is an incomplete list):

- ▶ **Trees reduce flooding and storm water runoff** by absorbing water directly, and through making the soil more permeable.
- ▶ **Trees' roots serve as anchors that reduce erosion** and sediment flowing into our streams and Long Island Sound.
- ▶ **Trees trap and hold pollutants** such as dust, ash, pollen, and smoke that damage human lungs.
- ▶ **Trees produce oxygen** (every acre of trees produces enough oxygen for 18 people every day).
- ▶ **Trees absorb enough CO₂ on each acre, over a year's time, to equal the amount you produce when you drive your car 26,000 miles.** Trees also store an average of 2.6 tons of carbon per acre every year, thus slowing the impact of climate change.
- ▶ **Trees reduce heating and cooling expenses by providing shade** (which reduces air conditioning needs as much as 30 percent) and providing a windbreak (which reduces heating needs as much as 50 percent).
- ▶ **Trees' create habitats for wildlife** and support ecosystem biodiversity.
- ▶ **Healthy trees can add as much as 15 percent** to residential property values.
- ▶ **Well-managed forests provide green jobs.** Foresters, arborists, loggers, and teachers manage and maintain forests and advise landowners about forest sustainability.

I ended my testimony by noting that it is clearly time for us in Connecticut to invest in those who manage our street trees and forests. We need to support our tree wardens, who often have many other responsibilities (sometimes including serving as the town's dog catcher). We need to have a robust staff in the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's forestry division, one that can manage state forests and advise our towns and forest landowners. The University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension should also invest in at least one dedicated extension forester.

The forests that cover almost 60 percent of Connecticut are the most important part of our state's green infrastructure. We must do a better job at dedicating resources to manage the natural assets that we are so fortunate to have.

"I speak for the trees! Let them grow! Let them grow! But nobody listens too much, don't you know."

Eric Hammerling lives in West Hartford.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF CONNECTICUT WOODLANDS

CONNECTICUT-GROWN TREES

*Locavores embrace forests
Reviving historic cash crops
Maple syrup reflections*



In October 2011, Connecticut Woodlands editor Christine Woodside visited former Connecticut Forest & Park Association Executive Director John Hibbard in the downstairs office of his longtime house in Hebron. In his nearly four decades running CFPA, between 1963 and 2000, Mr. Hibbard saw much change and effected change himself. Sitting comfortably in shorts and T-shirt before a poster of himself from 30 years before, Hibbard reflected on a half-century of the conservation movement in Connecticut. He talked about the evolution of maintenance of—and attitudes toward—the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails, the Landowner Liability Law and how it helped land conservation, and the life of state agencies.

JOHN HIBBARD SAYS

CFPA Archives

John Hibbard outside CFPA's new headquarters in the mid-1980s.

The former executive director of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association talks about environmental movements, land protection, forests, and CFPA's quiet but persuasive influence

Early Trail Volunteers: “It Was Their Trail”

Christine Woodside: When you started at CFPA, what sort of people were involved with the trails, both in the maintenance of and advocating for them? What were the attitudes back then about the trails?

John Hibbard: Well, I began in the early '60s and by that time, CFPA had lost a lot of trails due to sprawl. And if one were to look at the early editions of the [*Connecticut*] *Walk Book* you would see references of where you could take the bus and start hiking. By '63, the trails, particularly in the southwestern part of the state, had got chopped up or disappeared entirely. Also, at that point in time, there were a few of the original or early section chairs still alive and active. Romeyn Spare was one. Kornel Bailey was an early but not an original. Then there were some who came into the trails program probably in the '50s and '60s: [Harrol] Bill Baker, who was chairman of the Trails Committee and was involved in the fourth or fifth edition of the *Walk Book*. He became president of the Association in '66 and served a couple of years.

CW: He was influential?

JH: Well, I guess so. Seymour Smith was not an original, but early, too. And Seymour remained active, well, for the rest of his life, actually, but he gave up maintaining the northern part of the Appalachian Trail. He succeeded Ned Anderson, who was the original.¹ I never knew Ned Anderson, but I knew some of the next generation. So, Seymour was certainly—he had the philosophy that it was their trail and they did all the maintenance themselves. They really didn't need any help, didn't want any help. Probably would refuse help. Seymour, I can remember he had two cars. He had one car he kept all his trail stuff in, and that's what he used it for. He also, I think he'd go up to the White Mountains and maintain trails for the AMC [Appalachian Mountain Club], as well.

CW: What did these obviously personally devoted trail workers say to you? What did they ask you for? And what did they tell you about their work? Or, alternately, what did you ask or tell them?

JH: Pretty much it was a stand-alone program. They'd prepare the trails. They'd come to the office once in a while for paint. There was not a great deal of contact other than the annual trails meeting. Other than that, the Trails Committee met two or three times a year.

CW: And the rest of the time they were out alone on their trails?

JH: They were doing their thing. George Libby succeeded Rome Spare. And George developed this crew business with either 4-H clubs or youth. He also wrote a column for the Bristol Press entitled, “Just Rambling.” That was a weekly column, not necessarily on trails, but pretty much. He developed this crew thing. You could be on his crew, and then he developed a reward system where he'd take them somewhere at the end of the year, and some of his protégées, or kids he had on the trail, got pretty active. I think that's a prime example of developing partnerships or groups of maintainers. People had their friends help them, probably, but this was a kind of structured thing. Then, growth of trails in southwestern Connecticut was stymied, or limited, or didn't exist. You couldn't add any trails down there. You couldn't restore them because of sprawl, or whatever.

When Landowners Became “Less Unwilling”

JH: Then people like Sam Dodd got interested in developing trails, and you know Sam's story.² Sam actually took over trails that were theoretically maintained by the [University of Connecticut] Outing Club, but



CFPA Archives

Top, John Hibbard presents an Arbor Day award in Hartford. Below, he makes a call at CFPA's former rented office in East Hartford, in 1983.

¹ Ned Anderson pioneered the route of the Connecticut section of the Appalachian Trail.

² Dr. Samuel Dodd spent many years developing trails and working for open space preservation in Connecticut. See Connecticut Woodlands Summer 2011.

the UConn Outing Club had turnover. Sometimes they were active and sometimes they didn't do much of anything. So Sam, he took over the Nipmuck [Trail], pretty much, and then he got interested in developing new trails. He was pretty good at getting permissions from landowners, and I helped him with that some. But developing trails in urban areas was a pretty tough go, due to the landowner liability question, which really stemmed from the lawsuit of these kids down at Bishop's who hit a tree. I think you could check that out.

CW: There was a lawsuit by some young people?

JH: Somebody hit a tree; I guess it was an apple tree. The folklore of it is that the tree was planted so the owner was liable.

CW: They hit it with their car?

JH: No. Sledding or something. Recreation. By that time, CFPA had had an interest in resolving that issue, not only from a trails standpoint but other standpoints. There'd been a couple bills in the legislature, which I was active in promoting probably from '65 with the first session I was involved in, which was the carryover session prior to reapportionment. And, of course, the '67 session was after reapportionment. We had a bill passed that required that owners register with the then State Park and Forest Commission.

CW: So they would say we're landowners and we're registering our names officially with you and therefore they would not be liable?

JH: Regulations never were developed that would work, but that was the aegis, that the first Landowner Liability Law included registration with the State Park and Forest Commission, and then the regulations to do that had to be developed, and it took a long time and not much happened, basically. So then, when [former Governor John] Dempsey had developed his environmental task force or whatever it was called—Governor's Committee on Environmental Policy—that was one of the recommendations, that that issue be resolved, that that issue come before the legislature and be adopted along with all the other things that went along with that, including the establishment of the [Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection]. So that passed in '71. And that was really effective in allowing expansion of trails.

CW: Were there a lot of landowners who were saying they didn't want trails on their land after that accident?

JH: I can't remember when the deep-pocket lawsuits started, which was a plague nationally. If you went to a landowner and asked him if you could put a trail on his property, he would express concern over the liability issue, and he might or might not allow you, so that, in effect, stymied trail development. And if you went to larger landowners—corporations [and] Yale [University] or whatever—they wouldn't touch it, you know. Absolute no. So we, Sam, was interested in extending the Natchaug Trail through the Yale[-Myers] Forest, and David M. Smith, who was professor of silviculture at Yale, had charge of the Yale Forest, and he was pretty sympathetic.³ So Yale hired [law firm] Wiggin and Dana to develop what they called a license agreement, which allowed CFPA to extend its trail through the Yale Forest, and it cited the Landowner Liability Law. And that actually was helpful with putting new trails on Northeast Utilities or CL&P [Connecticut Light & Power] lands, and the [Metropolitan District Commission, the water utility] extending trails on the MDC that were already there. We had lost a trail on the MDC, the north end of the Tunxis was closed, I can't tell you exactly when, but there were problems with the MDC police.

CW: What town was that in?

JH: Barkhamsted. The MDC police felt that people were getting to the reservoir and then if police apprehended these people they would use the excuse that they were hiking and straying from the trail.

CW: But they actually weren't.

JH: Probably not. Probably they weren't hiking, but they used that as an excuse. So it took several years to get the trail reestablished on the MDC, that portion of the Tunxis. Now, another interesting thing: One of the original trail persons was a fellow by the name of Warner who lived in Barkhamsted, and his son, I think, Ben Warner, allowed the trail to be on their property probably in the '70s, and he wrote this little essay on the handshake deal.⁴

CW: So that sort of changed people's attitudes?

JH: It made them less unwilling.

CW: Did you have to get involved in these discussions?

JH: Yeah. Well, on the Mattatuck Trail, for example—portions of that were closed because of the unauthorized camping on the trail.

³ David M. Smith also served on the CFPA Board of Directors.

⁴ "Executed with a Handshake," by Ben Warner, a landowner and state Department of Environmental Protection water resources director. Connecticut Woodlands, Fall 1979, page 8.

John Hibbard's career spanned half a century

1954	1958	1958-60	1960	1963	1963	1966
Receives "Young Outdoor American" award from the Izaak Walton League	Graduates from the University of Connecticut	Serves in the U.S. Army	Takes jobs with the U.S. Department of Agriculture	Begins 37-year career at Connecticut Forest & Park Association	Organizes first of four Connecticut River Rambles, eco-cruises on the river's vulnerability	Works on Governor's Conference on Natural and Environmental Beauty... Works with Farmington River Watershed Association to acquire Talcott Mountain State Park



CFPA Archives

Mr. Hibbard, in Hartford, holds an award to CFPA from the National Woodland Owners Association in 1992, a few months after the passage of the Forestry Practices Act.

That was property that was leased to a hunting club. And they closed the trail because of unauthorized swimming, because that was in the Waterbury watershed. Then there was the incident of the person getting shot in Litchfield, the jogger. That was when [Lowell] Weicker was governor. This jogger got shot up there south of the White Memorial Foundation on Waterbury watershed. So we had been working to try to reopen the trail, but it never happened. Now, as the result of the shooting, Weicker formed this committee on hunting and public safety, of which I was a member, and we made various recommendations: increasing the number of conservation officers, which kind of was a temporary thing.

CW: The jogger was actually shot by someone who was out hunting?

JH: He was shot by a hunter, allegedly. So that impeded the reestablishment of the Mattatuck Trail. Then, of course, other things: I was involved in the committee on the [Appalachian Trail]. You know, where was it going to be. That was a pretty time-consuming proposition.

CW: That was when the National Park Service was trying to establish a permanent corridor?

JH: Yes. After the national legislation.⁵ And then, at that time the western route of the trail became the official route. On the eastern route, most of the landowners closed the trail because they didn't want the Fed involved. It lay dormant for a while, and then we thought we could establish the eastern route to go up to the Mohawk State Forest. It is now the Mohawk Trail. So I had been active in the Housatonic Valley Association—actually, I was involved in the reestablishment of it in the late '60s. There were people up there, Montgomery Hare, Frank Calhoun, Jake Rand, and others, who had pretty good contacts with landowners. So I got Monty Hare to agree to contact landowners on behalf of CFPA to see if we could reestablish it as the Mohawk Trail. The provision was that it wasn't the Feds, and they weren't committed to any long-term deal.

CW: So the landowners wouldn't be as worried?

JH: They weren't. There were a few problems but that worked out quite well. Monty Hare did most of the negotiations. That's how the Mohawk Trail got reestablished or established. In addition, you know the trails that Sam Dodd was able to, with my help and others', get in eastern Connecticut. And then the Shenipsit Trail. The idea was to get the Shenipsit connected all the way north of Bolton Notch, and at that time the DEP had gotten the Belding Wildlife Management Area given to them by Max Belding over a 10-year period. The Rockville Fish & Game had hunting rights for 10 years after Max gave the property. Extending the trail on that, there were some within DEP who weren't very enthusiastic about having the trail. I had to go up there and hold hands or whatever.

"I Had to Go Out and Hold Hands"

CW: You must have received phone calls at the office from people worried about trails. Did you ever talk somebody out of closing a trail?

JH: There were some interesting incidents. There was one case where portions of trail got closed, and so the section chair put blue paint on telephone poles to get around the area that was closed. A person was sitting on her porch, and she didn't like the idea of blue paint being put on the poles, and that people would be hiking by her house.

CW: Down the road.

⁵ A 1968 law established the Appalachian Trail as federal land. For decades after, the NPS worked to acquire trail corridor land by buying it or condemning it.

1967	1971	1974	1975	1968	1976	1980
Begins nine-year service on Hebron Conservation Committee	State passes Landowner Liability Law	Serves on a state task force for farmland preservation. Works on effort to acquire Bluff Point Coastal Reserve	Involved in Appalachian Trail land protection project	Leads effort to acquire Haley Farm State Park... Joins Hebron Recreation Commission for two years	Begins five-year stint chairing Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission	Works on CFPA's first published legislative agenda... begins work with CFPA board on new headquarters after John R. Camp donates land

JH: Down the road, yeah. So she protested that to him and he made some remark which wasn't too good. That didn't make her happy, so I had to go out and hold hands there and quell that. It so happened that some of her children, one of them, had worked for the Forest and Park Commission.⁶ It wasn't a hard job, but it involved talking to the person. I think most of the demons interfacing with landowners were that if you wanted to extend a trail, you had to have some way of communicating with the landowner. In some cases, the section chairs could do it without a problem. If people didn't live on the land and you weren't going by their houses, you had to do something. There were people who were interested in conservation. They might have been Association members or belonged to other organizations. You could talk to a family member and that family member would talk to the others and they'd say, "Oh yes, you can do it."

CW: So most of the time it worked.

JH: Most of the time it worked. I think there were people . . . you know the Landowner Liability Law helped in the case of the water authorities—trail development—that kind of paved the way for them to do it. And, of course, it was tested in the courts. One was a case where CL&P was over there in Lillinonah or one of those western trails, where they charged a fee for parking, but the court allowed that they weren't charging to hike. That went, I think, pretty far up the line.

CW: Did they have to stop charging for parking?

JH: No. The court allowed that they were not charging to hike.

CW: The Landowner Liability Law is definitely something that people still talk about today as one of the achievements that you left behind. Can you tell me how you got involved with that and what you did?

JH: The original law was passed in 1971. Same year as DEP [was established]. October first.⁷

CW: Forty years ago almost exactly. You worked pretty hard for that Landowner Liability Law to pass the first time. You were hearing through all these trail connections that you had that activity was a problem for people.

JH: We didn't have the number of maintainers . . . maybe 50. You'd hear at the annual trails meeting, "We'd like to be able to reestablish trails in southwestern Connecticut," or they'd like to extend trails or reconnect trails. [And they would say,] "But we are thwarted because of the liability issue."

CW: And that seemed wrong.

JH: It became a CFPA goal to get landowner liability legislation. If you look it up, probably there had been model laws in other states.

The National Council on State Governments had model laws in the '60s or even before.

CW: There was some momentum building.

JH: There was some momentum to it. It was always opposed by trial lawyers. But the impetus of the governor's committee and the establishment of DEP and a groundswell, and Earth Day. It wasn't just Joe Dokes who goes out every Saturday and maintains trails promoting it. It was some body politic promoting it.

A Career on a Crest of Environmental Wave

Conversation turns to the various waves of the environmental movement in Connecticut.

JH: Connecticut's rebirth of the environmental movement began in '61 when Dempsey hired Holly Whyte to do the Whyte Report. William Holly Whyte who wrote *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*. I wasn't here. I was in the service at that time. In '61 to '93, the General Assembly adopted many recommendations of the Whyte Report, including the establishment of conservation commissions, funds for the acquisition of land, Public Act 490, etc. Whether or not that came after *Silent Spring*, which was in—what? 1960?

CW: 1962 maybe? I should know.

JH: Well, you see, it's a test. After that, the Clean Water task force was [formed]. You know that was '65, I guess. And then [former Senator Abraham] Ribicoff proposed the national park.⁸ And then you had the [Connecticut River] Gateway Commission and I spent a lot of time on that, driving to East Haddam, right up the road. [He pulls out a book that reflects his life's work.]

6 This was precursor of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, which in 2011 became the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEP/DEEP).

7 The Landowner Liability Law (Connecticut General Statute 52-557) provides substantial limited protection from liability to landowners who allow the public to use their property for recreation without charge.

8 *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson (Houghton Mifflin, 1962) helped spark the modern environmental movement. The editor passed Mr. Hibbard's test by guessing the correct publication date. In 1965, Senator Ribicoff, also a former governor of Connecticut, proposed creating a national park throughout the lower Connecticut River Valley. It never came to be.

1985	1986	1989	1991	1993	1993	2000
Attends groundbreaking for new CFPA headquarters in Middlefield	Hires Linda Rapp, CFPA's first education and development director	Serves on Hebron Board of Selectmen Serves on Blue Ribbon Task Force to Preserve Connecticut's Dairy Industry	Works with state agencies to create Forest Practices Act	Works with CFPA members to sponsor first Connecticut Trails Day Chairs Hebron Board of Finance for half of the next decade	First of several stints as Hebron town moderator	Retires from CFPA

JH: So, this book is *Twentieth Century New England Land Conservation: The Heritage of Civic Engagement*, edited by Charles Foster, who was dean of the Yale School of Forestry at one point. He was also commissioner in Massachusetts in the early '60s. And it's a very interesting book. [CFPA board member] Russ Brenneman wrote a chapter. I was the institutional memory.

Conversation returns to the various waves of the environmental movement.

JH: If you want to say that the conservation movement began in the late 1890s nationwide . . .

CW: You could say that.

JH: Then you could go into all of it. [Then you had] the passage of the [federal] Weeks Act.⁹ Then you had that wave. And then you had the wave of the '20s, in good economic times. And then you had bad economic times with the CCC. Then you had the WWII and then you had sprawl. Pollution and whatever. Then you had *Silent Spring*. And then you had the establishment of all of these bureaucracies that some people want to do away with.

CW: Which of these waves inspired you to go into forestry and get involved in the conservation movement for a career?

JH: I grew up in a rural community. I was active in 4-H and was in a forestry club. One of my early mentors was Floyd Callward, who was extension forester at UConn. I studied forestry at UConn. Later I went to work for CFPA,¹⁰ and I guess, well, part of that was to have some working relationship with the public agencies and to have some involvement with the legislature to promote these issues that were redeveloped as a result of 1960. I didn't serve on the Clean Water Task Force, but I served on the Environmental Policy Committee. The Clean Water Task Force was [formed in] 1960. That had a body politic. Ellsworth Grant was involved in it. His sister-in-law, Katharine Hepburn, did [the documentary] *The Long, Tidal River*. So I guess it was a natural outgrowth. And then we were involved in not actively promoting the establishment of conservation commissions, but we knew what was going on and interfaced with that group of people in land trusts. And a big project CFPA had, in the mid-'60s, was the acquisition of Talcott Mountain State Park. That was going to be developed into upscale housing. We worked for the Farmington River Water Association to raise a considerable amount of money to be added to state and federal money to complete that acquisition.

⁹ The 1911 federal act established national forests.

¹⁰ Mr. Hibbard graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1958, served in the U.S. Army for two years, and worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for three years before working for CFPA.

2004

Receives an Environmental Merit Award from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

CW: CFPA has always operated pretty weightily, and quietly, behind the scenes, to do these important things like save big pieces of land. Some of the things I'm talking about go way back—Rocky Neck State Park.

JH: The 20s. 1929. Something like that.

CW: How was that for you? You were the public face of CFPA. That was this important group of people on the board. Did they want to be private? Did they try to do things quietly? It was a fairly humble organization considering the important things it's done.

JH: I guess that would require a sociological study of how things were in those periods of time. Well, for example, you take Harkness [Memorial State Park]. That was 1950 or around then. Chester Bowles was governor. Somebody proposed that it be given to the state. Well, the bureaucracy wasn't that red hot on it, but I think people from CFPA kind of bent Bowles's ear that it wasn't such a bad idea after all. So, yes, the state accepted it.

And Talcott Mountain, there was a hue and cry against these three individuals who had bought that from the Hartford Times—bought the tower and the land from the Hartford Times, and they had this great vision of developing it. Well, the property is in three towns: Simsbury, West Hartford, and Avon. Well, that wasn't such a hot idea according to people in those towns. And regional planning had come into effect, and I think the RPA, Regional Planning Agency, was not hot for it at all, and there were the highway problems. There [would]



CFPA Archives

CFPA Board of Directors members Clyde Fisher, left, the Rev. George Milne, and Mr. Hibbard at the groundbreaking ceremony for CFPA's new headquarters in 1985.

have been some big interchange built on the top of Avon Mountain. The DOT [Department of Transportation] kept telling the developers that this is what you've got to do. And it cost money that they didn't have anyway. And so, then, "Well, we're going to have the Save Talcott Mountain Committee, and we're going to raise money. Well, who technically can accept the money? We will have an NGO to accept the money." We had moved the office to Hartford, on 15 Lewis Street. The RPA was on the second floor. We were on the first floor. That ruminated for a long period of time and finally it was, yes, the people who owned it would accept a certain amount of money.

Now, Bluff Point [State Park] was another one. You know, the state put up the money to buy the initial piece from [Henry A.] Gardiner. And then, well, what about the rest of it? Well, they haggled over the price, but that was friendly condemnation. So, then what are you going to do with Bluff Point? There was a plan to develop Bluff Point, which didn't go over too good. So then various people got involved in making it a natural area reserve, which we were involved in. Then there was the problem of the sewer line. Groton City and the town's initial plan was to run the outfall down through Bluff Point and take it out in Mumford Cove. Well, that was a long, administrative thing. That was in the early '70s. I spent many a day in administrative hearings on that. Finally, it was ruled that the sewer line would not go through the point. . . . It would go directly to the Thames. And at the same time, there was this proposal to develop the Haley Farm. That was in the '60s. Former CFPA Director Belton A. Copp, who died recently, helped a group of people by saying it was not appropriate. Groton Open Space Association was formed, and again, money had to be raised, so who's going to be the recipient of the money? CFPA is going to be the recipient of the money. We were the entity that kept track of it. You asked the question: well, what's the difference, working quietly? Well, I don't know. I think after Dempsey, his report, I think you had kind of a groundswell of a so-called environmental community and it was easier to get people involved, number one, and secondly it became something of a body politic.

CW: Before that, it was harder?

JH: You had to do it quietly or you had to get somebody of stature, I guess. But you take the establishment of the Peoples Forest [in the 1920s]; that was a grassroots thing. And the American Legion Forest was the same thing. And you had these traditional, old-line organizations such as the DAR involved in that type of thing. So I guess it's evolution, whether it was naturally or not. And the same thing with trails. When [Thomas] Meskill became governor, he thought the state owned too much land. Not openly, but you know. Edith Chase of Waterbury, she had bequeathed Topsmead for the state. And Meskill was kind of queasy about it. Said they didn't need it or want it or whatever. Well, at the same time people who were in the Department of Ag and Natural Resources wrote this little pamphlet, "Land, the Most Enduring Gift," which had just come out. So I penned a letter to Meskill, saying that in view of the fact that Edith Chase had willed her Topsmead to the state, that that would be *her* most enduring gift and, seeing that the agency had just published this book, it would be appropriate for him to accept it. Which he did.

CW: The ungrateful . . .

JH: Well, he had other problems, such as the income tax. That was an example of [good luck]. She had been active in CFPA for years and years and years. It was like Mrs. Kellogg.¹¹

CW: She was an institution herself.

JH: Yes. That was an opportunity that had presented itself. I had some involvement with Meskill. He was governor when the DEP was created. He kind of was obligated.

The Average Life Span of Super-Agencies

CW: What do you think about the change of the Department of Environmental Protection, DEP, to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, DEEP? Did that surprise you? Do you think that it can be effective?

JH: Well, historically, there was always a question when DEP was established. Should a resource management agency also be a regulatory agency? And that question has existed up until the present time. So then you have the proposal to establish DEEP.

CW: It kind of bumps up the regulatory question, doesn't it?

JH: Well, energy is an environmental issue, and it's an issue that affects everybody. Is that the most appropriate arrangement? I guess the legislature said it is, or agreed with the proponents, which I don't really know whether there was a groundswell of proponents or not.

CW: Do you think that DEEP will last as it's conceived?

JH: Well, I think the average life span of super-agencies may be 20 years.

Conversation continues on the question of one agency overseeing energy and environmental enforcement.

JH: I think it can exist, I think there are bumps in the road, certainly. I guess this business over smart meters is an example.

CW: Because people will resist that sort of thing?

JH: On paper, it's not the worst idea. It's not a bad idea. But, should that kind of money be invested? If the savings are not going to be substantial? And there are people—you know, my wife is handicapped, so I've got to use electricity [during the business day] at not the cheap rate. And the elderly—they should be able to get it as cheaply as possible, but if they've got to use it in the middle of the day, are they being discriminated against?

Dirt Bikes and ATVs

CW: What about people using dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles? Do you see an increase in that sort of illegal, underground community in the woods?

11 Mr. Hibbard is comparing Edith Chase to Frances Osborne Kellogg, who deeded 417 acres from her Derby farm to the state in 1954. This property became Osbornedale State Park. Both women served for several years on the CFPA Board of Directors.



Christine Woodside

Mr. Hibbard in his home office in October 2011. The poster behind him shows him in the 1960s.

JH: I think there's a core of people. New England Trail Riders, you're familiar with them, which more or less I guess in their hearts wanted to do the right thing. But I think they wanted somebody to develop the trails for them. Or use trails that were already there. There might have been some that used old gravel banks and stuff like that. There was a committee that CFPA was involved in. That probably was in the '70s; I think [Northeast Utilities] footed the bill. There was a study where theoretically you could develop dirt bike trails, but I think they got pretty well shut off state land. The state did allow for some "enduros"¹² and still does, and they're fairly well policed. In the end, I think somebody screwed up and they became not too welcome. The ATV [riders] I don't think ever got that organized anyway. They just buy the thing and want a place to ride.

CW: Do you see them as a threat to the woods and to the trails?

JH: Well, [CFPA Executive Director] Eric [Hammerling] mailed out this study within the last couple of weeks, I guess, which I never digested much. I think there's more of them. They do more damage. Unless you post a bar to entry, you're liable to be subject to them. Whether it will be a phase that goes away, I don't know.

CW: How are we doing in Connecticut preparing private landowners to care for their land?

JH: I think without Public Act 490 or some way of transferring development rights or easements, it's a pretty tough situation for individuals. I have 100 acres under the old [tax-capping] 10-mill law, which I inherited. Unless I give it away, I've got to spend money. Even under 490 if you've got to pay someone to do your classification you spend a couple of hundred bucks.¹³ The current market being what it is . . . your situation for economic return isn't too good, unless you liquidate the stand. There are people who will hold onto the land as long as they can. Even if you do the right thing, you have to have somebody who's going to maintain the property.

Looking Back, and Seeing People

CW: Are you glad you spent all those years at CFPA?

JH: I guess my philosophical outlook is that I was able to be involved with first- and second-generation people who were either in forestry, natural resource management, and trail development. They were mentors, friends, and accomplices. I think currently we've been able to involve more people in the generational transfer who have similar ideals and objectives. I think there's a lot of work to be done in the vineyard, so to speak, because of overriding factors of dependence on non-renewable resources and not a real understanding of sustainability.

CW: [CFPA Executive Director] Eric Hammerling wanted to do this issue of the magazine because Eric, who never worked directly with you, sees evidence of your efforts everywhere he turns.

JH: So, what's happened in the last decade? Well as far as CFPA is concerned, the designation of the [New England Trail], which was moving slowly forward at that time and is now more or less a fact of life. Is CFPA going to be able to protect more of the trails, long term, even that one or others? I think it's something that has to be worked on persistently.

Discussion turns to CFPA's continuation of Hibbard's efforts: in land protection and education.

JH: And I think certainly the fact that we were able to have our own building [starting in 1985] after being a shoebox operation for decades—that gave us a base.

I guess that's it in a nutshell. You can be a leader, but you have to have a few people to the right or to the left, and when you look back, you ought to be able to see people. You shouldn't have to look too far back. Maybe they're not there, anyway.

¹² An enduro is an off-road race, usually by dirt bikes, over a span of several hours.

¹³ The 10-mill law capped taxes on undeveloped parcels. The General Assembly updated it last session so that tax caps would not expire. Public Act 490 permits owners to pay taxes on the land's use, not its potential use.



Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

The East Hartford fire of 1905 brought to life the state's proclamation that fire was a dragon to slay.

A CENTURY OF FOREST FIRE IN CONNECTICUT

From reality to myth, and back again

BY LLOYD C. IRLAND AND MEREDITH A. COWART

Today, catastrophic wildfires seem like a thing of myth. Sure, Rome fell to fire. There was that large fire in Maine 50 years ago. We hear about big wildfires in California. But in Connecticut? Open an old report from Arthur E. Hawes, Connecticut's state forester in the early 1900s, and you'll see that just two generations ago, it was quite common for tens of thousands of acres across Connecticut to burn every year.

Frustrated with landowners' lack of interest in forestry, Mr. Hawes finally reasoned, "Landowners could not be expected to invest their money in any long-term [forestry] program where there was so much likelihood of it going up in smoke." Upon appointment to his position in 1904, Mr. Hawes' first major act was to establish a fire warden organization. He hoped this would "slay the dragon of forest devastation" and thus interest landowners in genuine forest management.

If you had been a landowner in Mr. Hawes' era, how would you have managed your forest knowing there was a good chance it would burn itself up? How would you change your management now if you considered a stand-replacing fire a distinct risk?

Understanding risk is complicated, and even harder is planning for it. It always helps to understand the trends of the past.

Fire Trends during the Past 80 Years

The land area burned per year in Connecticut has decreased by an order of magnitude since the early 1930s. From the early 1900s through 1932, an average of 30,377 acres burned per year. In the past 20 years, the average was only 569 acres. In 1915, prolonged drought and the dead material left by the chestnut blight combined to make the worst fire year on record, with more than 100,000 acres burned. Between 1932 and 2010, in only one year did fires burn more than 10,000 acres.

The number of fires has also decreased, though not as steeply. Fires are still occurring, but that most are put out while small. The average size of fires has decreased from an average of 37 acres per fire in the early part of the century to between 2 to 4 acres per fire after 1933.

Since 1905, the Connecticut state foresters—Mr. Hawes and his successors—have collected data from town fire wardens. These reports often include snippets on the weather during the fire, the details of bad fires, major advancements in fire fighting technology, and a statement about how well that year's fire fighting organizations did compared with previous years. Foresters' complaints that the wardens didn't take reporting seriously peppered the historical literature. So fires were underreported. Mr. Hawes states that he believes the numbers the wardens reported increased after 1917. Note that for at least some larger fires, the entire area burned may have included pasture and orchards (not just forest).

The underreporting of fires may still be a problem now. Thus, it is safe to say that the data paint the trends in broad strokes. Prob-

ably officials reported larger fires more carefully. Even so, it is clear that fire incidence has declined greatly since the 1930s.

Averages don't tell the whole story. Fires larger than 10 acres can cause greater smoke emissions, have more significant ecological effects, and may be more likely to escape control. In the past 27 seasons, 544 patches of fires measured greater than 10 acres. Just looking at the average fire size over this period overlooks this effect entirely. These patches totaled almost 22,000 acres. Much of this was burned in ground fires and not crown fires. State Forester Christopher Martin reports, "Our nemesis is ground fires. Connecticut rarely experiences fires that crown."

Predicting Fires

Fire wardens can "feel it in the air" when a day will be a bad fire day, Mr. Hawes wrote in the proceedings for the Connecticut Fire Conference in 1926. Those "dry, hot, windy spring days," he said, were sure harbingers of large fires. The past 30 years have seen far fewer of the dry, hot, windy spring days than Mr. Hawes' contemporaries saw.

The Palmer Drought Severity Index, or PDSI, is considered the semi-official drought index. It measures temperature and rainfall in a formula to determine dryness. It is standardized to local climate. In this index, 0 is normal, drought is shown in minus numbers, and excess rain is reflected in plus numbers. The period from 1900 to 1930 saw long dry periods (18 and 14 years long, respectively) punctuated only by a year or so of above-normal precipitation. These conditions would lead soil, vegetation, and wetter areas to dry up, turning the forest into a box of matches.

continued on page 16

Why Are There Fewer Fires in Connecticut?

► **Suburbanization spreads.** Suburban migration and population growth mean fires are noticed sooner.

► **Less logging.** After the mid 1920s, logging plummeted. Less slash (unusable tree limbs left behind).

► **Forests are less flammable.** According to Emery Gluck, a state forester, less fire in the forest increases humidity. The forests are less flammable.

► **Fewer grasslands.** By the middle of the 19th century, two-thirds of Connecticut's original forest had been cleared.

► **Fire permits.** The fire burn permit system was established in the early 1900s. Today, all towns require residents to obtain an open burning permit before burning.

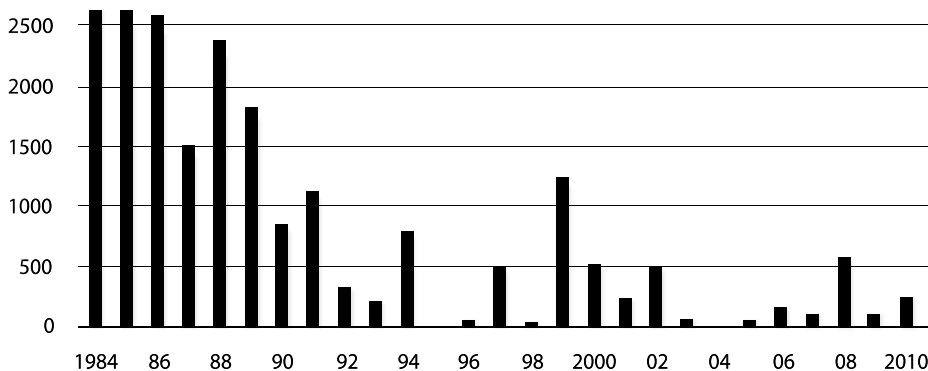
► **Smokey the Bear.** In the early 1900s, it was commonplace to throw cigarettes out the window and leave campfires unattended. Americans' mentality has altered. Who hasn't heard, "Only you can prevent forest fires"?

► **Electric trains.** From 1910 to 1926, sparks caused by coal-burning trains caused one third of forest fires in Litchfield County and one sixth of fires (by acres) in the state. Electrification of railroads after 1925 nearly eliminated this risk.

► **Fire wardens.** The fire warden system was established in 1906. In 1923, the Litchfield County Forest Fire Wardens' Association was formed, the first of its kind in the country. It allowed for greater cooperation between wardens and increased efficiency.

► **Improved technology.** Fire trucks and higher-volume trucks since the early 20th century changed the face of forest firefighting. There were also portable gasoline-powered pumps, radio communication, aircraft, satellite imagery for lightning detection, among many other improvements.

CONNECTICUT AREA BURNED IN FIRES LARGER THAN 10 ACRES 1984-2010



In Connecticut, the Forest Is Everywhere, Even in the Cities

When it comes to fires, our high population density (almost 740 people per square mile) is both a blessing and a curse. Residents often report smoke sightings early. Fire departments can respond quickly enough to keep wildfires from growing large. But a growing concern in Connecticut is what's called the wildland urban interface. With 3.5 million people and approximately 60 percent of Connecticut under forest canopy cover, I like to call Connecticut residents "forest dwellers."

Connecticut has not experienced a prolonged drought since the mid 1960s, when many public water supplies came within days of running dry. In recent years, the forest has remained more moist than dry in recent years.

These days, open burning regulations are tightly controlled by local burning officials through a permit issued by the local fire marshal or local fire department, depending on the town government structure.

The state offers communities a cost-share "dry hydrant" program. Also, it has held workshops informing local officials on how to reduce risk ratings, which translate into lower homeowner insurance premiums. This is an important public service.

— *Christopher Martin, director of forestry for the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection*

FIRE

continued from page 15

Fewer Droughts, Fires Since 1930

Although we have certainly experienced drought years since 1930 (especially in the mid-1960s), these have been far milder, and in only a few instances did they span more than one or two years. The contrasts are stark. Between 1910 and 1930, 50 percent of the spring fire seasons were rated on the PDSI at -2 or lower. So were 60 percent of the fall fire seasons. Between 1991 and 2010, none fell in this category. Instead, 55 percent of springs, and 70 percent of fall fire seasons, were on the wet side of normal.

Around the region, the severe drought of the early 1960s brought significant jumps in forest fires. In Connecticut, the drought did not reach its worst until 1965, but area burned peaked in 1963, and fire numbers exploded from 250 in 1961 (a very low year) to 943 in 1964. After 2000, fire numbers ranged from 90 to 450. Would 900 fires strain the system? We don't know. Climate experts tell us that we can expect such a drought on average once every 50 years.

Drought is not the only weather factor. Since 1970, the very worst fire years were not the driest ones. The scatterplot shows how loose the connection is between the spring PDSI and annual area burned. Still it is noticeable that during four of five springs rated at wetter than +2 on the PDSI, some forest fires burned fewer than 1,500 acres, whereas in four of the worst five years for forest fires, the springs measured -1 or lower on the PDSI. Wind and relative humidity are critical in spawning large, fast-running

fires, but we do not have historical data on wind or relative humidity. An authoritative analysis would use daily weather and individual fire information, which are not at our disposal for our research. But even in the absence of prolonged drought conditions, wind and low relative humidity can quickly dry out fine fuels, setting the stage for rapidly spreading fires.

At the Connecticut Fire Conference in 1926, Mr. Hawes explained why he believed they had not been able to handle fires that year. Under conditions of low relative humidity and low precipitation, he said, the fire protection system breaks down because "we are organized to handle periods of only average hazard." The firefighting system, he said, was not prepared to handle the higher hazards of that spring, and thus had met its match.

What Landowners Should Do

How do you, as a homeowner, plan for future fire risk? Connecticut has a number of programs to support and educate property owners on reducing fire hazard to their property, including "defensible space" precautions. In areas known to have more fire-prone forests, owners should not assume that the mild fire seasons of recent years will last forever (their insurance company shouldn't either). Leisure properties are a major problem. They are located in and near fire-prone forests. Their owners are seeking that "woody" feeling that contrasts with the big city, and they want vegetation to make their often-small lots seem more remote than they really are. Getting owners to trim out their densely wooded lots can be a hard sell.

After a forest fire, a century ago.

Connecticut DEEP



Something about Connecticut is unusual. Compared with other northeastern states we have been studying, since 1960 it has not displayed the “extreme value” behavior that is common elsewhere. The curve of area burned by years is fairly flat when ranked from high to low. In other words, Connecticut’s worst fire years are only somewhat worse than its average ones. This may reflect excellent access and strong fire services.

How does the state plan for this risk? Knowing the past certainly helps to predict the future. We have information on the sizes and numbers of fires in the past century. But weather, land uses and forest conditions, technology, education, urbanization, and organization of fire fighting, have all changed.

When building levees, engineers plan for the hundred-year flood. Residents along the Connecticut River understand this concept. It means the worst flood we are likely to experience once, on average, over a span of a century, based on past conditions. You would not build a levee to meet the average flood.

If we perform the same analysis on area burned by forest fires since 1960, it tells us that on average, in any 10-year period, the worst area burned could be 3,500 acres. This compares with the post-1960 annual average of about 1,600 acres. If we believe that fire detection and suppression methods are now much better than in 1960, and that another severe drought is unlikely, then we could expect a lower number. There is no right answer, and we are not advocating one.

An essential aspect of using the past to predict the future involves knowing why events in the past happened as they did. Aside from weather, it is difficult to point to any one major change that caused this major decline. Other New England states that experienced simi-

lar weather also saw declines in number of acres burned and number of fires throughout the 20th century, but none as dramatic or swift as Connecticut’s. A number of other factors have reduced wildfire occurrence during the past century.

Preparing for Change

This short summary leaves aside many questions. Has the dragon of fire in Connecticut been slain? Or is he only sleeping through a period of moister than usual weather? We cannot provide a complete and satisfying explanation for why the state’s fire experience has been so moderate, especially in recent years. Very likely though, favorable weather since the 1960s drought has been a factor.

We do know that droughts as severe as the one in the early 1960s are likely to recur. Governments should not assume that recent forest fire weather experience in Connecticut will continue indefinitely. As Mr. Hawes argued decades ago, we cannot make these judgments on the basis of the average hazard. This is true for the state, for municipalities, and for individual homeowners, especially those whose property is in the more fire-prone forest conditions.

Lloyd C. Irland, a former lecturer and senior scientist at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, is the author of The Northeast’s Changing Forest (Harvard University Forest, 1999). Meredith A. Cowart is a graduate student at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies.



Native trees and shrubs

Woodland wildflowers and ferns

Hummingbird, butterfly & bird attractants

Water garden & bog plants

Environmentally friendly products

Take a walk on the wild side at

Ballek's Garden Center

Ballek's ... Supporting Conservation and Preservation

Maple Avenue • East Haddam

860-873-8878

Open year round

WINTERTIME ON THE FARM, TIME FOR FIRESIDE STORIES

BY JEAN CRUM JONES

It's not unusual for our farm's guests to ask us what we do all winter. I just smile and say we try to get away for a week in March to a warm place, knowing they are not really interested in the mundane business of running a farm.

When Connecticut was agrarian-based, the farmers' winter activities were quite well known. They differed substantially from today's winter demands. Yet facets of winter farm life remain the same. (One constant activity through our 150 years is that the children carry in the wood for the home's warming spot. Farm kids learn early about their essential role in the family's life.)

WHEN THE ICE ON THE POND FROZE THICK ENOUGH, IT WAS CUT WITH LONG SAWS INTO SQUARE BLOCKS. THEY LOADED IT ON TO THE BIG, WOODEN ICE SLED. HORSES DRAGGED IT A QUARTER MILE TO THE ICEHOUSE. THEY COVERED IT WITH A THICK LAYER OF SAWDUST. THE ICE CHILLED THE MILK FROM THE FAMILY'S DAIRY HERD DURING WARM PERIODS. BURIED UNDER THE SAWDUST, THE ICE LASTED UNTIL THE NEXT YEAR'S COLD WEATHER RETURNED.

Our seven-generation farm family is fortunate. We still live on our homestead property. Many physical reminders, and old photos, document "the good old days." The storytelling Jones family gathers in front of the crackling fireplace. We enjoy regaling the young ones with tales of the way it used to be. Seven-year-old Jackson and almost 5-year-old Sam listen to stories from great-grandfather Philip, who grew up on the farm in the 1920s. Philip of course heard his grandparents' stories from the 1880s. My husband Terry, the current grandfather, fills in the details with stories he first heard in the 1950s.

Great-Grandpa Philip remembers the importance of the ice harvest. The icehouse still sits across the driveway. A big gap for air, between the outside wall and the interior wall, insulates the circa 1870

building. When the ice on the pond froze thick enough, it was cut with long saws into square blocks. They loaded it on to the big, wooden ice sled (now hidden away among our other old farm stuff). Horses dragged it a quarter mile to the icehouse. They covered it with a thick layer of sawdust. The ice chilled the milk from the family's dairy herd during warm periods. Buried under the sawdust, the ice lasted until the next year's cold weather returned.

Next to the icehouse stood the woodshed. Winter was the time to harvest the farm's wood supply. It was easier to drag the heavy logs over the snow and frozen roads to the barnyard, where it could be cut and left to dry in the long, narrow, south-facing shed until the following winter.

If snows came, Huntington farmers could get a break on their property taxes by clearing the snow from the roads in front of their farmlands. Of course, the Jones farmers were eager to minimize their taxes and vigorously worked to clear the road.

Strenuous winter activities encouraged huge appetites among the farm men. The women cooked large pots of stew and soup on the big, iron woodstoves. They used preserved meat and stored root vegetables. The Jones women also enjoyed baking pies, cookies, and bread in abundance.

Wintertime also meant time for meetings of the farm organization,



Library of Congress

Ice harvesting once was an important enterprise.

the Grange (first started in the mid-1800s). Women were invited to join, which was unusual for a fraternal organization. New England Grange meetings featured literary and musical programs, debates on agricultural practices, social dinners, occasional dances, and nonpartisan discussions. Agricultural discussions in New England focused on topics such as crop rotations, plant diseases, fertilizers, sheep raising, and the best rations for dairy cows.

Today's Farmers

Today, farm life is much easier because we have mechanical equipment and electricity. The Jones men enjoy working in the farm's wood lots—today's chain saws and gasoline-powered trucks make the job easier. We still heat primarily with wood, and we harvest the timber each year for the next year's burning. We relish the season of togetherness, playing games of checkers and Scrabble, and sharing stories. We still enjoy feasts of our own farm food (now pulled out of the freezer).

We attend winter educational meetings to remain progressive farmers. We learn the latest agricultural research and hobnob with other farmers at these events, which are sponsored by the New England University Cooperative Extension Services or other specialty organizations.

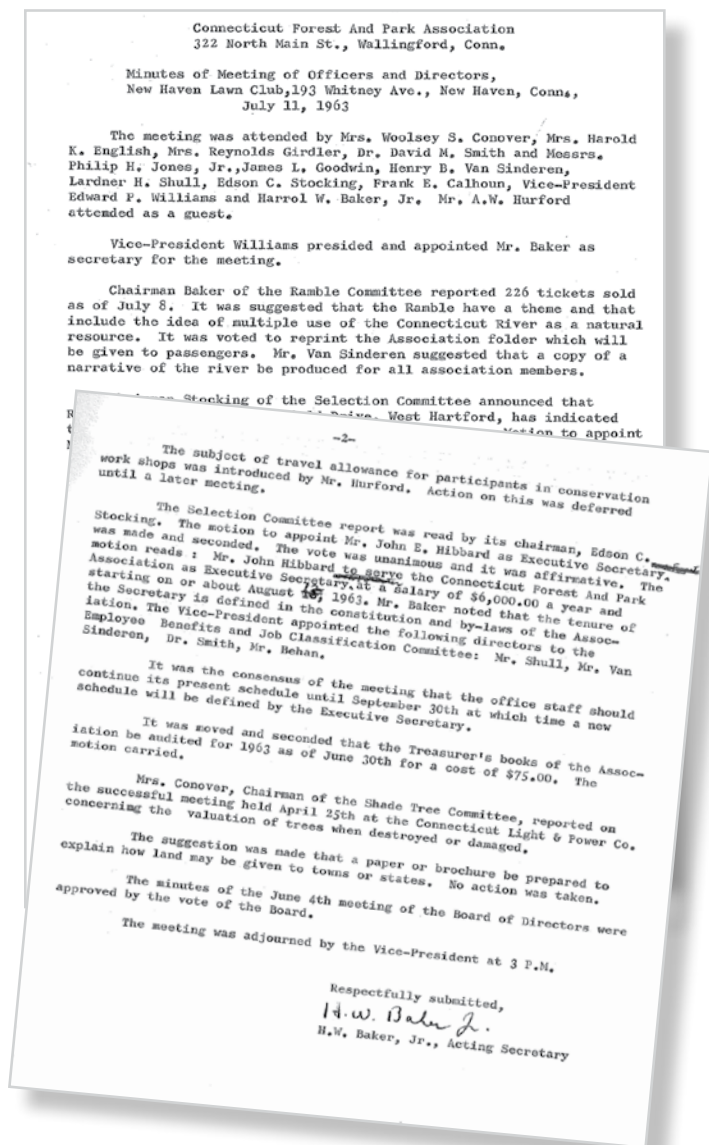
A big change since the good old days is the duty to pay state and federal taxes. Farms are businesses now, rather than being a common way of life, and we have much required government paperwork to do in January. As well, we are obligated to complete numerous specialized agricultural questionnaires and surveys. We service our many machines in the winter, and we clean and inventory our barns. We order supplies and seeds for the upcoming growing season. Personnel reviews should be completed. Management plans are made.

Yes, winter is the time for farmers to take a vacation—as long as all the many winter farm chores get done.

Jean Crum Jones is a registered dietician. She serves on the CEPA Board of Directors. Her family runs the Jones Family Farms and the Jones Winery in Shelton.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

CFPA BOARD VOTES TO HIRE JOHN HIBBARD: 1963



What might seem to be a small decision can have long-term consequences. This is certainly true of the hiring of John Hibbard on August 12, 1963. As the old minutes from July 11 of that year show, he was to be paid the outrageous sum of \$6,000 a year. His hiring is intermingled with a list of agenda items and bookkeeping items. Decades of service to Connecticut Forest & Park Association and the state and a significant impact on conservation strategy and legislation make the paragraph pale in comparison with what followed. Mr. Hibbard remained with CFPA until 2000. His involvement in state-level committees and as a devoted observer and advocate of good forestry and land conservation has continued.

—James Little

James Little is the development director of CFPA.

WORKING WITH THE LAND

Managing Land As a Renewable and Profitable Resource

- Ecological Inventories
- Wetlands Analysis
- Forestry
- Environmental Impact Studies
- Easements & Estate Planning

E|E|C|O|S

Ecological and Environmental Consulting Services, Inc.

Offices in Lyme and Norfolk, Connecticut.
We provide informational interviews at no cost or obligation. For more information, call (860) 434-2390 or (860) 542-5569 or visit us at www.eecos.com

Starling Childs, MFS; Anthony Irving, MES

Helping to protect your treasured land resources.

David Platt
Hartford
860.240.6062

Sara R. Stadler
New Haven
203.772.7717

BOSTON HARTFORD MADISON NEW HAVEN STAMFORD WOBURN

Conservation and Tax Planning



Murtha Cullina LLP | Attorneys at Law | www.murthalaw.com

APPEALING PROSPECT: VARIETY AND VIEWS ON THE PROSPECT MOUNTAIN SECTION OF THE MATTATUCK TRAIL

BY DIANE FRIEND EDWARDS

I have lived in Litchfield County for more than 20 years. I thought I already knew the best local places to hike. So I was surprised, and intrigued, when an acquaintance mentioned a “nice hike” somewhere I’d never heard of—Prospect Mountain. Another surprise: A section of the blue-blazed Mattatuck Trail goes up and over Prospect Mountain, mostly through the Litchfield Land Trust’s Prospect Mountain Preserve.

“Nice hike” turned out to be an understatement. My husband and I were delighted to find that, although short (1.9 miles end-to-end), the trail follows changing terrain and diverse sights, sounds, and scents. Evergreen needles cushion your footfalls in some areas, and in others, acorns and hickory nuts pepper the leaf-covered path. Mini-cascades burble in a narrow brook. Depending on the season and the weather, vernal pools provide habitat for frogs, toads, salamanders, and insects. Dozens of woodpecker holes decorate tree snags. Evidence of humans’ past use of the land—abandoned mine shafts, stone walls, an old field—appear here and there. So do clues to the mountain’s geological past: fault ledges, rocky outcroppings, huge boulders, and on the summit, exposed bedrock. Looking north from the 1,350-foot

summit, you can see the church steeple in Milton Center; to the west, the Shepaug Reservoir. The north and west views were opened in spring 2011, when the Litchfield Land Trust created a yellow-blazed trail from Cathole Road to the summit.

The Mattatuck Trail here winds through one of the most diverse forested areas in Connecticut, according to a Prospect Mountain Preserve management plan prepared in 2005 for the Litchfield Land Trust. Whereas most forests in the state consist mainly of mature hardwoods, Prospect Mountain has forests in all three successional stages: early, middle, and late. Blowdowns caused by a 1989 tornado had opened clearings where saplings now grow. The preserve also has a mix of mature hardwoods; a small grove of giant, 200-plus-year-old sugar maples; white pine stands; and old-growth hemlocks, which so far show no sign of infestation by the hemlock wooly adelgid.

Between the mid-1700s and the mid-1800s, people used the land here for farming, grazing, logging, and mining (for iron ore and, to a lesser extent, nickel ore). In 1983, Andrew Gagarin donated most of the property that now forms the Prospect Mountain Preserve to The Nature Conservancy, which then deeded it to the Litchfield Land Trust.

Wildlife on Prospect Mountain

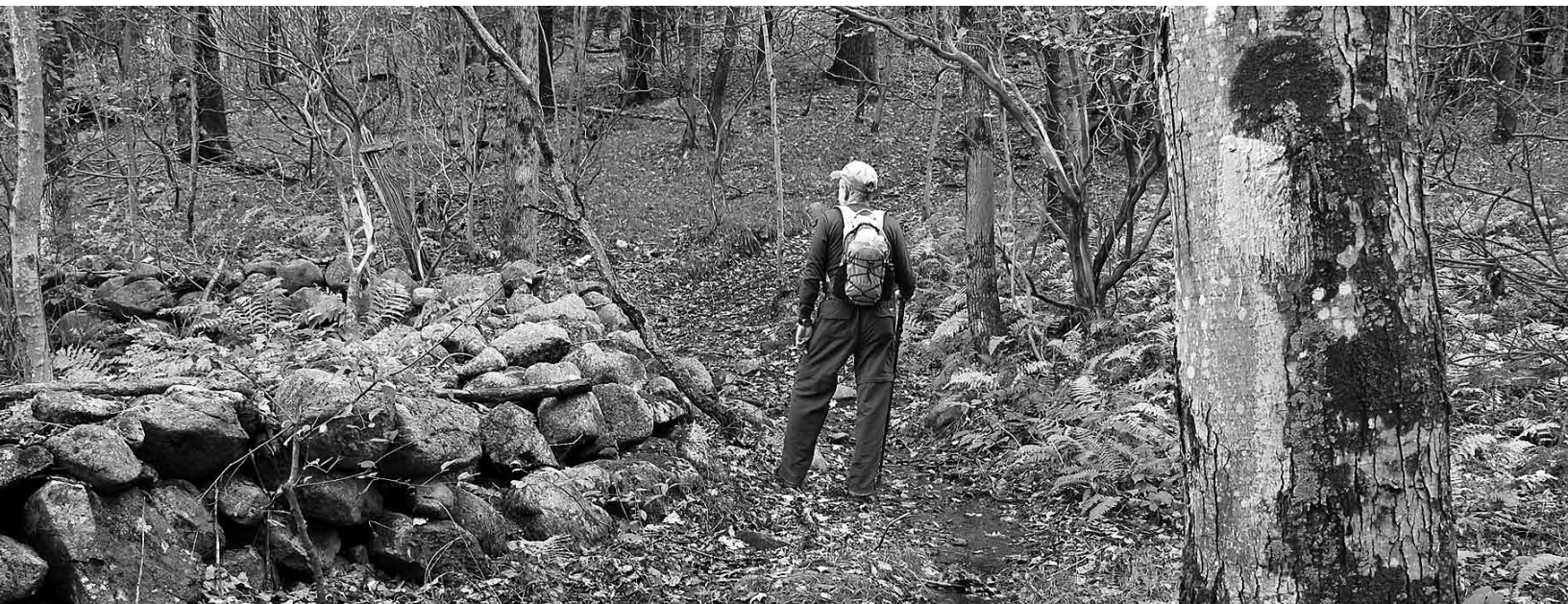
beaver	dark-eyed junco
white-tailed deer	tufted titmouse
bobcat	golden-crowned kinglet
red fox	cardinal
coyote	white-breasted nuthatch
raccoon	pileated woodpecker
black bear	yellow-bellied sapsucker
red squirrel	
hairy woodpecker	
black-capped chickadee	

Trees on Prospect Mountain

sugar maple	oaks
yellow birch	beech
tulip poplar	hemlock
hickory	white pine

Below, Paul Edwards passes an unusually large stone wall on the Mattatuck Trail. Above right, A 200-year-old sugar maple in the Gagarin Grove.

Diane Friend Edwards





The Hike

The Mattatuck Trail traverses Prospect Mountain from east to west, beginning at a small, unpaved parking area on Cathole Road and ending at a slightly larger parking area on Prospect Mountain Road. To avoid having to spot a car at each end, you have several options:

- ▶ Do the round-trip (3.8 miles).
- ▶ Hike from Cathole Road to the summit (1.2 miles) and back.
- ▶ Ascend from Prospect Mountain Road to the summit (0.7 mile), then return on the same trail.
- ▶ Take the blue-blazed Mattatuck Trail from Cathole Road to the summit and return on the mile-long yellow-blazed trail, which the Litchfield Land Trust created this past spring to give hikers a loop option.

The Mattatuck Trail rolls gently up and down with moderately steep sections on the western side of the mountain. Assuming you begin at Cathole Road, you almost immediately cross a small seasonal brook and then pass a water-filled mine shaft on your left. You ascend through hardwoods, crossing the north shoulder of the mountain. Next, you traverse an area of fault ledges and continue northward to an open ledge. After reaching the rocky north summit (there is also a lower south summit), you begin descending the west side of the mountain. In approximately 0.3 mile, look for the sign for the Gagarin Grove, the magnificent, huge sugar maples about 100 feet to the right of the trail. Shortly before reaching the Prospect Mountain Road trailhead, there is another old mine shaft on the right.

The yellow-blazed trail follows a more northerly route from the summit to the Cathole Road parking area than does the blue-blazed trail, but it has similar characteristics.

Directions

To reach the Cathole Road parking area: From Route 202 in the Bantam section of Litchfield, 1.9 miles west of the entrance to the White Memorial Foundation, go north on Cathole Road for 1.7 miles to the trailhead on the left.

To reach the Prospect Mountain Road parking area: From Route 202 in Bantam, 2.5 miles west of the entrance to the White Memorial Foundation, bear right on Old Turnpike Road for 0.1 mile. Turn right (north) on Prospect Mountain Road and go 1.5 miles to the trailhead on the right.

Diane Friend Edwards is a writer and editor. She wrote about a visit to Edwin Way Teale's house last year. Her hiking articles will appear here regularly.

Mark Your February Calendar For.. banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour



Film: The Banff Film Centre "Towers of the Ennedi"

- **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012**
Smith Middle School, Glastonbury
- **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2012**
Valley Regional High School, Deep River
- **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2012**
Connecticut College, New London
- **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2012**
Farmington High School, Farmington

Visit our website for details



A Connecticut
"Retailer of the Year"

Where Great
Adventures Begin...

75 Main St. • Old Saybrook, CT • (860) 388-6585

www.northcove.com

Hull Forest Products Inc.

Serving The Needs of Forest Landowners
Since 1972.

Providing Numerous Forestry Services:

Four Certified Foresters On Staff
Forest Management Planning
Tree Farm Certification
Wildlife Habitat Management
Timber Stand Improvements
CT Forestland Property Tax Classification

Purchasing Standing Timber.

*For A Free Initial Consultation or Sawtimber
Appraisal Please Call:*

Hull Forest Products Inc.

101 Hampton Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259
(860) 974-2083 or (800) 353-3331
www.hullforest.com

JOHN HIBBARD, A FIXTURE

BY LESLIE LEWIS

John Hibbard has been a fixture in my professional career for more than 20 years, going back to my work at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. I helped to coordinate the preparation of the state's Environment 2000 Plan (boy, that sounded a long way off in the early 1990s), a document that would determine the department's priorities, goals, and objectives into the new century. John served on the E2000 advisory committee. He provided thoughtful and reasoned feedback on the various proposals.



Over the next several years, until my retirement from the state and even after John's retirement from his official duties at Connecticut Forest & Park Association, he was there to lend his wit, wisdom, and work ethic to a number of efforts. I liked to say that there were 10 dedicated conservation advocates in Connecticut, and 9 of them were John Hibbard. Groups such as the Friends of Connecticut State Parks and the Recreational Trails Advisory Committee benefited



from his expertise.

I counted on John for advice and historical perspective, particularly regarding trails. Despite his genial and low-key demeanor, he is a passionate advocate for forests, pathways, parks, and the conservation of our natural resources. He kept the community up to date on bond agenda items, legislation,

and any other issue that might arise where voices were needed in support of the environment. His keen wit and dry sense of humor helped lighten the tension in many a meeting.

I came on board at CFPA after John's tenure here. But the ground-work he helped to lay has made this an amazing organization and a great place to work. There is a saying about getting to the point at which we are standing on the shoulders of giants. In the case of John Hibbard, that was both literally and figuratively true.

When you next visit your favorite walking route (see www.walkct.org), take a moment to pause and thank John Hibbard. The odds are pretty good that he had a direct or indirect hand in the conservation of that open space.

Leslie Lewis is the WalkCT director of CFPA.

BOOK REVIEW

LEARNING HOW TO SEE WILDLIFE, HABITAT BY HABITAT

The Wildlife of New England: A Viewer's Guide, by John S. Burk. Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire Press, 2011. 280 pages.

BY DAVID K. LEFF

Even if you're like me and have a shelfful of field guides covering everything from mammals to dragonflies, as well as plenty of books describing natural areas and trails, you may still want to add this volume to your collection. Unlike many other guides to preserved open spaces, this one doesn't just tell you what to look for and where, but explains why certain species are found in particular areas due to the environmental characteristics of those places. Burk, a longtime writer, photographer and researcher for various conservation organizations and publications, clearly perceives the three most important elements of our landscape for living creatures: habitat, habitat, and habitat.

As a result of that understanding, he not only leads us to places where charismatic megafauna like moose, eagles and bears are found, but puts us on watch for other signature species in the same habitat we might not otherwise notice such as wood frogs, milk snakes, damselflies, voles, and even black flies. Ultimately, this is a book not just about places and animals, but about learning how to see. Inasmuch as we typically see only what we look for, Burk's approach adds a dimension more likely to bring success to any wildlife viewing adventure.

It's about more than just what an animal looks like. Burk writes about seasonal and daily timing; understanding animal life histories (including migration patterns); knowing tracking signs; and the virtues of quiet, going slowly, and frequent stops. He includes tips on venturing out with children and using equipment such as binoculars

and cameras to best advantage.

Viewing wildlife requires a special way of being in the woods. For hikers accustomed to focusing on destinations or trail lengths, he notes that "unlike traditional hiking where there is usually a defined main goal such as a scenic vista or waterfall, wildlife sightings and encounters may occur at any time, and a successful trip doesn't necessarily require completing a trail in its entirety."

The book is divided into two parts. The bulk of the pages are devoted to a state-by-state description of natural areas in the six New England states (a dozen are listed for Connecticut) that include public parks and forests as well as private, publically accessible preserves such as the lands of the White Memorial Foundation. For each location there are directions and a description of the habitat and wildlife found there in addition to some historical background. A section entitled "Wildlife Species Profiles" comprises about 20% of the book and is usefully organized by the following habitat categories: Woodland; Mixed Habitats: Forests and Fields; Mountains; Freshwater Wetlands; Fields, Meadows, Thickets; Coastal: Ocean; and Coastal: Beach, Intertidal Zone, Tide Pool. Burk is commended here for prominently mentioning two significant forest pests that may change our woodlands irrevocably: hemlock wooly adelgid and Asian longhorned beetle. One wishes that he would have added a couple sentences on how to detect the beetle, and also devoted space to emerald ash borer.

The book would be vastly improved if it had a good and quick cross reference between the places described and the habitats they represent, especially since some areas exhibit multiple habitats. Also, it is a little disappointing that certain administrative and historical facts are wrong. For example, there has never been a Connecticut



Ferrucci & Walicki, LLC

Land Management Consultants

Environmental Stewardship
and Land Management since 1982

- Forest & Open Space Management Services
- Property Tax Reduction
- GIS & GPS-based Mapping
- Forest & Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Timber Inventories & Appraisals
- Professionally Managed Timber Harvests
- Environmental Oversight
- Municipal Watershed Management

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU!
FREE DOWNLOADS AT WWW.FWFORESTERS.COM - UNDER "RESOURCES"

6 WAY ROAD
MIDDLEFIELD, CT 06455
860-349-7007 FAX: 860-349-7032
EMAIL: FW@FWFORESTERS.COM
WWW.FWFORESTERS.COM

Satellite Offices in Connecticut:
COVENTRY, CHESHIRE, POMFRET, MADISON

Senior Staff:
DAN PERACCHIO, PHIL CASPAR, MARK KASINSKAS
THOMAS WALICKI AND MICHAEL FERRUCCI

SCOTLAND HARDWOODS A ROSSI COMPANY

FORESTRY SERVICES DIVISION
P.O. BOX 328, SCOTLAND, CT 06264

- **Dedicated To Helping Landowners
Meet Their Objectives**
- **In Business Since 1925**
- **Fully Automated Sawmill Facilities**
- **Complete Line of Forestry Services and
Consultation Provided By A Full Time
Staff of State Certified Professional
Foresters**

**TO FIND OUT HOW A ROSSI FORESTER
IN YOUR AREA CAN HELP YOU
MEET YOUR OBJECTIVES,
CALL US TODAY AT (877)-209-9906**



Connwood Foresters, Inc.

Serving CT, MA, RI & NY Since 1945

Forest Stewardship Plans
Property Tax and Cost Savings
Baseline Documentation Reports
Wildlife Habitat Improvements
Permit Acquisition

Expert Witness Services
Timber Sales and Appraisals
Boundary Location/Maintenance
Invasive Species Control
GIS & GPS Mapping

USDA NRCS Technical Service Provider for
Gov. funded stewardship plans/activities
for land trusts & individuals

860-349-9910

CONNWOOD.COM

Department of Forests and Parks, and John Winthrop was not the first governor of Connecticut nor did he ever live at Bluff Point. It would be unfortunate if such glitches undermined confidence in what is otherwise a valuable work.

Burk's simple, well explained perspective on the historical transformation of landscapes due to natural and cultural causes overcomes such minor infirmities in the text. "It's indeed an exciting time to be a wildlife watcher in the Northeast," he observes, "as many species have recently rebounded to levels unseen in previous centuries and decades." If you don't grab your binoculars and a daypack after thumbing through this book, you might want to have your pulse checked.

David K. Leff, the author of books and essays, is the former deputy commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Visit him at davidkleff.typepad.com.

For the best native
shrubs and trees ask your
garden center or landscaper
for plants from
Summer Hill Nursery



**Growing native plants
for over 35 years**

www.summerhillnursery.com

HUNTING DEER DOES NOT NECESSARILY CONTROL THE PROBLEM

I was very dismayed to read the latest issue of Connecticut Woodlands (Fall 2011) regarding Sunday hunting. If Connecticut Forest & Park Association chooses to lobby for Sunday hunting, then return my membership fee and contribution.

There already is hunting six days a week. I like having one day of the week to hike without being reminded that the forest creatures are being slaughtered. Many of us hike to appreciate the trees and the nonhuman animals that live there. The lack of balance and compassion in your editorials leave me disgruntled. Read this quote from the Dalai Lama: "It might not be an effective technique to ask a hunter to imagine the suffering of his prey, but you might be able to awaken feelings of compassion by beginning with having him visualize his favorite hunting dog shot and squealing in pain." You cite reasons for the decline of hunting but do not cite increasing human compassion for other forms of life or increased questioning of what's so fun about killing a peaceful, intelligent animal such as a deer.

Deer are overpopulated in overpopulated human areas due to human destruction of their habitat and natural predators. Hunting deer does not necessarily control the problem. Hunting deer frees up more food for the remaining deer so they reproduce at a faster rate. If you really want to control the deer population, why not push for more contraception in both deer and humans. The hunting lobby prevents the FDA from releasing a contraceptive for deer. Much of our planetary environmental destruction, loss of trees and habitat is directly due to human overpopulation.

Your attempted scare regarding Lyme disease is not fair nor right. Hunting is not effective in preventing Lyme disease. Deer do not carry or transmit Lyme disease bacteria. White-footed mice are the single greatest carrier of infectious ticks. If you don't want to get Lyme disease, just inspect your body after a walk in the woods or in your yard.

You minimize hunting accidents and do not report that from 1990 through 2000 there have been 7 hunting fatalities and 48 nonfatal hunting accidents in the state of Connecticut.

I thought I had joined an organization that lobbied for more forests and parks. I had no idea that it would lobby for more hunting of the very animals that need forests and parks.

—Dr. Shirley McCarthy, Branford

EDITOR'S NOTE: Hunting remains a controversial topic, and many members (probably the great majority) of CFPA do not hunt. But we believed that many of them would be interested in learning more about hunting history and regulation, as well as the attitudes of those who observe and regulate hunted species in Connecticut. The fall issue of Woodlands attempted to bring into the open the statistics and views of state wildlife officials. The magazine has no opinion about whether hunting is good or bad, but we believed the

time had come to bring the debate into these pages. The Q & A with Howard Kilpatrick on pages 6–8 of the fall issue addressed the questions of how to control a deer population in the absence of natural predators. The hunting history on pages 9–10 included the statistics on hunting accidents and fatalities since 1989.

CFPA's Board of Directors has not taken any action to support hunting. As President Eric Lukingbeal wrote in his message on page 4, the Board of Directors is beginning to consider whether it might support bow-and-arrow hunting on private lands where deer populations are out of balance with nature, such as in southwestern Connecticut. This would indeed mark the first time CFPA has considered supporting any kind of hunting on Sunday. CFPA does not plan to lobby for this but would consider supporting such legislation were it to make it through the legislative process in Hartford.

NO SUNDAY HUNTING

To the Editor:

I am very disappointed with Eric Lukingbeal's message in the fall issue, in which he made a strong plea to permit Sunday bow hunting. You may represent some members of CFPA but very definitely not me. The following are my thoughts on this problem:

* No Sunday hunting of any kind. If you drop a frog in a pan of boiling water he will immediately jump out. If you put him in a pan of cold water and heat it slowly, you will eventually have a boiled frog! That's the same as the "old foot in the door" approach.

If you propose Sunday hunting to CFPA members you will probably get a resounding NO! If you do it a step at a time, who knows where it will lead? Your suggestion of Sunday bow hunting will not do much to solve the problem, but what it will do is slide a foot in the door.

I am now in a wheelchair but was once an avid hiker. During hunting season I looked forward to having my Sundays free from hunters. I agree that deer, especially in coastal areas of Connecticut, are too numerous, but Sunday hunting is not the answer. Perhaps [the state] could consider lengthening the hunting season.

—Gerald C. Hardy, Manchester

DEER HERDS SHOULD BE MANAGED

Deer management is very important in our community for all the reasons that you have heard before, but I will reiterate them again.

Lyme disease is still rampant in our area and science indicates that the whitetail deer carries ticks to our bushes and to our residents.

Our forests need to reduce deer herds because they are destroying the habitat for birds and small game. As you well know, deer are tremendous foragers. The National Audubon Society (located in Greenwich) did a study ten years ago with a Yale graduate student. They found that the whitetail deer was destroying the habitat for birds in their 300-acre sanctuary. The Board of Directors realized that the health of their forest and sanctuary was their

fiduciary responsibility, so they instituted a bowhunting agreement with a local group of proficient hunters and that partnership has been working extremely well as some of the former plants are coming back, and song birds are also returning to their forest. Of course, the venison taken from the Audubon property is donated to the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County in Stamford.

Three of my close friends have experienced deer-vehicle encounters within the past two years. The most recent was in late October, costing \$4,600 for the repairs to the front end of his Lexus.

Bowhunting has been proven the most safe and effective method of reducing the deer herd in an urban environment. Communities all across the country have arrived at the same conclusion. Deer herds need to be managed, and bowhunting is the most efficient and safest method to reduce herds in an urban environment, provided the bowhunters are ethical and proficient.

— *M. Robert DeLaney, Cos Cob*
Mr. Delaney is council commissioner of the Boy Scouts of America in Greenwich.

HUNTERS ARE CONSERVATIONISTS

I believe hunters should be allowed to assist in the control of deer populations because, contrary to popular belief, licensed hunting is not the antithesis of conservation. To the contrary, hunters throughout history have been the originators and innovators of conservation. No one appreciates nature, nor spends more time in it, than hunters.

— *Jeff Crumbine, Greenwich*

SUPPORTS BOWHUNTING

I am writing in support of bowhunting as a deer management tool.

Repeated studies have shown that an overpopulation of deer is extremely destructive on plant communities. It has also been shown that by reducing the deer herd in a select area, regeneration takes place rapidly, and because of the limited home



Christine Woodside

The Nipmuck Marathon on October 2 challenged 143 runners, who scrambled over the Nipmuck Trail in Ashford for four to six hours. Top, Karen Benway was the first woman in 4:02:43. Bottom, runners stop at the aid station just before the halfway point.

range of deer, other deer do not migrate into the managed area for a number of years. Hunting, as a method of reducing the deer herd, is widely acknowledged to be the most effective and least costly way to reduce the herd.

GSLA has been managing the deer herd by bowhunting on the Greenwich Audubon properties for over 8 years without a single incident. In fact Audubon has received numerous letters of support for the effort. Due to the reduction of deer, Audubon has observed a resurgence of plants and ground nesting birds not seen in many years.

— *John Michelotti, Greenwich*

The writer is president of the Greenwich Sportsman's and Landowner's Association.

ICE CREAM ON THE FRONT

In Jean Crum Jones's mouth-watering article about ice cream (Summer), she states, "During World War II, the military ran miniature ice cream factories near the battle lines and sent ice cream to the soldiers."

At a distance of 67 years from the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, I have no memory of ever eating manufactured ice cream at the front. But my squad fabricated a putative ice cream out of evaporated milk, sugar, snow, and chipped D-ration (a granitic block of bitter chocolate). It wasn't in the same league as Robb's Farm ice cream in Glastonbury, but no one complained.

— *Edward A. Richardson, Glastonbury*

Culprit found in bat-killing disease

The appropriately named fungus *Geomyces destructans* is the cause of deadly white-nose syndrome in bats, according to research published in fall 2011 in the journal *Nature*.

The study by U.S. Geological Survey scientists and partners, conducted at the USGS National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin, provides the first direct evidence that the fungus *G. destructans* causes WNS, a rapidly spreading disease in North American bats.

"By identifying what causes WNS, this study will greatly enhance the ability of decision makers to develop management strategies to preserve vulnerable bat populations and the ecosystem services that they provide in the U.S. and Canada," said Anne Kinsinger, USGS associate director of ecosystems.

During the study, 100 percent of healthy little brown bats exposed to *G. destructans* while hibernating in captivity developed WNS. Additionally, the study demonstrated that *G. destructans* can be spread through contact between individual bats.

"While our study confirmed that *G. destructans* is spread bat-to-bat, it is also important to note that virtually all pathogens, especially spore-producing fungi, are spread by multiple routes," said David Blehert, head of the diagnostic microbiology laboratory at the USGS in Wisconsin.

—From a USGS press release. See usgs.gov for more about the study.

Friends of Goodwin Forest build new observation platform

Since 2009, CFPA has contracted with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to design and implement educational programs at the Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center in Hampton. The Friends of Goodwin Forest, a committee of CFPA, replaced a 40-year-old wildlife observation platform on Governor's Island. This small island in the upper reaches of the 130-acre Pine Acres Pond is a wonderful place to view migrating waterfowl and other wildlife. Once the property of John Cleveland, a former Governor of Connecticut, the island

was covered with true virgin timber until the hurricane of 1938. Some old growth trees remain there. The 1½-mile hike to get there takes one through several managed forest stands where opportunities for forest management education abound.

The first task was to remove the existing, unsafe deck, which had been built some 40 years ago under the direction of Forester Bob Garrepy. Under the guidance of skilled carpenter and FGF volunteer Stan Crawford, the group then developed a design for the new deck. DEEP Division of Forestry staff worked closely with FGF to coordinate efforts, including helping to provide lumber from the DEEP sawmill and removing hazard trees before the project commenced.

Volunteers carried in all of the beams and other materials. Special thanks go to Fran Zumpano, FGF's Trails Committee chairman, Stan Crawford, Dale May and Charlie Rose, for the lead roles they played and the tools, tractors and transport vehicles they provided. At least a dozen other FGF volunteers assisted with construction and transport.

This completed project adds another attraction to the Goodwin State Forest's outstanding 14-mile trail network.

—Steve Broderick

CFPA forester and Goodwin Forest Center program director



Mile-a-minute vine

When you see this mean vine, call the state

Mile-a-minute vine has triangular leaves with three sides and no lobes, small but sharp barbs along the stem, and small saucer-shaped leaves found at branching

points stem. Scientists and staff at the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the University of Connecticut are continuing their collaborative efforts to control mile-a-minute vine (*Persicaria perfoliata*) and remind the public to remain on the lookout for this plant. Mile-a-minute vine is a highly invasive annual plant from eastern Asia that can quickly outcompete and replace native vegetation, damaging habitat for native plants and animals.

"Invasive plants are a significant threat to Connecticut's natural resources, and mile-a-minute is potentially one of the worst. Early detection and rapid response are essential if we are to keep these invaders at bay," said Bill Hyatt, chief of DEEP's Bureau of Natural Resources.

Earlier this month, DEEP and UConn biologists confirmed the presence of mile-a-minute vine at a location in Bristol, a city where these plants had not previously been reported.

"The public is our best source of reports about this invasive plant, and as we approach the end of the growing season, these plants become especially visible in parks, forests and yards. The early fall is the ideal time to find and report these problem plants," said Logan Senack, Connecticut invasive plant coordinator.

"If you find mile-a-minute, especially if it is growing on your own property, make sure to report it before pulling it up," adds Donna Ellis, Senior Extension Educator at UConn. "We may need to collect additional information about the plants before they are removed."

Mile-a-minute was first found in Connecticut in Fairfield County in 1997. Since then, it has spread to 20 Connecticut towns, as far east as Stonington and as far north as Simsbury. Mile-a-minute spreads by seed and quickly grows into dense stands that can cover and outcompete native vegetation.

In summer 2011, UConn and DEEP scientists removed the plant in Sprague. They hosted several invasive plant control activities for mile-a-minute along the Shetucket River. Scientists from UConn and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station will release an insect that feeds only on the plant at several sites.

—From Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection press release. See www.ct.gov/deep



MAKING A DIFFERENCE: BELTON COPP

BY RUSS BRENNEMAN

If you wanted to build a marina to serve the burgeoning boat population near the mouth of the Connecticut River, no better site could be found than at Smith's Neck in Old Lyme near where the Lieutenant River is swallowed by

the Connecticut and then the Sound. You would want to dig up a marsh and dredge out to deep water and shoulder aside the bird people, but the cost in dollars and trouble would be well worth it.

The family and friends of Belton Copp who gathered in October to celebrate his life and all life while seated on the sloping meadow outside the family home on Smith's Neck looked westward across that very marsh toward the broad, sparkling estuary, but they saw no marina, only undisturbed wetlands, a healthy habitat for a myriad of creatures, and a much cleaner river. All this was in significant measure the result of the leadership, labor, and example of the man we came to celebrate, mourn, and honor.

Former Connecticut Forest & Park Association director Belton Allyn Copp IV, who bore such a formidable name with lightness and grace, died September 27, 2011, at his home in view of the same vista (in his mind's eye, one hopes, because his sight was failing). When he and his wife, Eugenie Tyler Copp, moved to Old Lyme in 1948, wetlands in Connecticut were up for grabs, available to be exploited by the highest bidder. Half of the coastal wetlands that had existed in 1900 had been dredged, filled, or used as dumps for garbage or industrial waste.

No more.

Just as had the founders of the CFPA years before, Mr. Copp saw earlier than most that without vigorous, imaginative, and coordinated public and private action, Connecticut's wetlands, habitats, open spaces, farmland, forests, and beautiful places would be mindlessly lost. Saving them primarily through generous private action became a focus of his professional and personal efforts, many of which directly benefited CFPA. He exemplified the term land saver.

After exceptionally distinguished and courageous service as a naval officer in World War II, which he entered after graduating from Yale in 1942, Mr. Copp received his law degree from Yale Law School and began his law practice in New London in 1951. Early on, he became a friend and colleague of Dr. Richard Hale Goodwin, the chairman of the botany department at Connecticut College, director of the Connecticut College Arboretum, and one of the founders and twice president of The Nature Conservancy.¹

Their collaboration led to some of the earliest land saving actions of the Conservancy in Connecticut and elsewhere.

A longtime supporter of the CFPA, Mr. Copp was an active director from 1967 to 1970 and worked on revisions of the articles of incorporation and bylaws that were adopted by the board. While attending Yale Graduate School of Conservation, he was appointed to the State Board of Fisheries and Game, which in 1971 was merged into the Department of Environmental Protection (now the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection).

He was closely involved with establishing some of the earliest Connecticut land trusts, including the Old Lyme Land Trust (founded in 1966 as the Old Lyme Conservation Trust). He was active in the for-

mation of the Peace Sanctuary in Mystic on land formerly belonging to Mary L. Jobe Akeley, which is today managed by the Pequotsepos Denison Nature Center. The Conservation and Research Foundation, of which Mr. Copp was a trustee, funded the first comprehensive study of easements and other techniques to safeguard development rights by land trusts and other public and nongovernmental land savers.²

Mr. Copp often contributed his professional services pro bono to land savers, notably in the late 1960s when a developer proposed building housing on Haley Farm in Groton. Mr. Copp helped local citizens oppose the proposal before local commissions. CFPA aided in the fund drive of the Groton Open Space Association to "Save Haley Farm," and in July 1970, the farm became the state park that is enjoyed today.

Preserving the remaining coastal wetlands was an ongoing concern. Mr. Copp stimulated or arranged many private transactions that resulted in the safeguarding of wetlands. He supported the work of the Save the Wetlands Committee, whose work resulted in the state law protecting tidal wetlands that was enacted in 1969. Important to this work was Dr. Goodwin's distinguished colleague at Connecticut College, Professor William A. Niering.³

The subtitle of the book recounting the history of land conservation in New England that was edited by Charles H. W. Foster is "A History of Civic Engagement."⁴ That phrase succinctly captures the core of Mr. Copp's life, which can be only hinted at here. His first "engagement" was in defense of his country, when he lost his left arm under fire as captain of a motor torpedo boat making a daring nighttime reconnaissance of Manila's (Philippines) harbor in 1945. He returned from the war convinced that a better way must be found to reconcile international rivalries than through armed conflict. He became active in United World Federalists at a time when many dismissed such a notion as a fanciful dream. Whether popular or not, ideas for civic benefit continued to dominate his thinking and public discourse, including during his unsuccessful run for Congress in 1964.

His war service and injury were a turning point in his life. Born to privilege with everything going his way, as he once related, he learned, "There are some people who are not quite that lucky." After the war, a theme of his life became helping many, particularly young people, who had not been among the lucky ones, except as beneficiaries of his unobtrusive generosity.

There is much reason to celebrate, honor, and mourn this remarkable man. As the afternoon dwindled after the gathering in Old Lyme, the sun began to set, but his legacy remains as bright as ever.

Russ Brenneman of Westport is a member of the Board of Directors of CFPA.

¹ See *A Botanist's Window on the Twentieth Century* (Harvard Forest, 2002) by Richard H. Goodwin.

² Brenneman, Russell L. *Private Approaches to the Preservation of Open Land* (The Conservation and Research Foundation, 1967).

³ Dr. Niering supplied the botanical identifiers for regulated wetlands in 1969. See Connecticut General Statutes, Section 29a-29 (2).

⁴ Foster, Charles H. W., editor, *Twentieth Century New England Land Conservation: A Heritage of Civic Engagement* (Harvard Forest, 2002).



U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
STANDARD
Permit No. 344
New London, CT

16 Meriden Road
Rockfall, Connecticut 06481-2961

Address Service Requested

Conserving Connecticut since 1895

Thank you *for...*

Supporting CFPA as a member

Giving to the Annual Fund

Advocating for strong conservation laws and policies

Connecting children, families and individuals to the land

Volunteering on the trails

Volunteering at education programs

Volunteering as WalkCT Family Ramble leaders

*Thank you for protecting forests for future generations
and ensuring your legacy through your support of **CFPA**.*

*Please keep **CFPA** in your heart and plans in 2012 – we need you!*

