

P.O. Box 167
Tiverton, RI
02878
401.625.1300



www.tivertonlandtrust.org

Fall 2017

The Recipe for Success: A Country Day at Pardon Gray 2017

A Country Day at Pardon Gray has become a signature event marking the beginning of fall. People of all ages flock to the Tiverton



countryside for an old-fashioned, fun-filled day. The organizing team, however, has a slightly different take. Do we have all the volunteers in place? What's the weather forecast? Has every detail been rechecked? After months of planning, it is show time. Only with an organized and dedicated group of volunteers can this fall festival take place year after year. It is an opportunity for the Tiverton Land Trust to give back to the community that supports us in so many ways.

The 2017 event was no exception, though Hurricane José kept us guessing. As a true labor of love, Wayne Browning once more drew on his vast experience to lead the planning committee. Eileen Browning, the ultimate detail person, quietly worked to keep the rest of the group on task. Sue Thayer-Kramers continued to secure vendors, exhibitors, and set up tent and site plans, while Kim Herfert (2016 TLT Volunteer of the Year) was invaluable in calling on her network and overseeing the children's activities.

As in the past, George Alzaibak took on the task of providing live music all day long, including his daughter Patti's heartwarming rendition of The Star Spangled Banner, performed on a new stage platform

that George provided. If you enjoyed the TLT grill, thank John Foley, former TLT president, and his grill hands who cut, chopped, and cooked your lunch. Pie for dessert was organized by long-time volunteers Marcia Phillips and Diane Sanna, with a crew of gracious pie servers and Diane's granddaughter cutting brownies.

This year, two new committee members joined in. Kelly Levesque, known for her involvement in many community organizations, took on the challenge of recruiting volunteers, without whom we could not run this fair. She interfaced with Tiverton High School students as well as adults. Lindsay Epstein helped with networking and support duties. She also provided pottery lessons at the event.

These are not the only people who make A Country Day at Pardon Gray possible. Numerous adult and student volunteers join in. From old cars, tractors and fire trucks to climb on, hay wagons to ride, animals to pet, vendor wares to buy, and exhibitor booths to learn from, it is a concerted effort. Thanks to the planning committee and to all our volunteers, sponsors, vendors and exhibitors for making the day so memorable.

We are always looking for new folks to join in organizing this annual event, as well as potential board members and other volunteers to help the rest of the year. Contact us through our TLT Facebook page or info@tivertonlandtrust.org.

—Sue Thayer-Kramers

More photos on Page 5 and Back Cover!

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President's Message

As fall comes to New England, and with it the cooler nights and changing foliage, we are able to reflect on another successful year for the Tiverton Land Trust.

Several noteworthy events occurred this autumn. TLT and its partners, Tiverton Open Space Commission and The Nature Conservancy, opened the Pocasset Ridge Conservation Area (PRCA) to the public. Tiverton Land Trust also closed on a 60-acre parcel to launch the next phase of the project – connecting Pocasset Ridge with Weetamoo Woods and Pardon Gray Preserve to the south. This purchase continues our effort to protect nesting and animal habitat within the largest tract of continuous forest in the East Bay.

The Trust also hosted its annual “A Country Day at Pardon Gray” in September. While it looked like the celebration would be hampered by Hurricane José, we were relieved that the storm headed out to sea just in time for us to enjoy a warm sunny Saturday. This was a great opportunity to thank our members, encourage new folks to join, and mostly to showcase a beautiful part of Tiverton that is protected through the efforts of the Trust and its supporters. If you have not attended this celebration, please consider adding it to your calendar next year. We continue to look for ways to make it a better experience for folks of all ages.

Finally I would be remiss if I didn't thank all our volunteers and donors who make such efforts possible, as well as all the great organizations working to keep Tiverton's rural character intact. Tiverton Land Trust is supported entirely by your gifts of membership, year-end giving, and grants. Please be as generous as you can. This year, a number of contributors have made gifts to honor friends, to mark a special occasion, or in memory of the departed. These gifts are much appreciated by all. Donations to our Land Acquisition Fund or Stewardship Fund help preserve and care for the properties we protect for future generations. If you would like to join the Trust or make a tax-deductible contribution, please return the attached envelope or look on our website for further ways to give. We also welcome conversations about gifts of stock, conservation easements, or legacy gifts.

Thanks again for your support in 2017, and happy holidays. If you have not enjoyed one of our many trails, make it a point to get out before the end of the year. It will give you more reasons to be thankful for the wonderful community in which we live.

Eric Watne, President



UPDATES...

Destination Tiverton: GIS Trail Mapping

Imagine stopping by the TLT Basket Swamp property and realizing you don't have a trail map. You could view a pdf from our website. Or you could reference your location from your cell phone. Recently approached by Ginger Lacy from the Tiverton Open Space Commission, the TLT Board of Directors is considering a collaborative project that will use Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to map out trails on each of our public access properties, as well as Open Space Commission properties like Weetamoo Woods. Other groups approached for this project include The Nature Conservancy, RI Audubon Society and the Department of Environmental Management.

Ginger's presentation was received with enthusiasm. Not only will the project lead to downloadable GIS maps; a pamphlet with maps of all public access properties in Tiverton would also be available at trailheads and key tourist locations. Descriptions would include information such as trail lengths, acreage, difficulty ratings, unique features, and regulations. So whether you prefer paper maps that you can touch and feel or an electronic map on your cell phone, we soon hope to give you these choices to enjoy the outdoors throughout Tiverton.

Pocasset Ridge Conservation Area Opens to the Public

The public opening of the Pocasset Ridge Conservation Area on October 3 was a quiet affair. Five members of the conservation partners managing the area—Tiverton Land Trust, Tiverton Open Space Commission, The Nature Conservancy—took off the tape and uncovered the new sign draped in a plastic tarp. Management emphasizes protection of the area's natural communities and wildlife, while providing a level of public access compatible with preserving the wilderness quality of its ecosystem. Please note that



Left to Right: John Berg (TNC), Eric Watne (TLT), Garry Plunkett (TOSC), Brian Janes (TOSC) and Nancy Weinstein (TLT).

PRCA is a 'dog free' property, so if you visit please do not bring your canine friends. We have many preserves that allow dogs; however the combination of sensitive bird nesting grounds, along with the need to create a hiking opportunity for folks who are not dog lovers, influenced this decision.

John Berg led a preview hike during Land Trust Days. One of the hikers, Paula White, expressed her sense of awe: "Inspiration throughout the woods, from the trees, mushrooms, and snakes found. The weather was just perfect. ... I would definitely recommend this hike."

TLT Acquires 60 More Acres on Pocasset Ridge

It's official! On October 16, TLT closed on the F&J Realty property, two parcels totaling 60± acres on Pocasset Ridge. Trish Sylvester, chair of TLT's Land Protection Committee, was instrumental in finalizing this transaction. F&J Realty is held by 10 members of the Matta family, the former owners of Pardon Gray Preserve. The F&J parcel contains part of Borden Brook and existing trails through rugged terrain leading to historic cellar holes. It is strategic in breaking up the tract of unprotected land east of 8 Rod Way to make the remaining parcels less attractive for development. Thanks to the Baffin Foundation and The Nature Conservancy for their major financial support. We still have a significant funding gap, however, and need to replenish TLT's Land Acquisition Fund before we can purchase another available parcel on Pocasset Ridge. Please help with the Pocasset Ridge Campaign if you can.



Exploring Pocasset Ridge

“Extensive—and Impenetrable Forest”.

Such are the notations on a map of Narragansett Bay that was issued in 1820 by Army Corps engineers for the United States Topographical Bureau, the agency that would go on to produce the maps that opened the way to the American West.

Remarkably, the high country east of Stone Bridge was known then as now only from beyond, a mysterious place of deep shadows.

An era better known for its nascent mill industries, expanding fleet of sailing ships, whaling, urbanization and rising immigration, the 1820’s also gave rise to a generation of writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, observers of nature who grew up at a time when New England deforestation had reached its peak.

Enduring, still, at the end of the 20th century, but then threatened by speculative development, citizens of Tiverton rallied first to save this forest at Weetamoo Woods, and then at Pardon Gray Preserve, all the while creating the blueprint to save more of this extensive tract of forest. With dedication to the task and partnerships with The Nature Conservancy and RI environmental agencies, 500 acres more have been saved and outfitted with trails so that hikers may now

enter a forested realm which has never been opened before.

Exploring the rock formations, hillsides and rolling terrain of this forest together with its first visitors has been an eye-opening experience for me.

Adventurers who came on the occasion of a Land Trust Days hike were amazed by the bright sunlight and clear, open views existing in the depths of this forest between its canopy of oaks and floor of huckleberries.

Leaving the forest edge behind, with its tangle of shrubs and vines, hikers to the heart of Pocasset Ridge may observe a natural structure where specific varieties of trees, plants, birds and wildlife inhabit specific locations governed by topography and access to water. Hillsides of hickory, woodlands of oak, and bordering wetlands of beech and holly are interspersed with bedrock ledges, cliffs, and boulder-fields, crisscrossed throughout with surface streams and shrub swamps.

Brought further to life by resident wildlife, such as the red headed woodpeckers we saw convening amid a stand of dying oaks, there is much to explore!

—John Berg, The Nature Conservancy





In every walk with nature one receives far more than (s)he seeks.

~ John Muir

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Please be generous in your support of the Tiverton Land Trust – as you have been in the past!

Dedicated to preserving the rural character and scenic beauty of Tiverton for generations to come.

OUR MISSION

Tiverton Land Trust
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