



Winter 2005

*From The President's Desk:*

## Conservation Update

There are many ways to get involved in celebrating or protecting Bolton's unique open spaces.

**Feb 12<sup>th</sup>** Noon-4pm Bolton Winter Carnival. Looks like there will be enough snow this year for a great winter carnival. Bring the family to Old Sugar Road for a day of sledding, toboggan races, cross-country skiing, snowshoe tours and outdoor fun. Sponsored by the Conservation Commission, Trails Committee and BCT.

**Mar 6<sup>th</sup>** 3pm - Bolton Conservation Trust annual meeting at the First Parish church hall next to the Town Hall. Come hear a renowned guest speaker, Tom Wessels, speak on "Reading the Forested Landscape", get an update on current conservation projects in your neighborhood, and enjoy a tasty free buffet dinner from the Nashoba Winery.

**Mar 14<sup>th</sup>** 7pm Bolton Master Planning "Charrette" in the Sawyer School cafeteria. What do you want Bolton to become 20 years from now? Does rural character and open space still fit in? Share your ideas in an easy workshop setting.



Tom Wessels, Annual Meeting Guest Speaker

### In other news:

Welch Pond is Bolton's only bog, a unique ecosystem between Wataquadock and West Berlin Roads. It's currently protected with 10 acres of town conservation land. Now the preserve is growing 50% as 2 acres of abutting conservation land and 3 more of restrictions and a trail connector are being donated by Ed Taylor, a former member of the Conservation Commission.

Most people assume that last year's big farm protection project was over when the town approved it. Not true. Nothing really happens to protect the 180 acres of the Nicewicz and Schartner family farms until the \$1.8 million grant money is received from the state. Fortunately, there appears to be a lot of recognition that this is a unique opportunity to

protect, together with the abutting Schultz farm, a nearly 300 acre farm block so close to a metropolis, from which thousands of children come each year to pick apples. Stay tuned.

Not all farms can be saved. The old orchards across from the winery are becoming ten houses, and may have the town's first common septic system, although each lot first has to pass conventional testing. Thankfully, a land swap was worked out with Bolton's largest apple orchard (aptly named "Bolton Orchards") to buffer the apples from the new homes, and visa versa.

The other big land news from last spring, the Stephenson land, centerpiece of the 413 acre Rattlesnake Hill forest preserve covering much of northeastern Bolton, just got some great news. Senator Bob Antonioni announced a \$166k grant from the state, which reduces the tax

payer cost to only \$234k for 76 acres, just \$3,079 per acre.

While the new grant is good news for the town's coffers, the Stephenson, Nicewicz and Schartner projects have taken a big toll on your conservation trust's coffers. This reduces our ability to move quickly. So, if you haven't sent in your 2005 BCT membership, please do so now.

Some of Bolton's best conservation successes are completely silent, as some landowners prefer to protect a cherished parcel of land with anonymity. Some simply do it for the kids and adults that are refreshed there, or the creatures that live there.

-Ken Swanton  
President  
Bolton Conservation Trust

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## Conservation Vision

Many people in town often wonder about the value of purchasing Conservation land in Bolton. Residents enjoy hiking or cross-county skiing with friends and family on conservation land, but why is it so important to purchase key parcels of land, when they become available, during times when the town has so many other priorities?

The answer is, "Bolton has Conservation Vision.". Conservation Vision is best described as a long term flexible plan for creating valuable conservation assets. Bolton is blessed with town organizations, private organizations (like the Bolton Conservation Trust) and residents who care enough about conservation and the planning for Bolton's future that countless hours of

time and effort are dedicated to Conservation Vision.

An example of Conservation Vision is the 439 acres of conservation property which surrounds Rattlesnake Hill. This Conservation Vision started in 1975 when the Trust purchased the Rattlesnake Hill area (10acres) and also worked with the Town to purchase the Lime Kiln property (40acres).



Thirty years of vision later, and many 1000's of volunteer hours for discussions with abutters, developers, and state grant committees, along with multiple presentations at town meetings, Bolton has created a *priceless* land conservation asset.

This 439 acre contiguous parcel of conservation land is one of the largest protected conservation properties east of RT495.

In an effort to celebrate Bolton's Conservation Vision of the Rattlesnake Conservation area, The Bolton Conservation Trust in conjunction with the Bolton Conservation Commission, and Trails Committee will be hosting a

### **WINTER CARNIVAL**

**February 12, 2005**

**Noon to 4 P.M.**

**On the Phillips Property  
(Off Old Sugar Road)**

with sledding, and toboggan races, along with cross-country skiing and snowshoe tours of the Rattlesnake Hill and surrounding conservation properties.

Please make an effort to attend this conservation event, and become part of the future Conservation Visions of Bolton

Dan Gaffney

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### **ELF PROGRAM UPDATE**

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The 2nd Environmental Learning for the Future (ELF) session of the school year was held on January 19<sup>th</sup> at the Florence Sawyer School. This lesson "Fly Away or Stay?" is part of our cycles curriculum on the subject of bird migration.



**Volunteer Sharon Johns and a First Grade ELF student working on "Fly Away or Stay"**

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Karen Murphy from the Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences led the parent volunteers through activities to educate us about where birds go for the winter and why.

ELF is a volunteer based program sponsored by the Bolton Conservation Trust where parents teach in the Florence Sawyer classrooms about the natural world. Three lessons are taught each school year. The program is designed to teach children a specific lesson through hands-on projects about the processes and connections in the natural world, and how the environment relates to us. The children learn in fun and inventive ways to appreciate and respect nature and all of its wonders. The reward is seeing them make the connections between their world and the world around them.

Tina Flaherty, Director of Education

***The Bolton Conservation Trust***

*Established 1974*

*Dedicated to its mission, "to assist in and promote the preservation of the rural character of Bolton, to preserve and maintain conservation areas, and to educate the public concerning the use of natural resources."*

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