

# Hedgerows

Summer 2013 Published by the Washington Township Land Trust

*This Land Is Your Land — Support Local Conservation*

## 2012 Year in Review

Submitted by Karen Richards, Past President

This year we helped NJCF acquire 44 acres on Schooley's Mountain. The property protects the headwaters for the streams and wetlands of the Teetertown Brook, which holds a Category One, Trout Production (FW2-TP) State classification. This property is also habitat for NJ Threatened Wildlife such as the Barred Owl and Longtail Salamander and the NJ Endangered Bob Cat.

In September we held the Ultimate Tasting with beer, wine and food. We sold over 90 tickets and made a profit of \$2,600. This event generated a lot of excitement and was very successful due in large part by a lot of time and effort of volunteers. Special thanks to Chris Steffan, our fundraising chair, Jim Fitterer our decorating chair, and Paul Krylowski for his services in preparing the program for printing.

We renewed the mill apartment lease for another year with tenant, Jim Fitterer. Jim has logged in over 100 volunteer hours since moving in Oct 2011.

## Park report

WTLT received a grant (\$2,000.) for the park. We purchased and positioned a shed to store equipment. Had mowers and weed whackers donated to park maintenance. We need to create a plan for the rest of the grant.

Newest trail is the Old Trestle Trail (coming off the east end of Frying Pan Tree Trail) which connects to the Columbia Trail behind Frazier Steel. The path was cut open and maintained this year.

- No major flooding damage this year.
- Normal maintenance kept the trails passable to walkers. Needed to use a chain saw early on to cut a log across a path. The trail sign (lost when Columbia Trail work was happening) was replaced.
- Wildflower meadow is maturing – more flowers showed up this year. Bayberry and white dogwood seem to be holding their own despite the weather.
- Hurricane Sandy pushed a number of trees over in Mill Pond Park that need to be cut through as trails are blocked. Tops of evergreens were snapped off as well. The large Ash tree at the beginning of Frying Pan Tree Trail has been damaged. A branch the size of a large tree broke off and is across the trail. A tree fell from across the river and up against the outside and entry arch of the turbine bay, jamming up under the floor and knocking up some floor boards. Jim F. removed the limbs and portions of the tree actually touching the mill and the main trunk is still in the river traversing the river and has to still be cut up.



Damage to the "Whomping Willow"? No, it is the Ash Tree on Frying Pan Tree Trail.

## Mill report

Routine maintenance has been performed throughout the year, thanks to our many volunteers. The restoration of the mill is on hold until we can raise enough money to apply for a grant. The most pressing need is to address the crack in the intake arch, but the estimated cost is \$80,000 and possible grants require anywhere from 20% to %50 matching funds.



Photos from the Ultimate Tasting. Sponsors that made the event possible were Long Valley Pub and Brewery, Peapack Fine Wines, Hunterdon Brewing Company, Valley Restaurant & Pub, Splash Seafood Restaurant, Pandan Fusion Lounge, and Brasserie 513.

From the President

As the Washington Township Land Trust enters its 22nd year the land preservation record is admirable. We own, jointly own, or have helped to acquire over 1000 acres of land. We invite everyone to visit our web site to see some of these properties and to visit them in person. Presently the best maintained is the Mill Pond Park and trail along the South branch of the Raritan River. The Trail begins in Long Valley just off of the Columbia Trail at the border of the Toll Brothers development on Fairview Avenue, goes along the river and loops back to the Columbia trail – foot traffic only, please. Trails on the other properties are not far in the future. Also, two new property acquisitions are currently underway jointly with the New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

We are proud of our efforts. However, we must find new people who are willing to serve as trustees. The minimum number is nine up to a maximum of 21. We are currently at nine trustees and need to add new people in anticipation of attrition in the next few years. If you think you can help us, please contact us.

Thanks,  
Tim Warrener  
WTLT President

**2013 OFFICERS**

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Tim Warrener

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Gregg Forsbrey

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Chris Steffan

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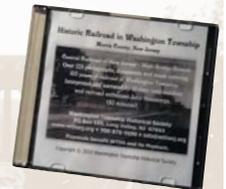
# Old Trestle Trail

Submitted by Caryl Brackenridge

Land Trust volunteers have been blazing a new trail in Mill Pond Park. It branches off the Frying Pan Tree Trail, continues east along the river through a beautiful stand of pines, past the remains of an old railroad trestle and turns briefly north to connect with the Columbia Trail as it crosses Land Trust property west of Frazier. The railroad trestle once spanned the South Branch of the Raritan near its junction with Electric Brook and the stonework still remains.

The first train that traveled through German Valley (now Long Valley) was in 1876 and the railroad was the High Bridge Branch of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. That branch continued through Naughtright and Flanders on the way to Lake Hopatcong. Just beyond the center of town, however, the Chester Branch diverged, carrying trains across our trestle bridge on their way between the Taylor Iron and Steel Company in High Bridge and the iron ore mines in Chester.

If you are interested in learning more about the history of the railroad in this area, you can buy a DVD, "Historic Railroad in Washington Township" from the Washington Township Historical Society. ([www.wthsnj.org](http://www.wthsnj.org)) If you are interested in helping us blaze and maintain trails in Mill Pond Park, you can contact us at [obadiah1750@hotmail.com](mailto:obadiah1750@hotmail.com).



Either way, you will make a local non-profit very happy.



# First Work Day

Submitted by Chris Steffan

April 27, our first work day for 2013, could not have been better. The sun was out, the sky was a clear, brilliant blue and the air was perfect; about 70-75° and low humidity. We gathered and headed toward the first of six areas needing attention along Old Trestle Trail. Numerous trees had fallen as a result of Storm Sandy and those blocking trails needed to be removed. We de-branched, cut through the trunks and moved the debris to the sides of the trail. Along the way we were able to socialize with each other as well as observe what nature is offering this time of year.



Photo courtesy of Chris Steffan

I would like to thank Cade & Tim Warrener, Caryl & Jim Brackenridge and Ken Steffan for volunteering their time and labor. Without help from members and friends the trails in Mill Pond Park would not exist as they are.

If you would like to help in the park, please check our web site ([www.wtl.org](http://www.wtl.org)) to find out about the next work day. You will be helping us maintain this natural area as well as being able to enjoy what nature offers us right here in the center of Long Valley.

# Wood Turtle Sighting

Submitted by Chris Steffan

While mowing/trimming Land Trust property, we came across a turtle of moderate size. Initially thought to be a Box Turtle by one observer, we found out that it was actually a Wood Turtle. We watched as the turtle made its way into the tall grass, going about its business undisturbed.

If you should see turtles on a walk anywhere, please, look at it but leave it where you find it. Turtles have territories and should not be moved out of them. They know if they need to be in water or on the ground as they search for food and nesting places. One exception: If you see a turtle crossing a road and you can be sure of the direction it is going, by all means, move it out of the way of traffic in the direction it is headed. (editors note: diligence especially after a after rain storm)

Wood turtles can live 20-30 years and at about 14 years old start to mate. In early summer the female will lay one clutch of about 8 or 9 eggs which take about 70 days to hatch. Dependent on the weather in the fall, the hatchlings may over-winter in their nest until spring. Raccoons and skunks will eat the eggs and hatchlings if they find them.

Unlike other turtle species that favor either land or water, the wood turtle resides in both water and land environments. Aquatic habitats are required for mating, feeding, and hibernation, while land habitats are used for egg laying and foraging.

The Wood Turtle is listed as a threatened species in New Jersey. Population decline is a result of factors such as poor land usage practices which result in the destruction of habitat. Stream degradation is also another contributor. When you consider the life span of a wood turtle and the small number of eggs laid yearly, you can see how any disturbance can cause a population decline.



Wood Turtle (top) and for comparison a Box Turtle (bottom)



# 2012 Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner

Submitted by Caryl Brackenridge

On December 14, 2012, WTLT members met at the Long Valley First Aid Squad building for a fun evening. As usual, cocktail hour was followed by various delicious dishes and the annual meeting was casual and brief. Outgoing President Karen Richards was thanked for her many years of service and her excellent leadership as President. New officers elected were President Tim Warrener, Vice-President Gregg Forsbrey, Treasurer Chris Steffan and Secretary Susan Penney.

All WTLT members and families are invited to this event and it is always on the second Friday in December, so mark your calendars now for December 13, 2013. If you are superstitious, you can just pretend it isn't Friday. Hope we see you there.



WTLT President Tim Warrener, Jim and Caryl Brackenridge



Gary Zockoll and past WTLT President Karen Richards



Ken and Chris Steffan



WTLT Secretary Susan Penney, Kim and Eric Kaiser

Photos courtesy of Chris Steffan

## Help Us Keep You In Touch

Dear Members, Benefactors and Friends,

We are currently working on updating our Land Trust membership contact information, so we can begin contacting our members in a "Green" fashion. We're asking that you return your information using our Land Trust email address: [obadiah1750@hotmail.com](mailto:obadiah1750@hotmail.com)

Please include:

1. Your preferred email address.
2. Your current phone number(s):
3. Your home address with (ZIP)

If you do not use email or must have communication by U.S. mail, please send your information to:

WTLT  
P.O. Box #4  
Long Valley, NJ 07853.

We promise your contact information will remain private and not shared with any other organization or contacts.

Thanks for your continued support of the Washington Township Land Trust.

Sincerely,  
Barb Kellner  
WTLT Board Member

## There was just no end of the fun to be had at the Obadiah LaTourette Grist and Saw Mill!

Submitted by Caryl Brackenridge

Over the years the restoration project has resulted in various items being stored in the out building/garage next to the mill. However, the volume of these items, mostly wood scraps, etc., pales in comparison with the household items bestowed upon us by tenants of the apartment on the ground floor of the mill.

One Saturday, four volunteers started work at 8 am, sorting out items that could be given to charity and loading unwanted items from the garage into a huge walk-in dumpster. By noon, the dumpster was filled with pounds of cardboard, clothes, rickety desks and bookcases, solid cement bags, mattresses, cushions, a three piece sectional couch, two other couches, a stuffed chair, a toilet, kitty litter, litter boxes, and even a dead squished rat found in the bottom of a metal trash barrel. The really good news is that it only rained hard for about an hour, and just rained lightly the rest of the time.

The bad news is that we needed another dumpster because there was a stuffed chair, another toilet, a bathtub, a water heater, two radiators, two refrigerators and other assorted items still left. If you don't want to miss out on the fun the next time we have a project, just send us an email at [obadiah1750@hotmail.com](mailto:obadiah1750@hotmail.com) and we will let you know about our next workday at the mill or in Mill Pond Park. Hey, if we are really lucky maybe it will rain again.

### Washington Township Land Trust Annual Membership

- Individual \$25    Family \$35    Business \$100



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (For WTLT use only) \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (optional)  
I wish to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for:

- Land preservation  
 Mill restoration work  
 Mill Park plantings/maintenance

Make check payable to: WTLT  
PO Box 4  
Long Valley, NJ 07853

*Volunteers and Professional Services Needed.  
Contact any WTLT officer for details.*



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