



The Official Newsletter of the Southbury Land Trust

Fall, 2014

Photo above taken at the Platt Farm Preserve by Julie Stuart

THANK YOU Contributors to George's Barn

- GRANDAL/ATWOOD FUND
- ELEANOR BENEDIKT FUND
- SOUTHBURY COMMUNITY TRUST FUND
- CT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
- SOUTHBURY LIONS CLUB
- PINE MEADOW GARDENS EVENT
- PRIVATE DONORS

Phillips Farm Barn Raising

After several years of hard work, planning and fundraising, George's barn on Phillips Farm is almost complete! George Phillips had built the original barn on the edge of his property on Sanford Road many years ago. It served George, a long-time farmer, and his livestock well for over 60 years. In 2002 the Southbury Land Trust purchased and conserved Phillips Farm and its over 105 acres of rural beauty. In 2011 the barn ultimately came down after several tropical and winter storms. The SLT then embarked on a fundraising campaign to rebuild George's barn.

Thanks to many generous donors and to Mike Lyons, who spear headed this project, along with his crew and land trust volunteers - the post and beam construction is stunning!



The posts and beams were added to the foundation on Friday, September 6th. The roof and siding were added the following week. Come check it out at Phillips Farm Funday on October 26th. Details inside.

Southbury Training School Update

The Vision for "Southbury Farms"

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture has formed a committee comprised of agricultural leaders from around the state to create a five year plan for the farmland at the Southbury Training School. As the holders of a conservation easement [still in the works] on the land, our Land Trust will take part in the drafting of the plan. The 921A area is to be known as "Southbury Farms." The State will continue to own and manage the farmland with the Land Trust's permanent conservation easement assuring that the property remains in agricultural use in perpetuity.

Large areas of the property will most likely continue to be leased by the Platt Family, which runs an award-winning dairy on their adjacent land. The Department of Agriculture has expressed interest in leasing smaller areas to new or beginning farmers as "incubator farms", while other areas may be leased to other farmers. An incubator program is also planned for state-owned Savin Farmland in Lebanon. Some other possibilities for the five year plan include reviving the old apple orchard, a community garden, an apiary to help the threatened honey bee population and sustainable timber harvesting in the woodlands.

Julie Stuart Joins Land Trust Staff

The Southbury Land Trust has hired Julie Stuart for its newly-created position of Administrative Director. Karen Huber, the current Executive Director, will be leaving the staff, but will provide consultation to the Trust as needed. Julie joins Regina Badura who continues to serve as Stewardship Director.

Julie will manage day-to-day operations and will support the organization's land conservation and outreach programs. She will also be responsible for fundraising initiatives, marketing and capital campaigns.

"The Southbury Land Trust is a vibrant and growing organization," stated Tom Crider, President of the Southbury Land Trust. "With the recent addition of the Southbury Training School farmland easement, we are responsible for nearly 2,000 acres of preserved land. Julie has many talents and strongly supports our mission, so she's the right person to help us manage our current properties and continue preserving more open space for Southbury residents to enjoy."

Julie graduated from Dickinson College with a Bachelor's Degree in history and from the University of Hartford's business school with a Master's of Science in Organizational Behavior. She spent the first 15 years of her career in Corporate Human Resources, and has since worked part-time in marketing and communications. She serves on several Boards and Commissions in the town of Bridgewater where she resides, including the board of the Bridgewater Land Trust. She also comes from a family steeped in farming, and is an avid runner, hiker and bird lover.



A photo of Julie Stuart, taken at the Phillips-Lovdal Farm Preserve.

Matusovich Family Donates Land to SLT

As they were growing up, Gail Matusovich's three children loved to explore the land up the hill behind their Jacob Rd. house. When Mrs. Matusovich learned that she could make sure it stayed in its natural condition by donating it to the Southbury Land Trust, she decided to call us and find out how to go about it. Her now-grown children, Scott, Wendy, and Holly wholeheartedly agreed with the plan and the 12 acre parcel is now owned and protected by the Land Trust.

We are grateful to Gail Matusovich and her family for their donation and we encourage others who would like to preserve their land to contact us. Donating the fee interest or a conservation easement can not only assure that your land will remain undeveloped but can also generate substantial tax benefits.

A Special Note

Karen Huber, who has served with distinction as our executive director since 2001, has decided to use the considerable skills and experience she honed with the Southbury Land Trust to become a land trust/conservation consultant. As such she will continue working on special projects for us, helping us fulfill our responsibilities as a growing non-profit organization. As she continues working on our projects she'll also be helping other land trusts grow and become more effective.



Southbury Land Trust *at a glance*

- Founded in **1978**
- **2,007** protected acres
- Own **46** Preserved Properties
- Hold conservation easements on **24** Properties
- Maintain **15** Hiking Trails covering **14.7** miles for public use
- Currently have **375** annual memberships (and always welcome more)

Our Mission: To preserve farmland, open spaces and other natural resources for the benefit of present and future residents of Southbury

A Tribute to Richard Gracy

Richard D. "Dick" Gracy, 72, died on September 9, 2014. Dick had been a very dedicated volunteer for the Southbury Land Trust for many years. His big smile, many talents and generous contributions will be greatly missed.



PLEASE JOIN US...

PHILLIPS FARM FUNDAY

Sunday, October 26th, 2014 1:30 PM to 4 PM

Heavy rain cancels

Phillips Farm, Sanford Road

- HAYRIDES
- GOODIES & TREATS
- CHECK OUT THE NEW BARN
- PUMPKIN HUNT
- PUMPKIN PAINTING
- SPOOKY TRAIL
- GUIDED HIKES
- OBSERVATION DECK



A free and fun event sponsored by the Southbury Land Trust

LET'S GO! Fall Hike

Please join us for an afternoon hike at the Southbury Training School Farmland Property

Date: Sunday, October 12th

Time: 1:30 PM

Location: Meet at Southbury Town Hall Lower Parking Lot at 1:30 PM for carpooling to hike site.

Ed Platt will guide this approximately 1 hour hike. Please wear sturdy boots and bring water.

New Observation Deck at Phillips Farm Fen



In July, Troop 60 Eagle Scout candidate Matthew Szczygiel added an 18 by 20 foot viewing deck to a boardwalk at Phillips Farm. Pictured from left to right: Mike Matthews, Tim Szczygiel, Dan Brockett, Peter Carpenter, Ian Bette, Matthew Szczygiel and Regina Badura.



PRESERVING WORKING LANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

2014 State of CT FARM FACTS

- Total acres protected: 2,547
- Number of protected farms: 31
- Towns with protected farms: 24
- Counties with protected farms: 7
- Size of protected farms: 16-212 acres
- Average size of protected farms: 84 acres
- Number of farms with stands open to public: 6
- Farm types: dairy, beef, vegetables, Christmas trees, nursery stock, hay and cropland
- Project partners: 1 federal & 2 state agencies, 4 towns and 7 land trusts (including SLT)



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SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST

Office: 68 1/2 Bennett Square
(next to shoe repair)
Mailing Address:
PO Box 600, Southbury, CT 06488
Telephone: (203) 264-4441
www.southburylandtrust.org

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Volunteer Fair

Many thanks to the Town of Southbury for hosting the first ever Volunteer Fair on Saturday, August 23rd. A very successful event for the town, and many residents visited our table and signed up to volunteer.



Pictured at the Volunteer Fair from left to right: Peter Weissmann, Bob Mosca, Regina Badura and Bill Neil

Trending Nationally...

Each year, an estimated 2 million acres of America's farms, ranches, forests, wildlife habitat and other open spaces are fragmented into smaller parcels or lost to development, according to the President's Annual Economic Report to Congress. Continued losses of this open space can adversely affect rural economies. These losses reduce opportunities for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation and affect wildlife, water and other resources.

The good news is there are ways for both landowners and Congress to slow down this troubling trend. Donating a permanent conservation easement (development restriction) to a qualified organization, such as a land trust, enables farmers and ranchers to maintain their current operations and conserve the natural assets of rural America. In return, landowners may deduct the value of the easement from their income taxes. This tax incentive is a major reason why there now are 1,700 nonprofit land trusts nationwide that protect 47 million acres of farms, ranches, forests, wildlife habitat and other open spaces — twice as many acres as a decade ago and a larger land area than the state of Wisconsin, according to the 2010 National Land Trust Census.

A Tribute to Cindy Hunt-Stowell



Southbury Land Trust's long-time board member and friend, Cindy Hunt-Stowell, passed away on July 31, 2014 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Cindy was the board's expert on land trust standards and practices, helping establish processes which will keep our organization strong and sustainable.

Cindy spent her business career at IBM, with assignments in systems engineering, software development and management. After retiring from IBM in 1992, she became actively involved in local conservation, environmental and philanthropic organizations, serving as a board member of Flanders Nature Center and Land Trust, Southbury Land Trust, and Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition, and providing pro bono consulting services in business process and management to the Connecticut Community Foundation and other nonprofit organizations. She sang for over 20 years with the Connecticut Choral Society and volunteered as a Master Gardener. She was also a founding commissioner and three-term member of the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission, which recognizes land trusts around the country that meet national quality standards to ensure the permanent protection of land. As a result of her planning and stewardship, the preservation of a great deal of land is being facilitated. Throughout her business career and volunteer activities, she was an inspiration to her family, friends and colleagues. She will be greatly missed.

*No endowment or donation can replace
the value of a volunteer. Your time and
talent are our treasure.*