

**CLINTON LAND CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.
51st ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
FOR THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1, 2017 to AUGUST 31, 2018**

FINANCIAL STATUS

We started our fiscal year with investments and cash totaling \$560,200.64 and ended our fiscal year on August 31, 2018 with investments and cash totaling \$625,500.20. This represents a net increase in our endowment portfolio of \$65,299.56.

Dividends and interest earned on investments this year totaled \$5,760.97. We received \$9,205.19 in membership dues and for general donations, which include donations for the David and Alice Crosby Scholarship, land acquisition, programs and maintenance.

We had operating expenses of \$20,921.00 this year, compared with \$30,729.00 last year, which represents a decrease of \$9,808.00. Expenses include costs for insurance, property maintenance, Website and network support, accounting fees, printing and postage, boundary and trail maintenance, and our annual scholarship awards. We also have an outstanding loan in the amount of \$86,373.00, borrowed for the purchase of the Weisse-Loveday property.

The Finance Committee, which includes our treasurer Jack Breen, Ken McDonnell, Mike Houde, our bookkeeper Kathy Tessman, our accountant Dave Reynolds and Dave Adams from Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, helped in compiling information for this annual report.

This report will be posted on our Website within the next week or two. We completed and filed our 990 Tax Return as required by the IRS for the previous fiscal year.

LAND HOLDINGS

The Trust acquired no new properties during this past year. The total acreage owned by the Trust remains at 878.37 acres. The list of properties held by the Trust is attached to this report. The Trust also owns conservation easements on five privately owned parcels representing approximately 3 acres.

STEWARDSHIP OF LAND

Vice President Frank Byrne continued as chair of our Land Management Committee, which includes Dana Whitney and Gary Stevens. Frank and his land management committee, along with our volunteers, continued their regular monthly work

days held on the second Saturday of every month from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. at various properties as listed on our Website.

The Trust is continuing the meadow maintenance program for the Elliot Preserve. Gary Stevens and Mike Hesper donated their time and large machinery to brush-cut the Elliot Preserve twice this year. Also the walking trails at The Elliot Preserve were kept mowed. We also mowed the walking trails and the meadow at Taylor Ridge entrance area of the Jesse Buell Forest. Additionally we kept the undergrowth cut back along Liberty Street at the Lar Fagan Preserve.

Dana Whitney, as a part of his trail walking and inspecting trails routine, discovered an unauthorized camping site in the Jesse Buell Forest and some damage to the trails from the use of off-road vehicles. The Clinton Police Department was notified and these issues were resolved. Also, Dana met with Terry Shaw of the Menunkatuck Audubon Society and spent a day surveying and assessing the Trust's osprey platforms. The Menunkatuck Audubon Society has a program whereby osprey platform owners, like the CLCT donates \$250 to the Audubon Society for each of the platforms that need replacing, and the Audubon Society will provide expertise and labor in rebuilding new platforms. Rings End Lumber provides the materials. Dana Whitney and Sally Heffernan provided assistance with some of the work and from the fall of 2017 to the spring of 2018, five new platforms were installed and four platforms were repaired with new predator baffles and braces. Many thanks to the Audubon Society for providing this service.

Brian Wilson, an early member of the CLCT returned to Clinton after living in Pennsylvania for a number of years and began working on several projects in Peters Memorial Woods. He has repaired steps on trails, rerouted trails to avoid wet areas, put in plank walks to make walking the trails easier and has rebuilt the bridge on the Burnham Trail. The original bridge was built by Brian over 30 years ago when Brian was a boy scout and was invited by Lou Bougie to help with trail construction. Brian worked on mapping and constructing many of the trails in Peters Woods. The public is invited to a trail walk this Saturday, October 20 from 10:00 until noon celebrating the reopening of the Burnham Trail showcasing the new bridge. Thank you Brian for all you've done in Peter's Woods over this past year.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS

Sally Heffernan continued as chair of our Outreach Committee, which also includes Larry Ouellette, Mike Castiglione, Kim Flanagan and Dana Skidmore. This committee has been in charge of publicity and environmental education through various events throughout the year.

The 20th Annual Alice and David Crosby Scholarship was awarded this year to 2018 Morgan School graduate, Nicole DiStasio, who is currently attending Paul Smith College majoring in Sustainable Communities.

The 9th annual Eunice Carter Symonds Scholarships were awarded this year to 4th and 5th grade students at the Abraham Pierson School. The scholarship winners were Ivilin Orellana, Ellie DePaul, Isabelle West, Aiden Champion, Timmy Hayes and Niklas Anderson. Some of the students attended a two week session and others attended a one week session at the Bushy Hill Camp in Essex. Bushy Hill Camp's program has been recognized nationally and has been used as a model for environmental camp programs across the country.

In February, the Trust again sponsored a Winter Animal Tracking Program called "Who's Been in My Back Yard?" at the Indian River Complex. Eric Becker, former director of Bushy Hill Camp, did an excellent job engaging and teaching a large group of kids how to identify different animal tracks in the snow.

In April we sponsored the 16th annual Peeper Prowl at the Indian River Complex with Brendan Hylan of the Bushy Hill Camp. After Brendan's indoor presentation to a full house of children and parents on microorganisms, frogs and amphibians found in ponds and vernal pools, the group went outside for the annual expedition into the woods and vernal pool adjacent to the playing fields.

At the end of May, Board members Mike Houde and Dana Skidmore held another of the annual field trips to the Town Beach with students from the Abraham Pierson School for the annual "Pierson Beach Day." This year's event again included helpers from the Morgan School and members of the Clinton Shellfish Commission, along with parents and retired teacher volunteers.

On the first weekend in June the Land Trust hosted a Trail Days event at the Peters Memorial Woods.

2018 marked the 11th year of Ecology Camp, led by Board member Dana Skidmore. 63 campers and 11 counselors enjoyed five mornings of science exploration at the Town Beach, Peter's Memorial Woods and the trails at the Indian River Recreational area.

The goal of Ecology Camp each year is to expose children to the different habitats in and around Clinton. At the Town Beach, campers discover and learn about invertebrates in the intertidal zone, the seine for fish on the sand bars and they observe the unique shore birds as well as the majestic osprey that inhabit the Hammock River Salt marsh. Comparing these habitats is key to the understanding of life by the shore.

While exploring the upland woodland ecology of both Peter's Woods and the Indian River Complex, campers could contrast the different animals living in the woods and in vernal pools.

At the end of five days, campers and counselors come away with an appreciation of these habitats and the animals that live there. Having this knowledge gives them a

desire to protect them. Without a doubt, these kids are environmental stewards of the future!

In August the Trust co-sponsored a summer reading program with the Henry Carter Hull Library in honor of Lynnabeth Mays. This year's program was about Edible Plants. Also, the Trust sponsored two back packs full of fun things to help children explore the outdoors. These back packs can be checked out of the library for a period of time and then returned for the next child to check out.

In September Board member Kim Flanagan chaired the annual Beach Cleanup at the Clinton Town Beach in conjunction with "Save the Sound." Board members, along with a group of volunteers and members of Clinton's Pretty Committee collected trash from beaches along the Clinton Harbor, Hammock River and Cedar Island. Each year all the debris is categorized and documented and the results are sent to Save the Sound for analysis. This year over 500 pounds of trash were collected.

John Pease of Networks Plus continues to maintain our Website, www.clintonlandtrust.org.

GRANTS AND LAND ACQUISITION

None.

MEMBERSHIP

Our secretary, Sue Savitt, has updated our membership and continues to keep it current. Our total number of active memberships of individuals, families and businesses who renew annually, plus the life memberships is 164. The breakdown of memberships is as follows:

- Individual Members: 50
- Family Members: 55
- Life Members: 57
- Business Members: 2

Our membership categories have been reduced to the following three with these updated dues amounts:

- Individual Annual (\$25)
- Family Annual (\$40)
- Business Annual (\$50)

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

I was thinking the other day about values. Cultural values and where they come from. I think it's safe to say that for all cultures on the planet, at least in the beginning, the natural world informed and provided the basis for all values. Today for many

Indigenous cultures this is still true. The natural world provides shelter, water, food, clothing and raw materials for everything they need to survive. Human beings need the natural world in order to survive. The natural world provides the basis for what has true value—clean air, water, food, beauty and balance—and we are an integral part of it all.

I don't know if you've notice lately but it's a mad, mad world out there. Every day we are swamped with information that technology brings to us. Embedded in this information often times are values that that leave us totally disconnected with the natural world and its vital role in our everyday lives. The Land Trust's woods and trails provide an opportunity for people to feel connected with the natural world and to be reminded that being in nature we discover an essential part of what it means to be living on this earth—to feel human. The natural world helps us reconnect with ourselves.

So, seek out life's simple pleasures, take a walk in the woods and connect once again with nature and all its beauty.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael J. Houde
President of the Clinton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.
October 16, 2018