PASCOMMUCK CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.
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NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4 No. 1 Summer '86'

COMMENTARY

One of the Board of Director's goals is to improve communication with the Trust's membership. One of the ways we hope to do this is to reinstitute the newsletter and to publish on a more regular basis.

A lot has happened since we published our last newsletter in Spring, 1985. This edition of the newsletter should bring you up-to-date with the Conservation Trust's major activities, issues over the past year.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

The Pascommuck Conservation Trust has gained recognition and credibility, while carrying out its purposes of conserving open space, wetlands and farmlands during the past year.

The Trust can look back on a successful fund-raising raffle during the Easthampton Bicentennial, tours of Nashawannuck Pond during the Bicentennial and Fall Festival, land and conservation restriction acquisition and a new educational program.

As part of its activities during the Bicentennial held in June, the Trust realized a net profit of $3514.85 from the official Bicentennial raffle in which 5,945 tickets were sold and $2000 in prizes awarded.

The Trust also won the Bicentennial Committee "Special Award" in the float competition during the Bicentennial parade, with its pinecone decorated depiction of Easthampton's first settlement on land now owned by the Trust on East Street and designated the Old Pascommuck Conservation area with the E. Florence Smith memorial nature trail.

Boat tours on Nashawannuck Pond also proved a popular attraction for Bicentennial and Fall Festival-goers. The exposure gained through successful work earned recognition and credibility for the Trust, even at this early stage in its history.

Favorable publicity resulting from Trust efforts contributed to a new awareness in town of the need to conserve ecologically fragile areas. That awareness became evident when the Board of Selectmen agreed to donate a 40-acre parcel of land along the Manhan River to the Trust at the Annual Town Meeting in May 1985.

Awareness of ecological issues has also helped the Land Acquisition and Maintenance Committee negotiate and complete transfers of several other small land parcels along the Manhan River floodplain. Those are detailed in the committee report.

As part of its efforts to educate the general population, and in particular, young people, of the need to conserve our resources, the Research and Education Division was formed on November 13, 1985. So far, the group has begun a study of the danger of leaking underground petroleum storage tanks, an inquiry into potential pesticide contamination of groundwater supplies and development of a curriculum for grade school children on important conservation matters. (See Research & Education Committee Report page 3)

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS (Continued page 4)

LAND ACQUISITION AND MAINTENANCE REPORT

During the latter portion of 1985, the Trust added two new properties to its inventory, which now includes a total of 5 properties ranging in size from 1 acre to 40 acres and located at various points within the town of Easthampton.

The Trust also has secured conservation restrictions on two other properties, according to the Land Acquisition and Maintenance Committee.

In June 1985, the Trust acquired a gift from Mr. & Mrs. Martin Tichy a 1½ acre parcel containing some 600 feet of frontage on the Manhan River and 450 feet o frontage on Lovefield Street. It abuts nother Trust-owned property donated in December 1984 by Mr. & Mrs. John Dwyer. In addition, the Tichy's have donated a conservation restriction on a 1 acre parcel across the river from the donated land, with about 400 feet of river frontage.

In its biggest acquisition to date, the Trust, by vote of the Easthampton Town Meeting in May 1985, gained possession of a 40-acre parcel of land with 1 mile of frontage on the Manhan River for the token sum of $1.

The wooded floodplain property, a valuable part of the Manhan River Greenbelt has 110 feet of access frontage from Terrace View.

The Trust wishes to thank the citizens of Easthampton for their foresight in permanently protecting this parcel indefinitely.

In keeping with its policy of encouraging donors of property to select a name for their donation, the Board of Directors has approved a request by Mrs. Mary Borawski, donor of a 4 acre parcel off West Street, that the property be named the Stefania Kortes Drondoski Memorial Conservation Area, in memory of Mrs. Borawski's mother.

This Spring, the Board of Directors voted to approve a transfer of land of its West Street property between the Conservation Trust and Mr. Dolat, an abutter to the Trust's property. In effect, this transfer gives the Trust additional land along the Manhan River while still maintaining access to the parcel from West Street.

As always, the Land Acquisition and Maintenance Committee needs volunteers to help with simple maintenance, such as grass mowing, and litter pickup, as well as trail construction and maintenance, or arranging work parties or outings. The committee is also reorganizing and can use members to help negotiate donations or restrictions on other parcels of property. Please contact Bill Carroll if you are interested in helping share the load of this most important Trust function.

PROPERTY INVENTORY

At the current time, holdings of the Trust are as follows:

Old Pascommuck Conservation area	- 5 acres
Dwyer Parcel	- 1 acre
Tichy Parcel	- 2 acres
Town Parcel	-40 acres
Stefania Kortes Drondoski Memorial Conservation Area	- 4 acres

The Trust also holds conservation restrictions on 2 acres of land owned by Mr. & Mrs. Dwyer and an acre owned by Mr. & Mrs. Tichy.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Statement - June 30, 1986

Income		
Membership	$613.00	
Interest	468.43	
Gifts	20.00	
Total Income		$1101.43
Expenses		
Printing	77.00	
Postage	137.20	
Supplies	23.19	
Community Proj.	545.20	
Other	250.20	
Total Expenses		1032.79
NET GAIN To Date		$ 68.64
Account Balances		
Checking	$716.18	
Savings	10159.59	
Memorial	3263.39	

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Educating young people on the need to conserve our resources and helping other towns follow the lead set by the Trust in acquiring and preserving environmentally sensitive properties have been a part of Trust activities in the past year.

Members of the Trust have spoken to children in town grade schools; conducted a forum on groundwater in an attempt to help citizens

better understand where their drinking water comes from and the clear danger to its quality; and have met with people in other towns interested in forming land trusts of their own.

In February 1986, Trust director Ken Larsen, spoke to 4th graders at the Center School on the problem of underground petroleum storage leaks - an issue currently before the town's Board of Health.

This effort at educating young people has expanded, as the Trust agreed to finance a Pond Life Education Program for all the town's 4th Grade Students in conjunction with the Arcadia Nature Center.

The fourth grade classes at the Maple Street, Center Street and Parsons Street Schools participated in this program in April and May. An Arcadia representative met with the respective classroom teachers. The school children then received instruction in pond ecology from their teacher before making the field trip to the Center. There they received one day of hands-on instruction. The Trust approved up to $600 to pay costs associated with the program and busing of the children to the Center. The actual cost to the Trust was $423.

Directors have also attended workshops held by the Cooperative Extension Service at UMASS to outline the progress of the Pascommuck Trust to groups from other towns interested in forming their own land trusts. One group, the Hilltown Land Trust has drafted its bylaws and organized, and has already, with the help of the National Trust for Public Lands, saved an 82-acre sugarbush from development in Plainfield. More such meetings with forming land trusts are planned for the future.

Finally, the Trust in April 1985 sponsored a groundwater forum at the Easthampton Congregational Church. Hydrogeologist, John Sackrey presented an explanation of the formation of an aquifer to townspeople who have become increasingly aware of the need to preserve the quality of their drinking water.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Research and Education Committee, headed by Trust director Ken Larsen, is currently holding meetings at the Sunrise Manor Community Room off Clark Street in Easthampton. The meetings convene at 7:00 pm on the third Monday of every month. ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.

The committee has identified two important areas to focus its attention: the conservation and protection of Easthampton groundwater and the establishment of natural resources education in the Easthampton school system.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

RENEW--AND BETTER YET INCREASE--YOUR SUPPORT TODAY! FILL OUT THE MEMBERSHIP FORM BELOW, DETACH AND FORWARD WITH YOUR CHECK TO THE ADDRESS LISTED ON THE FORM, MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO PASCOMMUCK CONSERVATION TRUST, INC. REMEMBER, ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

YES, I/WE WANT TO JOIN WITH OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY CONCERNED CITIZENS AND HEREBY MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION FOR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP IN THE PASCOMMUCK CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.

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☐ NEW MEMBER
☐ RENEWAL

☐ REGULAR VOTING MEMBER.....$ 6.00 OR MORE
☐ SUPPORTING VOTING MEMBER....$ 15.00 OR MORE
☐ CONTRIBUTING VOTING MEMBER..$ 50.00 OR MORE
☐ LIFE VOTING MEMBER.....$150.00 OR PROPERTY

☐ I WOULD LIKE TO BE ACTIVE IN THE TRUST.

NAME _____ DATE _____
ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

In light of the inherent complexities of the topic of groundwater and the educational curriculum establishment topics, the Committee will be spending its next meetings in self-education of its members.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

-(Continued from pg 1)

During September's Fall Festival, the Trust once again conducted boat tours of Nashawannuck Pond. Again the Trust's efforts contributed to understanding of weed growth which is choking the life out of the pond. Having recognized the pond's problem, with efforts such as those provided by Trust pond tours, the town, through its planner, Marcia Berkley, applied for a state grant to pay for a pond cleanup.

At Ms. Berkley's request, Trust members asked people taking the pond tours at the Fall Festival to write letters in favor of securing the state grant, and some 30 of them did so. That effort paid off, as the state agreed to fund its portion of the study of the pond cleanup. At the Annual Town Meeting in May, the approval was given to fund the Town's 30%, or $24,000 portion of that study.

The substantial price for the study is caused by the need to make a comprehensive review of all sources of water entering the pond's watershed including streams, storm drains and surface runoff in order to pinpoint the source of nutrients which feed the algae and plant life which is quickly choking the pond.

In an effort to better define the responsibilities associated with Trust activities, the Trust's Board of Directors in November approved an organizational manual complete with organizational charts, with each director taking responsibility for one of seven categories.

The categories are as follows: Administration, Financial Planning, Land Acquisition and Maintenance, Research and Education, Membership, Publicity and Public Relations.

In December the Trust celebrated a successful year and the Christmas holidays with a gathering attended by many members and their friends. As usual a fine buffet was offered to those who attended. Also featured was a tremendously enjoyable slide presentation by Fred Morrison on the Migration of Monarch Butterflies.

UPCOMING EVENT

The Trust will again sponsor boat trips on Nashawannuck Pond during the Easthampton Fall Festival, September 20 and 21. Volunteers are needed to help set up the day before and to work at the event. Anyone who is willing to devote time to this activity should contact Mike Tautznik.

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OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

William Carroll, President
Joyce Neal, Vice President
Michael Tautznik, Treasurer
Edward Dwyer, Clerk
Barbara Diamond
Francis Galat
Ruth Green
Kenneth Larsen
Stella Wiernasz

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editorial & Layout:
Ruth Green
Walter Hamilton
Diana Pinkos

Graphics:
Robert Pinkos