



Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.  
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Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.  
 Glastonbury, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield, Connecticut

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## Annual Meeting Featured *Special Guest Speakers:* Founder Joe Hickey, Past Presidents Parker, Schade, Cox, Moyer, Woodworth, Doran, and Current President Duff



**Joe Hickey**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Annual Meeting “Special Guest Speakers” began with Joe Hickey’s account of his conversation with Eleanor Buck Wolf following the late



of the acquisition of the Standish Parcel by the Trust, and revealed its strategic location blocking the proposed entrance to the race track. The subsequent actions of the lawyers for the track are legendary. As if someone had kicked their anthill, they checked and

re-checked their maps, and finally gathered up their papers and left. There can be no underestimation of Eleanor Buck Wolf’s role in galvanizing her childhood neighbor Myles Standish and his many siblings and cousins who owned shares of the 1.5 acre parcel by the river to transfer them to the Trust. Next, Duffy Schade picked up the story of Eleanor Wolf. Soon after building their house in Glastonbury, Duffy read about Eleanor and her crusade to stop the race track in the newspaper. She contacted Eleanor and offered her services as a professional



**Earth Day Wood Parcel work session: 60+ person cleanup, trail building, invasives removal, erosion control beaver dam building crew paused for 50 Year Celebratory “stump speech” from Wethersfield’s own Senator Murphy. Environmentalists from GSA Daisies to GMCT founder Joe Hickey joined in. See P.7.**

50’s early 60’s construction of the Putnam Bridge/Route 3/ 191 incursion into the meadows. The conversation beginning with, “We ought to do something...,” led to the formation of a “Great Meadows Committee” and culminated in the incorporation of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. in March of 1968. The worst fears of Joe, Eleanor, and the other founders were soon realized in the horse racing track proposal that would have built a dike around the Wethersfield meadows, and a marina in the Crow Point borrow pit. Joe set the scene at the public hearing as Eleanor, in her polite lady-like manner, informed the public

Eleanor and her crusade to stop the race track in the newspaper. She contacted Eleanor and offered her services as a professional

See Annual Dinner, page 3

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**50th Anniversary Events Schedule — Page 2**

**Rocky Hill 175th Parade – Sunday, May 27**

**CT Trails Days – Saturday, Sunday June 2, 3**

**Rocky Hill Farmer’s Market Days – Jul. 25, Aug. 29, Sept. 26**

**Old Fashioned Potluck Picnic – Saturday, Sept. 15**

**Join or renew your membership now!** Go to [www.gmct.org/membership](http://www.gmct.org/membership) or use this form.

( ) \$15 – Individual ( ) \$300 – Life Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \$ 25 – Family ( ) \$500 – Family Life Membership Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send Check payable to Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. to P.O.Box, Glastonbury, CT 06033

# Save the dates! 50th Anniversary Events you don't want to miss!



**May 27th — Rocky Hill 175th Anniversary Memorial Day Parade**  
*Hope you didn't miss the chance to ride with the eagle!*

## June 2 and 3 — CT Trails Day Events

1. Saturday, June 2, 10:30am - noon — Little Kids Nature walk at the Wood Parcel (Weth)
2. Saturday, June 2, 10:00am - 1:00pm — Bike Ride loop from Ferry Landing, Meadows, Goff Brook Lane, Old Main St., Riverview
3. Saturday, June 2, 1:00pm - 4:30pm — Nature Walk Dividend Pond Park/Loop Trail (RH)
4. Sunday, June 3. 9:00am - 11:00am — Intermediate Paddle from the Cove upriver and back
5. Sunday, June 3, 10am - 11:30am — Novice Paddle around Wethersfield Cove
6. Sunday, June 3, 9:00am - 12pm — Bike Ride from Cove Park, village streets, through meadows across Ferry to Glastonbury and back
7. Sunday, June 3, 1:45pm - 3:00pm — Hike: Historic District and Quarry Park from Ferry Park

**July 25, Aug. 22, Sept. 26, Wednesdays, 3:00pm - 7:00pm — Rocky Hill 175th Farmer's Markets @ Ferry Landing GMCT Booth and walks or paddles TBA**



**September 15, Noon - 4:00pm —**

## 50th Anniversary Harvest Potluck Picnic!

- ✓ Packard's Pratt Farm, 156 Tryon Street, South Glastonbury
- ✓ Members' Families, Guests, and Friends of the Meadows Invited
- ✓ GMCT will provide burgers, dogs, corn on the cob, soft drinks. BYOB
- ✓ Bring a "potluck" dish to share — hot dishes, salads, desserts
- ✓ BYO re-usable silverware and plates
- ✓ Lawn games, bird watching, wagon rides down the pasture to the river

**September 29, 8:00am - 11:30am — Source to the Sea Cleanup**

At the Wethersfield Cove with the Connecticut River Conservancy, MDC, families, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, High School Enviro-Club Kids.

**October TBA, Cocktail Party at the River Restaurant and Bar,**  
on the River at Great Meadows Road, Wethersfield

**Brisk Winter Walks 2019**

**March 2019 — Annual Dinner — The Full Cycle of Celebration**

# Earth Day Work Session enhances the beauty of Spring at the Wood Parcel

C.F.&P Trail expert Phil Wilsey (rear) supervises an eager group of WHS Environmental Club members and Young Dems in improving the accessibility of the Wood Parcel trail with stone dust. GMCT President Chris Duff, center, gives his approval.



Senator Murphy joins Caroline (9), Patrick (6) and Dad Erik Maziarz who take a break from working like beavers... literally...building a BDA (beaver dam analog) from sumac stakes and sticks to control erosion off the field of sweet corn grown by Anderson Farms under lease from the Great Meadows Conservation Trust



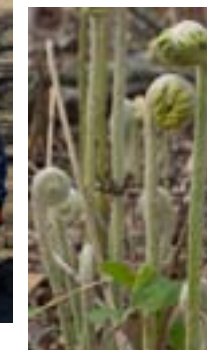
Senator Murphy thanks a group of families doing a final sweep of trash along the edge of the Anderson Farm fields and marsh end GMCT's Frechette Field



Along with a 40 foot row of full trash bags, a pickup truck load of rusty recyclable metal, the clean up crew also bagged a beaver skull to add to WHS Biology teacher Joanne Norris' specimen shelf. The young beaver from Beaver Brook evidently fell victim to a predator, in spite of an impressive set of wood gnawing self-sharpening incisors, orange tinted from an iron rich diet of bark and roots.



For a glorious moment in early May crab apple blossoms arch over Beaver Brook.



Cinnamon ferns, left, unfurl their fuzzy fiddleheads in the shade along the trail.



A muskrat hopped up the outfall-rocks, slid

through the new culvert, and swam across the pond.



A tiny delicate cowbell lilly graced the edge of the path for a brief spring instant.



The blossoms of the adder's tongue (*erythronium americanum*) are already fading. This wildflower was commonly called *adder's tongue* because of the appearance of the leaves as they emerge from the ground, *trout lily*

because the mottled leaves resemble the markings on a brook trout, and *fawn lily* because the two leaves stand up like the ears of an alert fawn.

## Dick and Joan Mihm played key supporting roles over decades

by Jim Woodworth

A few days before the GMCT 50th Anniversary Celebration, long time Trust member and treasurer Dick Mihm passed away. Even as Dick's memory began to slip, Dick's positive energy had served to calm and comfort fellow residents in the memory care facility he had moved into near his daughter's home in Colorado.

Dick and his wife Joan's 61 year marriage centered around family and service and a mutual love of nature, experienced through hiking, cross country skiing, canoeing, and birding.

As Dick settled into teaching physics at Glastonbury High School, he and Joan became involved in the newly formed Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc. Only two years after its incorporation, Joan assumed the duties of Membership Chair...which she continued for 37 years!

If it can be said that the GMCT stands "on the shoulders of giants," then Joan Mihm is the foundation that sustained the membership through nearly four of GMCT's five decades. The sheer numbers of welcome letters to new members, the mailings, the thank you letters for donations is only rivaled by Joan's gentle, kind nature.

Dick's career as an innovative and forward thinking teacher led him to embrace the digital revolution, so as Joan's membership list grew, Dick automated the records and mailing label printing in an MS Access database that is still in use today.

Recently, I sat with Joan in her comfortable living room in the trim ranch home in Glastonbury that she had shared with Dick for better than 50 years, raising three children, one a professor of financial history and another an inveterate birder.

Together Joan and I perused photo albums showing Mihm family members enjoying outdoor activities and nature scenery from the nearby meadows, travel north to a favorite summer escape on the Maine coast,



**Dick's arm around Joan's shoulder, birding binoculars at the ready, matching smiles shining on their faces.**

and west to the natural wonders of the Rockies.

During my tenure as president when, after numerous gentle reminders from Joan, I'd finally show up in that living room with the President's membership renewal letter. Joan would take it from there.

Also during my tenure, after Dick had retired from his second career as Senior Systems Analyst at Phoenix Life, he took on the position of Trust Treasurer. During Dick's 7-year tenure as treasurer, he set up an Excel spreadsheet with the formulas that established and continue to track the balances of the E.B. Wolf Land Acquisition Fund, the Stewardship Fund, the Operations Fund, and the Endowment Fund. To this day, the Treasurer generates his quarterly and annual reports from Dick's spreadsheet.

And soon the photo we were looking for emerged: Dick's arm around Joan, birding binoculars at the ready, matching smiles shining on their faces. Joan, reflecting on their life together, noted that what she liked to do, Dick liked to do. Birding, hiking, canoeing, cross country skiing...and dedicated service.

## Annual Dinner provided an oral history of 50 years of leadership

photographer. Eleanor promptly sent her up in a private air plane to fulfill the need for aerial photographs of the meadows.

Fast forward to 1988 when John Lepper alerted Eleanor to the clear cutting by DOT of the flood plain forest around Brainard Field. Duffy documented the "stump city" with her camera. GMCT helped arrange an easement with the Nature Conservancy that would limit future cutting in the landing path.

Duffy concluded her talk, illustrated with her photos of Eleanor, by reading a delightful and illustrative excerpt from one of Eleanor's books about charming a skunk out of her have-a-heart trap.

Judy Parker's most active years were the decades of the 70's and early 80's when there were continuous pressures to develop the floodplain, especially the Elm Street area in Wethersfield. The Trust helped to defeat a large development proposal in the late 70's by defeating a referendum 8:1, and in 1983 convinced Wethersfield to incorporate flood plain zoning into to the Master Plan.

Neal Cox told a humorous story of the removal of a junk car from a branch of Goff Brook. After noticing an advertisement for the service of removing old cars free of charge, satisfaction guaranteed, Neal called and arranged to meet the man near the meadows. When Neal pointed out the derelict Caddy with the tree growing out of it, the young man allowed that, "This wasn't what I had in mind." But following Neal's cheerful, "Well, as long as we're here..." out came the Caddy, tree and



**Duffy Schade  
1982-1985**



**Judy Parker  
1079-1982**

all. Neal sent the tow truck operator off knowing he had another satisfied customer.

Ralph Moyer talked about the purchase of the Wood Parcel, which greatly

depleted the Trust's resources. Thanks to a fund raising initiative that Ralph headed and to the receipt of a DEP Open Spaces and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant, as well as a generous bequest from Eleanor Buck Wolf herself, Ralph left the Trust in sound fiscal condition. He was also proud of the UMass study completed in his tenure that was a follow up of an earlier study, looking at the meadows from a planning point of view.

Jim Woodworth used photos to illustrate two major land acquisitions. The Wolcott family had acquired parcels in the Wethersfield meadows in 1662, and in 2003, descendants donated the parcels to the Trust. The Wolcott family had been stewards of the land for over 350 years; the Trust is now 14 years into its promise to preserve the parcels "in perpetuity"! The Hayes Parcels, nearly 20 acres of prime farmland along the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill border, once had supplied feed to the large



**Jim Woodworth  
2003-2006**

Edward Hayes, Sr. dairy operation on Trinity Ridge in Rocky Hill.

Rick Doran, who assumed the duties of treasurer after his tenure as president, talked about the investment program set up at Vanguard by the late June Cox that still guides our investments today.

Rick summed up the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration with a recitation of John Donne's "No Man is an Island" adapted to the Great Meadows and those gathered that evening for whom the bell of stewardship of the Great Meadows tolled.

Chris Duff MC'd the speakers after his election to a second term. At right, he accepted the gift of a onesie emboldened with the 50th logo designed by his Mom Jennifer, for their newborn son Rowan, representing the future generations for whom we're preserving the Meadows.



**Christopher Duff  
2017-Present**



**Former Hartford Courant Graphic Artist Phil Lohman designed the Trust History panels of founding "Giants" and "Steps Along the Way" on display at the dinner.:**



**Looking for "Official" GMCT 50th Logo Merchandise?!**

**Order a hat, shirt, or laptop sleeve to show your GMCT pride!**

**50th Anniversary merchandise is available @ —**

**<https://www.redbubble.com/people/gmct>**

**All proceeds above the cost of goods go back to the Trust.**

**Choose your size and color!**



1968/2018  
 .....  
**GREAT  
 MEADOWS  
 CONSERVATION  
 TRUST**  
 .....  
**50  
 YEARS**

# We stand on the shoulders of Giants!

**Henry Beers** – Insurance industry giant who developed group medical insurance, formulated the first federal group life insurance program, was architect of the CT unemployment compensation program, and as President and Chairman of Aetna Life insurance was dedicated to corporate community responsibility. Served as the first President of the Great Meadows Conservation Trust.

**Joe Hickey** – state and DEP planner who pioneered Rails to Trails in Connecticut, recipient of a Greenways Life Time Achievement Award, suggested the need for a group to protect the meadows.

**Russel Brenneman** – lawyer who defined the field of environmental law, mentored young lawyers, taught at Trinity and UConn Law, co-founded and led the CT League of Cons. Voters, and served as president of the CT Resources and Recovery Auth. and the CT Forest & Parks Assoc..

**Eleanor Buck Wolf** – daughter of a founding family, trained nurse, whose gentle persuasiveness and connections brought the Trust into existence, hosted 20 plus years of Board meetings, and endowed the E. B. Wolf Land Acquisition Fund.

**Peter Revill** – Chief Design Engineer for the Metropolitan District Commission who, as Land Management Chair, shaped stewardship principles, and assembled the Land Book.

**W. Thayer Chase** – landscape architect who designed and planted the entire stretch of the Merritt Parkway with native shrubs and trees; drew maps of the meadows and river for the Trust..

**Duffy Schade** – appointed official town photographer of the '84 flood for Glastonbury, worked from a cherry picker, a helicopter and a seaplane to document the devastation. Duffy has chronicled the meadows and the Trust in words and photographs since 1974.

**Jolly Steffens** – served as President and Secretary, was a tireless advocate for inclusion of The Meadows in the Conte Refuge. As pilots, Jolly and her husband Charlie flew Duffy Schade in their seaplane over the meadows to photograph the flood of 1984.



**Eleanor Buck Wolf**



*The signers of the GMCT Articles of Incorporation pose with the newly signed articles in Eleanor Wolf's backyard overlooking the Wethersfield Cove. (left to right) Betty Brown, Glast., Marion Flaherty, Weth., Joe Hickey, Weth., Henry Beers, Glast., Felix Montano, Rocky H., Russell Brenneman, Glast., Eleanor Wolf, Weth., Charles Crosier, Rocky H.*

## The Presidents

- 2017-Present: Christopher Duff
- 2012-2016: Tom Kehoe
- 2009-2011: Mark Packard
- 2007-2008: Richard Doran
- 2003-2006: James Woodworth
- 2000-2002: Ralph Moyer
- 1998-1999: Neal Cox
- 1995-1997: Jolly Steffens
- 1991-1994: John Lepper
- 1989-1990: Clyde Brooks
- 1085-1989 Frank Child
- 1982-1985: Edith Schade
- 1979-1982: Judy Parker
- 1977-1978: George Stiles
- 1976-1977: Eleanor Wolf
- 1974-1975; Elizabeth K. Brown
- 1973-1974: Eleanor Wolf
- 1968-1972: Henry Beers



**Russ Brenneman, Joe Hickey and Eleanor Wolf** celebrate the anniversary of the organization they founded 25 years before.



Past presidents pose at the 25<sup>th</sup>: **Edith "Duffy" Schade, Frank Child**, Trinity College Biology Professor, **Judy Parker, John Lepper, Eleanor Wolf.**

**Peter Revill and Thayer Chase** pour over a map in the meadows as they worked together to identify boundaries, develop stewardship plans and manage the growing number of .properties that the Trust was "preserving in perpetuity." The acquisition of the Standish Parcel in 1974 blocking the race track epitomized the concept of "strategically located parcels."



**Thayer Chase** examining a native shrub in Eleanor Wolf's garden.



**Jolly Steffens**, President, Secretary, and tireless advocate for the meadows, baked a cake for the 25<sup>th</sup>, with the Trust logo.

**Ellie Revill** served as Trust Secretary for decades. She was a plein aire painter. When she passed away earlier this year, she was the last person to know Florence Griswold.

