

Hedgerows

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This Land Is Your Land — Support Local Conservation

Covaleski Property Cleanup

On a brisk October morning volunteers met on Califon Road to do some property maintenance. This was not the ordinary mow a trail or trim a branch job. This was debris clean-up.

Over time, prior to being placed into preservation, many used tires had been dumped in an “off the beaten trail” area of the property along with some other unwanted materials. There were 175 old used tires, storm windows, old glass and some bits of siding and screening material piled up.

The clean-up took about 2 hours, 3 trips with 2 trucks for the tires and a last one for trash. We eliminated some mosquito habitat and junk making our property that much more enjoyable for those who hike through it. Yes, it was work but we took time to meet and talk to each other, enjoying the day and our time together knowing we were making a difference.

If you have an interest in volunteering with us, you can e-mail us at obadiah1750@hotmail.com . Just let us know that you would like to be on our volunteer list and we will contact you when we need help with another project.

Thank you to our volunteers: Charlie Dauchert, Jim Fitterer, Ron Heil, John Holt, Chris Steffan and Tim Warrenner.



(Left) Tim Warrenner, Ron Heil, Jim Fitterer, Charlie Dauchert and John Holt

Photos courtesy of Chris Steffan

S O S

There is a saying “*If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem*”. WTLT has a problem and we hope you can be part of the solution.

Volunteers such as Chris Steffan have put her best effort into mowing and trimming the trails of Mill Pond Park with an occasional volunteer or two to assist. It takes her about 2 hours to mow all the trails. With the summer we had this year she could have used three more people to trade off work days.

Chris also organized a work day to initiate the removal of Japanese Knotweed which is taking over several areas of the park. We had three volunteers including Chris help with that effort, but we needed additional help to combat this invasive.

The Covalesky property on Califon Road is in need of trail work. We need to chainsaw some trees that fell during Storm Sandy. Who didn't have some damage from that?

You are probably thinking that you have similar issues at home and we can't argue with that. We do also. But, if you can spare an hour to two, your help would go a long way. Our properties would be better taken care of and none of us would be doing the lion share of work.

WTLT has preserved many acres in and around Washington Township and these properties require work:

Trails & Fences

Creating new trails and installing boundary fencing.



Lisa Delambert helping control the invasive Japanese Knotweed in Mill Pond Park.

Maintenance

Trimming trails to removal fallen branches or trees and help with the removal of invasive plants.

Observation

Watching that there are no misuses such as motorized vehicles driving through the properties, illegal dumping of trash, or damage to the properties, etc.

Helpful Solutions

Consider volunteering. Add or up-date your name & e-mail to our volunteer list so that we can contact you when we need help.

Consider adopting a trail. Make that trail your project.

Create a team of 2/3 friends and work together.

When using the trails for recreation, take a pair of clippers with you and trim that odd branch sticking out in the right of way. You may think this is minimal effort but this type of trimming would greatly improve the walk for everyone. (continued)

Becoming A Member Of WTLT

Submitted by John R. Holt

My non-scientific understanding of the idea of entropy includes the notion that such conditions for happiness and affirmation of living as order, balance, harmony, and beauty require for their creation and sustenance a continuous and vigorous application of energy. While the ultimate source of energy in our solar system seems to derive from the sun, in the human world of our construction—which includes ideas and institutions as well as farms and cities—the main energy source seems to be mental and spiritual. And by ‘spiritual’ I mean that set of espoused meanings and values that govern our existential choices and actions. It takes spiritual energy to keep the true, the good, and the beautiful alive and well. All it takes for the triumph of the false, the bad, and the ugly is for enough decent people just to give up and let their minds and spirits go to rot.

Mindful of the above global reflections, I have decided to act locally and become a member of, among other organizations, the Washington Township Land Trust.

I was attracted to this area when I was hired to the faculty of Centenary College, where I taught English and philosophy for twenty-two years before retiring a year ago. I fell in love with the rolling hills, the rocky ridges, the verdant parks, the sparkling streams and rivers and deciduous woods of northwest New Jersey; and my wife and I and our two dogs (the four children are now on their own) were lucky finally to find a house that suited us perfectly. We are grateful for all that the area’s natural and cultivated beauty has given us. Now I want to give back some of the positive energy that this environment has stimulated so that the next generation can enjoy what I have enjoyed.

The Land Trust “was organized to protect and preserve the ecological, cultural, and historical integrity of the areas that contribute to and enhance the rural character of Washington Township and its environs.” This mission is in line with what I value, and it’s one that requires volunteer energy and vigilance. When I first started commuting here from New Brunswick in 1989, the area was more rural than it is now; more farmland, more space. But others apparently felt as I do, and housing developments sprang up like mushrooms. I sympathized with the “No Mall In The Valley” signs that indicated opposition to the inevitable commercial growth that followed the

population growth, but how could I deny to others what I wanted for myself? Of course we face the old irony of ruining what we love by loving it unwisely; people are attracted by the rural character, and before long it’s not rural any more but just another exurb.

So it’s a balancing act, as is so much of our lives. Protect and preserve while undergoing change. It takes energy.



SOS (continued)

Advise WTLT when you see something that needs attention. Go to our website, www.wtlt.org and use the link to our e-mail.

If you have some other possible solutions to offer, we would love to hear them. Meanwhile, please enjoy the trails and keep our plea for help in mind.

Caryl Brackenridge views the invasive Japanese Knotweed infesting Mill Pond Park.

Washington Township Land Trust Annual Membership

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



Name _____

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

- Land preservation
- Mill restoration work
- Mill Park plantings/maintenance

Make check payable to: WTLT
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*Volunteers and Professional Services Needed.
Contact any WTLT officer for details.*



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