

RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST

2002 ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Meeting of the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust was held at the Elementary School, 1 PM on April 7, 2002. Co-chair Peggy Sanders noted that our main business was the election of trustees. Trustees Steve Weiss and Alison Whitlock chose not to seek re-election. The Nominating Committee recommended Ken Kahn, Linda Thomas and Jenny Daniell, who were elected unanimously for three-year terms. Glen Ayers, Al Shane, Joan Godsey, Peggy Sanders and Annette Gibavic agreed to serve another term. At our following meeting, officers elected were Co-chairs Peggy Sanders and Mary Alice Wilson, Treasurer Lou Bannister, Secretary Annette Gibavic and nominating committee Peggy Sanders and Joan Godsey. Our new t-shirts, designed by Peggy Sanders, were on display and on trustees, and are being well-received.

Following the Annual Meeting, Julie Grow and her partner Jim Parks gave a sparkling program of their Wingmasters Birds of Prey, which included a golden eagle, a red-tailed hawk, falcons and owls—barred, snowy and saw-whet. Their presentation was one of seamless harmony to a rapt audience of adults and children. Julie and Jim returned to give another presentation at the Harvest Festival in October. Their contributions on our behalf are much appreciated.

During the year there was continued activity in East Leverett Meadow. Sheila Seaman secured a Field & Pond grant to further work on our entrance and signage. Appreciation of this area for birding was furthered by an early morning walk with Harvey Allen on April 18. Mary Alice Wilson has developed bird lists. Work parties have addressed the maintenance of the Meadow, and we continue to study its management in terms of haying, animal control, etc.

The Frances King Memorial Program, held at the Elementary School on March 5 featured wildlife biologist Trina Moruzzi Moore, who gave two talks to upper and lower grades. Slides, pelts, track cards and models of wildlife in Leverett were of much interest to the kids, as well as the fact that she grew up and went to school in Leverett.

A very successful fund drive named "Gateway" was launched in the fall, when an important parcel at the foot of the Gutter became negotiable. A significant anonymous gift, the largest single contribution ever made to RGT, and a very effective town-wide appeal sparked a rewarding response from our loyal Leverett citizens as well as from other land trusts. A fall "Gateway" hike was well attended.

Mary Alice Wilson began a much-needed effort to organize our duties in monitoring our land and conservation restriction holdings. Researching our responsibilities, creating a baseline notebook and scheduling monitoring dates that could be done before snowfall, she has made an impressive start in this work.

Besides organizing the Gateway Fund Drive with Joan Godsey, and conducting a wildflower workshop, Jean Bergstrom has begun town-wide map work in designating protected areas. This makes visible our progress in establishing wildlife corridors and prioritizing areas important to preserve.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Gibavic, Secretary