

# Essex Land Trust Annual Report



*Caring for our world here at home*

*May, 2023*

Essex Land Trust's 54<sup>th</sup> year of operation was commemorated at its Annual Meeting at Essex Meadows on April 27, 2023. Our members continue to support the land trust's mission of acquiring, preserving, and managing our preserves to protect the environment and small-town character of the villages of Centerbrook, Essex, and Ivoryton.

## Highlights of the Past Year

ELT President, Jeff Croyle, kicked off the meeting with highlights and accomplishments of the past year:

- Membership was up 5 % to 463.
- 23 preserves with 33 miles of trails representing 59% of the open space in Essex.
- Volunteers contributed an outstanding 5,000 hours of their time.
- Significantly increased our social media presence - Facebook followers were up 34% and, in just 7 months, we grew Instagram followers from 0 to 256.
- Recently published a local Wildlife Guide to be distributed to members as part of our upcoming membership renewal campaign.

Our Programs & Events Committee has been busy:

- Joined the Ivoryton July 4th parade with our decorated tractor/trailer and volunteers.
- Piloted three Hike and Happy Hour events at Fern Ledge, Windswept Ridge, and Canfield with meetups afterwards at local breweries.
- Besides the happy hour events, we had 3 "dry" hikes: Falls River Preserve led by Steward John Matthiessen, arborist Bob Kutcha led a tree identification hike at Canfield and Steward Scott McCoid led 70 hikers at the Millrace focused on the history of Ivoryton and the impact of the flood 40 years earlier.
- Had 2 paddles – a Nott Island circumnavigation and a North Cove/Falls River Cove paddle with local history provided by Jim Denham.
- VRHS students annual Warriors in the Community program benefited several land trust preserves.
- On Earth Day, ELT stewards worked with the VRHS Environmental Club to clean up Great Meadow. VP Bob Nussbaum worked with the Essex Library to transplant a swamp white oak from the library to Cross Lots while garden volunteers returned the favor by thinning bee balm from the Cross Lots pollinator garden and donated it to the library for their own garden.
- Held an informal Board Meet & Greet at Osage Trails to engage with members, discuss our current plans and volunteer opportunities and gather input from members.
- Celebrated 30 new Conservators for Life since the plaques on the Conservators Rock at Cross Lots were last updated.
- Commemorated Arbor Day with Essex Elementary's 3rd and 5th grade students by planting a tree on the school property.
- Held cleanups at Falls River Park, Osage Trails, and Cross Lots.



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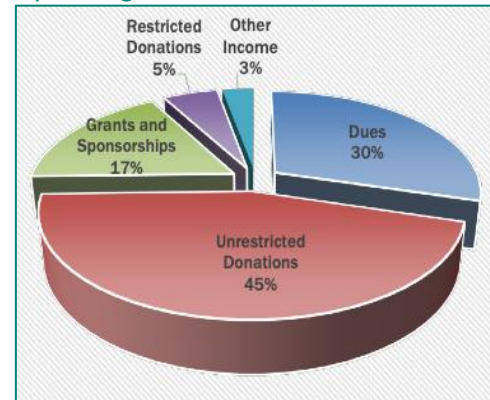
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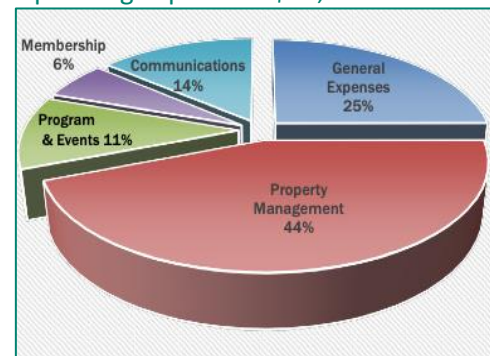
**Treasurer Report:** We had strong financial performance with our income exceeding operating expense by over \$45,000. We are thankful for the generous support of our donors and especially those who provided grants and sponsorships.

- ☞ Investment returns were down 12% from 2021 in line with overall stock market performance.
- ☞ We insourced our investment accounting work to reduce costs.
- ☞ Implemented PayPal enabling donations for unrestricted and restricted gifts.
- ☞ Brought on Bob Dryfoos, who has done an exceptional job of handling all incoming cash as Assistant to the Treasurer.
- ☞ Operating Income was up 41%, unrestricted donations increased 64% due to a jump in memorial contributions.
- ☞ Operating Expenses were down 3% versus prior year despite higher expenses in Communications and Events.

Operating Income - \$139,094



Operating Expenses - \$90,729



**Stewardship Report:** Stewardship of our 657 acres involves thousands of hours. and we continue to recruit new stewards and other volunteers.

- ☞ Our largest project was electrifying the Cross Lots barn. This created a much-improved workspace and facilitated the transition from gas to battery operated equipment.
- ☞ We purchased a visitor counter system to better understand where to deploy resources, the impact of changes/improvements we make to the access and interest of our preserves, and for future grant support by quantifying the impact on the community. We average 250-300 visitors daily across the six preserves we monitored.
- ☞ We continue to deploy effective methods for controlling invasive Japanese Barberry. The most effective methods tested include cutting and burning of the remaining stems in early summer and the applications of different herbicides in late summer.
- ☞ We hope to install a floating kayak/canoe dock at Falls River Park, which is the only public access point to the Mill Pond.
- ☞ Managing healthy wildlife habitats remains an important priority. Pam Peters and her volunteers maintain and enhance our pollinator gardens at Cross Lots, Pratt House, and Osage Trails.
- ☞ Our bird steward, John Mikstay, continues to work on restoring, renovating, and creating nesting locations around various preserves. We now have 18 bird nest boxes, one Wood Duck nest box, and one bat roost/maternity box across 5 preserves.

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- ☛ Pam Peters and Glenn Jacobsen led a team of over 20 volunteers that created and manage our American Chestnut orchard at Cross Lots. This was done in collaboration with the CT Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation. The team planted 50 nuts from 5 different parent trees from other CT orchards. By late summer we had a 75% survival rate. In about 5-7 years the trees should be ready to start producing nuts which will require special pollination techniques to ensure the nuts are 100% American species.



## Special Recognition

- ☛ The land trust board provided recognition plaques to long standing stewards Stuart Warner and Roger Field. Both are retiring after having been involved with the ELT for 25 years. Stuart has been instrumental at both Osage and The Preserve and Roger for his work at Canfield.
- ☛ The Board also thanked James Daly for his recent leadership of the Programs & Events Committee.

## Board Matters

Members approved the minutes from the prior year's Annual Meeting. They also approved the new Board classes as show below:

Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026
Jim Denham	Chet Arnold	Joel Anik
Tom Gezo	Jeff Croyle	Deb Carreau
Kathryn Ryan	Paul Greenberg	Carrie Daly
Barbara Sarrantonio	Leif Owens	Bob Nussbaum
-	-	Peter Holland

After the Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors elected the following new slate of Officers:

Jeff Croyle, President  
Deb Carreau, Treasurer

Bob Nussbaum, Vice President  
Carrie Daly, Secretary



# Members & Contributors

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This 2022 Essex Land Trust Members and Contributors list includes all family, individual, and corporate memberships, contributing foundations and organizations plus those making matching grants, and individuals in whose names we received memorial tributes during the year. We also list those who have joined the Falls River Society having decided to include the land trust in their estate planning. The support of all donors makes it possible for us to pursue our mission of acquiring, preserving, and managing open space to protect the environment and character of our community.

We look forward to your continued involvement and support in 2023 and encourage you to visit one of our 23 preserves representing over 650 acres. Visit our website at [essexlandtrust.org](http://essexlandtrust.org) to learn more about the land trust and read about upcoming events.

## **Conservator for Life**

John & Susan Abbot  
Chet & Wendy Arnold  
Janice & Tip Atkeson  
Charles Atwood & David Dedmon  
Leslie & Cotty Barlow  
Hollis & Gery Barry  
Mrs. John Bent  
Ina S. Bomze  
Richard & Barbara Booth  
Alison & Stephen Brinkmann  
John A. Bross  
Joanne Browne  
Mark Brustolon  
Richard Buel  
Ed & Suzy Burke  
Jennifer Tate & Walker Burns  
Grant & Peggy Cambridge  
David Canfield  
Richard Carlson  
Michael & Susan Carlucci  
Shirley & Judson Carr  
Deborah & Wright Carreau  
Bill & Helen Chatman  
Herb & Sherry Clark  
Community Foundation of  
Middlesex County  
Bill Connolly  
Mary Coolidge  
Peter Coombs & Jane Siris  
Kate Cordsen

## **Conservator for Life**

Jeff Croyle & Pam Peters  
Danielle Danese  
Tom & Alyson Danyliw  
Mr. & Mrs. Jan Deknatel  
Emme & Jonathan Deland  
Jim & Carol Denham  
Robert L. Doane  
Rob & Linda Douglas  
Robert & Theresa Dryfoos  
Reynolds Du Pont, Jr.  
Kathleen Duggan  
Judith Duran  
Ostrom Enders  
Bob & Debbie English  
Essex Savings Bank  
Mr. Harry Fanslau, Sr.  
Joseph Feczko & Leighton Gleicher  
Cynthia & Roger Field  
John & Lily Flory  
William J. & Sandra M. French  
John & Debbie Fuller  
The Fuller Family Foundation  
Geoff Furtney  
Eleanor Schneider  
The Galiette Family  
Joseph Garner & Leslie Scutt  
Richard W. Gates  
Bruce & Taffy Glowac  
Jenifer Grant & Ron Noe  
Paul & Phyllis Greenberg

## **Conservator for Life**

Janet & Malcolm Gross  
Dee Grover  
Steve & Barbara Haines  
Frank & Barbara Hall  
David & Verena Harfst  
Kristin Harris & Ian T. Douglas  
Frank P. Heinemann  
The Hermes Foundation, Inc.  
Rob Hernandez  
Chuck & Cathy Hill  
Dana & Joan Hill  
Charles & Tammy Hinckley  
Donn & Leslie Holland  
P.J. Hovey & Ralph Heath  
Jacqueline Hubbard & Norman  
Needleman  
Barbara & Robert Hughes  
Jeff & Julia Hutchinson  
Maureen Hyde  
Glenn & Melissa Jacobsen  
John & Emily Johl  
Polly Johnson  
Ned & Helene Johnson  
Mary Jones  
Kathy & Tom Kallman  
Kathryn S. Katz  
Christopher & Sarah Keenan  
Judy Kelsey  
Jon & Catherine Kirby  
The Kitchings Family

# Members & Contributors

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## **Conservator for Life**

Lisa Krall  
Phillip Krall  
Jean M. Leuchtenburg  
Moses Lieberman  
Hon. Terrance D. & Bette Lomme  
Jeff & Judy Lovelace  
The Lyon Family  
Carol MacElwee  
Alan & Barbara Macgregor  
Wendy & John Madsen  
Kathleen Maher & Chip Goodrich  
Susan Malan & Robert Ward  
Al & Barbara Marulli  
Joanne E. Masin  
Sophie Masin  
John & Alex Matthiessen  
George L. Maxwell  
Ross & Susan McConnell  
Locke & Sara McLean  
Joseph & DeniseMarie Kaire Mendler  
Mimi Merton  
Karen Milano  
Philip Miller  
Robert & Carolyn Miller  
Wilk & Dagmar Miller  
Mitchel-Foster Associates, LLC  
Garret & Mary Penniman Moran  
MUR Properties  
Bob Nussbaum & Claire Matthews  
Tony & Sue O'Connor  
Carmen O'Connor  
Patrick & Amy O'Keefe  
Wini Olson  
Leif & Kristen Owens  
William L. Palmer & Family  
Terry Parkinson  
Joan & Douglas Paul  
Dr. Michael & Susan Perl  
Michael Plouf & Toni Robinson  
Rives & Nancy Potts  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter S. Prichard

## **Conservator for Life**

Nancy Rambeau  
Ernie & Linda Reamer  
Pam Reeser & David Winstead  
Mark J. Reeves  
Joan & Bill Reichenbach  
Lynn Richardson  
Richard Rieder  
River View Cemetery  
Dr. Allan Rubenstein & Dr. Jane Halperin Rubenstein  
Tom & Lucy Rutherford  
Barbara Sarrantonio  
Michael Saxe  
Linda & Philip Scheffler  
Rennie & Judy Schoonmaker  
Mr. & Mrs. John Senning  
David & Theresa Sistare  
Brant Smith  
Helen Smits & Roger LeCompte  
Barbara & Myron Stacks  
Madeline Stanley  
Janet & Michael Stoner  
Zack Storms  
Fowler Storms  
Jim & Robbi Storms  
Jeffrey Sund & Jane Piro  
Peggy & Howard Tuttle  
Jody Van Loan  
Jim & Nancy Vaughn  
The Waldo Trust  
Mimi & Stuart Warner  
Tom & Betsy Whidden  
Mr. & Mrs. William Whitney  
Rosemary Willis  
Matthew & Judith Winkler  
Vicky Winterer

## **Explorer**

Carl Boland & Jennifer Clark  
Chris Bray  
Ann Thompson & Jim Childress

## **Explorer**

Thomas & Sally Crawford  
Victoria Hanor & Charles Bumbar  
Joan & Keith Jones  
David & Barbara Preston  
Jean M. Richards  
The Rogers Family  
Tracey & Mauricio Salgar  
Elizabeth & Marc Schnitzer  
Susan & Peter Scott  
Catherine Stevens & Juliette Meeus  
Amanda & Mike Tevis  
Molly & David Watkins

## **Adventurer**

Paula & Joel Anik  
Diana & Bob Annon  
Loretta Berry  
The Blicharz Family  
Kathleen & Lawrence Bolanowski  
Jennifer Chu & John Weikart  
David & Audrey Conrad  
Andrew Corbin  
Michael & Beth Crain  
Claire E. Crosby  
Michael Cunningham  
The D'Occhio Family  
James & Carrie Daly  
Mrs. R. Dempsey  
Genie & Rodney Devine  
Marialina Dominguez  
Robert J. Donohue  
Jim Godzman  
Ed & Judy Greene  
Bob & Susan Grillo  
Marilou & Andrew Griswold  
Steve Hall  
Scott and Karen Harris  
Richard & Elise Helmecki

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## **Adventurer**

Karen & Michael Hines  
Candace Holmes  
Fred & Lu Huntington  
Tom & Valerie Izzo  
Susan Jobson  
James L. Kerr & Helen H. Miller  
William & Lisa Leonard  
Joseph Lux & Margaret Fagan  
Shirley Malcarne  
Louis Mazzaresse  
Ben McGuire & Joshua Janson  
Henry & Sharon McInerney  
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Muhlfelder  
August F. Pampel, Jr.  
John & Melinda Patterson  
Eleanor Perkins  
Whitney Weeks & Doug Pickett  
Mary Ann & Fred Pleva  
Anna Pollock  
Dennis & Verity Powers  
Barbara Prendergast  
Leslie Quarrier & Peter Amos  
Carol & James Richmond  
Howard Rifkin & Devon Dabbs  
John & Kathryn Ryan  
Ms. Judith M. Saunders  
Jim Scala  
Terry Stewart  
Robert Surdam & Patricia Ellis  
Fred Szufnarowski  
Lois Stahlbush Tolley & Steve Tolley  
Susan Van Benschoten  
David McDonald & Dita Varleta  
Bruce Weiss  
Beth & Michael Whitcomb  
Lynda & Dan Wilkes  
Mrs. Jerome Wilson  
Ariel Crohn & Jon Wojculewicz

## **Adventurer**

Alexandra Zablocki  
**Trekker**  
Bob & Barbara Anselmi  
Tom Atkinson  
The Baczewski Family  
George Ann Bardenheier  
Diana Blair  
Stephen & Linda Boatti  
Pierre & Dawn Boulanger  
Marylou & Ian Bowen  
Cathy Burnett & Arthur Bogen  
Maureen Butler  
Susan Campbell  
Brett D. Carey  
David A. Carlson  
Randy & Cynthia Clegg  
Mary C. Colburn  
Elizabeth Comstock  
Laura Copland & Michael Pressman  
Keith & Carolyn Crehan  
Fred & Carol DeCrescentis  
Rebecca & Chris Dowler  
Elaine M. Erdman  
Linda Esty  
Neal Fisher & Susan Grant  
Peter B. Fleischer  
Earl & Liz Fowler  
Jim & Celia Francis  
Michael Furgueson  
Tom & Aurise Gallucci  
The Gatto Family  
Tom & Evelyn Gezo  
Ann & Patrick Callahan  
William Graham  
Chuck & Rose Grusse  
Mr. & Mrs. David T. Guernsey, Jr.  
Patricia L. Harper  
Carol Harper  
Kathy & Larry Heebner

## **Trekker**

Jenny & Peter Holland  
Dick & Gail Hoxsey  
Ona & Todd Josselyn  
Maggy & Mike Kaczorowski  
Susan Kaufmann  
Maxine Klein & David Zeleznik  
Nancy Kozlik  
Richard & Linda Levene  
Craig & Kathy Lifland  
The Lopez Family  
Rona Malakoff & Ethan Goller  
Bob Malchiodi  
Bob & Alison Marcinek  
Stan & Linda Marciniak  
Dick & Pat Mather  
Sally & George Mayer  
Lisa Melnicsak & Keith Kelley  
Alan & Clara Miller  
Alan Miller & Janet R. Sparrow  
Len & Beebe Miller  
Andrew & Monica Mitchel  
Ron & Sue Nelson  
David & Brenda Newbegin  
Philip & Linda Nuzzo  
Connie O'Brien  
Gregory & Jan Perruccio  
Carol Pierce  
Rina Pollak  
Tom & Mary-Louise Polo  
Robin Pool  
Todd Rossel  
Mr. & Mrs. William H. Ryan  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael T. Ryland  
Susan E. Saltus  
Mary Lee Schroeter  
Donald Shildneck  
Thomas & Karen Smith  
Tom Soboleski  
Lois & Ken Thomsen

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## **Trekker**

Paul Thornwall  
Charles Tremayne & Caroline Grist  
Kathleen McKinney Tucker  
Howard Tunick  
Drew Viner & Lisa McGill  
Gary & Carol Weed  
George & Kirsten Wendell  
Debra Whalen  
Joseph Youll  
William & Elisa Young  
Polly W. Zarella

## **Hiker**

The Mangan Family  
Joanna Aversa  
Jennifer Baier  
Dee Beckmann  
Frank, Joan & Laura Behrendt  
Dudley & Mary Lawrence Bickford  
Linda & Peter Bierrie  
Kathryn Bonomi & Sam Tanenhaus  
Linda Brughelli  
Sharon Bush  
Anthony & Mary Cannella  
Joseph Carfagno  
Mark Carroza  
Katherine Clark-Nilsson  
David & Merry Coleman  
Elizabeth H. Cook  
Bob & Sue Cornell  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Coviello  
Ronald & Mary Ellen Cozzolino  
Catherine Craighead  
Christine Rogers & Marc Croteau  
Anthony J. B. Cutone  
Diane & Robert Day  
Joe & Karen DiRenzo  
Michelle & James D. Duffy  
Scott Eigner

## **Hiker**

Finlay & Mary Ferguson  
Jean Fisher  
Jill Frazer  
Linda Freedman  
Anne Gantner  
David Gephard  
Steve Gephard & Leslie  
MaLise-Kane  
Patrick Gilbert  
Karen Giugno  
Charles & Barbara Goodwin  
Francis R. Greco  
Aimie Gresham & Vince Mangano  
Mellicent & Bill Hawke  
John & Judy Heiser  
Rich & Rachel Higgins  
Sarah Hodge-Wetherbe  
Renate Houchin  
Patricia Hurley  
Kayla Hushin  
Janet Irving  
William & Susan Jackson  
Joell Jacob & Gerry Polinsky  
Gerri Jardine  
Burton & Susan Jaynes  
Alexandra & Bruce Johnson  
Robert Johnson  
Celia Johnson  
Joanne N. Kelley  
Louisa Ketrone  
Sharon Lewis  
Nikki Lindberg  
Jim Lockhart  
Nicole Logan  
Suzanne Magruder  
Michele Marshall  
Claire K. Matthews  
Richard Mawhinney

## **Hiker**

Scott McCoid  
Peggy McDonnell  
Diane M. Niles  
Robert Osborn Jr.  
Christine Palm  
Richard Paolino  
Steve & Lynn Patarini  
Karen Paulson  
Denise Peterson  
Ellen Pfarr  
The Rev. & Mrs. George W.  
Razee  
Sarah Richardson & Rich Olson  
Rebecca Russell  
Roger Salway  
George & Dianne Sexton  
Judy Shepherd  
Douglas Shomo  
Michael & Karen Silverberg  
Daniel & Mara Slatkin  
Denise Smith  
Susan & Randy Sokol  
Joan & Nicholas Squeglia  
Kim & Randy Stafford  
Jack & Barbara Stillwaggon  
Barbara Stratton  
Claire Tiernan  
Linda Tosti  
Gail & Bill Tubbs  
Hans & Barbara Ullstein  
Anne Vasbinder  
William J. Vile Sr.  
Catharine Wagner  
Lana Westgate  
Chet & Eileen White  
Janice Wilson  
Andrea Woolston  
Cicely Worrall

# Members & Contributors

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## Corporate Members

Acer Gardens  
A. J. Shea Construction  
Anne Penniman Associates, LLC  
Bartlett Tree Experts  
Bogaert Construction Company  
Brett Law, LLC  
Brockway Island LLC  
Burr Capital Advisors  
Centerbrook Architects and Planners  
Computer Signs  
Essex Hardware  
Essex Meadows  
Essex Printing Company, LLC  
Essex Savings Bank  
Giroux Landscaping LLC  
Haskins Electric, LLC  
J. B. Filtration LLC  
Kaufmann Masonry LLC  
L. C. Doane Company  
Mara Lavitt Photography  
Paulson Training Programs  
Stevens Excavating  
The Clark Group  
The Sugar Kelp Cooperative  
Tower Laboratories, Ltd.  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
WollackLewitz, LLC  
YearOne

## Corporate Matching Grants

3M  
Virtus Partners

## Foundations and Organizations

AmazonSmile Foundation  
Carlson Family Foundation  
Chester Kitchings Family Foundation  
Community Foundation of Middlesex County  
Community Foundation of Middlesex County/Janvrin Fund  
Community Foundation of Middlesex County/Jones Family Fund  
Community Foundation of Middlesex County/Marilyn C. Fall Fund  
Community Foundation of Middlesex County/Alison & Stephen Brinkmann Family Fund  
Essex Lions Club  
Essex Savings Bank  
Joanne E. Masin Foundation  
MRB Foundation

## Gifts in Memory

Ann Nussbaum  
Betsy Godsman  
Bill Grover  
Carl Shroeter  
Christopher Winkler  
David Kelsey  
Jack MacElwee  
Kate McSpadden  
Raymond & Marion Groce

## Gifts in Honor

Al Macgregor  
PJ Hovey  
Roger & Cynthia Field

## Falls River Society

Fisher Buell  
Elizabeth Callender  
Anne Comstock  
Daniel Dewey  
Elizabeth Dewey  
Harriet Cheney Downing  
Jean R. Hanor  
Robert Nussbaum  
Philip Putnam  
Richard Tredwell  
Estelle Ives Zahn



The accreditation seal is awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

## Mission & Vision

The Essex Land Trust acquires, preserves, and manages its open space to protect the environment and small-town character of the villages of Centerbrook, Essex, and Ivoryton for current and future generations and provides our community with recreational and educational opportunities through strategic acquisitions and responsible stewardship of properties with significant environmental value.

Our vision is to provide the Essex community with a network of permanently protected preserves that give residents of all ages ample opportunities to enjoy the beauty of nature while safeguarding our waterways, wetlands, and supporting healthy wildlife habitats.