

**THE WOODBRIDGE PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**WOODBRIDGE, CONNECTICUT**  
**FOUNDED IN 1928**

**ANNUAL LETTER 2010**

Dear Friends,

*PRESIDENT*

CARRIE R. SWIGART

Woodbridge Park Association  
P.O. Box 3883  
Woodbridge, CT 06525

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*SECRETARY*

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EDWARD MAUM SHEEHY

First and foremost, I'd like to thank all of you who generously supported our organization this past year either with your monetary donations or with your time and talents. We depend upon this support to maintain our parks, and we appreciate each donation. As with organizations everywhere in these economically challenging times, we've looked to our budget for any small changes we could make to stretch our funds further. As one example, you'll notice the shorter and smaller format of this annual letter. With this change and others, we've been able to conserve our resources and continue to maintain and protect our parks and the trails that run through them.

This past year has been a relatively quiet one for our association and our parks. We've made no major purchases of land or easements, and we have not been asked to contribute to any town land conservation purchases. Our usual projects of park maintenance and improvements to our existing lands and trails have kept us busy though. Craig Percy will update us in more detail later in this letter about the very successful park maintenance day this spring. Mike Walter, our superintendent, is at the forefront of all park and trail clearing efforts as always. Not only does he organize our twice-yearly park clean-up days, but he also coordinates the Eagle scouting projects that are done in the parks on a regular basis. These projects help us to maintain the trail system in the parks and increase the accessibility of the trails to our town's residents. Over the years, the Woodbridge Park Association has enjoyed a wonderful relationship with the local Eagle Scout troops, and we have been the beneficiaries of their hard work and dedication.

Our board has had only one change in its membership this year. After many years of faithful service, Judy Moore decided to step down from the board. The chair of our nominating committee, Becky Daymon, will thank Judy more extensively below, but we will all miss Judy's steady presence at our meetings.

We had another very successful Harvest Hike recently. Students and their families from the Beecher Road School enjoyed a crisp fall day for a hike through the park to the ever-popular Wepawaug Falls. Suzanne Werth organized the hike for the second year in a row, and we thank her very much for pulling it all together once again! She'll give us all a report on the event later in this letter.

Lastly, one of our past presidents, Rich Forselius, will introduce us all to the sport of letterboxing. As you'll see from his article, this is a terrific way to enjoy the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park.

## Spring Clean Up 2010 – by Craig Percy

As part of the routine maintenance of Alice Newton Street Memorial Park, the WPA organizes periodic trail maintenance “parties” and annual spring and autumn “clean up parties” that focus on leaf raking in the meadows section of the park.

This year, the spring clean up was held on Saturday May 15, and it was well attended by volunteers from the town. Especially helpful were the many members of the Amity High School Environmental Club, organized by Sandy Honig (president) and Courtney Cheng (advisor). On this bright spring morning, everyone spent several hours raking and clearing trails throughout the park. We are so appreciative of all the Woodbridge residents who came to help out, and our special thanks to the AHS Environmental Club.

The WPA welcomes all volunteers for its spring and autumn clean ups, and we encourage you to contact us if you would be interested in helping out. Please contact: [president@woodbridgeparks.org](mailto:president@woodbridgeparks.org).



Some members of the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park spring clean-up crew.

## Thank you, Judy - by Becky Daymon

This spring, long-time WPA Director Judy Moore decided, much to our dismay, that it was time to retire from the board. Judy has been a board member of the WPA for over 40 years and always played an active role. In 1975 she became Secretary and held that position for 13 years, until 1988. She did this without the ease of computers and e-mail! Judy chaired the nominating committee for many years and is largely responsible for the current board. In preparation for the Park's 75th birthday, Judy worked with Susan Matheson and Barb Adams on the Archives Committee, which resulted in a lovely handout of the Parks history. Judy's efforts and dedication were not limited to the meeting room. She was the first to arrive for our annual spring clean up of the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park, arriving with her trusty clippers in hand, ready to attack vines that threatened the blueberry bushes in the meadow. Being an avid birdwatcher, she wanted to ensure that the birds had plenty of berries! Judy was also always on hand to pass out refreshments at the end of the fall Harvest Hike. Judy's voice of reason and her warm smile will be greatly missed on our board. On behalf of the entire board of Directors, thank you Judy, for your many years of dedication and devotion to the WPA.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Hike – by Suzanne K. Werth

In our efforts to introduce the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park to the Beecher Road School community, the Woodbridge Park Association sponsors an annual “Harvest Hike” during the third week of October. The Harvest Hike has become an important community outreach event for the WPA. It is a popular event for families who have recently moved to Woodbridge, as well as those seeking fresh air and outdoor exercise, and it has become a welcomed annual event on the Beecher Road School calendar. This year’s 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Hike was held on Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. WPA trail guides led over 50 hikers – Beecher Road School students and their families, PTO members, principals, teachers and staff, - on a 1-hour walk through the beautiful Alice Newton Street Memorial Park. Hikers followed the Blue Trail to Wepawaug Falls and looped back to the trailhead via the Yellow Trail. It was New England fall foliage at it’s finest! Apples, cider, and snacks awaited hikers upon their return, compliments of the Beecher Road School PTO.

The WPA encourages all residents to utilize and enjoy the many hiking trails available in our area. Park Association property trail maps may be found at [www.woodbridgeparks.org](http://www.woodbridgeparks.org). Happy hiking!

## Letterboxing in Woodbridge – by Richard Forselius

Letterboxing is an intriguing pastime requiring navigational skills in a charming "treasure hunt" -style outdoor quest. A wide variety of adventures can be found to suit all ages and experience levels, and letterboxes have been hidden in Alice Newton Street Memorial Park for those interested in this exciting activity. This is a fast-growing hobby for those interested in hiking with a little treasure hunt attitude. It is especially fun for families with children who need a little challenge and mystery to enhance the fun of hiking. Letterboxes are usually found near, but just off, trails and hidden from casual view by natural features such as rocks, leaves, sticks, etc.

Letterboxes are essentially plastic boxes with sealed plastic bags inside (for extra weather protection), hidden in parks or the woods in specific locations, located on properties that are accessible to the public. They usually contain a rubber stamp, inkpad, and a logbook. Those finding a hidden letterbox will use their own unique rubber stamp and stamp in the logbook that they found in the letterbox along with the date. They will also stamp their own personal letterbox log with the stamp found in the letterbox.

This is a sport based on trust, especially two items of trust:

1. The trust that you have been very discreet in locating and accessing a letterbox, not allowing others to see what you are doing, and not causing any harm to the environment.
2. The trust that the found Letterbox has been returned to its stated hidden location in good condition.

The Letterboxing North America website reminds Letterboxers about this, *“Please be sure to reseal baggies and boxes carefully so that they stay dry and re-hide boxes in their original location, completely hidden from view.”*

You will find a considerable amount of information about Letterboxing at the Letterboxing North American website, [www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org). If you go to the Letterboxing NA website and click on Getting Started, you will find an article on [Letterboxing 101](#) written by “Sojourner” of Orange, CT. This, and other articles linked from the website, will get you started and on your way with this fun outdoor sport.

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In closing, I’d like to encourage all of you to come out and enjoy the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park. It’s a delight in all seasons. For information about the park, including trail maps, please visit us at [www.woodbridgeparks.org](http://www.woodbridgeparks.org).

Thank you for your support, Carrie Swigart, President.