

About The Wyndham Land Trust

The Wyndham Land Trust, Inc. is engaged in the preservation of natural resources in Windham County, Connecticut. Its emphasis is on wildlife habitat, especially where unique or particularly fragile assemblages of animals and plants exist or may be expected to exist. Its properties are open to the public for the quiet enjoyment of nature. Land may be acquired by donation or purchase. Since WLT enjoys 501 (c) 3 status donations to it are deductible under IRS rules, a feature which sometimes proves attractive! Our work is supported by dues, donations, grants and a very modest endowment income. Members enjoy an annual potluck supper, generally in the fall.

Inquiries may be directed to the Wyndham Land Trust, Inc., PO Box 302 Pomfret Center, CT, 06259 or to info@wyndhamlandtrust.org Please see our web site www.wyndhamlandtrust.org Phone (860) 963-2090. Your comments, questions and suggestions are most welcome.

Wyndham Land Trust Board of Directors:

Michael St. Lawrence, **President**
Michael Green, **Vice President**
Stephen Adams, **Secretary**
Penny Foisey, **Treasurer**
Janet Booth
Jo-Ann MacFarlane
Andy Rzeznikiewicz
Jeff Stefanik
Ron Tillen

Staff
Marcy Dawley

Campagna Family Donates Land in Canterbury

The Campagna family recently donated a 58-acre property along Brooklyn Road in Canterbury to the Wyndham Land Trust.

“The property is located in a large undeveloped forest,” said the trust’s land manager, Andy Rzeznikiewicz. “Large unbroken forest lots are critical for supporting wildlife, and I’m happy to see this protected.”



Local hearing instrument specialist, Ralph Campagna, steered the donation to the land trust with support from his five siblings. The land was acquired by Campagna’s grandfather in the 1950s and passed down through two generations.

“I walked the property with Andy,” remembered Campagna. “It was a beautiful day, and his enthusiasm for the property was infectious. I always knew it was a special place, and his visit reinforced our family’s decision to donate the land. We wanted to keep it intact, just as it was hundreds of years ago.”

A swamp cuts along the northern boundary of the new Campagna Preserve. Protecting critical wetlands is one of the missions of the Wyndham Land Trust.

Annual Appeal/Membership drive

You should have received our annual appeal/membership drive in the mail a few weeks ago. The land trust depends on the support of its membership to survive. Please renew your membership for 2020 and consider a donation to support our mission. Together we can make a difference in the Quiet Corner. If you have already renewed, thanks. We love ya!

Welcome

We welcome the following new members:

David Auger, George Auger, Marlene Auger, Andrew Baldassarre, Richard Barnett, Louise Bennett, Debby Blackmer, Jacqueline Celko, Arunabh Chattopadhyay, Mary Chenell-Smith, Linda Child, Christopher Nelson, Barbara Chrzan, Charles Coombs, Catherine Crawford, Lisa Flynn, Carl Gentry, Timothy Hakanson, Carolyn Hart, Donald Hibbard, John Hubbard, Benjamin Hutten, Cliff Jackson, Lisa Jones, Sally Keil, Kathleen Koller, Rick Kubina, Nancy Lane, Sandra Mello, Scott Robinson, Patricia Roos, Revell Sandberg-Diment, Ian Sarr, Ann Marie Shroyer, Catherine Smith, Jeannine Steniger, Karin Tourtellotte, Steve Townsend, Jeff Woods, and Kathryn Mary Auger Young

Kid's Corner: Fun Facts About Beavers

BY LUCAS CANAVAN

- Since they spend so much time underwater, beavers can hold their breath for up to 15 minutes.
- Beavers have a second set of lips, covered in fur, so they don't get water in their mouth while chewing underwater.
- Beavers don't get cold easily, even in ice water, because they have around 77,000 hairs per square inch.
- Beavers will construct canals leading to food sources in the summer so that they can have more easily accessible food in the winter.
- Beavers create underwater food caches by sticking the ends of willow, aspen, and other tree species beavers like to munch on in the mud. This caching begins in late August or early September, and the beavers won't stop until the ice is too thick for them to easily break through.
- All lodge entrances are submerged. If the dam breaks and the entrances are exposed, the lodge is deemed to be uninhabitable.
- Beavers can't see very well. When patching a dam, they rely on the sound of flowing water.



Lucas and his sister Bella volunteer at a Walktober event.

(Since Lucas was a toddler, he has explored Wyndham Land Trust properties. Now, at age 13 he's excited to contribute fun (nature) facts to the newsletter. He came up with this list after reading Ben Goldfarb's book "Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter." In his free time, Lucas likes to climb on rocks and trees.)



The wetlands at the Duck Marsh in 2007 before a storm destroyed the beaver dam.

Restoration of the Duck Marsh

Twenty years ago the land trust was starting to become established in NE Connecticut. We owned 800 acres, and the Duck Marsh Preserve in Pomfret was the crown jewel in our holdings. Wintering wildfowl were regular visitors to the extensive wetlands, and birders observed them from two bird blinds and an observation deck. That all changed in 2007 when a storm destroyed the beaver dam in a culvert that maintained the water level in the ponds. The water drained away, the wildfowl went elsewhere, and the bird blinds sat unused for over a decade. We expected the beavers to rebuild their dam, but nature was not cooperative.

That's about to change. Connecticut DEEP is now working with the land trust to recreate the effect of the beaver dam and to restore the valuable wetlands. The work is expected to be completed in 2020, and we hope the wildfowl will return next winter.



Janet Booth and Rob Tillen at Celebrating Ag

Celebrating Ag in Woodstock

The annual Celebrating Agriculture event at the Woodstock Fairgrounds in September is a great way to showcase the work of the land trust to local residents. This year Janet Booth, Marcy Dawley, Jo-Ann McFarlane, and Ron Tillen volunteered their time to set up the land trust booth and spend the day interacting with visitors. They recruited new members, connected with existing members, and talked to landowners about the benefits of donating land to us.



Wyndham Land Trust Earns National Recognition

In August the Wyndham Land Trust announced it had earned accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission—joining a network of over 400 accredited land trusts across the nation that have demonstrated their commitment to professional excellence and to maintaining the public’s trust in their work.

“Accreditation demonstrates the Wyndham Land Trust’s commitment to permanent land conservation in the Quiet Corner,” said Michael St. Lawrence. “We are a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program. Our strength means special places—such as Bull Hill in Thompson and the Duck Marsh in Pomfret—will be protected forever, making this an even greater place for us and our children.”

“It is exciting to recognize the Wyndham Land Trust with this national mark of distinction,” said Tammara Van Ryn, executive director of the Commission. “Donors and partners can trust the more than 400 accredited land trusts across the country are united behind strong standards and have demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

The Wyndham Land Trust is one of 1,363 land trusts across the United States, according to the Land Trust Alliance’s most recent National Land Trust Census. Accredited land trusts steward almost 20 million acres of land—the size of Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. There are 120 land trusts in Connecticut, and 30 of them have been accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

Killingly Power Plant

The Wyndham Land Trust continues to oppose NTE’s proposed 650-megawatt combined-cycle natural gas-fired electric generating facility adjacent to our Dunn Preserve in Killingly. NTE bid successfully at the regional ISO New England forward-capacity auction in February, and in June the Connecticut Siting Council approved their application.

The Killingly group Not Another Power Plant (NAPP) filed an appeal against the decision of the Siting Council, and a decision is expected early in 2020. In the meantime, statewide opposition to the power plant has intensified with rallies in Killingly and at the State House in Hartford. Protesters are buoyed by Governor Ned Lamont’s pledge that Connecticut will move to a zero-carbon electric grid by 2040, which seems incompatible with building new gas-powered power plants in the state. NAPP holds a protest opposing the power plant every Saturday morning at Killingly Commons from 11am to noon.

Walktober



Marcy Dawley led a Last Green Valley Walktober walk to the Rapoport Preserve in Woodstock, where participants searched for salamanders in the leaf litter.

Recognizing Ben and George - 80 Plus Years of Service

In the spring of 1975 Virginia (Jimmie) Booth met with attorney George Jackson, who did legal work for the Booth family. As the meeting concluded Jimmie turned to George and said, “Why don’t we form a land trust?” George’s response was, “Why not?”

Jimmie had already recruited John Bigelow and Phil James along with Otis Curtis, who was elected the Land Trust’s first president. Although Jimmie was the prime mover, George, with his expertise in real estate law, was the franchise quarterback. The new land trust had no property, no money, and zero experience. George researched documents from other land trusts and wrote the by-laws and the charter, which was submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. George also did the paper work required for the land trust to qualify as a nonprofit 501-C3 tax exempt organization with the IRS. From the very beginning, George also served as secretary and treasurer.

The ever activist Jimmy Booth persuaded Lois Orswell and Ben Williams to join the board. Thanks to a generous endowment gift from Lois Orswell in 1991, the Wyndham Land Trust was in business. Income from the endowment enabled the land trust to pay its bills and to meet operational expenses.

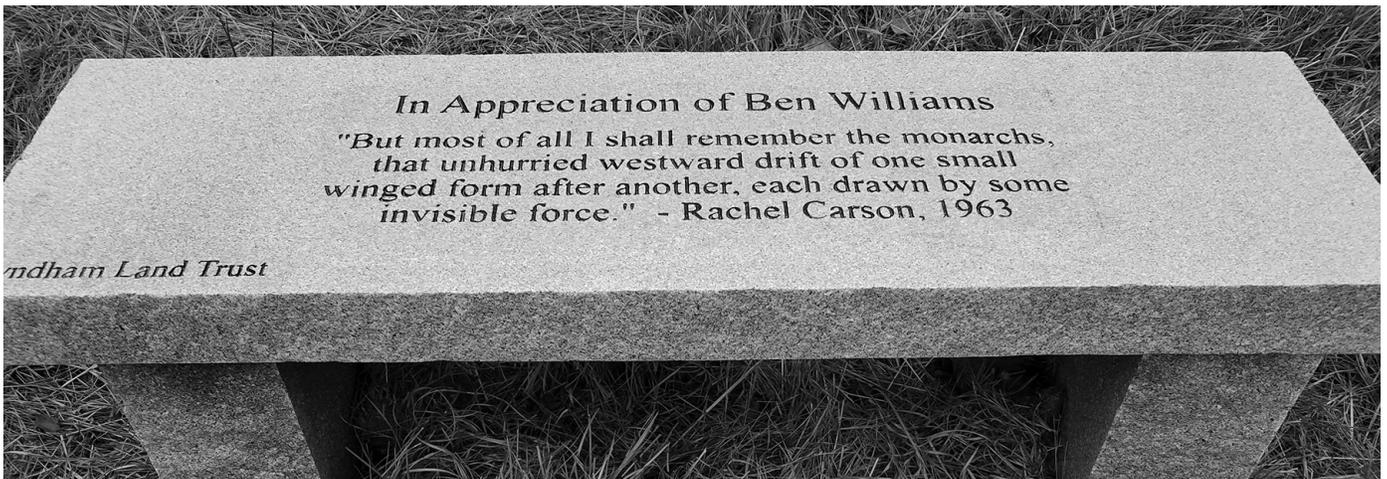
With George and Ben’s retirement from the board in 2019, the last of the original founders has stepped down. Together Ben and George have contributed 80-plus years of service to the land trust. Ben’s lifetime commitment to the natural world was a perfect match with the mission of the land trust. Under these circumstances his progression from board member to vice president and, finally, president was a natural evolution.

George’s tenure—44 years since that first meeting in 1975—is as remarkable as it has been exemplary. In addition to his wise counsel, his generosity of time, talent and services represents service above and beyond the call of duty. For all those years George did the land trust’s legal work without charging a single penny. How many thousands of dollars do you suppose that represents?

Ben and George take great satisfaction from the astounding progress in membership growth and land acquisition in recent years, together with earning national accreditation. Both of them have publicly and privately expressed their admiration for the protection work that is so characteristic of the current board. Good things don’t happen by accident, and much of the credit for today’s accomplishments goes to the capable leadership of the Wyndham Land Trust.



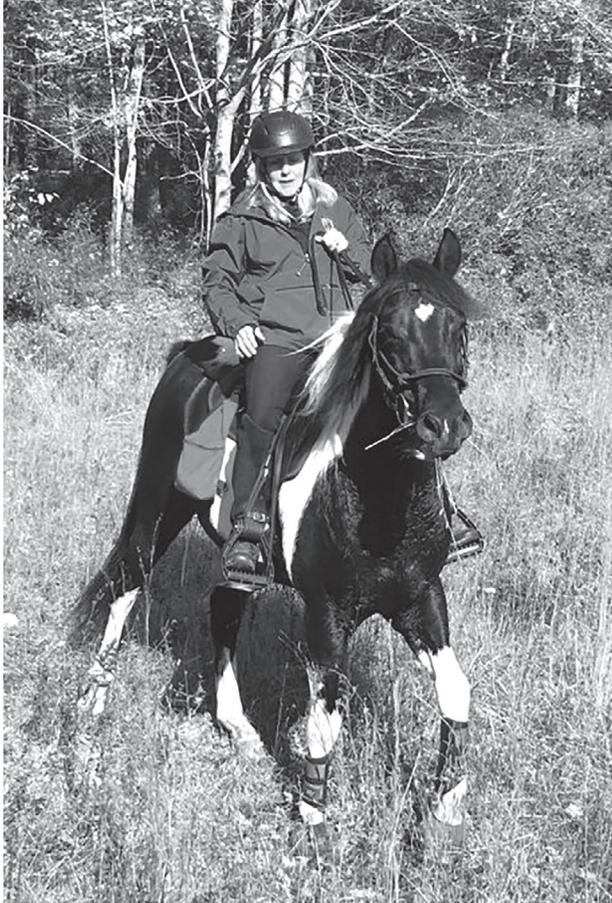
To honor the years of commitment from Ben and George, we installed engraved granite benches at the Lyon and Aicher Preserves, respectively. Ben’s bench recognizes his passion for butterflies; George’s bench recognizes his place among the founders of the land trust.



Penny Foisey Joins Board

I am pleased to join the Board of the Wyndham Land Trust. I'm passionate about conserving open space and maintaining access to the centuries-old trail network in our area. I have been serving the land trust in the role of a steward for many years and have enjoyed developing trails on some of the WLT properties that allow horses.

I am a lifelong resident of Pomfret, where I reside with my husband David and some four legged family members. We have been very involved with developing and maintaining trails as part of the Pomfret Horse and Trail Association (PHTA). We are proud to live and serve in a town with one of the highest conserved land rates in the state.



Penny and Pippin in the woods

I am honored to have received the Lois Orswell Award, Recognizing Environmental Awareness, as Trail Blazer, Land Steward in 2013. As my good friend Lisette Rimer always says, "Open space is the jewel of our town." She is so right!

I have a rewarding career, specializing in finance, with Thames Valley Council for Community Action. I find this work gratifying as we help to improve the lives of community members that are in need. I am also a Licensed Certified Community Association Manager, Association Management Specialist and manage the Cornfield Point community in Woodstock.

In my spare time you can find me in the woods on my favorite trail blazing partner—Pippin. PHTA has developed an extensive multiuse trail network within the town of Pomfret. With the support of landowners, town government, DEEP, and WLT, we have more trails to ride than time to ride them.

Don't be surprised if you see me out there with saw and horse clearing downed trees and branches, maintaining the trails. One of my favorite, little known trails is our Barrett Ridge trail. You can find this trail on the DEEP park map for Mashamoquet Brook State Park. Entering it from the Jericho Rd trail head, you will begin on a conserved Town of Pomfret property that quickly brings you into state forest/park land. I can recall hiking the town piece with Andy Rzeznikiewicz when Pomfret was considering the purchase. The town wanted to know if our horse group could use it to develop a connection into the state forest. This is what I love about conserving land for future generations—we have this amazing trail due to conservation.

I look forward to bringing my skills and love of the outdoors to this wonderful organization. I am honored to serve.

Annual Appeal

You should soon be receiving a request in the mail to renew your membership and to donate to our annual fundraising drive. To simplify things for you, we combined our annual appeal with our annual membership drive. Please support our mission by renewing your membership and donating to the annual appeal. Memberships in the land trust run from January through December. Both memberships and donations may be tax deductible.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Wyndham Land Trust is to conserve the natural resources of Northeast Connecticut - the water courses, swamps, woodlands, and open spaces, the plant and animal life therein, and the scenic natural and historic sites - all of which are very much a part of the unique character and beauty of all communities in Northeast Connecticut.



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Wyndham Land Trust



WYNDHAM
LAND TRUST, INC.

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Winter Solstice Gathering

Please join us at the Lyon Preserve in Pomfret on the afternoon of Saturday, December 21, to watch the sun set on the shortest day of the year. Warm up by the small fire with some hot chocolate and a tasty treat. The event will run from 3–5pm. The Lyon Preserve is on Wright's Crossing Road in Pomfret, just north of the intersection with 101—look for the gate and the land trust sign.



Hardy souls at the 2017 Winter Solstice Gathering at the Lyon Preserve in Pomfret