



JOIN US SEPT 20

The Greenwich Land Trust's Family Field Day  
**Go Wild!**  
 Sunday Sept. 20  
 3:00-6:00pm  
 Colquhoun Farm, North Street  
 www.gltrust.org

# THE GREENWICH LAND TRUST

FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER

## MINGUEZ FAMILY GIVES FOUR ACRE PRESERVE TO THE GLT

In July, the Minguez family graciously donated a four acre property on Sterling Road in north Greenwich. The GLT's newest preserve encompasses majestic trees, native wildflowers and ferns, and portions of two ponds. It contains rocky outcroppings, which combined with the other natural features of the land, provide wonderful habitat for small mammals, birds, reptiles, and insects.



In close proximity to other Greenwich Land Trust properties and to the Audubon Center, the Minguez Preserve extends the natural and protected greenway in this area and helps protect the Byram River watershed. With this wonderful gift, the GLT now protects 745 acres of open space. The GLT is grateful to the Minguez family for their generosity and support of land conservation.



If you are interested in learning about donating land for preservation, please contact the GLT's Executive Director Ginny Gwynn at 203.629.2151.

## THE GREENWICH LAND TRUST - HOME AT LAST



In March, the Greenwich Land Trust moved to its new conservation center at the Louise Mueller Preserve at 370 Round Hill Road. Having open space, a set of historic buildings to call home and the ability to welcome the community creates an extraordinary new chapter for the Greenwich Land Trust.

The renovation of the 19th century farmhouse, which now houses the GLT offices, began in 2014. The contractor, Auburn Landing, has extensive experience in restoring historic buildings and worked closely with the volunteer Mueller Project Building Committee, headed by GLT Vice-President Bruce Dixon. The group focused on three guiding

factors: preserving history, protecting the environment, and being cost effective. Auburn Landing's attention to GLT's budget and respect for history allowed GLT to make choices that balanced financial considerations with environmental and preservation concerns. Wonderful in-kind donations to the project also enabled GLT to conserve costs.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

**YOUR LAND, YOUR WATER, YOUR FUTURE... Our Mission**

# THE GREENWICH LAND TRUST

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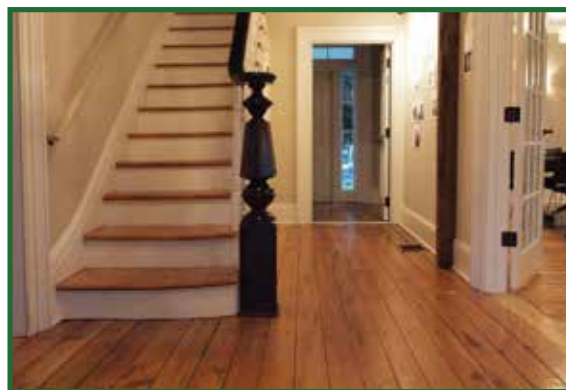
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*Home at Last - continued from Page 1*

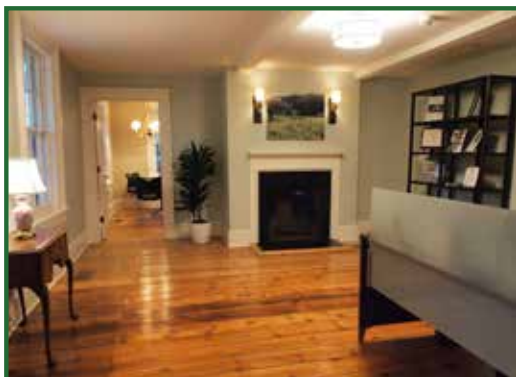
## Preserving History

During the farmhouse restoration, attention was given to preserving as many of the significant interior and exterior architectural details as possible. When work began to meet today's specifications, historic chestnut posts and beams were found to be the building's main support. Hand-hewn nails and hand-split posts (some with bark) had been inside the walls for over 125 years – uncovered only as heating, wiring, and plumbing fixtures were replaced. One example of these historic posts and beams is on display in the foyer. Beneath layers of newer floor coverings, wide planked flooring, common a century ago, was uncovered, sanded and beautifully restored. Windows, doors and moldings were repaired and reused. Exterior wooden siding was uncovered, the gracious and welcoming south porch restored and shutters added.



Work continues on the stone potting shed and greenhouse, now surrounded by a beautiful wildflower garden. The barns and ice house, already in use by our staff, volunteers and summer Youth Corps, are being repaired and painted.

## Preserving the Environment



Efforts were made throughout construction to protect the environment. All removed metal (fire escape, radiators, pipes) was recycled, old appliances were sold or donated, paints and floor sealer with no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were used, and countertops made from recycled materials were installed. As the house was shored up with steel, large foundation stones were removed and re-used to repair stone walls. Efficient new heat pumps minimize use of the existing oil-based heating system.

Outside, the pathways were constructed of a rain-permeable material which resembles river pebbles. The parking area has a permeable base of honeycomb plastic topped by dirt and sod, but looks like a grassy field. Barns, potting shed and greenhouse are all being repaired, repainted, and re-used. Native plants and trees are thriving throughout the grounds.

Thanks to the generosity of local residents, the Greenwich Land Trust now has a home to welcome members, volunteers and those interested in GLT's mission and work. On September 9th, GLT members will be invited to the official opening and ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the GLT's new home.





# Go Wild! TURNS SWEET SIXTEEN ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20

The year 2000 was the inaugural *Go Wild!* chaired by Leslie Lee and Jane Dunn. Inspired by Mariette Badger to launch a fund-raiser to bolster GLT's open space funds, they created a unique family fun day. Over the years, *Go Wild!* has expanded with more exciting activities and attendees. Yet it remains as it started – a delightful afternoon of fun for all generations to enjoy on protected open space, with a goal of raising funds to preserve and protect more of the open space which makes Greenwich so special.

As *Go Wild!* turns sweet 16, the Greenwich Land Trust is thrilled to have BNY Mellon Wealth Management as a corporate event sponsor and Serendipity magazine as a media sponsor for the sixth consecutive year. BNY Mellon's financial support, enthusiasm for the GLT mission, and wonderful corporate volunteers contribute greatly to *Go Wild!*'s success as do Serendipity's event promotion, journal printing, and volunteers. Thank you!

The GLT salutes this year's co-chairs Anne Gray and Catie Salyer, whose creativity and hard work will bring our community another wonderful *Go Wild!* See you on Sunday September 20!

For tickets, please visit [www.gltrust.org](http://www.gltrust.org) or call 203.629.2151. ext.102.



BNY Mellon Wealth Management representatives Katy Tucci (left) and Andrew Borner with GLT Executive Director Ginny Gwynn.



# HAPPENINGS IN

## *Managing the GLT's Meadows*

The Greenwich Land Trust maintains over 20 meadows throughout our community. These meadows are home to beautiful native wildflowers and grasses - and the wildlife that they support. Passing by, you may notice swaths of pink flowers (Joe Pye or milkweed), orange (butterfly weed) or yellow (black-eyed Susan and goldenrod). These colorful flowers attract hundreds of butterflies, bees, and insects. Plants may grow up to 6-feet tall so also serve as hiding places and shelter for mammals of all sizes.



Meadows in the eastern United States are an ecosystem that developed through the actions of large herbivores and humans. From the trampling and eating preferences of such creatures as mammoths, mastodons, and horses to the burning and agriculture of Native Americans followed by the similar practices by European settlers, the eastern United States developed a patchwork of open fields that became habitat to ground-nesting birds, mammals and insects. As farming moved westward and the population grew, the loss of farms and development of subdivisions reduced habitat necessary for those plant and animal species that had become dependent on open fields for both food and shelter.

The Greenwich Land Trust's protected meadows are essential to the well-being of meadow dwellers and vegetation. The GLT mows meadows to eliminate woody species and invasive plants every year. The timing and frequency of the mowing is based on each GLT preserve's unique management plan which documents the major environmental features of the property, vegetation, special conditions, and history. Management plans are written for each property at the time of acquisition and are to be updated every five years.

## *Invasive Japanese Barberry and the Lyme Disease Connection*

Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is a popular ornamental bush with red autumn leaves and red winter berries. A century after its U.S. introduction in the late 1800's, it was recognized as an invasive plant – and more recently as a health risk as well. Picked up by animals and hiking boots, its seeds spread widely and germinate at rates as high as 90%. Adaptable to habitats from forests to parking lots, Japanese barberry grows quickly and densely, pushing other plants out of the way. Its sharp spines make it inhospitable to deer browsing and human removal.



The health risk from Japanese barberry comes from its popularity with white-footed mice and ticks. Mice are a leading carrier of Lyme disease and a host for ticks. Japanese barberry creates a humid microenvironment under its low, spiny branches, creating a haven for ticks and for white-footed mice seeking shelter from predators. Jeffrey Ward and Scott Williams, scientists with the CT Department of Forestry and Horticulture, found that a barberry-infested forest yielded 120 Lyme-infected ticks per acre compared to 10 ticks per acre in a forest not infested with barberry.

In 2015, the Greenwich Land Trust is actively removing Japanese barberry by mowing and removing bushes on the Sargent-Gildersleeve-Stone, Duck Pond Hill, Millbank-Greene, and O'Sullivan Preserves. Please join in the fight against Japanese barberry by removing the plants from your own property. Beautiful native substitutes to consider include highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*), and winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*).



# THE GLT'S MEADOWS

## *Cultivating Vital Bee Populations on the GLT Meadows*

Passing by the GLT's open meadows, you may notice white or multi-colored boxes stacked in the sunshine. These are beehives maintained by volunteer beekeepers on about twenty GLT meadows. Bees are beneficial to GLT's orchards and wildflowers – as well as our neighbors' gardens. Bees are pollinators: they transfer pollen between flowers to fertilize plants. Along with pollinators such as bats, butterflies and birds, bees help support our food supply, by fertilizing everything from apples and blueberries to carrots and pumpkins. They also pollinate about 90% of native wildflowers.



In recent years, bees have been decreasing in large numbers – a phenomenon known as Colony Collapse Disorder. Factors contributing to this problem may be climate change, pesticide use, habitat loss, and parasites. If the problem becomes much more serious, it will threaten our food supply.



With expanses of open space, the GLT can provide essential habitat for bees with the support of local volunteer beekeepers. These experienced beekeepers and their bees are essential to the health of wildflowers, berry bushes, fruit trees, and flower gardens.

Few people realize that each bee colony has only one queen, but she lays about 2,000 eggs per day. Caring for the colony, nurturing the young, collecting food, guarding against enemies are all done by other bees. A healthy bee colony is a very busy place. No wonder we talk about busy bees!

## *Senator Chris Murphy's Visit to a GLT Preserve*

In July, Senator Chris Murphy visited the GLT's Sea Meadow Preserve as part of a daylong trip focusing on the health of Long Island Sound and its importance to local communities. Senator Murphy was joined by the GLT's Board and staff as well as neighbors. Discussion focused on the importance of protecting open space along Long Island Sound and its tributaries as well as on enhancing federal tax incentives to encourage permanent open space protection using conservation easements.



## STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

### *GLT Youth Corps: Teens Working for Conservation and Wages*

From late June to mid-August, the Greenwich Land Trust welcomed 14 Greenwich teens to tend the Mueller gardens, remove invasive bamboo and Japanese barberry, and care for young American chestnut trees. The teens were employed in the GLT Youth Corps - a partnership of the Greenwich Land Trust, The Resource Foundation, and the Town of Greenwich Social Services Department. Like last year's pilot program (which employed half as many teens), the teens were graduates of the Town's Greenwich Youth Conservation Program and ready for a full-time summer job. Though they battled invasive plants, poison ivy, and angry insects, they also visited pristine preserves, learned about native plants, harvested organic vegetables and fruits, and made weekly food deliveries to Neighbor-to-Neighbor. The GLT is proud of the program's success and looks forward to hiring more teens next summer.



### *GLT Staff and Volunteers: Preserving and Promoting Conservation*

This summer GLT's staff, interns and volunteers have been busy across GLT preserves and in the office. From GIS mapping, filing and Go Wild preparations to gardening and log cutting, the GLT team has tackled a wide variety of projects. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Chris Aldrich at [chris@gltrust.org](mailto:chris@gltrust.org).





## SPRING AND SUMMER EVENTS AT GLT



June Trails Day Hike led by GLT's Land Steward, Chris Aldrich



July Kayak Trip to Shell Island



Earth Day Beautification Project



GLT Donors Honored at May Celebration



Mueller Project Committee and Campaign Leadership



Donor Louise Mueller (center) with Julie Burke and Louisa Stone




# THE GREENWICH LAND TRUST

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## SAVE THE DATE

### GLT Annual Meeting

*Wednesday, December 2, 2015*

Please join us at the  
Round Hill Club for our annual meeting.  
Details to follow.

## PLEASE JOIN US THROUGHOUT THE YEAR! UPCOMING EVENTS INCLUDE:

- Mueller Preserve Ribbon Cutting - Sept. 9
- *Go Wild!* Family Field Day - Sept. 20
- Fall Fungal Foray - Oct. 15
- Wildflower Seed Collection - TBD



**Winter 2016:** Winter Walk, Maple Sugaring

**Spring 2016:** Wildflower Walk, Earth Day  
Celebrations, Stargazing

Events are weather dependent and  
subject to change, so please check our website,  
[www.gltrust.org](http://www.gltrust.org), or Facebook for up-to-date information.

