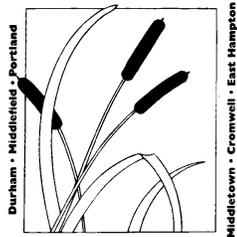


**MIDDLESEX**



**LAND TRUST**

# The MIDDLESEX LANDSCAPE

Serving the towns of Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland and East Hampton

Volume 14, No. 2

Middlesex Land Trust, Inc.

Spring 2002

## Middlesex Land Trust To Celebrate 15<sup>th</sup> Year With Hike, Talk and Picnic

Please join us for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Middlesex Land Trust on May 18, 2002 at the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association (CFPA) on Route 66 in Middlefield.

Our keynote speaker this year will be CFPA's new Executive Director Adam Moore, who will also provide us with a tour of the new CFPA outdoor education facility. Adam, son of longtime Land Trust Board member Diane Moore, has recently returned home to Connecticut after spending the last few years working on Martha's Vineyard with their Land Bank. Prior to that he was a professional forester working in and around the Middlesex County area. Open space and environmental protection are two of Adam's priorities. We think it's in the family genes...

A look at your calendar will tell you that we are trying something different this year. We will be holding our annual meeting on a Saturday morning, beginning at 10:00. In addition to our

speaker, we are planning to provide a picnic lunch as well as the opportunity to walk (or hike) the Connecticut Forest and Park Association grounds.

For additional information contact Alan Hurst at (860) 267-2799 or leave a message at the Land Trust office at (860) 343-7537.



## Check Out Our New Website!

Well, it has been a long time in coming, but we are finally developing a new website to help keep all of our members up to date on our activities. We are still in the early stages of development, but we encourage all of our members to visit the site frequently and check out the changes that we will be making. Our plans include adding information on work parties, special events, meetings, property guides, site photos, and links to other conservation minded organizations.

Swing by and check us out at [www.middlesexlandtrust.org](http://www.middlesexlandtrust.org) and if you have any suggestions or comments, please email them to our web master at [whincks@ntplx.net](mailto:whincks@ntplx.net).

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# The *Chairman's* Corner

Wow! That's how I started my first Chairman's Corner, nearly five years ago. At that time I was a little nervous and a little excited, but rarin' to go.

In 1995, when Tom Wells invited me to my first meeting of the land trust and the board accepted me into its ranks, I became the 41<sup>st</sup> board member of the Middlesex Land Trust. Little did I know... (We've now had nearly 60 board members in 15 years and I need to thank each and every one of them for their contributions).

Where did the time go? It seems like just yesterday that Richard Sweet passed me the birch gavel as I reported at my first annual meeting that no new properties had been acquired in twelve months, that Tom Ladny edited our "Decade of Trust" providing a history of the first ten years of the land trust.

At that time we had 20 properties and then thirty properties and then forty. We passed the 200-acre mark with Mica Ledges thanks to the work of Diane Moore, John LeShane and Richard Sweet. Then came 300 acres, 400 acres and now we have 500 acres.

Tom Wells, Laurie Giannotti, Stuart Winqvist and others helped publish our first Trail Guide, made possible with a grant from The Rockfall Foundation and additional grant money from the East Hampton Rotary.

We finally got a telephone installed in the office (860 343-7537) and an answering machine. Nothing like diving right into the twentieth century – and just in time.

We bought a domain name and developed a web site. Our new and improved website will be spectacular, and you'll be able to remember the address, [www.middlesexlandtrust.org](http://www.middlesexlandtrust.org).

We applied to DEP for an open space grant to acquire the Sellew property in East Hampton and got it. My thanks to Katherine (nee Doak, now Winslow), and others, for helping me talk with many families interested in preserving their lands for future generations.

We spent the better part of a year on the Sellew purchase. We went from grant writing to making presentations to fund raising, wringing our hands (my job) and processing DEP paperwork. And it worked. Many thanks to Doug Bonoff for his help surveying, posting and stewardship of the Sellew property.

We started and have grown our stewardship endowment. We own stock. We have four life members. Thank you. You know who you are (and we're not telling – you're ours!)

I have enjoyed being Chairman immensely. I thank the membership for selecting me, trusting in me and sticking by me these last five years. On July 1<sup>st</sup> I am promoting myself to the most important position in the organization, member.

*Alan*



## Land Trust Acquires Portland Property



## Spring/Summer Work Parties

This spring the Middlesex Land Trust received a donation of a small parcel of land from Jack Sterry in Portland. While diminutive in size (perhaps half an acre) its aesthetic appeal is immeasurable. Reservoir Brook, a clear flowing stream with the largest watershed in town, curls through a scenic ravine of hemlocks and ledges creating rips and rapids on its way to the Connecticut River. An area above and looking down into the gorge with a little effort could be converted into a scenic picnic spot beside the historic Old Marlborough Turnpike, a road built in 1809 to be the main route from New York to Boston until other friendlier routes were found around the boulder-strewn blockage of the Bolton Ridge.

The Sterry parcel is almost directly across the road from a forest road that meanders about a mile through Compartment 17 of Meshomasic State Forest. This road connects up with our adjacent 8 acre Oak Ledges preserve, the Mattabeseck Audubon Society's 11 acre Helen Carlson Nature Sanctuary and, via forestland owned by Northeast Utilities, our 10 acre Robinson Preserve. In so doing it creates a mosaic of protected open space with miles of walking trails.

Our newest preserve can be reached from the junction of Rte 17 and 17A near Wangunk Meadows by proceeding east and then immediately turning left onto Cornwall Street. At the top of the hill turn left onto Old Marlborough Turnpike and continue approximately one mile to the junction with Thompson Hill Road. The preserve is on your left just before the junction.

Thanks to the Sterry family for this generous donation of property.



Now that the weather's getting warmer and the days longer, it's time to get off the couch and get back to work! Please join us for one or more of our upcoming work parties. Contact John LeShane for more information, 342-0658.

**Thursday, May 9, 2002, Middletown (site to be determined).** Meet at 5 PM at the Silver Street commuter parking lot, exit 12 off Rte 9. We will either work at the Marino or Harris preserves.

**Saturday, June 15, 2002, Shenipsit Trail in Glastonbury (Meshomasic Hiking Club).** Meet at 9AM at Wassuc Green in Glastonbury. Contact John LeShane for directions 342-0658.

**Friday, June 21, 2002, Portland.** Meet at 2 PM at Old Portland Town Hall. We will probably work at the Johnson or Temkin preserves. Pizza and beer to follow.

**Thursday, July 18, 2002, East Hampton.** Meet at 5 PM at the intersection of Rte 16 and Rte 66. We will probably work at the Sellew preserve. Pizza and beer to follow.



## Family Lands Program a Success

The Middlesex Land Trust hosted a planning session titled "Preserving Family Lands: Legacy or Memory" this past April 9<sup>th</sup> at the Middlefield Community Center. It was a great success with numerous Middlefield and Middletown residents in attendance. Within Connecticut over 80% of the forests and 100% of the farmlands are owned by private citizens. As these family lands are sold, subdivided and developed, we are losing important green areas. It is vital that landowners know of their options. Featured speakers included Stephen Broderick (UConn Cooperative Extension Service), Katherine Winslow (The Nature Conservancy) and John LeShane (recent land donor). A variety of issues were discussed including how to preserve land while reducing land taxes, and the pros and cons of conservation easements and charitable annuities. The MLT will be hosting additional planning sessions in other communities. Dates and times will be announced in this newsletter as well as local papers. Thanks to everyone who participated.



## Calling All Volunteers!!!!

Do you or someone you know have good organizational skills? Our office, at the deKoven House in Middletown, could use some TLC. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Are you a high school senior or junior? Do you need community service hours? Look no further. The Middlesex Land Trust needs volunteers to help with our work parties. Our Land Trust has 40+ preserves with over 400 acres to maintain. Come and enjoy the fresh air with us. Please see the list of upcoming work parties on page 3 of *The Middlesex Landscape*.



For more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact Donna Monnes, 635-7099.

### The Middlesex Landscape Contributors:

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## Middlesex Land Trust Membership Application

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- This is an address change
- Annual Membership..... \$10
- Sustaining Membership.....\$35
- Patron Membership.....\$100
- Life Membership .....\$1000
- I would like to learn more about donating land or conservation easements.
- I would like to donate time.
- Stewardship Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:

The Middlesex Land Trust, Inc., and mail to  
27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457

*Dues & Contributions are Tax Deductible*

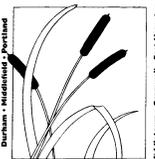
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