



# THE Spruce

## FALL 2010 NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 2276 ▪ Huntington Station ▪ Shelton, Connecticut 06484

*Supporting Our Local Farmers*

## Beardsley Cider Mill and All The Farm Has To Offer



### Fall 2010 Events

Mark your calendars, you may want to consider the following:

**Sept. 21- Hearing at Shelton City Hall-** J&D Country home builders for a certificate of approval for a single family residence to be located on the property of the applicant at 71 Lane Street, R-1 zone, and which requires a reduction setback from the front property line from 40ft to 30.9ft. This borders our property and one concern we have is to maintain the natural woodland buffer along our boundary. Just to clarify: We have a stone wall which borders our property followed by roughly 50 feet of woodlands to the field edge. This will provide an adequate buffer from the field to the proposed house. It is actually beneficial that they want to move the house closer to the street because that brings it further from our property line. An initial concern was the loss of a vegetative buffer along the field but after a site walk we got a better feel of the lay of the land.

**Oct. 2-5- Land Trust Alliance** classes. Information can be viewed at <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/learning/rally>

**Oct. 17th- Hike at Tahmore Loop Trail** on the SLCT's property overlooking the Housatonic River sponsored by Shelton Trails Community. Come join the fun!

**End of Oct-Beginning of Nov.- Date will be posted on our website-** Clean up of Far Mill River with Trout Unlimited- Nutmeg chapter. Volunteers are much needed. <http://www.nutmegtu.org/>

**November 10- SLCT Meeting** at the Shelton Community Center at 7 pm.

With much fanfare, the Cider Mill at Beardsley's farm opened September 11th. They are offering Alex's lemonade. Proceeds go to Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF fights childhood cancer). They also offer fresh-pressed cider, apples, plums, peaches, farm-baked pies, cider donuts, fried dough, cookies, local honey, maple syrup, maple candy, jams and jellies, fruit butters, pumpkin cheesecake, and unique gifts for purchase.



The Beardsley's have been farming this plot of land in White Hills section of Shelton since 1849! It was a dairy farm until a school bus lost its brakes and crashed into the barn in 1973, burning it to the ground. Although the barn was a complete loss, no one was seriously injured. Everything from hay to turkeys has been raised on the farm, including apple trees planted in the 1920's, which are still being harvested today. In an effort to provide the growing community with fresh local produce, and to preserve the farm land from being developed, they have rejuvenated the existing orchards. Currently, there are over 5,000 dwarf and semi dwarf apple trees in their Pick-Your-Own Orchard.

**See Beardsley.....page 2**



# SLCT History: 1999

## Siblings Donate Farmland

In 1999 the Trust was the recipient of a great gift from the Brewster/LaMaccia family who donated two parcels of land. An unknown advantage (to us at that time), was that one of the parcels was, (and still is) being actively farmed. This was beneficial to the trust because it helped us to understand the effort required to become good land stewards, and provided us with good ideas for stewarding our other land parcels. Stewardship of the Brewster/LaMaccia parcel is done by those who farm it and farmers know how to do it right. They take the utmost care of the land year round whether pruning, planting, cutting hay, or fighting the spread of invasive plants. What else can we say, except keep up the good work and Thanks.



*Saving the land: Marge Estok, left, treasurer, and Marybeth Banks, president of the Shelton Land Conservation Trust, stand on property donated to the trust by John and Jeannette Brewster LaMacchia, standing at right.*

The following article is a reprint from Connecticut Post when the Trust was given the land in 1999. *By Karen Ramunni, staff writer.*

**SHELTON** The pastoral landscape at the top of White Hills will remain just that, thanks to a gift from two members of one of the city's farming families.

John Brewster and his sister, Jeannette Brewster-LaMacchia, donated two pieces of land, part of Beardsley Farm on Leavenworth Road, to the Shelton land Conservation Trust to ensure it remains open space and is never developed. The donation includes one 16-acre piece used as an apple orchard and another 4-acre piece next door.

"This land has been in our family for 5 generations," John Brewster said. "We have been the stewards of this land all our lives.

"This is a gift to the whole world that will benefit everyone." Land Trust president MaryBeth Banks said. "Open space is a necessary ingredient – it's absolutely critical to maintain the character of the community."

Their desire to keep the land from development prompted the donation, Brewster said. If they left the land to their children,

they would have to sell it to pay inheritance tax, they said.

"We have four children between the two of us," he said, "and if we left the land to them, they would probably have to sell it to pay the taxes, and then it would probably get developed.

"We want it to remain undeveloped forever," Brewster-LaMaccia said, "and we thought this was the only way to make sure that happens."

Many years ago, the land, which is part of Beardsley Farm, was used as a cow pasture and had on it a dairy barn, said Brewster-LaMaccia, who also is town historian. Later, woods grew in, and since then, the land has been used to grow apples, peaches, and other crops.

Under the deal, the family will retain lifetime rights to the use of their land for agricultural purposes, Banks said, and the Brewster's nephew, Dan Beardsley, will continue to harvest apples from the orchard to use in the cider mill he and his wife and father are opening this fall.

"We are absolutely thrilled with this donation," Banks said, adding it brings the number of acres the Land Trust now holds to about 370. "It is an honor to receive this property. I think it is the best gift anyone can give."

Donations such as this were more common in past years, Banks said.

"Unfortunately, we don't get too many now," she said.



### Beardsley Cont.

Approximate Picking Time and Varieties Available:

#### Mid September:

Gala, Honeycrisp, Liberty, Jonagold, Macoun, and Cortland

#### Early October:

Mutsu, Jonagold, Empire, Red Delicious, and McIntosh

#### Mid October:

Braeburn, Fuji, and Winesap

#### Late October:

Enterprise, Goldblush, and Goldrush (Granny Smith and Rome coming in 2012)

Located at:

278 Leavenworth Road, Route 110 in the White Hills section of Shelton, CT 06484

[Info@beardsleyscidermill.com](mailto:Info@beardsleyscidermill.com)

203-926-1098

# New Trail Grows at Nicholdale Farm

*Eagle Scout Project of Joe Delgado*

This past winter and spring, scouts led by Eagle Scout Candidate Joe Delgado spent their time in the woods creating a new perimeter trail under the direction of Trust volunteers. The new trail was carved along the stream corridor to the eastern most boundary where it links to the scout camp. It's a beautiful addition to the orange marked trail. The new trail is marked in blue. If you get the opportunity to visit Nicholdale, or have time left over from picking apples at Beardsley's, visit the new trail. It's just down the street, and LT President Joe Welsh says "The trail is great!"



## Taking Care of The Land

### WHIP 2009

## Upland Wildlife Management

This year has been challenging as we attack invasive plants on our properties. Japanese Barberry has been one of the most predominant targets as we carry out our USDA WHIP funded control-

project that was awarded in 2009. The focus of the contract is to improve the upland wildlife habitat at our Nicholdale Farm. Working in the upland woods is a bit more difficult than when we cleared the fields of large invasives because barberry and other invasives like bittersweet can surround and choke desirable plants and trees. As a result, progress becomes slow, but steady because we need to be selective in what is cut and treated. This continues to be a work in progress, and we continue to do what it takes to get a handle on the invasive plants which reduce the diversity of the native habitat.

While it is amazing and quite frustrating to see how quickly barberry can take over and reduce the quality of woodlands, it was encouraging to see the recent news that Connecticut Nurseries are putting a halt to the sale of 25 varieties of barberry. Here is an excerpt from that article:

### Connecticut nurseries move to eradicate invasive plants

*Post writer Michael P. Mayko*

They tolerate a wide variety of growing conditions. They offer contrasting colors to the landscape. They control erosion and are resistant to most green eating animals.

But many varieties of the Japanese barberries so popular with Connecticut gardeners and professional landscapers also tend to crowd out other plants, earning them the status of "invasive" plants.

Now, the Connecticut Nursery

and Landscape Association, acting on six years of research conducted by the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture, has agreed to phase out the propagation and sale of 25 varieties of barberry over the next three years.

Kevin J. Sullivan, a CNLA board member and owner of Chestnut Hill Nursery in Stafford Springs said the voluntary phase-out and propagation ban will cost the industry about "\$7 million."

"We were all in the same room working together on the same problem," Sullivan said. "We worked hand in hand and accepted the scientific findings. There was no malarkey. From my point of view, a lot of good came out of this."

Still, he said, the voluntary phase-out will cost the state's \$1.1 billion nursery industry "about \$7 million ... We are the only state that did this. We set a real template for the rest of the nation."

These 25 varieties of barberry have a propensity for growth and to crowd out other plants, taking away their sunlight and nutrients. Their extensive root system makes them almost impossible to dig out.

While many of the plants were often used by the state's Department of Transportation for erosion control, their seeds were carried by such natural forces as birds and wind, allowing them to take root in less desirable areas.

"If these were planted in a residential area, it's not so bad," said Sullivan. "What's bad is having a hedge row spring up on a field near a maple forest."



From Top:  
House covered  
with Kudzu,  
Oriental  
Bittersweet,  
and Japanese  
Barberry



## Getting to know our parcels:

### LT6: The First Parcel

This .30 acre property was owned by State National Bank of Connecticut and given to the Trust in 1971. It was the Trust's very first parcel and while small, it is a great green strip along the Far Mill River. It's one of the prettiest, being right on the Far Mill River, next to Blockbuster Video on Bridgeport Ave. In the spring the river runs in torrents, and is located on the 100 year flood plain. During the summer, you can cross it by using the rocks as stepping-stones. It is described on record deeds as follows:

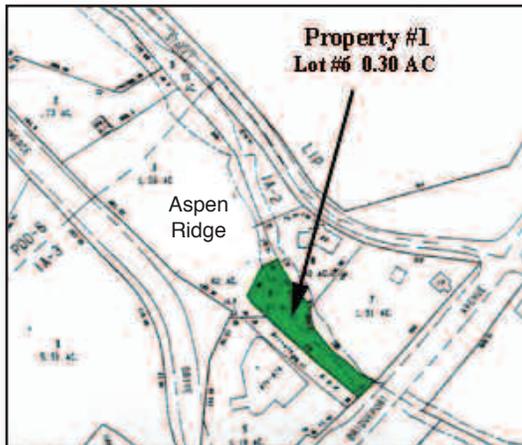
Being a 3/10's acre parcel bounded and described as follows:

**NORTHWESTERLY:** by land now or formerly of Elsie Dubail Jordan, 97 feet, more or less;

**NORTHERLY:** by the center of the Far Mill River, 270 feet, more or less;

**EASTERLY:**  
by the highway known as Connecticut Route 8, 34 feet, more or less;

**SOUTHERLY:**  
by a travelway leading from Connecticut Route 8, 270 feet, more or less.



March 2010



September 2010

## Shelton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

P.O. Box 2276 • Huntington Station • Shelton, Connecticut 06484

### *President*

Joseph Welsh

### *Vice Presidents*

Philip Jones  
Edward McCreery

### *Secretary*

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### *Board Members*

Robert Carreau  
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Bruce Nichols  
Joseph Palmucci  
Margaret Paulson  
Donald Pendagast  
Robert Wnek

### *Member Emeritus*

Robert Stockmal  
Lise Olsen

Shelton Land Trust has 67 members whose 2010 dues are yet to be paid. We are only interested in payment of 2010. Back dues have been forgiven. Those members that are in arrears for three years will be dropped on 4/1/2011 from our rolls.

Dues are \$15.00 for the year and can be sent to Shelton Land Conservation Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 2276, Huntington Station, Shelton, CT 06484.

If you have changed your e-mail address in the last few years, please include it with your payment.

To be better informed about Land Trust activities and local conservation issues, why not join the Trust's email alert list? To be added, simply send an email to [slctjoew@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slctjoew@sbcglobal.net)

