

# Littleton Conservation Trust



Newsletter

Spring 2006

## Envisioning the Future: Strategies for Retaining Small Town Character

Tuesday, April 11th

Littleton High School Performing Arts Center

6:30 PM ~ LCT Annual Meeting

7:00 PM ~ Dr. Ed Bell Forum

Starting at 7:00 p.m., Senator Pamela Resor, Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture, will present a brief update on the state's Massachusetts Land Use Reform Act (MLURA). MLURA is proposed legislation aimed to fix many of the state's problem-ridden and outmoded zoning regulations.

Delivering this year's Dr. Ed Bell Forum is regional and community planning consultant Susan Moses. Ms. Moses will spotlight successful strategies some Massachusetts small towns have implemented to retain their historic town character when challenged by growth pressures and change. Focal areas include protection of town center and commons, methods of historic preservation, creation of effective zoning overlay districts, tools to protect open space and agricultural lands as their costs continuously rise, and proactive initiatives for accommodating affordable housing. Ms. Moses will illustrate these techniques with visual examples and case studies.

Ms. Moses extensive planning experience is with specialization in land and open space protection, development impact analysis,

sustainable economic development for livable communities, and transportation policy. Currently she serves as the Essex County Community Foundation's Smart Growth Circuit Rider, providing technical assistance to some 34 cities and towns. In her own town, Ms. Moses volunteered on the Community Preservation Act committee and currently volunteers on the Open Space Committee. Additionally, she serves on the board of the regional Essex County Greenbelt Association.

Refreshments will be served and an opportunity to meet the speaker will follow the formal presentation.

The Bell Family, in remembrance of Dr. Ed Bell and Dr. Ellen Bell's shared love of nature and the sense of discovery, endowed the annual Dr. Ed Bell Forum. Dr. Ed Bell was a very active and long-serving member of the Littleton Conservation Trust. The Littleton Conservation Trust is proud to host the Forum with the support of the Littleton School Department.

Freedom's Way Heritage Association is cosponsoring the Dr. Ed Bell Forum. Freedom's Way is a nonprofit public interest organization with the goal to preserve, protect, and promote the shared historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources of the region. The Freedom's Way Heritage Association seeks congressional designation of its 45 member towns as recognition of the area's national significance.

Starting at 6:30 p.m., a short annual business meeting of the Littleton Conservation Trust will precede the Dr. Ed Bell Forum.

by Don MacIver

## Annual Canoe Trip

Saturday, May 20th 1:30 PM at Long Lake boat launch



The Conservation Trust's continuing cycle of exploration of Littleton water bodies brings us back to Long Lake. In addition to paddling along the varied shoreline of Long Lake, we plan to take a walking side trip from Prouty Landing to the top of Wilderness Hill, site of the New England Forestry Foundation's William A. King Education Center. We will be taking advantage of the new facilities at the boat launch area adjacent to the town beach. Participants are expected to rinse boat hulls before and after the event to prevent the spread of invasive water plants. For those who have not seen the recent storm water management improvements at Long Lake, there will be an opportunity for a guided tour of the Wetlands Park and individual Rain Gardens in the Long Lake neighborhood. All are welcome to add their canoe or kayak for this event. Participants are responsible for providing appropriate personal floatation devices for paddlers and passengers, especially young children. The launch point is at the end of Meadowbrook Road off Goldsmith Street. *Note: May 20th is also one of NEFF's Discovery Days at Prouty Woods. For more information see their Web site: <http://www.newenglandforestry.org>*

## Developing an Ethic of Land Stewardship

by Stephen Long

The Littleton Conservation Trust (LCT), distinct from the Town's Conservation Commission, is a private land trust formed in 1962 to promote Littleton's rural character; to preserve its water, plant, and wildlife resources and its unique views; and to provide environmental education. The LCT is caretaker of over 300 acres of property (all gifted from far-sighted residents) on which we manage a system of trails for public use.



### LCT Board of Trustees April 2006

Barbara Chapin  
16 Hartwell Avenue 486-8898

Rick Findlay *Vice President*  
46 Beaverbrook Road 486-4031

Henry Harvey, M.D. *Founding Trustee*  
1 Wilderness Road 486-3211

Arthur Lazarus  
*Director of Land Stewardship*  
19 Shaker Lane 486-0261

Donald MacIver *President*  
43 Foster Street 952-2706

Grant Marley  
212 Great Road 952-8151

Jeff Menzigian *Secretary*  
115 New Estate Road 486-3241

Virginia Sprong  
237 Tahattawan Road 486-3324

Melissa Spurr *Newsletter Layout/Editor*  
87 Hartwell Avenue 486-4517

Kathy Stevens *Treasurer*  
46 Shaker Lane 486-8847

Steven Sussman  
32 Lake Warren Drive 486-9630

Charles Roth *Trustee Emeritus*

Edith Smith *Trustee Emeritus*

*It is apparent that different attitudes exist as to the value and use of land. For example, many see land only as real estate to be bought and sold. Others may see it as a precious landscape to be preserved for wildlife and passive recreation. Others may see it as land to be used for agriculture and timber harvesting. It is difficult to strike a balance between these and other interests. A different and enlightening way of looking at the value and use of land was addressed in an editorial printed in the summer 2005 issue of "Northern Woodlands". This editorial, reprinted here with permission, presents a newer way of developing and promoting an ethic of land stewardship.*

Because of the way our nation was born and grew, we tend to think of land as an infinite resource. Most of us have ancestors who left an Old World where only the wealthy owned land. When they arrived here in the vast New World, there was such an abundance of land the government gave it away to encourage settlement and to wrest it from the inhabitants, who didn't embrace our notions of deeds and titles. Even though that was many generations ago, the underlying national attitude toward land as a commodity remains. The term commodity, of course, implies routine buying and selling, and commodities are more or less interchangeable.

So it's easy to think of land primarily as real estate, complete with "For Sale" sign. Buying and selling land is generally a good way to make money, because it has almost always appreciated in value. Hold onto a parcel long enough, and it will be worth more than you paid for it. A classic way to earn an even better return is to buy a large parcel, determine where the building sites are, and then subdivide the land accordingly. You can sell each of the smaller pieces for a higher price per acre than you paid, and after you've recouped your investment, you can hold onto the remaining land and use the cash to do it all over again. This approach works whether you buy a 100,000 acre tract in a lightly settled area or 20 acres on the outskirts of town. You can make even more money by cutting some or all of the timber before subdividing the land. It's amazing that people will buy parcels that have been skinned, but they do. This is classic American land speculation, and someone at this moment is cashing in on it within a few miles of you.

The speculative impulse is reinforced by the rootlessness of our society. Even in our most rural areas, there are few people today who live a long life on the same piece of ground. So we find ourselves nearly four centuries after the founding of the Plymouth Colony still in the process of settling this land.

I don't think it's possible to defeat the societal and market forces that make speculation and parcelization an ongoing fact of life for the rural landscape. But not everyone has the cash or the derring-do – or the impulse – to make a living as a speculator, so most of us find ourselves living on a piece of ground that at least temporarily we call home. But even then, if we try to wring as much cash out of that asset as we can by overcutting the timber, the home place can be little more than a commodity.

The only way any of us gets past that attitude is by developing an ethic of land stewardship. Some people get there by using the land in ways that are passive: birding, botany, and hiking have led plenty of people to a strong connection to their land. But others get there by using the food, fuel, and lumber the land can provide. When done well, with a clear understanding of what the land can produce, people can harvest crops of wood and meat year after year, and both they and the land are better for it. So, using the land is not the problem; in fact, it can be the solution, because by using it, we can't help but look on it with awe. We can't help but marvel at the land's power to turn sun, soil, and water into an amazingly intricate system.

*(continued on next page)*

## Littleton Conservation Trust Membership Form – 2006

New       Renewal

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date determines year of tax deduction)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

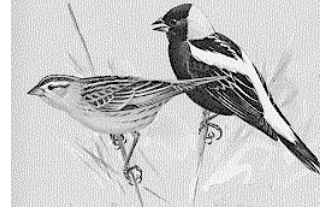
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_      Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual: \$25  | <input type="checkbox"/> Family: \$ 40       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend: \$100   | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter: \$ 250   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron: \$500   | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor: \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____   |  |
| <br>   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift to Permanent Fund: \$ _____                              |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me information about how to preserve my own land. |  |

*(Provide your email address if you want to receive notification of upcoming walks and conservation-related events.)*

Please cut out this form and send it to:

Kathy Stevens , Treasurer  
Littleton Conservation Trust  
PO Box 594  
Littleton, MA 01460



### Developing an Ethic of Land Stewardship

*(continued from previous page)*

Through science and a healthy respect for that which science can't teach us, many people are learning how to work with the land so it has the capacity to produce goods for people without diminishing its ability to support a vast array of plants and animals. Long after we are recycled through the system, the land will still be there. The condition it's in depends on how its succession of tenants has tended it. Did they exploit it or did they try to leave it a better place? Did they see land ownership as a right or as a responsibility?

When people get to know a piece of land, it is not merely a commodity – it is a treasure.

*This editorial was reproduced with the permission of "Northern Woodlands," a quarterly publication of the Center for Woodlands Education, Corinth, Vermont. Subscription information is available by calling: 800-290-5232.*

*Submitted by Arthur Lazarus, Trustee and Director of Land Stewardship, Littleton Conservation Trust.*

For a calendar of area events, workshops, and conferences that have to do with land and water resource protection, smart growth, sustainability and related subjects, visit [Townboard.org](http://Townboard.org)



*LCT at the 2005 Littleton Holiday Bazaar in December  
Kathy Stevens, Doreen Morse, Pattie Townley*

# Thank You to Our Active Members

---

The Littleton Conservation Trust wishes to acknowledge the financial support of our active members:

Jack & Eva Apfelbaum  
Ellen Aron  
Ken & Bodil Atkins  
Prudence Baker  
Elizabeth Baker  
Brian Baloknois  
James Barisano  
Betty Belcastro  
Sam and Holly Bell  
Sarah Bell and Jim McCartney  
Clarence Bentle  
Ilene Bilenky  
Sacha Blom & Rikke Sorensen  
John W. & Sally Bowers  
Ray & Jeanne Bracken  
David & Nancy Bradbury  
Mike Brodevick  
William & Pamela Brown  
Jill Brown  
Edward & Donna Bruce  
Edward Carpenter  
Gerard & Diane Cavallo  
Barbara Chapin  
Dorothy Chase  
Jane Chrisfield  
Vera S. Cohen  
Pat Colombo  
Alfred & Barbara Courchaine  
Andrea Curran  
George Curran  
Arthur DaCo  
George & Louise Dewey  
Bruce & Cheryl Deyle  
Debbie DiPierro  
Tom Doyle  
Dan Duval & Chesca Fox  
James & Karin Ellingboe  
Mary and Jonathan Ells  
Henry Erickson  
Dee Febba  
David & Erika Fenstermacher  
Frederick & Pumpkin Findlay  
Mark & Carol Flanagan

Steve & Sarah Foss  
Mark Frederick  
Irene Freidel  
Ernie and Sally Frohring  
Rachael & Donald Gallant  
Melissa Gee  
Margaret Gibbs  
Ray & Judy Grande  
Elena Grigorenko  
Gary Gumuchian  
Scott & Jodi Harris  
Charlotte Hartwell  
Henry & Marge Harvey  
Sheridan Harvey  
John Hathaway  
Bruce M Hauben & Joyce Brinton  
Carol & Marshall Henrichs  
Warren & Ann Himmelberger  
Alan Hoff & Jennifer Ablard  
Henri Holikanop  
James & Barbara Holmer  
Gertrude Houghton  
Marian, David & Charles Howe  
Charles & Nancy Howell  
Christine & Matthew Kavalauskas  
Richard & Elizabeth Kerr  
George Kinder & Kathy Luban  
Thaddeus & Alice Kosciuszek  
John & Sandra Lally  
Art & Jan Lazarus  
Nancy Levine  
Grace Lindquist  
Donald MacIver & Meg Low  
Barbara MacKay  
Grant & Laura Marley  
Deanne & Jack Marvin  
William & Evelyn Masson  
Marie Mayer  
Donald & Frances Meyers  
Brian & Lisa Miller  
Trina Miller  
Robert & Doreen Morse  
Carolyn Mueller

Scott O'Lari  
Tom & Nicole O'Toole  
Richard & Bernice Packard  
Kevin & Laura Palaia  
Charles W. & Barbara S. Pappas  
Thomas Pennell  
Thomas & Nancy Penney  
Claire Piche  
James and Eleanor Pickard  
R. M. Polley  
Robert & Charlotte Rafferty  
Bob & Gwen Rheume  
Roper-Byan Family  
Jayne Rossett  
Paul & Natalie Rothwell  
Charlotte Russell & Michael Kearney  
Allen B. Sanderson  
Tom Scurfield & Dee Febba  
Stuart & Bonnie Sharpe  
Norm & Barbara Sheldon  
David & Jeanne Sill  
David & Bernice Smith  
Constance Smithwood  
Jim & Trish Sommer  
Harry & Virginia Sprong  
Melissa & Kevin Spurr  
Barbara & Mark Staples  
Richard & Kathryn Stevens  
Linda Stone  
Dan & Liese Sturtz  
Steven Sussman  
Sherrill Swezey  
Judith Taylor & Scott Lewis  
Warren & Virginia Terrell  
Peter Teto  
Ernestine Tomao  
Aina Vileans  
Jeffrey & Janet Wilkinson  
Joyce Williams  
Sanford & Nancy T. Williams  
Julie Wormser  
Carl Wrubel  
Jeffrey & Laura Yates  
Mary Young



## Birding Trip

Join us for a special day-long birding field trip to the South Quabbin area to see nesting eagles and spring migrating songbirds with LCT guide Grant Marley on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Contact Doreen Morse to register:  
[danmorse@yahoo.com](mailto:danmorse@yahoo.com)

If you'd like advance notice of Trust events emailed to you, please send your email address to: [danmorse@yahoo.com](mailto:danmorse@yahoo.com)

This is the fourth in a series of articles intended to alert the community to the threat of invasive plants to our biodiversity and the New England landscape. Previous articles covered:

- Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
- Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
- Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbicollatus*)

This article focuses on Japanese and European Barberry. Future articles will highlight the following egregious but controllable species:

- Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica* and *frangula*)
- Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
- Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)
- Shrub Honeysuckles (*Lonicera tatarica*, *morrowii*, hybrids)
- Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

All of these plants are alien or exotic to this region. They have few natural enemies to keep them in check, and most spread at a prodigious rate. Many colonize to the exclusion of native flora, and some, such as Burning Bush, are extremely persistent and resistant to control.

Our goal is to make readers aware of the problem and to encourage you to participate in a solution by cleaning up your own property. I say a solution, but in reality it is **the only** solution. Non-profits (such as the Nature Conservancy and local Land Trusts) as well as local, state, and federal governments will take up the challenge. But without the public, the battle for our landscape will be a losing one.

### *Rosy Glow Banned in Boston (Almost)!*

Effective January 1, 2006, more than 140 invasive plant species, including Japanese Barberry cultivar ‘Rosy Glow’, are on a list of prohibited plants in Massachusetts. Most cannot be imported or propagated in the state from that date forward. A few of the more popular ornamentals such as Japanese Barberry, Norway Maple, Burning Bush and the shrub Honeysuckles have been given a 6 month importation extension, and propagators have been given 3 years to sell plants they have in production. By 2009, all will be out of commerce. (See the Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association web site for additional information: [www.mnla.com](http://www.mnla.com))

These plants will be out of commerce, but certainly still with us, thanks to their tenacious nature. Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) and European Barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) are available in an array of colors and sizes. Comely hybrids, such as Crimson Pygmy, Bagatelle, and Helmund Pillar produce thousands of little red drupes that grow up into homely little prickly bushes. Birds spread the seed far and wide and plants can soon dominate the forest understory to the exclusion of native wildflowers and shrubs.

Japanese Barberry (mounding with single thorns in the leaf axils) and European Barberry (upright with 3 thorns in the axils) grow throughout Littleton, but fortunately not in the alarming concentrations found in the Berkshires, Connecticut, and southern Maine. We can prevent that from happening here by pulling (with heavy gloves) or grubbing out plants when we see them. Care should be taken to remove all roots because fragments have been known to re-sprout. Herbicides, such as Roundup and Brush-Be-Gone, are effective as foliar sprays or in cut stem applications. Follow the label instructions.

If you would like help identifying invasive plants on your property or would like to join the growing group of volunteers committed to cleaning up Littleton, please call me at 486- 8482.



*Japanese Barberry (above)*

*European Barberry (left)*



P.O. Box 594  
Littleton, MA 01460

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Littleton, MA 01460  
Permit #6

# Postal Patron

Littleton, Massachusetts 01460

 This newsletter is printed on recycled paper (20% post-consumer waste)

## The Book Corner

These and other books donated by the LCT are available at the Reuben Hoar Public Library

*A Blessing of Toads:  
A Gardener's Guide to Living With Nature*  
by Sharon Lovejoy

This book is a collection of essays by garden and nature writer Sharon Lovejoy from her "Heart's Ease" columns in Country Living Gardener magazine, to which she is a well-known contributing editor. Through these essays she delivers great advice for gardeners of all types and endeavors, as well as providing inspiration for getting out and getting your hands dirty while enjoying the abundance of life in the yard. She offers everything from recipes for feeding wildlife, to growing and caring for scented plants indoors during the winter. The book is jammed packed with great anecdotes and quotes, as well as sound advice on attracting "good" bugs, or dealing with many different "nuisance" critters that can frustrate anyone's best intentions. Mostly, Lovejoy seems to want to (and does!) take the mystery and intimidation out of gardening and living with nature, making it accessible to everyone and allowing her readers to feel good about whatever they manage to accomplish, even if it isn't perfect. A great book to have on your shelf to reach for when you need advice, or if you just want to read a good story or two.

*Discovering Moths:  
Nighttime Jewels in Your Own Backyard*  
by John Himmelman

Nature writer John Himmelman became fascinated with moths after watching the movie *Godzilla Vs. Mothra* as a young child, and apparently his enthusiasm hasn't waned. In this well written guide to moths, Himmelman explains all aspects of their intricate life cycle, why they are important in the web of nature, and shows why these under-appreciated "creatures of the night" are as worthy of our attention as the birds and butterflies of the daytime. Included is information on how to attract moths, when and where to observe them, how to best photograph them, and how to grow/raise them. There are over 90 beautiful photos and many illustrations that complete this nature guide and introduction to the hobby of "mothing".



Reviews by Kathy Stevens