

# THE WOODBRIDGE PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.

WOODBRIDGE, CONNECTICUT

FOUNDED IN 1928

## ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2006

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EDWARD MAUN SHEEHY

Dear Friends,

This has again been a busy year for the Woodbridge Park Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It has been my pleasure and honor to serve as President. We have enormous strength and diversity in our present 21-member Board of Directors who actively support our work for open space and conservation.

I am overwhelmed and deeply saddened over the passing of Woodbridge Park Association Officer and Long Time Director Barbara Wright Adams of Race Brook Road in Woodbridge. Barb passed away the morning of Sunday, April 23, 2006 after a long illness. Barb had a wonderful, kind and loving personality which was infectious with everyone. She was always optimistic and loved walking in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park in Woodbridge Center.



*Barbara Wright Adams, Woodbridge  
Park Association Secretary*

For the past three years, Barb has been serving as Secretary to the Woodbridge Park Association. She readily assumed this task, taking thorough minutes of our meetings, as required by our bylaws. She also has been very helpful with park maintenance activities. For many years, she would join our work parties with gloves and clippers to cut back the growth to make hiking trails a little more enjoyable for everyone.

Barb's sister, Becky Daymon, of Woodbridge, also serves as a Woodbridge Park Association

Director. Becky has told us that Barb had a wonderful Easter and that meant everything to her. We are all so glad for that. She leaves her terrific husband, Bob, and sons Sterling and Monte. As a lifelong resident of Orange and Woodbridge, she also leaves close family in both towns. All Officers and

Directors of the Woodbridge Park Association wish to express our deepest condolences to the Adams and Wright families. The world has lost a wonderful person who did her part to make it a better place.

The Woodbridge Park Association was incorporated on October 4, 1928 and on January 14, 1929, the Board of Directors, consisting of eight members, was elected. Records indicate that the latter date has since been viewed as the founding date for the purpose of marking anniversaries. We believe the Woodbridge Park Association is the fourth oldest land trust in Connecticut according to the listing maintained at the Convocation of Connecticut Land Trusts. From our Articles of Association recorded in the Woodbridge Land Records on November 21, 1928, the Park Association has the following purposes:

“To acquire by gift or purchase lands within the town of Woodbridge and to hold the same for any or all of the following purposes: to establish such lands as a bird refuge and for the preservation of birds, fish and other animal life, and of trees, shrubs and plants; for the planting and care of trees in accordance with the principles of scientific forestry; to build roads and paths therein and to make accessible to the public any historic locations therein; to establish its holdings as a park for public use and recreation, in accordance with such rules and regulations as it may adopt...”

We continue to be active in joining other supporters of open space initiatives in Woodbridge to encourage the Town to devote additional funds to the acquisition and preservation of open space. We have increased our grant writing knowledge and applications to attempt to obtain funds from sources outside your generous donations.

Big news this year is a gift to the Woodbridge Park Association of a parcel of 9.4 acres from Elaine Glass, located at 159 Center Road. Her husband, attorney Joe Glass of New Haven unfortunately passed away early March of this year. This generous gift of undeveloped land adjoins our Alice Newton Street Memorial Park property to the west and south. We are looking at extending our trail access to this newly acquired parcel. Our most sincere appreciation goes to the Glass family for their wonderful generosity!

We also have terrific news with a conservation opportunity for the Shepherd Farm Ridge parcel west of Litchfield Turnpike. The Woodbridge Park Association is partnered with the Trust for Public Land (TPL), the Woodbridge Land Trust and the Town of Woodbridge in a joint effort to preserve this key 35.8 acre parcel. I have been working with the TPL on this for approximately three years and sincerely appreciate the key assistance provided by Tim Northrop, TPL State Director. Tim has created an agreement for permanent protection of the Shepherd Farm Ridge as conservation land with present owner Joan Shepherd Eicher.

The Shepherd Farm is a family farm that has been in continuous farming for more than 100 years. Sara Shepherd continues to own and operate the 20-acre dairy farm which is separate from the ridge parcel. Also, the Regional Water Authority acquired 22.7 acres of this ridge parcel in 2005. Preservation of this key parcel will allow the historic trail from the north of the Boy Scout Camp Whiting all the way to Dillon Road.

Maintenance activities in park properties continue throughout the year. We conducted another successful annual workday at our Alice Newton Street Memorial Park property on Saturday, April 8, 2006. This workday occurs annually near Earth Day; please let us know if you are interested in assisting us with future workdays.

Superintendent Win Hubbard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Walter and Director Bob Fries have overseen maintenance and clean-up throughout the park. We have also been re-blazing trails where necessary. The Alice Newton Street Memorial Park is the preeminent hiking area in the town of Woodbridge, and gets lots of use, especially by folks with their dogs.

And speaking of dogs, in our Winter meeting of February 27, the Woodbridge Park Association Board of Directors voted to require leashes on dogs on our properties. This was in response to three reports in the past year and a half of unruly dogs not under the control of their owners in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park. Director Debra Forselius and I installed five "All Pets Must Be on a Leash" signs at various entrances to the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park on Saturday, March 18. We realize this is a very unpopular move by the Board from our many hikers who love to take their dogs along with them. But we hope everyone understands the potential liability and concern for safety of all hikers that our Board has.

We continue to work closely with the Boy Scout Troops in Woodbridge and congratulate all four local Boy Scout troops for their service to the town of Woodbridge. In separate ceremonies, Troop 907 recognized eight new Eagle Scouts this spring! At least 27 Eagle projects have been completed successfully at the Park Association's properties over the past four decades. We have identified new Eagle Scout candidate projects and are assisting Life Boy Scouts with their Eagle Project applications. These projects should clear up some of the issues related with the North Section of our East Boundary Trail and wet areas. George Karsanaw has also had the Cub Scouts Pack 902/Den 11 in the park with leaf and tree identification hikes, and helped us with clean-up duties, thanks to them! Also, Chris Dickerson's Amity Girls Cross Country Team helps us every year with clean-up activities!

We again had an excellent "Harvest Hike" in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park with students, principals, teachers and parents from Beecher Road School last October 19 enjoying the fall beauty. I would like to especially thank Director Sarah Davison for again chairing this valuable event. We will be conducting another fall Harvest Hike event this year on Wednesday, October 18 at 4:00 p.m.

The Woodbridge Garden Club and the Woodbridge Park Association have attempted a joint project to identify and catalog notable trees within the town of Woodbridge. This is a way for the Woodbridge Garden Club and the Woodbridge Park Association, both concerned with maintaining the beauty of our natural environment, to work together and with other interested members of the community to document notable trees of Woodbridge, on both public and private property. We hope to register Woodbridge grand and unique species with the Connecticut Notable Trees Project, which automatically enters identified town trees in the National Registry of big trees. I especially wish to express my appreciation to Betty Fearon, Leslie Martino and Barbara Bosco for their leadership with this project. Alycia Wilson of Wallingford has served this past year as Woodbridge Tree Identification Captain. We are looking for a new Captain. Interested?

At our annual meeting May I just concluded my third year as President, and since our by-laws require term limits, I am thrilled to announce that Christopher R. Dickerson has taken over as President. Chris has served as Vice President the past three years; I wish Chris all the best!

I also want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Officers and Directors for their dedicated stewardship of the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park and the generous vision of the Park Association's founders, and their energetic efforts in moving toward preservation goals. I am also grateful to attorney David W. Schneider for his wise and expert guidance in the increasingly complex issues surrounding open space preservation. I had an outstanding slate of Officers to work with: Christopher R. Dickerson, Vice President; Barbara W. Adams, Secretary; and Michael E. Burt, Treasurer. Winchester L. Hubbard is our Park Superintendent, and Michael Walter serves as Assistant Superintendent.

It has been my pleasure to work with all our generous and dedicated Park Association Directors for many years. I thank them profoundly for their devotion to our parks and our goals. They have been true friends to the people of Woodbridge, each serving the community in other capacities, also.

We encourage you to visit our website at [www.woodbridgeparks.org](http://www.woodbridgeparks.org). We provide trail maps there for your downloading and other items of current interest, such as a printable Notable Tree Nomination Form.

In a resolution of May 1995, the Park Association moved to encourage gifts of land located within the town of Woodbridge. We are actively negotiating with a number of parties regarding purchasing additional parklands. We continue to seek to purchase or acquire open space land for preservation as part of the Park Association's holdings. At the annual meeting in May, 2006, we discussed many potential open space acquisitions. The Park Association is considering several of these parcels, but we need your support.

Director Jinny Schneider has proven her valuable assistance this year in assessing grant opportunities and applying for government and foundation grants. We have received our first small grant from the state of Connecticut to enhance educational and recreation activities at the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park.

We need your assistance and especially generous donations to help us continue to preserve open space in Woodbridge, while there remains undeveloped land in private hands. Please consider the need to preserve open space and donate generously to us this year. Please also consider us in your estate planning; we are ready to assist with this.

We have a finite period of time to acquire additional properties, as there are very few parcels remaining in Woodbridge. Keep this in mind when you consider your tax-deductible donation in the enclosed donation envelope; remember we function solely on the voluntary contributions from Woodbridge residents and a few corporations. The Park Association also gratefully wishes to acknowledge the essential support through donations of in-kind assistance from several companies. We encourage all company matching gifts; please provide details about your company's gift program.

We support the town's acquisition of the Regional Water Authority's 181-acre Race Brook Tract properties in the town of Woodbridge. This acquisition is being accomplished in three

phases by the town of Woodbridge. The Woodbridge Park Association is on record as supporting additional funds allocated in the annual town budget proposals for fiscal years 2005, 2007, and 2009.

We continue to work closely with the Woodbridge Commission on Publicly Owned Properties, the Woodbridge Conservation Commission and the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society on open space issues. I would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance that Don Menzies of the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society has provided us, particularly with the Hitchcock farmhouse development easement, which passed in a town meeting on January 15, 2006. Our sincere appreciation goes to Bob & Alicia Hitchcock and towns folks who supported this new approach for restricting development in our town. We received financial contributions for the Hitchcock Easement from William Wright Kelly & Louisa Cunningham, James L. Morgan & Georgia Chavent Morgan, Diane C. Urbano & James Urbano, Stuart Warner & David Paltiel and Lawrence J. Wartel.

Please walk in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park frequently and encourage others to enjoy all the fabulous forestland in Woodbridge. I especially invite you to hike some of the lesser-used trails. Please also feel free to contact Chris Dickerson at any point at: [president@woodbridgeparks.org](mailto:president@woodbridgeparks.org). We sincerely welcome your support and active involvement in the dedicated work of the Woodbridge Park Association.

With all best wishes,

Richard J. Forselius  
President 2003–2006



### *Use of Woodbridge Park Association Properties*

Woodbridge Park Association properties are free and open to all, every day of the year. Our properties are designed to remain in their natural state. Hiking trails are marked; please remain on the trails. No motorized vehicles are allowed except those used for maintenance. Hunting and fishing are not allowed. Please do not pick wildflowers or disturb other plants or wildlife. To ensure the safety of visitors, smoking and fires are prohibited. Additional restrictions are posted at entrances.

The main entrance to the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park is on Meetinghouse Lane just north of the Woodbridge Town Hall and west of the First Church of Christ Parish House. A large map is posted at the main entrance next to the memorial tablet.



Please be generous with your tax-deductible contribution to the Woodbridge Park Association! Your support is needed more than ever to protect Woodbridge open space! If you misplace your donation envelope, contribution forms are available at <http://www.woodbridgeparks.org/Contributions.htm>

Please assist the Woodbridge Park Association with trail maintenance. We schedule periodic park workdays, usually on Saturday mornings. If you would be available to help us, please send an e-mail to: [trailmaster@woodbridgeparks.org](mailto:trailmaster@woodbridgeparks.org)

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## *Woodbridge Park Association Community Building*

The Woodbridge Park Association reaches out to the greater Amity community in a variety of ways. We invite young families to visit the Park by joining us on our annual Harvest Hike on Wednesday, October 18th at 4:00 p.m. Beecher Road School principals, teachers and staff join Woodbridge Park Association trail guides and Beecher Road School children and their families on a leisurely hike through the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park. We try to take a different trail route each year, but we always visit the glorious Wepawaug Falls as one of our trail stops, as the Falls are a crowd favorite!

Boy Scouts have used the Park as the site for their Eagle Scout Projects for many years. Recently we've extended our community building efforts to include the local cub scouts as well. Den 11 of Woodbridge's Pack 902 went on a leaf and tree identification hike, earning badge points. Den 11 also cleaned up a portion of the eastern branch of the Wepawaug River's bridge crossing. This clean-up project removed the natural damming effect from seasonal storms, and helped improve the condition of the river banks from erosion.

The Amity High School Girls Cross Country Team and the Amity Boys Throwing Team volunteer time at the annual Woodbridge Park Association work day in April, where volunteer work crews help prepare the Park for its most heavily used summer season.

The Woodbridge Park Association encourages the greater Amity community to join us at one of our annual events, and if you are interested in developing a club or community program with us, contact Director Sarah Davison at 389-8843.



### **ALICE NEWTON STREET MEMORIAL PARK TRAILS**

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