

RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST
2003 ANNUAL REPORT

Report of the Secretary

The Annual Meeting of the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust was held on June 21, 2003. Undeterred by the spring-long threat of rain, we met at the foot of Laurel Hill Drive, car-pooled to the cul-de-sac at the top of the hill and then hiked down to the foot. The trail was lovely, mountain laurel in bloom surrounded us, and a thrush provided music. The business meeting was conducted at the Mall at Moore's Corner. Water rushing down the Sawmill River, accompanied by the rain which had finally caught up with us, also provided music. Our "swinging" co-chair (seated in the swing in the middle of the floor!) called attention to the Annual Report of the Secretary and Treasurer and various maps of our holdings. Gwyn Mitchell was elected as a trustee.

A major accomplishment this year was the revision of our by-laws, through Mary Alice Wilson's inspired suggestion of devoting 10 minutes of each meeting to this end and the threat of another meeting if not completed. The monitoring of our conservation restriction lands was scheduled and nearly completed. At long last, the Schuyler CR was approved and added to our list.

Our major monthly financial boost still comes from the recycling efforts of Gordon King, assisted by his faithful few, which has now reached over \$36,000. We were the recipient of gifts given in memory of Edna Emerson, who lived many years on Cave Hill.

This year's Frances King Memorial Program on May 29 occasioned the return of another Leverett Elementary School graduate, Anne Gibavic, who recently hiked Vermont's Long Trail, 285 miles from the Canadian border to the Massachusetts line. Anne set up her tent in the school library, letting the children take turns crawling in. Her book, *Alone but Not Lonely*, is in the Leverett Library.

An important meeting with the director of Conservation Services, Joel Lerner, and an environmental education specialist at UMass, Attorney Robert Levine, was held on October 28 and was well-attended by area conservation groups. In November, Chris Condit gave a fascinating presentation of digital maps and archeology, also at the Leverett Library, also well-attended—including persons who could understand his technology!

Several outdoor activities and hikes during the year were organized and led by RGT trustees Al Shane, Jean Bergstrom and Joan Godsey, including a Woodcock Walk, a Brushy Mountain hike and a Wildflower Ramble.

The Trust has been in contact and negotiations with several landowners who are interested in protecting their land with our assistance. We are increasingly being contacted on preservation issues.

We appreciate the cooperation and support of our larger membership and are eager to involve interested parties in our efforts to protect and preserve this lovely part of our increasingly troubled world.

Annette Gibavic
Secretary