



Great Meadows Conservation Trust, Inc.  
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“Wood Parcel at Dawn” Christof Geiss September 2018



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

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# 50 Years of service to the community

Rounding out a year of 50th Anniversary celebrations, it was entirely fitting for the Trust and for founding member Joe Hickey to receive awards from the Wethersfield Economic Development and Improvement Commission.

The annual EDIC Holiday Social and Salute to Business is hosted by the planning department at the Wethersfield Country Club. After the social hour, dinner, and remarks by Mayor Bello, the keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Benfield, gave a lively presentation on the benefits to the local economy of tourism.

As he presented one of three longevity awards, EDIC Chairman Mark Trahan, cited the Trust's incorporation in 1968 by notable figures including Eleanor Wolf, Joe Hickey and Russ Breneman, following the construction of the highways through the meadows. Early successes of the Trust included stopping the proposed race track, efforts to incorporate flood plain zoning into town zoning regulations, and halting the clear cutting of flood plain forest near Brainard Field.



In his acceptance remarks, Trust President Chris Duff explained to the audience of business people the ways in which the GMCT adds value to the community, including the value of agriculture, outdoor activities, and environmental enhancement.

After a number of awards to new businesses, mostly restaurants, the evening was capped by the most prestigious award, the Betty H. Rosania Award, named after a woman who served the community in so many ways.

The award went to Joe Hickey whose involvement in the community began when he took his first job in the state planning department, and moved to Wethersfield. In Joe's acceptance remarks he emphasized his desire to get things done, often by cutting through red tape.

On the state level, he helped to make “The Last Green Valley” initiative happen, bringing needed economic development to Eastern Connecticut. Joe's past awards include a Greenways award for his role in turning abandoned rail lines to bike trails. In town, in addition to his role in the Trust, Joe served on the PZC, the CC, and recently, the Design Review Advisory Committee.



President Duff and Joe Hickey



The EDIC “Salute to Business and Holiday Social” GMCT received a longevity Award and Joe Hickey was honored with the Betty H. Rosania Award for a his lifetime of commitment to Wethersfield through the GMCT and the many planning Boards and Commissions he served on..

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

( ) \$20 – Individual ( ) \$350 – Life Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \$30 – Family ( ) \$550 – Family Life Membership Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Official 50th Proclamations from three Town Councils

**Rocky Hill**– The trifecta of proclamations from each of the three towns commending the Great Meeaws Conservation Trust, Inc., on its 50th year of protecting and preserving the meadows began in Rocky Hill in April of 2017 in a ceremony presided over by Mayor Claudia Baio, and included Trust President and Councilman Chris Duff and authored by Trust member Sandi Kelly.



From left are Jim Zagroba, Larry Lunden (holding an IBA sign), Diana Evans, Joe Hickey, Jim Woodworth (holding the IBA Award plaque), Chris Duff, receiving the proclamation from Mayor Baio, Sandy Kelly, Betty Schmitt, Linda Nielson, Tim Lewisi

**Glastonbury**– Trust Board Member and Town Council member Whit Osgood read the Glastonbury Resolution in February, 2018. Duffy Schade, Chris Duff, and Betty Schmitt made remarks thanking the Council. Also present were Mark Packard, Rick Doran, Sandi Kelly, Linda Nielson, and Jim Woodworth.

**Wethersfield**– Mayor Amy Morin Bello read and presented the Proclamation at the Wethersfield Town Council meeting in August. Trust members Ralph Moyer, Jim Woodworth, Betty Schmitt, Gerry Hayes, Judy Parker, Pam St. Jean, and Rick Doran, accepted the proclamation from Mayor Bello.



## Save the Date!–Thurs., March 28 Annual Dinner 2019

Robert Thorson, UConn Geologist and author of *The Boatman* about Thoreau and the Concord River, will speak about the Connecticut River and the Great Meadows.



The Wethersfield Proclamation was based on the wording developed by Sandi Kelly for Rocky Hill

## Senator Murphy sends congratulations

Senator Chris Murphy sent congratulations to the Trust: “For a half century, GMCT has worked to preserve Connecticut’s natural beauty and educate the public on the importance of open space. GMCT members past and present should be incredibly proud of all that has been accomplished. I wish you all many more successful years ahead.”



# Brisk Winter Walks 2019

This is the schedule for the Great Meadows Conservation Trust winter walks for 2019, co-sponsored with the Connecticut Audubon Society Center at Glastonbury, the Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury, the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center in Wethersfield, and Goodwin College.

**Tuesday, January 1, 1:00 pm, Wethersfield.** About 1½ hours. Meet Jim Woodworth at 160 Middletown Ave, south of Maple St, on GMCT’s **Wood Parcel**. Cross the shiny bridge and follow the trail along the marsh and around the loop past the 18th century house site. Hike will continue across the culvert by the Pond, and out along the edge of the farm fields that once hosted the original “Pyquag” Native American summer camp and along the marsh across the **Frechette Field** parcel, 3.2 acres of farmland, swamp, and a pollinator garden.



From I-91 south take exit 25 S to route 3 south, or from Glastonbury take route 3 south over the Putnam Bridge. At the second light turn left onto Middletown Ave. From I-91 north take exit 24 to route 99 north. Take route 99 1.3 miles to a traffic light. Turn right onto route 3 north. At the first light turn right onto Middletown Ave. Make a U turn and park on the east side of Middletown Ave.

**Sunday, January 6, 1:00 pm, Wethersfield.** About 2 hours. Meet Jim Woodworth at 412 Hartford Ave, corner of Jordan Lane, for a short walk through the gate to our **Wolf Parcel and DeMille Easement**. See habitat improvements made with the help of a WHIP grant and volunteer work. Stay for a longer walk, another two and a half hours, up Hartford Ave. and out along the Hartford dike that divides the Folly Brook Nature area from the South Meadows Industrial Park. We’ll walk through the area slated for “tree removal” for the Brainard Airport approach.

**Saturday, January 12, 10:00 am, Rocky Hill.** About 2 hours. Meet at 78 Goff Brook Lane, off of Old Main St. Join Jim Woodworth on a hike to several of our parcels, **DiPaola, Brooks, McCann, or Ryan** parcels in the Rocky Hill Meadows. From I-91, take exit 24, Wethersfield, Rocky Hill, Silas Deane Highway, route 99 south. Take the Silas Deane a short distance to the second traffic light past the interchange. Turn left onto Marshall Rd and follow it to the end. Turn left onto Old Main St, and take the first right onto Goff Brook La. Meet just past the railroad crossing.



**Sunday, January 20, 4:30 pm, Wethersfield.** As the midwinter’s sun sets in the West and the Wolf Moon rises in the East, meet Jim Woodworth and Bike Walk Wethersfield’s Kevin Sullivan, at the Keeney Center parking lot, 200 Main Street, Old Wethersfield. Walkers will stroll down Main Street to Wethersfield Cove Park (about 1 mile), walk through the parking lot to the Cove channel, under the I91 overpass and out to the River’s edge. The Wolf Moon on the breast of the flowing waters will give the luster of mid-day to the river below! Will howling echo from the far shore?

**Saturday, January 26, 10:00 am, Glastonbury.** About two hours. Meet GMCT’s Larry Lunden and Charley Smith of the Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury at the Connecticut Audubon Center at 1361 Main St. We will meet inside the center. We will take a short hike through Earle Park, over the bluff, across Holland and Hubbard Brooks, and along the Connecticut River to our **Austin and Matava** parcels in Glastonbury Meadows.

**Saturday, February 2, 10:00 am, Glastonbury.** About an hour and a half. Meet GMCT’s Dan Schnaidt and LHC’s Charley Smith behind Glastonbury Town Hall, 2155 Main St. Hike along the river with views toward Crow Point to our **Preissner** parcel and out into the Glastonbury Meadows where we will see our **First Church of Christ**, Glastonbury, parcel.

**Sunday, February 10, 1:00 pm, Wethersfield.** Meet Jim Woodworth and Goodwin College’s Bruce Morton, Program Director of Environmental Studies, at the Putnam Park parking lot, 100 Great Meadow Road, just north of the Putnam Bridge. We’ll peel away the centuries to imagine the river bank before the bridge, and explore the 300+ acre **Crow Point** property owned by Goodwin College. We’ll observe the process of nature reclaiming the land and waterways excavated for fill to build the highway across the ancient farmland and wetlands of the great meadows.

From I91 N, take exit 25/26 and bear right on Exit 26 to Wethersfield. At the end of the ramp, turn left under the Putnam Bridge to the parking lot. From I91 S, take exit 26, Marsh St. /Old Wethersfield. At the end of the ramp, turn left under the highway, and right at the T toward the Putnam Park lot. From Route 3N/ Maple Street, take the exit toward I91 north, but bear right to exit onto Great Meadow Road, and turn right toward the parking lot. From Route 3S, take the I91N exit at the end of bridge, but bear right to exit onto Great Meadow Road, and turn right toward the parking lot.

**Sunday, February 17, 1:00 pm, East Hartford.** Meet Penny Rusnak, Rick Doran, and Goodwin College’s Bruce Morton, Program Director of Environmental Studies, at Hockanum Park, 324 High St. Explore our **Wilson-Carvalho** and **Hockanum Meadows** parcels in the “Wethersfield Triangle” of land marooned on the east side by the meandering of the river. We’ll explore the new trails that Goodwin College is constructing along the River from South Meadow Road along the River toward Putnam Bridge.

From Route 2 west, take exit 5 A, Main St. At the second traffic light take a left, and then another left and under the highway onto High St. From route 2 east, take exit 5 A, High St. Once on High St, follow it south, past the elementary school, to the park on the left

**Dress for the Weather and ground conditions. Many places will be muddy. Weather and water conditions may revise or cancel. This area is used for hunting, so wear an orange vest if you have one. Call Jim Woodworth for the latest information, 860-808-9968. Free.**

# WHS/GMCT Foraging Walk along Wood Parcel Trail

## Gary Carter, Jr., from the Pequot Nation shared his deep plant knowledge

Continuing a collaboration begun last year, the GMCT joined with the Wethersfield Historical Society to host a Native American foraging walk led by Gary Carter, Jr., a foodways expert and historian from the Pequot Nation.

After a welcome by Amy Wittorf WHS Director and Jim Woodworth, GMCT Stewardship Chair, Gary led the enthusiastic and diverse group along the path, pointing out native plants and regaling the group with cultural lore.

Visible from the bridge over Beaver Brook is a stand of cattails. Cattails, Gary pointed out, played a central role in Native American life, providing food in the roots, and "flowers," shelter in the reeds that, when woven into mats, were used as sheathing on dwellings. In dry weather, the reeds shrink and provide ventilation, but in wet weather, they swell and shed water.

Not far along the trail, Gary spotted a lone boneset, an herb with a brilliant white flower in late summer, ripening into a fringe of wind-blown seeds by fall. In addition to the medicinal properties, Gary focussed our attention on the bright green pairs of leaves joined at the stem. Native Americans, he said, would bestow the white flowers with green leaf pairs on wedding couples.

After the walk, the group proceeded to the Keeney Center where they supped on delicious squash soup, greens and foraged mushrooms prepared by Chef Sherry Pocknet, Native American foodways expert.



A lively group of would be foragers gathered to learn about the native plants that sustained Native Americans still thriving in the wetlands of the Wood Parcel.



A lone boneset, white flowers long gone to seed, shows the unique paired leaves joined at the stem.



At the edge of the Anderson Farm cornfield, Gary extolled the virtues of native American three sisters corn, beans and squash interplanting

## Holidays on Main

Thanks to the generosity of Fair Weather Acres and Anderson Farms...and the quick harvesting of Linda Nielson and Jim Woodworth, a cornucopia of fall vegetables was saved from the hard Thanksgiving frost.



Holidays on Main silent auction basket of fall vegetables.

From the Elm Street fields of Anderson Farms came red and yellow beets. From the Rocky Hill meadows fields of Fair Weather Acres came kohlr crops, red and savoy cabbages, Scots kale and lanciato, red and green kohlrabi, and a few beautiful red cauliflowers.

A bushel basket of these vegetables (with Trust membership) was donated to the silent auction at the Webb Barn, proceeds of which went to the Chamber of Commerce and Social Services. A Trust table at the Heirloom Market gave out vegetables for donations that totalled \$78, and a number of membership brochures were handed out.

## Need to drive the Rocky Hill Meadows? GMCT members can borrow a key to the gates!

As landowners in the Rocky Hill Meadows, GMCT owns a number of keys to the gates located at the Ferry Landing, Goff Brook Lane, and at the Wethersfield border on Meadow Road.

The gates are designed to exclude vehicular traffic with convenient bypass lanes for pedestrian and bicycle access. But for GMCT members who wish to enjoy the beauty of the farmland and wildlife habitat from the comfort of a vehicle, the Trust offers members the use of a key.

Trust member Jim Zagroba has generously offered to make his key available. Jim lives near the Ferry Landing, and he can be reached at (860) 529-2474.

Members who borrow a key are expected to heed the posted rules, including locking the gate after passing through, not blocking the roadway or gates, and keeping dogs leashed and out of fields. Upon leaving the meadows, they should return the key to Jim promptly.

Bathed in the late afternoon light, the early November high water—17 feet above sea level on the Hartford gauge—reveals extraordinarily beautiful views of the Wethersfield Cove.



## Source to the Sea Cleanup 2018 — The Results!

Thanks go to Council Members Mary Breton, Ken Lesser, Mike Hurley, and Mayor Amy Morin Bello, and the 100 or so volunteers who earned their orange shirts. Also, thanks to the Park and Rec and town crews who installed the dock extension, pruned the growth back to make the path under the highway more accessible and inviting, the Wethersfield Police Department boat that kept us safe, the CRC, MDC, along with the Conte

**The totals: 1.2 tons of trash!**  
**2100 Beverage Containers**  
**7 Tires – two huge truck tires**  
**50 single-use plastic bags**  
**500 feet of fishing line**  
**HUNDREDS of chip bags!**  
**Two large Styrofoam dock floats and a barrel**

NFWS led by Director Andy French who brought their jon boat and airboat. We can be proud we have the largest cleanup in CT, but, of course, not so proud that we have one of the worst concentrations of trash on the River. It was a grand day on the river with 600 crew boats rowing down the river to the starting line in Wethersfield where crews in the early heats saw the orange-shirted volunteers cleaning the river bank.



Left: CRC Lower River Steward Alicea Charamut welcomes the Volunteers from atop the MDC Gator. Center: Paul Woodworth and Sarah Bello maneuver a truck tire from the foot of I91 through the poison ivy to the NFWS airboat piloted by Conte Refuge Director Andy French. Right: Erik Maziarz loads the haul from the dark side of the Cove, gathered by Diana Evans, Gerry Hayes, and Bob Ludwig,

# A perfect summer day for an old fashioned potluck picnic!



The perfect setting: The Pratt Farm on Tryon Street in Glastonbury. Center left: Host Mark Packard drove the picnickers through the pasture for views of horses, the coal wharf, and River. Below left, Linda Nielson, head picnic organizer, and Rick Doran.



Above: Allan Nielson tends to the corn on the cob pot. Jim Woodworth and Rick Doran manned the grills with support from Chris Duff. On the porch Ed Chiucarello, banjo and vocals, and Keith Burns, bass, provide the perfect old fashioned tunes. Tom Woodworth enjoyed a slide. Jennifer and Chris Duff with Rowan, GMCT's newest addition. Center right: feasting under the big tent. Below right: Betty Schmitt, Jenn Duff, Sandi Kelly and Pam St. Jean arrange the potluck table.



Above: Hostess Cathy Ogden chats with Larry Lunden. Above right: Betty Schmitt and Mike Zalznock ponder environmental issues. Right: Duffy Schade is caught on camera after nearly 50 years behind the camera photographing GMCT events, people, and the Great Meadows. Not pictured on this page is Paula Tamburro who took Duffy's place behind the camera to record the GMCT 50th Anniversary Old Fashioned Potluck Picnic! Left: Ellen Pratt chats with Bonnie Maguire.

