



THE Spruce

SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER

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

Preservation in Perpetuity

Nothing can be more of a shining example of this concept than the recent Shelton Land Conservation Trust, Inc. acquisition of four acres to add their 370 acre inventory. The property located in the Means Brook Greenway was identified as a target for acquisition back in 1998 when the Land Trust's then President, Mary Beth Banks, first approached the landowners knowing of its importance to the watershed and greenway corridor and recognizing the need to protect it from development. Development proposals for the parcel over time have ranged from a catering facility to a gas station and convenience store. A deal to acquire the land could never be reached until earlier this year when the owners contacted the Land Trust. The property is located along Leavenworth Road (Route 110) and borders three properties that have been protected over the years with conservation easements, Aquarion Water Company Land, Jones Family Farm, and Stockmal Woods. The four acres is also in close proximity to the Land Trust's Nicholdale Farm and George Willis Woods. The property also borders the Means Brook which is the main tributary feeding Aquarion's Means Brook Reservoir.

In keeping up with a layered approach to conservation and preservation, a creative partnership with Aquarion Water Company and Jones Family Farms has enabled the property to be protected with a joint acquisition by the Land Trust and Aquarion followed by a lease-back to Jones Family Farm for farming use and forest management. When referring to past land acquisitions, Land Trust President, Joseph Welsh has often stated "Nothing is better than acquiring a piece of property that comes with a farmer, they are some of the best land stewards you will ever meet." This is also very true of

Aquarion Water Company and the level of care they take to protect our watershed areas knowing that as long as mankind

generous contribution from Aquarion Water Company. The Trust also expressed its appreciation to the Jones



inhabits the earth there will always be a need for quality drinking water to sustain life as we know it, said Land Trust President Joseph Welsh, who is also an employee of Aquarion.

Following up with the acquisition, the Land Trust will be working with Trout Unlimited Nutmeg Chapter, and Far Mill River Association, to carve out a public fishing access area along the Means Brook. The Land Trust expressed its appreciation to those who made this acquisition possible, including donations made to its Land Acquisition Fund from the Marjorie Richie Estate, and a

family who have agreed to take on the management and protection of the parcel.

The Land Trust is not new to the partnership concept. All of the components of its jewel property, the nearby Nicholdale Farm, have been acquired in partnerships that have included: Iroquois Gas Transmission Company; Aquarion Water Company; the City of Shelton; Jones Family Farms; and the National Fish & Wildlife Agency. Today Nicholdale is one of the City's most popular parcels for hikers, birdwatchers, and local scouts who use the campsite.

Partings:

Thornton Best Lauriat

Born: Milton, MA

Lived: Shelton

Thornton Best Lauriat “Hank”, age 84, of Shelton, CT passed into eternity on Friday, May 27, 2016 at Yale-New Haven Hospital with his loving family by his side. He was the devoted husband of 62 years to Jacqueline “Jacke” (Corson) Lauriat. Hank was born in Milton, MA on July 20, 1931, son of the late Eugene C. and Lillian C. (Best) Lauriat. On graduation from Melrose High School in 1949, he entered the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, NY and graduated in 1953, receiving a commission in the U. S. Naval Reserve. Hank married Jacke, the love of his life, on May 8, 1954. He served on active duty in the Navy for several years and later retired with the rank of lieutenant commander.

In civilian life, Hank pursued a long engineering career, specializing in the maritime application of gas turbine engines. His first employer was Solar Turbines in San Diego, CA. From there he moved to Connecticut to work for Avco (later Textron) Lycoming in Stratford. His work took him all over the world to such places as England, Belgium, Spain, and South Korea. Hank and Jacke settled in Shelton, where they raised five children and built two homes. After a long career with Lycoming, he retired as Director of Marine and Industrial Engineering. After this he

and Jacke enjoyed a two-year stay in Singapore as Hank again worked for Solar Turbines.

In retirement, Hank served his community as a member of the Shelton Conservation Commission and the Shelton Land Conservation Trust. Every month he got together with fellow Lycoming retirees, and he traveled to Melrose for high school reunions. He also made frequent visits to spend time with his brother Philip and sister Jean. Hank and Jacke took several dream vacations to Australia, New Zealand, and the Caribbean, as well as a number of memorable cruises.

Family was very important to Hank. He loved to surprise Jacke with the perfect Christmas gift each year. He kept up with each child’s (and later, each grandchild’s and great-grandchild’s) activities and was proud of all their achievements. An expert woodworker, he built two wooden boats, and he crafted many beautiful accessories and furniture pieces for his family’s enjoyment. He loved playing board games and cards, and once in a while he even managed to beat Jacke at their evening game of Scrabble.

Hank is the beloved father of David T. Lauriat (Byrle), Philip A. Lauriat (Lilliane LeBel), Judi E. Lauriat, Janet L. Kasle (Steve) and Jennifer D. Lauriat; brother of Philip A. Lauriat (Mary) and Jean L. McInerney. Mr. Lauriat is the loving grandfather of 8 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Bluebird Additions to Nicholdale and Lane St. Parcels



One of nine new bluebird houses on our Nicholdale and Lane St. parcels constructed and placed as part of an Eagle Scout project. Our thanks to Charles Manger for this wonderful addition to habitat creation at the Land Shelton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

How to pick heirloom tomatoes — and why squeezing them is a bad idea

Reprinted from the Dever Post

By Maura Judkis, The Washington Post

The tomatoes, they're beautiful. Purple heirlooms, green zebra stripes, blobby and bumpy and smelling of earth. They're here at last, and you can finally get your hands on them, and that, precisely, is the problem.

Call them the tomato touchers. They're the people who go to the farmers market and handle every plump orb, squeezing and groping, feeling them carefully for firmness and flaws before deciding which one will make it into their next Caprese salad.

"The grass is greener on the other side of the fence," said Eli Cook, owner of Spring Valley Farm & Orchard in Romney, W.V. "They think if they pick through the whole pile, the one on the bottom is best."

If it were potatoes or apples or cabbage? No problem. But heirloom tomatoes are as delicate as they are gorgeous, and the tomato touchers who are too rough are ruining it for the rest of us. They're the reason Leigh Hauter, owner of Bull Run Mountain Farm in The Plains, Va., had to change the way his CSA share pickups worked.

Hauter used to let customers pick all their own produce. Now, when they come to a Washington parking lot to claim their shares, they can sort through the bins for their cucumbers, garlic, basil, eggplant and fennel — but when it's time to collect their allotted five tomatoes for the week, they turn to Hauter, who retrieves them from flats in his van.

"I get a little bit huffy, and I probably lose some members because of that," he said.

Paugussett Trail Facts

The Paugussett Trail is a 9.2-mile (14.8 km) Blue-Blazed hiking trail "system" in the lower Housatonic River valley in Fairfield County and, today, is entirely in Shelton and Monroe, Connecticut. Much of the trail is in Indian Well State Park and the Town of Monroe's Webb Mountain Park. The mainline (official "Blue-Blazed") trail is primarily southeast to northwest with three short side or spur trails.

The Paugussett Blue-Blazed Trail was originally created with the help of the Great Depression era Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) while Indian Well State Park was a Works Projects Administration (WPA) project.

Indian Well in Shelton is named the the pool beneath the waterfall at the entrance to the state park as well as for the legend of a Native American tragic romance between a Paugussett brave and a Pootatuck maiden.

The route of the original and planned (longer) Paugussett trail blazed can be seen in the Connecticut Forest and Park Association 1940 Connecticut Walk Book map of major trails.

In 1946, before the building of Aspetuck Village (and other housing developments) the Paugussett Trail crossed the entire length of Shelton, Connecticut rather than ending near the Connecticut Route 110 entrance to Indian Well State Park. It left Shelton just below the Trap Falls Reservoir, entering into Stratford at the town-owned Roosevelt Forest (bordered by Trumbull and Shelton, located near Connecticut Route 8 exit 11).

Trail volunteers in Shelton hope to connect the Paugussett Trail to the Shelton Lakes Greenway trails and from there to Stratford, Connecticut.

Roosevelt Forest in Stratford was purchased and developed as a project by the Works Projects Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression and is named after President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It has been expanded in recent times by the addition of land, including a few acres across the border in Shelton. It contains many hiking trails. Note that only cars with Town of Stratford resident stickers are officially allowed parking privileges inside Roosevelt Forest (others are supposed to pay a non-resident fee though this may not be enforced).

Paugussett is the name of an Algonquian-speaking native American tribe and sachemdom existing in southwestern Connecticut in the 17th century.

Derby Connecticut was once known as "Paugussett" before it was renamed in 1675.

Paugussett villages existed in Bridgeport, Trumbull, Stratford, Shelton, Monroe and Oxford in Fairfield County as well as in what is now Milford, Orange, Woodbridge, Beacon Falls, Derby and Naugatuck in New Haven County, Connecticut. The Naugatuck were a branch of the Paugussett.



View of Housatonic River, facing south, from scenic overlook spur for Paugussett Trail near Golden Hill Lane, Shelton, CT.

Descendants of the southeast Fairfield County Connecticut branch of the Paugussett tribe (known as the "Golden Hill" Paugussetts) today have a reservation in Colchester Connecticut (New London County) as well as a small land holding in the Nichols section of Trumbull, Connecticut.

Growing with Guy

Saturday, July 23rd was a picture perfect day for the second outdoor classroom series "Growing with Guy" led by Guy Beardsley at his organic farmstead "Guy's Echo Garden".

We met at the shed where there are clams for sale every Saturday, and Guy proceeded with a very informative talk about root vegetables and garlic planting in the shade before heading



out to the fields. There we saw how the potatoes were growing and many different varieties of tomatoes. Everyone got to sample different varieties of tomatoes, and the golden heirloom cherry tomatoes were the sweetest any one of us ever had! Guy explained that the veins in the tomatoes were caused by too much water. The tomatoes ripped their skin, but later healed themselves by growing a protective layer over the splits. Guy introduced us to organic mulching and explained that the rows were first covered with the mulch before planting. This lets him know which rows to plant.

In the barn were Guy's garlic cloves, still on stems. There were a few that would win 1st place at any of the local competitions. The bulbs on some of these garlics looked as big as baseballs.

It was interesting to note that too much nitrogen in the soil makes tomatoes taller, with less fruit. Guy says it's always important to test

your soil, so you know if you needed more or less nitrogen.

There is a testing station in New Haven called The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Have. They are open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30pm. You can drop off a soil sample, and they will mail you back the results in a week or two. They are located at

123 Huntington Street,
New Haven, CT 06504

Phone: (203) 974-8521

The next and final session will be announced by email and on our website.

If you would like to attend, please email Joe Welsh at slctjoew@sbcglobal.net, or visit www.sheltonlandtrust.org.

We're on FACEBOOK!



Please "like" our page and you can keep informed about upcoming events and Land Trust news. Search Shelton Land Trust.

Shelton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

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

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2016 General Meetings 2nd Wednesday of the month.

September 14

October 12

November 9

December 14

All general meetings will take place at the

**Shelton Community Center
41 Church St.
Shelton, CT 04484**

Call (203) 450-1371 for details not listed here.

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

