A Sense of Place
SPRING 2020

WINNAPAUG FARM PRESERVE
As I write this from my home office, our WLT community is on my mind, and I’m hoping that everyone is staying safe and finding ways to cope. We at the Westerly Land Trust have been utilizing technology to try our best to maintain a normal work week. But the reality is there is no such thing as Normal. Even last week’s Normal has changed this week, and we find we must be even more flexible, understanding, and patient than many of us were ever created to be.

Stop seeing our friends and family? Cut our own hair? Make our own masks? This is not a Normal I want to get used to, but we must.

When things start to go haywire for me, time outdoors always helps, and clearly that is the case for many. We have seen unprecedented use of our preserves over the past several weeks. With playgrounds, state parks, and schools closed, people are searching for a safe place to breathe deeply, stretch legs, and feel normal again. We are proud to know that the Westerly Land Trust’s properties are creating solace for many in our community. The number of downloads and use of our Trails App has more than tripled between mid-March and early April. We simply ask that people adhere to social distancing guidelines and leave nothing behind, so we can keep the trails open and pristine for the next person. We have received many calls and emails from grateful people, thanking us for keeping our lands open to the public and providing places of respite from these wild times. Knowing that in some small way we are contributing to the comfort of others has been a major boost to our spirits.

Spring reminds us that life begins anew and Nature forges on. Birds nesting, trees budding, bees at work—these are inspiring and humbling days. In the end, Nature may be just what will heal us. We look forward to the time we can gather together, hug and kiss hello to our family and friends, and celebrate the little things again.

Until then, we are wishing all of you good health and safe passage through these times.

Jennifer Fusco,
Executive Director

NEW BOARD MEMBERS
In January, Westerly Land Trust welcomed two new Board members, Polly Chorlton and Jeff Walker. While new to their Board roles, both are veteran volunteers and supporters of the Westerly Land Trust.

POLLY CHORLTON
A native of Mystic, CT, Polly works at the Ocean Community YMCA as a fitness instructor and personal trainer, previously serving as the Health and Wellness Director for close to 20 years. Through the YMCA, Polly spent many years as a race director for the Roger Schonning 5K Road Race, Tarzan Brown Road Race and both the Mystic River Valley Triathlon and the OCY Triathlon. She also worked with a variety of committees and boards within the YMCA. Polly is a member of the Westerly Track and Athletic Club and is on the Board of Directors, most recently serving as Secretary.

Polly is an active volunteer at WLT’s Farm Dinner and serves on the committee for the Annual Setting the Pace for Conservation 5K road race and has been an active and cheerful volunteer whenever we’ve asked for her help. Polly resides in Westerly with her husband, Stephen Schonning.

JEFF WALKER
Jeff Walker, a South County native, moved to Westerly in 2002 with his wife, Jana, and their two sons, Mark and Matthew. Jeff works as a Vice President and Manager of Business Support in Washington Trust’s Wealth Management Division.

Jeff’s true passion lies in outdoor activities, which first attracted him to the Westerly Land Trust. An avid runner, Jeff has completed twenty marathons, a 50K trail race and wilderness races in Iceland and Alaska. He serves as Vice President of the Westerly Track & Athletic Club. In addition to running, Jeff enjoys hiking, biking, swimming, kayaking, triathlons, skiing, camping and just generally being outside.

Jeff’s volunteerism with the Westerly Land Trust includes working with the Coffee & Clearing Club, “CCC”, as well as serving on the annual Setting the Pace for Conservation 5K road race committee and WLT’s Finance Committee.
UPDATE ON THE ELEANOR F. AND EDWARD W. BARLOW NATURE PRESERVE

Despite the fact that we are separated, things continue to move forward at the Barlow Nature Preserve. The building which will be our Land Trust home continues to evolve, and the workers have staggered their jobs to adhere to social distancing guidelines while maintaining the timeline. We are utilizing several green building initiatives in line with our conservation mission, including installing solar panels on our roof to facilitate electricity for the house and farm. These practices not only maintain our mission to care for the land, but also help reduce operating costs of the building year over year. We are excited to move into the final phase of the renovation project and see the vision for Barlow take shape.

Outside on the Barlow farm, our three farmers have been hard at work preparing for their 2020 growing seasons. Echo Rock Flowers, Vita Nova Compost and Frontier Farm will all have viable crops this season thanks to these flexible and entrepreneurial farmers. WLT contracted with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to install a new well on the farm property which will provide the water needed to accommodate vegetable and flower crop production. This amazing feat was accomplished the first week of April.

In addition, we are proud to introduce you to Barlow’s first tenants—our bees! We are so excited to see them get “beeezy” and their presence will not only help pollinate the crops but will hopefully contribute to future stores of WLT’s own Barlow honey. Our mouths are watering already. See more on bees to the right.

Especially during this difficult time, we take comfort in seeing the trees in bloom, the bees at work, and life emerging from the quiet of winter. Life on the farm continues, and we are so thrilled to have this special property as part of our landscape in Westerly. The Barlow project would not have been possible without the support and dedication of many partners. A substantial portion of labor is being donated from our supportive members, and we have secured several in-kind donations of materials from local businesses who believe in the mission of the Westerly Land Trust. We remain truly grateful for the opportunity to preserve this special place. When the time is right, we will welcome visitors to the property to celebrate this new beginning.

BEES AT BARLOW

Each species of bee plays a unique role in our ecosystem, but collectively they serve as a critical pollinator necessary for both human and wildlife existence. Unfortunately, bees face an uncertain future due to the overuse of pesticides. This spring, the Westerly Land Trust will endeavor to do our part in protecting bees as we welcome four hives to the Barlow Nature Preserve.

Three conventional hives were donated by John Maxon and established by Sheilia and Tom Beattie, and a Flow Hive was donated by Olga Goff. Because bees are responsible for over 60% of the produce we see in our grocery stores, their presence right next to the newly established Barlow farms will have a direct impact on local produce for Westerly’s residents. In preparation for our new tenants, our staff is busily learning the ways of the bees to ensure that the colonies succeed in their new location.

These bees will also serve as a key learning opportunity for students who visit the Preserve. The Westerly Land Trust’s field trip programs are growing each year, and the Barlow Nature Preserve is the perfect place for experiential agricultural learning. Here, from a safe distance, students will learn about the role bees play in the cycle of farming, from bee pollination, to planting and growing produce and flowers, and finally to composting organic materials.

We are excited about the privilege and responsibility of hosting bees on our land and look forward to the time when we can share their bounty with our members and guests.

Italian Honeybee
*A. m. ligustica*
THANKS to our 2019 SUPPORTERS

FOUNDATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

$10,000 AND ABOVE
PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE
Anonymous (2)
The Bafflin Foundation
Sheilia and Tom Beattie
The Champlin Foundation
Fidelity Charitable Trust
Linda Griffin
The Forrest C. and Francis H. Lattner Foundation
General William Mayer Foundation
The New York Community Trust
Deborah and Chuck Royce
Southern RI Conservation District
Lise Strickler and Mark Gallogly
Stanton Terranov, Sr.

$5,000 TO $9,999
PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE
Ashaway Charitable Trust
Jennifer and Alan Brinton
Emma Clyde Hodge
Memorial Fund/ Anne Earle
Megan Flanigan
Joan and Gerry Gorman
Halvorson Family Fund/ Mike Halvorson
Russell and Carey Jeffrey Family Foundation
The Lattner Family Foundation
Karín McCormick
Marguerite and Tom Moore
Schwab Charitable Fund

$2,500 TO $4,999
PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE
Norma Terris and Albert D.
Firestone Foundation
Jennifer and Jay Fusco
Olga and Lyman Goff
Pam Heller
Ardis and Dick Holliday
Hollingsworth Family Foundation/
Lin herr and Dana Hollingsworth
Barbara and Allen Leadbetter
Kathy and Bill McKendree
Joyce and Richard Panciera
Pfizer Foundation

$1,000 TO $2,499
PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE
Carol Amedeo
Donna Anderson
Appleby Charitable Lead Trust/
Stephanie Raia and Peter Appleby
Lisa Barnes

Debra Brendel and Joe Miceli
Donna and Frank Celico
Julie and John Coduri
Carter and Bruce Conway
Carol and Les Crandall
KC Crandall and Kate Corbett
Jim Crowley
Jeanne and Harvey DeMovick
Alexandra and Paul Dewey
Karen and Karnig Durgarian
Thomas Eglin
Elms Retirement Residence
Marsha and Eric Fiske
The Fuller Family Charitable Trust/
Deborah and John Fuller
Pamela and John Gentile
Debra and John Hanley
Gale and Terry Hunt
Deborah and Peter Lamm
Cathy and John Lathrop
Florence and Matthew Lewiss
Anne and Tom Liguori
Margah and Tom Lips
Louis Foundation/ Katherine
Metcaife and Langdon Wheeler
Camilla and Hunter Marvel
Louise Mauran
Susie and Josh Metz
Alexandra Moore and Carter Holliday
Dorothea Moore
Patricia and Peter Moore
Susan and Thomas O’Connor, Jr.
Daisy and Hans Oppelt
Ann and Hollis Petersen
Phillips 66
Ellen and Fred Prelle
Ba and David Prigmore
David Rathbun
Sharon and Steve Rowley
Maggie and Steve Ruzzo
Jill and Nick Scola
Cynthia and Thomas Sculco
Deborah and Samuel Shaw
Daisy and Jamie Smythe
Karla and Brad Stuebing
Andie and Ben Ten Have
Louise Thorson and Richard
Gregory III
Kate and John Townsend

Vanguard Charitable Endowment
Tara Whelan
Marilyn and Bill White
Christi and Nicholas Wood
Rebecca Woodward and Adam Kaufman

$500 TO $999
Bobbie and Fred Allardyce
Karin and Jim Aukerman
Pam Barnes
Jodie and John Clark
The Robert Cummings Family Foundation/
Alexandra Cummings and
Howard Haronian
Linda and Matthew Cunningham
Heather and Bob Davis
Cynthia and Charles Doocy
Sarah and John Duffy
Suzanne and David Francis
Eileen Goldgeier
Gray Goose Cookery
Ann Gray and James Royle
Heidi and Paul Grillo
Mary and Michael Hagen
Terry Hamann and Alan Perlstein
Calynn Jenkins
Karen and Mel Jolly
Eti Katoni and Rick Thompson
Nancy and Bob Kiel
Eileen Kim
Jean and Brad Kopp
Sue and Bill Lester
Peter Lewiss
Dion Luzzi
Gail Mallard
Liza Moore and Arnie MacDonald
Sue and Pete Ogle
Mary and James Penrose
Lynne Randall and Tom Malone
Susan and Gene Renz
Gayle and Howard Rothman
United Way Of Rhode Island
Lisa and Bob Vuono
Cassidy Whipple

I was thrilled with the quality of the new bridges and how well-maintained the trails were. Thanks so much for providing these areas of respite. It is a true luxury to be able to walk to these areas and not have to drive. We live in a great town and the Westerly Land Trust makes it so much better.

~ Ellen Madison

Arlene Hawkins, Sylvia Blanda, and Ed Conklin at the 2019 Farm Dinner
THANKS to our 2019 SUPPORTERS

“I believe in the importance of green space to the soul. The Westerly Land Trust was one of the first organizations I donated to in Westerly and I will continue to support them in the future. I consider it more than a fair exchange – a little green for a LOT of green – and birds and wildlife and joy.”

~ Barbara Seith

$250 TO $499
Lynn Azzinaro
Joan and Glen Berwick
Sylvia Blanda and Walter Young
Bridget Bridgman
Diane Brink
Sally and Peter Burgess
Susan Capalbo
Jeanne and Tony Cardwell
Ernest Chornyei
Deni Cox Catullo
Joyce Duerr
Susan Dumouchel
Deb and Len Edwards

Laura Kline and Michael Lazar
Mary LaPere
Kitt and James Lee
Lisa Lichtenberger
Bob Liguori
Ellen Madison
Mary Jane and Robin Marvel
Theodore Marzilli
Jerrye and Ed Miguel
Carol and Chuck Miller
Elizabeth and Clement Moore II
Morgan Stanley
Emily and Marshall Mugge
Julee Oh and John Thero

2019 CORPORATE SPONSORS

EVERGREEN - $2,500
Grey Sail Brewing Company
Starkweather & Shepley Insurance, Inc.
Westerly Community Credit Union

EAGLE - $1,500
Cornerstone Self Storage, Inc.
Olga B. Goff Real Estate
Rawson Materials
Sage Environmental
Schonning Insurance Agency
Stanton Realty
The Wine Store

HERON - $1,000
Anchor Insulation
Brookside Electric
Cherenzia & Associates
Dick’s World of Wines
Jonathan Edwards Winery
Lathrop Insurance Agency
Louis Panciera, Inc.
Miceli’s Furniture
Valenti Family of Dealerships
Washington Trust Company

BLUEBIRD - $500
The Andrea Seaside Restaurant and Beach Bar
Dunns Corners Market
EZ Waste Systems, Inc.
First Financial Advisory Services
Ginger’s Service Station
The Hotel Maria
Premier Physical Therapy
Printing Plus
RE/MAX South County
Schilke Realty
Stela Parties and Events

BUSINESS MEMBERS - $250 TO $499
Avondale Boat Yard
Avondale Homeowners Association
Bouvier Insurance
Broadview Garden Center and Florist
Frank Hall Boat Yard
Kaiser Tree Preservation Co.
ServiceMaster of South County
South County Tourism Council, Inc.

+ Bequest

This list represents donors of $250 or more in calendar year 2019. We’ve made every effort to ensure the correct listing of each donor and gift, but please notify us of any corrections or omissions.
SALT MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT

This spring, RIDEM’s Mosquito Abatement Coordinator and Save The Bay, with the help of The Westerly Land Trust and Audubon Society of Rhode Island, are conducting a salt marsh restoration project on the northwestern section of Winnapaug Pond. Both the Westerly Land Trust and Audubon Society of RI own properties that abut this affected section of the pond.

Winnapaug salt marsh is exhibiting signs of degradation including the presence of impounded standing water on the marsh surface which has stunted vegetation and in some cases caused it to die. These shallow areas of water do not support fish or other wildlife, but instead create mosquito breeding habitats. To restore this area, Save the Bay excavated runnels, or narrow channels, to allow the water to naturally return to the salt pond. The excavated peat from the runnels was placed on the marsh surface to benefit marsh plant growth. The peat has also been used to fill in depressions that are creating the mosquito-breeding habitat.

These runnels will be maintained by hand for at least two growing seasons to ensure that they provide the necessary drainage. Save the Bay in coordination with the Westerly Land Trust and the Audubon Society of RI will establish photo stations to assess the change in vegetation coverage before and after the marsh adaptation activities.

These types of projects have proven successful in many areas along the coast. RIDEM’s Mosquito Abatement Coordinator and Save The Bay conducted similar salt marsh adaptation projects in 2013 and 2016 on properties owned by the Town of Westerly, the Weekapaug Foundation for Conservation, and abutting private property. Monitoring results of these projects has shown greater vegetation coverage and less standing water on the marsh surface since the runnels were excavated. WLT is pleased to participate in this restoration project.

TERRACORPS

The Westerly Land Trust is looking forward to welcoming a TerraCorps Member this summer, adding another full-time person to our team for an eleven-month timeframe. A faction of the AmeriCorps organization, TerraCorps thrives on its mission: “to prepare and mobilize emerging leaders to help communities gain access to and conserve land for people and nature.” Previously, TerraCorps only served Massachusetts; but now the Westerly Land Trust is queued to become one of its first Rhode Island partners. WLT’s TerraCorps Member will be focusing on Community Engagement and Environmental Education. Our environmental education programming continues to grow. Each year we receive inquiries from more schools and organizations interested in participating in what we have to offer. In order to accommodate all these requests, we’ve had to expand our range of programming. From field trips on our preserves, hosting summer programming, developing ‘Trail Blazer’ after school programs, partnering with NESS (New England Science & Sailing), participating in science fairs, and visiting schools to bring programming to the classroom, we are at capacity. The addition of this TerraCorps Member will allow us to continue to expand our education programming and develop new curriculum to meet the new science standards enlisted by RI schools. We will also have added capacity to our community programming which includes the Community Garden, Farmers Market, monthly hikes, and other WLT sponsored events and activities.

We are very thankful to both the General William Mayer Foundation and the TerraCorps initiative for making this new position at WLT possible.
VOLUNTEER CORNER: STEVE WEISS

Steve Weiss has been hiking his whole life, and when he moved to Westerly seven years ago, he found himself exploring the Westerly Land Trust trails. So in 2018, when he stumbled across an article in the paper announcing the WLT Annual Meeting, he was inspired to attend. Right then and there, he joined CCC. A year or so later, it was no surprise that Steve was one of the first to accomplish the Westerly Land Trust Trails App Passport Program and earn his tshirt!

Originally from Long Island, Steve left New York at age 18 to pursue a B.S. in Wildlife Biology at Colorado State University. Ten years later he earned a Masters in Technical Journalism from the University of Wyoming. He landed a career working for the Forest Service in Colorado, Wyoming and California. Then Steve moved to southeastern Washington to work as an environmental engineer, biologist and “jack of all trades” on the Superfund Cleanup of the many nuclear reactors on the Hanford Site. The Hanford Site is half the size of Rhode Island and straddles about 50 miles of the Columbia River.

Steve likes to give back to the community, especially through organizations that are very active. “I was amazed at how much the Westerly Land Trust accomplishes: the many properties managed, the miles of trails built and maintained, and the many events held for the members and community,” Steve said. “What makes it even easier to help is all the dedicated, friendly, and enthusiastic volunteers and office staff (who also get out of the office and to do the ‘dirty/ fun work’) I get to meet and work with.” Steve also volunteers at the Mystic Aquarium, where he educates visitors about the animals, conservation, and general biology.

Thank you, Steve, for bringing a lifetime of environmental skills and experiences to the Westerly Land Trust.

TRAILS APP

Get interactive trail maps with GPS tracking, our calendar of events, property photos, Passport Program, live updates of trail conditions and recently spotted wildlife all at your fingertips! Visit your app store and search “Westerly Land Trust” or go to WesterlyLandTrust.app.

PASSPORT PROGRAM

The Westerly Land Trust Trails App’s Passport Program is a fun and competitive way to track your hikes on our preserves. Similar to a scavenger hunt, each WLT property with hiking trails has three QR codes hidden in plain sight. As you find these QR codes, simply open the App, click ‘Passport Program’, choose your preserve, and your camera will open within the app to scan the code. Collect all the QR codes and you will win an exclusive Passport Program t-shirt, which comes with bragging rights, of course. Spring is the perfect time to get outdoors and complete the program!

Anita Kaiser and Lori White

THANK YOU
2020 CORPORATE SPONSORS

EVERGREEN - $2,500

STARKWEATHER & SHEPLEY INSURANCE BROKERAGE, INC.

EAGLE - $1,500

Westerly Community Credit Union

HERON - $1,000

Anchor Insulation
Brookside Electric
Dick’s World of Wines
Jonathan Edwards Winery
Ginger’s Service Station
Louis Panciera, Inc.
Miceli’s Furniture
North American Property Solutions
Valenti Family of Dealerships

BLUEBIRD - $500

The Andrea Seaside Restaurant and Beach Bar
Cahill and Co.
Dunns Corners Market
EZ Waste Systems
First Financial Advisory Services
The Hotel Maria
JRV Woodworks
Premier Physical Therapy
Printing Plus
RE/MAX South County
Schilke Realty
Stanton Realty
Stela Parties and Events

401.315.2610 • WWW.WESTERLYLANDTRUST.ORG
UPCOMING EVENTS

We look forward to a time when we can gather together again. We are optimistically planning events for the remainder of 2020, but as these events approach, we will adhere to guidelines set by the State of Rhode Island. Please check our website for up-to-date event information at www.westerlylandtrust.org. Stay safe and healthy.

Westerly Land Trust’s Farmers Market
Thursdays beginning June 11, 10am-1pm
Shop for locally grown produce and hand-crafted goods every Thursday from June 11th through September 17th at 85 Main Street in Westerly.

Setting the Pace for Conservation 5K,
Avondale Farm Preserve
Thursday, July 16, 6pm
Historically held in the Fall, this year the Westerly Land Trust’s 5K race around beautiful Avondale Farm Preserve will be held on a summer evening, followed by festivities including food and music. This race is one of the flattest courses in Rhode Island, making this a great opportunity to run/walk your best time. But best of all, the proceeds benefit the conservation work of the Westerly Land Trust.

10th Annual Farm Dinner at
Winnapaug Farm Preserve
Saturday, August 29
Celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Westerly Land Trust Farm Dinner. Please note that this year, the Farm Dinner will be held prior to Labor Day. Details and ticket information will be available in July.

PHOTO CONTEST

This year, the Westerly Land Trust is seeking photos taken on our beautiful properties for a chance to be featured on our website, app, newsletter and more! In addition, all submitted photos will be entered into our calendar contest. The top 12 photos of the year will be put into our very own 2021 Westerly Land Trust Calendar and all 12 winners will receive a calendar and one pound of Barlow Nature Preserve Honey. Calendars will go on sale at the end of this year.

How to participate: Submit your photos via email to mlee@westerlylandtrust.org, and please include your name and the WLT preserve featured in each photo. Photos can be submitted throughout the year until October 1st to give ample time to create the calendar before 2021.

Please note: When you submit your photos, you are giving WLT permission to use them on all our media outlets.

Photo Credit: Greg Pettys - Avondale Farm Preserve