

## President Signs Bill Expanding Conservation Tax Incentives

On August 17, 2006, President Bush signed the 2006 Pension Reform Bill, legislation that included a provision that provides wonderful new incentives to protect land.

The provision, which expires at the end of 2007, will:

- increase the charitable deduction limit from 30% to 50% of adjusted gross income (AGI) for donations or bargain sales of qualified conservation contributions;
- increase the charitable deduction limit to 100% of AGI for eligible farmers and ranchers (i.e., those who receive more than 50% of their income from farming or ranching), so long as the contribution does not prevent future agricultural use; and
- allow the taxpayer to carry forward the deduction for 15 years (rather than five years).

These new rules apply to gifts of real property interests (typically, a conservation easement) to public agencies or nonprofit conservation organizations exclusively for conservation purposes. As before, conservation purposes include the conservation of land areas for outdoor recreation and education, scenic protection, habitat and ecosystem protection, preservation of historically important lands and/or certified historic structures, and other public benefits.

The new provisions will apply to donations made during calendar years 2006 and 2007. These changes provide added incentive for landowners to donate or make bargain sales of conservation easements to land trusts and conservation organizations.

As always, every conservation easement must clearly identify the purposes of the easement and the resources to be protected. Any reserved rights must be consistent with the protection of the conservation values of the property. The donee land trust, the Steep Rock

Association for example, must have the commitment and the resources to enforce the terms of the restriction.

## Trustees Elected

**Mark Averill, Natalie Dyer, John Potter and Steve Solley** were reelected to the Board after one year off. Steep Rock's by-laws state that Trustees may serve two consecutive three year terms but then must go off the Board for one year. During their year off the Board, they were all active volunteers: John and Steve were members of the Preservation and Forestry Committees; Mark helped on the Stewardship Committee and he's invaluable at the Picnic; and Natalie stayed on the Trails Committee, overseeing all the volunteer trail monitors and organizing volunteer workdays.

**Lars Andersson, Bill Coleman and Peary Stafford** are the new Trustees elected to the Board.

**Lars Andersson**, an investment banker at JP Morgan, lives at Gunn Hill Farm, New Preston and New York City with his wife and three children. Lars is a strong believer in protecting open space, agricultural lands, forests and the rural character of our area.

**Bill Coleman** writes: "We have been in town since March 1988 and have enjoyed it ever since. When my kids were younger they hiked all through Steep Rock, when they were not swimming on the Shepaug summer swim team. I am a retired attorney in Brooklyn New York and Steep Rock has been one of my refuges from the hectic professional life".

Since arriving in the area 20 years ago, **Peary Stafford** has particularly enjoyed the natural elements of the Steep Rock reservations, especially its birds and insects. Peary says he looks forward to actively participating in protecting its beauty and wildlife. He can be found most any day walking the trails with his binoculars and camera in hand. Peary is the author of the charming and informative "Salamanders In Love" article on

page 2 .



*Laetiporus sulphureus* in Steep Rock

# Salamanders in Love

or

## Salamandr'Amour

By Peary Stafford, Steep Rock Trustee

---

Try this the next time you're enjoying your dinner or a glass of wine on a rainy April night: put on a pair of boots, grab your rain gear and a strong flashlight, and head off for the hemlock forests of Steep Rock. Once there, get out in the rain and stare into a pond for an hour or so. If the time is right and you're discreet with the light, you might just get a glimpse into the intimate world of salamanders in love.



The smell of homemade Chicken Cacciatore was wafting through the house and I was considering the Heineken chilling in refrigerator when the phone rang. I knew it would be Betsy Corrigan (a fellow Steep Rock Trustee) and almost dreaded the call. "You wanna go?" came the question across the line, and I knew I had to say yes. She and I had been exploring the vernal pools of Steep Rock over the past few weeks and that afternoon we'd talked about hoping the rain would continue into the night. As it had done just that I knew I had no excuse for copping out so I said "Sure!" with an enthusiasm not entirely heart-felt. My wife, BK, shrugged acquiescence and turned off the stove; we pulled on our rain jackets and stepped out into the rainy night. The aroma of that chicken dogged me all the way to Steep Rock.

As I dodged various migrating amphibians on our way into the preserve any patrolling policeman would surely have thought me more than one sheet to the wind. Fortunately, no police lights appeared; rather it was the lights of John & Betsy's car that rose in the mirror as they came down the dirt road behind us. When Betsy and I had inspected the pool near the railroad bed the day before, we found Wood Frog eggs and what looked like Jefferson Salamander eggs, but

none of the eggs of the far more common Spotted Salamander and we were trying to figure out why. Maybe the conditions hadn't been just right and the Spotteds hadn't yet bred? Was the dry weather of this spring deferring the normal timetable? We weren't sure but perhaps this evening's rain would bring all the right elements together and tonight would be the night.

Spotted Salamanders (*Ambystoma maculatum*) are one of the species in a group of amphibians called Mole Salamanders; so named because they spend the vast majority of their adult lives underground, eating worms, larva, centipedes, arthropods and other delicacies. About the only time they emerge from the burrows that they borrow from small rodents or from under the fallen logs that they favor in the upland woods is when the first warm rains of March or April arrive and soak through the earth. It's then that they bestir themselves and move back to the vernal pool they were born in; sometimes forming mass migrations of hundreds of animals. They've only one thing on their mind at this point – the reproduction of their species – and that's what we were hoping we'd be privy to tonight.

I know it all seems a bit voyeuristic but Betsy has been studying vernal pools for a long time without seeing this ritual and I, a recent arrival to the vernal pool set, had certainly never seen it. Hell, I'd never even seen a Spotted Salamander! Besides, it's not as if the salamanders would care!

There was no give in the rain during the short walk from the cars to the pool, and my mind drifted back to the goodies waiting for me back home. When we got to the pool it looked like I might be back there enjoying them sooner than I had thought. The strong beams of our lamps revealed a few caddisfly larvae and diving beetles but nary a salamander. Even with the rain plinking the surface of the water, it was remarkably clear, allowing us to see every detail of the leaf litter bottom.

But we hadn't come out into this unpleasant night to see leaf litter and I was seriously considering decamping when quietly, John said, "There's one" and we

followed the beam of his light to the bottom of the pool. There in all his glory, lying on the masses of leaves, was a male Spotted Salamander. Almost eight inches long, he was a slender black beast made up of a stack of segments like tiny doughnuts; almost like a stretched-out amphibian Michelin man. Shiny brilliant yellow spots adorned each segment the entire length of his body as well as his legs, head and tail. The contrast of the yellow spots with

# Members of the Steep Rock Association

## Fiscal Year October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006.

---

The Steep Rock Association is a land trust founded in 1925 by Ehrick Rossiter when he purchased the 100 acres of land that included Steep Rock itself. Steep Rock has always relied on contributions from friends to help defray the costs of managing the land we own. This financial support is crucial to our operating budget. We are most grateful to the following members for their support during our last fiscal year .

Joe & Ruth Abdella	Joe & Ruth Bilotta	Joel Confino & Lisa Alter	W. Russ Elgin
Lou & Kay Abella	Judy Black & Richard Schlosberg	Gale Conley	John Endicott
Richard & Patricia Abrams	Mr. & Mrs. George M. Blake	Jane Conn	John & Karen Erickson
Louis & Anne Abrons Foundation	Mr. & Mrs. C. D. Blinn	Roberta B. Connolly & Arthur M. Miller	Donald Etherington
Alice Adams	Judith & Roger Bogin	Beth Conrad	Noel & Starr Evans
Margaret Addicks	Stephen & Christine Boies	Barbara Ann & David S. Cook	Bill & Martha Fairbairn
Jerome & Alice Adesman	Christopher B. Boshears & Todd B. Catlin	Craig & Valerie Cooper	Ashley & Tom Farmen
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Aeschliman	The Boulders Inn	Mr. Paul L. Cornell, Jr.	Gretchen & Philip Farmer
Ruth M. Alex	Newton R. Bowles	Betsy Corrigan	Pat Farrell
John & Phyllis Allen	Jane & John Boyer	Nancy & Fred Costello	Sally A. Fasman
Christopher & Valerie Andersen	Keith & Elaine Brackett	Ann P. Dahl	Wendy & Eric Federer
Ky Anderson	Bessie Bradley	Tony Daloisio & Teresa Hargrave	Mr. & Mrs. Edward P. Fedor
Kenneth M. Anderson	Susan Branson	Stuart S. Daly	Debra Feeks
Donald & Prudence Anderson	Dr. & Mrs. Alan Braverman	Timothy & Laura Daly	Norman M. Feinberg
The Andryc Family	Randall & Reggie Breeckner	Nina Dana	Ann & Bob Ficks
Mrs. Harold A. Anson	Julia & Peter Brennan	Mr. Roger Danford & Mr. Richard Higgins	Mr. & Mrs. John H. Field
Anonymous (6)	Daniel Bresnan	Tom & Betty Daniels	Arnold & Roberta Fink
Jim & Pat Appleyard	Stephen & Wanda Brighenti	James & Anne-Marie Davenport	The First National Bank of Litchfield
James Appleyard	Barbara Brinton	Joan & William Davidson	Laurel Fisher
Bill & Geri Appleyard	Lisa Brooks	John P. Davidson	Ellen Fitzgerald
Charlotte P. Armstrong	Mr. & Mrs. Robert D. Brown	Elliot & Karen Davis	John J. Flynn, Jr.
Denise & Peter Arturi	Mrs. Graham M. Brush, Jr.	Mary & George Davis	Frank & Joan Foley
Judith & George Auchincloss	Susan Buckley & Lance Sherman	Florence S. Day	Ruth Miller Forge
Lucy V. Averill & Ralph Averill	Jean Ann Burr	William & Norma Deacon	Dr. Allen Fossbender
Mark Averill	Ann M. Burton	The deCourcy & de Sieyes Families	Patricia J. Fowler
Susan & Sam Averill	Fredrick & Virginia Byerly	Amy DeLuca	Mr. & Mrs. J. Winston Fowlkes, III
John & Nancy Babington	Hilary & Joseph Califano	The DeMeo Family	Linda & Paul Frank
Danielle Baechle & Jules Finker	Don & Holly Camp	Mr. & Mrs. Philip N. deVries	Joan Friedland
Diane & Robert Baker	Carlos & Gay Canal	Liz & Larry Dexheimer	Sidney & Rod Funston
Penny & Bill Bardel	Sandra Canning	Josephine & Paul Dobkin	Carol H. Fyfield
Joan & Jeffrey Barist	Peter B. Canoni & Fritzie Updegraph	Mark & Fiona Donovan	Ronald Garfunkel
Jane & Howard Barnett	Mr. & Mrs. Allan R. Capellaro	Paul Douglas	Lisa Gifford
Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Basile	Michael Caroe	Joseph A. Doyle	Alison Gilchrist
Dick & Diana Beattie	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel J. Carten	Peter Duchin	David & Camille Gillespie
David A. Behnke & Paul F. Doherty	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Catlin, Jr.	Jack & June Dunbar	Joe & Joanna Gitterman
Marie H. Bender	Jean D. Chapin	Marc C. Duncan	Clarence O. Godwin
John & Doris Benford	Janet D. Chenery	Alan Dunkelberger	Julie & Zack Goodyear
Robert & Laura Benn	Ron & Nancy Chute	Dust Away Cleaning, LLC	Harold Gootrad
Rebecca & Ted Bent	Hollis & Ted Clark	Brad & Donna Dutcher	David & Kim Gordon
Jayne Bentzen & Benedict Silverman	Kenyon and Manny Clark	Richard & Helen Dutton	Ferris G. Gorra
Mr. & Mrs. Randolph Bernard	Julie Lynn Clark	Margaret F. Duus	Judie Gorra
Ms. Mary C. Casler	Ann Clifford	Natalie & Elisha Dyer	Mr. & Mrs. James A. Graham, Jr.
Marko Beznosiuk	The Coleman Family	Eagle Electric Service	Philip Grausman & Judith Petrovitch
Craig & Amy Bibb	Mr. & Mrs. George Colettis	Susan & Michael Eanes	Lisa Gray & Alan Organschi
Flora M. Biddle	Nelly & Michael Condon	Ebner Camps, Inc.	Mr. & Mrs. Wallace A. Gray

## Steep Rock Members 2005–2006, cont.

Margaret Clement Green	Anne-Marie Keegan & Gregg Reinhart	Mara McDonald	A. Leonard Parrott
Mary Anne Greene	Kathryn & John Kehoe	Annette R. McDonald	Peter & Denise Pasch
Gloria & Marty Greenstein	Chris & Sue Kelly	Dr. William H. McDonald	Susan & John Payne
John Greenwood	Jim & Joanne Kelly	Patrick & Robin McGrath	Sally G. Paynter
Doug & Kaatri Grigg	Ann Khouri & Leonard Bass	Denise & Alex McNaughton	Mr. & Mrs. Phillips H. Payson
Margaret Grimes	Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Kiiffner	Elsie & Bill McTiernan	Kirsten M. Peckerman
William R. Grose	Karen Lavine & Donald Kilpatrick	James & Cornelia Mead	Bill & Marilyn Peirce
Dr. & Mrs. Allen Grunberg	Louise W. King	Mercedes Mestre	Mr. & Mrs. Henry B. Pennell, III
The Gunnery	Bill & Julie King	Louise & Harold Meyer	Laura Nafis & Edward Pennington
Murray & Susan Haber	Charles Kinney	The Stairway Fund	Susan C. Peterson
J.C. David Hadden	William & Susan Kinsolving	Georgianna L. Middlebrook	Diana & Eugene Pinover
Jean & Roald Haestad	Erika Leigh Klauer	Dwight D. Miller	Rod Pleasants & Steve Godwin
Tante Marie's Cooking School	Stewart E. & Leila Larsen Klein	Anna H. Carew-Miller & Chapin Miller	Priscilla Manning Porter
Sunny & Michael Halperin	Klemm Real Estate	Edwina & John Millington	Peter & Jan Poskas
Gael Hammer	Kris Knoernschild & Mark Murzin	Margaret Miner & Hugh Rawson	Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Potter
Jane-Howard Hammerstein	Rita & Colin Knudsen	Wendell & Florence Minor	John & Anne Potter
Joseph J. Hanggi, Jr.	Richard Krantz	Cynthia & Tom Mitchell	Mr. & Mrs. James M. Powers
Monica & Christian Harcken	Mark Krentzman & Caroline Vanderlip	The Mnuchin Foundation	Laverne Prager
Diana Hardee	Henry W. Kunhardt	John & Amy Moisan	Alec & Drika Purves
Ivy & Ted Harrington	Mr. & Mrs. Charles La Muniere	Kevin & Allison Mongeau	Jayson C. Quist
Mr. & Mrs. Henry W. Hart	Nancy LaFrance	Prudence M. Montrezza	The Raymunt Family
Rita & Gus Hauser	Miss Tillie Page Laird	Theodore D. Moore	Elizabeth R. Rea
Jane & Bill Havemeyer	Nancy & Stephen Lasar	Egbert Most & Regina Badura	Ray & Sue Reich
Jean Hazelton	Kathy & Dan Leab	Mr & Mrs. John Mullen	Maggie Condon & Peter Repplier
Douglas C. Heaven	Molly Leach & Lane Smith	Rob Lee Muller	Madeline & Paul Revere
Minna Hebert	Leslie S. Lebl	The Mulvehill Family	Robert J. & Virginia V. Reynolds
Mrs. Jean Hellyer	Virginia Lee & Robin Grossman	Mr. & Mrs. George Murdock	David & Sally Reynolds
Jean V. S. Henry	Dan Levinson	Beatrice Murgio	Hal Rhodes
Anne & John Herrmann	Mr. & Mrs. Melvyn Lewinter	Mrs. George A. Murphy	Brian & Eileen Riano
Anton & Sigrid Hildmann	Joe & Kathy Linley	C. J. Muse & Ashley Goodale	Beth & Tom Rickart
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hinckley	Leslie & John Lintner	Emma & Matthew Muszala	Jane Risley
Kenneth Hipp	Richard Lipsett	Milton & Joan Myers	Elizabeth M. Rives
James & Robin Hirschfield	Michael & Jill Lloyd	Robert & Sandra Natale	George Roberts
The Hopkins Inn	Ann & Michael Loeb	Gunnar & Nancy Neilson	Adelaide C. Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Houldin	William & Wendy Luers	Dick & Peggy Neimeth	Polly Roberts
Peter & Hilary Houldin	Paula & Eric Madoff	Jack Nelson & Jeanne Sargent	Mr. & Mrs. R. Rockwell
Bill & Nancy Houldin	Susan & John Magee	Carol & Stan Nelson	Peter Rogness & Robert Parker
Drs. Orion & Lisa Howard	Anne Maitland & Paul Baiocchi	Gail & Eric Nelson	The Rosenstock Family
Charles Taylor Howard	S. John Malinowski	Marjorie Neuwirth	Robert & Nancy Ross
Helen & Derek Hughes	Ron & Linda Mandle	Franklin Nichols & Terri Tibbatts	Thomas W. Rossiter
Kitty & Rick Hunt	Susan Mandler & Robby Barnett	Paul & Christine Nussbaum	Gaila & Peter L. Rossiter
Dennis Hussey	Paul Manfredi	Joni & Jerry O'Brien	Sheryl & Bill Rubinstein
J. Seitz & Co.	Ecton & Betsy Manning	Conan & Liza O'Brien	Mark & Sharon Ruchman
Pam & Mike Jackson	John & Ingrid Manning	Pat O'Conner & Stewart Kellerman	Rumsey Hall School
Drs. Ruth & Robert Jaffe	Anthony Manzi	Alexis Moore O'Connolly	Michele Rybos
Elliot & Roslyn Jaffe	Peter & Maureen Marcucio	Mr. & Mrs. H. Tom O'Connor	Erica Ryland
Susan Jahnke	Phil & Susan Markert	Robert E. O'Keefe & Katherine Webster-O'Keefe	Mary & Arthur Sachs
Charlotte E. Johnson	Joan & Paul Marks	John & Judy Olear	Robert Sandine
Josephine Johnson	Henry R. Martin	Doreen & Robert Orciari	Regine Laverge Schade
Ronald & Joan Jones	Stuart Martin	Carol & Larry O'Toole	Rosanne K. Schaffner
Yolanda Joseph	Marion E. Matera	David Owen & Ann Hodgman	Elizabeth Schiffer
Shulamit & Najma Kadosh	Mrs. William M. Materne	Reese & Vi Owens	Ralph Schlosstein & Jane Hartley
Susan & Don Katz, MD	Harold Mayer & Lynn Rhodes	The Pantry	Craig & Susan Schoon
Liz & Buddy Kay	The McCullers Family	Bob & Sandy Papsin	The Scribner Family
Pierce M. Kearney			Mr. & Mrs. John Seacord

## Steep Rock Members 2005–2006, cont.

Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Seaman  
Pat & Dick Sears  
Elizabeth Seideman  
Joanna V. Settle  
Robert M. Seymour  
Marthe B. Shanley  
Andrew Shapiro in Memory of Judy Stevens  
Alan Shayne & Norman Sunshine  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Shea  
Sarah A. Shepard  
Daniel D. Sherr & Margaret M. Ferguson  
Dr. & Mrs. Gary Shields  
Vicki Silver  
Scott R. Singer  
Nancy Sklavos-Gillett  
Ron & Janet Smith  
Tyler J. Smith  
Georgene & Doug Smith  
Barbara Smith  
Christopher & Marlene Smith  
Scott H. Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. William H. Smith  
Col. F.H. Smith, III  
Mr. & Mrs. R. W. Snook  
William & Challis Snyder  
Nancy Farr Solley  
Pamela & Nicholas Solley  
Randi & Mitchell Solomon  
Richard Sonder & Susan Monserud  
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Sorrell  
Susan & Chip Spencer  
Peary & B.K. Stafford  
Mark Stansberry  
Nancy R. Steinman  
Mr. & Mrs. George M. Stephenson  
Marjorie & Michael Stern  
Missy Stevens  
Faith Stewart-Gordon  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold J. Stoeffler, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. John Strawbridge  
George & Joan Streib  
Patricia Struglia  
Daniel Sullivan & Michelle Manafy  
Marie Swanson  
Allyn C. Swanson  
Debbie & Ned Swigart  
Peter & Diana Tagley  
Joan Tait  
Joan Talbot  
Barbara & Peter Talbot  
Adele & Norman Taylor  
Richard & Claire Thomas  
Natalie & John Thompson  
Terry & Wanda Tiernan  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward E. Tierney

Tim Tierney  
Darryll & JoAnne Toth  
Chick Treadway  
Richard & Susan Ulin  
Bob & Chris Uljua  
Robert & Suzanne Ullram  
Homer R. Underwood  
Ray & Carol Underwood  
Anne & Toby Unger  
Hiram Upson  
Lee & Cynthia King Vance  
Bill & Melinda vanden Heuvel  
Dolores Vecchiarelli  
Margaret von Gal  
Burnley C. Wadsworth  
George & Barbara Walberg  
Sara Walbridge  
Ellen R. Walin  
Julia & Carter Walker  
Carol M. Ward  
Mrs. Nancy L. Warren  
Washington Food Market  
Washington Rod & Gun Club  
Washington Rotary Club  
Linda & Marty Wasserstein  
John & Jean Waterhouse  
Heather Watts & Damian Woetzel  
Laurance Weber  
Natalie Frost Weeks  
William H. Wehrhahn  
Joshua Miles Weiner  
Debi Weinshank  
Kathie & Peter Weisman  
Patricia A. Welles  
Harry & Jody Wells  
Abby N. Wells & Eduardo Ginnocchio  
Michael & Susan Wert  
Mr. Alain Wertheimer  
Mrs. W. Chattin Wetherill  
Daniel & Cynthia Whalen  
Harry & Ann Marie White  
Beatrice Hofstadter White  
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund J. White  
Francis C. Whitehead  
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin C. Whitehead  
Lester Whitney  
Mrs. Foster J. Whitney  
Walter & Kathy Whitney  
Marguerite C. Whitney  
The Friends of John Gribbin  
Douglas Williams & Andrea Csizmadia  
Evelyn A. Williams  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Williams  
Sally B. Williams  
Ella H. Williams

David & Kelly Williams  
Dorothy M.S. Wilson  
Rita & Bob Wilson  
Barbara & Peter Wodtke  
Marcelle Wolf  
Richard & Roberta Wool  
Mr. & Mrs. William W. Worcester  
James Worth  
Billie Worthington  
Harry & Darby Wright  
Edward & Barbara Wright  
Cherra Wyllie  
Charles K. Wynn, Jr.  
Paul & Bonnie Yacknick  
Patti & Tom Yamin  
Christopher Yelding & Daniel Bresnahan  
David & Frances Yelen  
Mary Jane Yurchak  
Edward Zumpf

## Gifts of Land & Easements 2005

Anonymous  
Robert & Angie Brown  
Peter Canoni & Donald Brigham  
Jack Field  
Minna Hebert  
Lawrence and Susan Kessler  
Wendy & Bill Luers  
Mel & Janet Lewinter  
Michael & Ann Loeb  
Jennifer & Neil Mitchell  
Steven Mnuchin  
SMR Properties

## Memorial Gifts

Rhoda Addison  
Matthew H. Davidson  
Dana Gibson  
Stanley & Virginia Peterson  
Stephen Reich  
Bill Risley  
Judy Stevens  
Ray Struglia  
Patricia Yurchak & Clisson Rexford



*Clark Gifford, Steep Rock's Land Manager, removing a downed tree from the railroad bed in Hidden Valley.*

# Stephen Reich Memorial Bridge Donors

---

T. Michael Alex	Michael & Jill Lloyd
Sheila Anson	Paula & Eric Madoff
Christine Armstrong & Benjamin Nick- oll	Linda McGarr
Arthur D. Deacon & Son, Inc.	Audrey & Daniel Meyer
Mark Averill	Harold A. Meyer
Penny & Bill Bardel	John Millington
Jonathan & Kristi Beck	Wendel & Florence Minor
Jayne Bentzen & Benedict Silverman	Emma & Matthew Muszala
Estelle Bronson	Eliza & Michael Paolucci
Don & Holly Camp	Kirsten Peckerman
Richard Carey	Diana & Eugene Pinover
Victoria Marsh Cherniske	Peter & Janet Poskas
Maggie Condon & Peter Repplier	John & Anne Potter
Jane Conn	Stephen Reich Memorial Fund
Paul L. Cornell, Jr.	Polly Roberts
Neil W. Currie	Barbara Paul & Charles Robinson
Tom & Betty Daniels	Matthew L. Root
Dale Stull Demy	Andrew Roraback
Natalie & Elisha Dyer	Peter & Gaila Rossiter
Susan & Michael Eanes	John & Carol Santoleri
Gretchen & Philip Farmer	Regine Laverge Schade
Kirsten Feldman & Hugh Frater	Martin Schneider & Debra Fine
Emily Fitzhugh	Patricia & Richard Sears
Frank & Joan Foley	Wendy & Greg Seeley
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Furse	Elizabeth Seideman
Michael Gorra	Sarah Shepard
Helen & Tony Griffiths	Robert & Helen Smith
Steve & Holly Haas	Patricia Struglia
Diana Hardee	Debbie Swigart
Rita & Gus Hauser	Terry & Wanda Tiernan
The Hickory Stick Bookshop	Washington Parks & Rec Commis- sion
Peter & Hilary Houldin	Chick Treadway
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Ingrassia	Lee & Cynthia King Vance
Yolanda Joseph	Hedda Windisch von Goeben
Louise King	William Wehrhahn
Mark Kentzman & Caroline Vanderlip	Barbara & Peter Wodtke
Miss Tille Page Laird	Paul & Bonnie Yacknick
	Richard & Helen Zampielo

**Please consider making an additional donation to help us rebuild the Hidden Valley Bridge over the Shepaug River in memory of Stephen Reich. Construction has begun and will cost \$138,000. We have not yet reached that goal.**

## CT Land Conservation Council

---

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council was formed this year by the merger of two entities you might be familiar with - the Land Trust Service Bureau and the Land Conservation Coalition for Connecticut.

The Council's mission is to advocate for land preservation, stewardship and funding, to help strengthen the long term health and viability of the land conservation community. CLCC can more effectively advocate critical issues at the State Capitol as one entity, joining forces with state land trusts, municipalities and other environmental groups,

The Council will provide education, training, technical assistance to land trusts and other organizations on Connecticut-specific topics .

More information is available from Sarah Pellegrino at the Nature Conservancy office in Middletown, 860-344-0716, ext. 320. Email: spelle-



*More than fifty Gunnery sophomores camped out in Steep Rock in September. This annual event, led by faculty advisor John Alter includes working on a stewardship project. These students are removing invasive honeysuckle shrubs.*

## Salamanders, cont.

As our lights played across the bottom of the pool we discovered another salamander partially hidden beneath a decomposing oak leaf, then another over to the right and so on and so on until it became apparent that there were probably about 15 salamanders just in the small part of the pool that we could observe. Their beautifully patterned bodies stood in stark contrast with the drab leaves on the bottom of the pool.

These salamanders, unlike frogs, fertilize their eggs internally, but they don't pass the sperm from the male to the female via copulation; no, it's far cooler than that. The male, who arrives in the pool first, awaits his intended in the near-freezing water. When she arrives he deposits a white glutinous droplet capped with sperm (a spermatophore) on the vegetation at the bottom of the pool. If she is sufficiently enticed, the female then lowers herself on the spermatophore, takes it into her cloaca, and the deed is done. I know, I know, but it seems to work for them.

We'd been standing there for almost an hour watching these guys and the other biota of the pool when it became apparent that the salamanders were beginning to form up into little groups; two here, three there, as many as six about ten feet away. Above I mentioned the loaded words "sufficiently enticed" regarding the receptivity of the female. This enticement process is seriously bizarre (but well-documented by other salamander voyeurs) and it rapidly became apparent that it was underway in our pool. Salamander foreplay was abounding; one would put a snout under the other's leg and roll it over or one would climb over the top of another and slide down the other side or start at the back and swim to the head then back to the tail. Every sort of contact you could imagine was taking place in that pool. In fact, it was difficult to tell just how many salamanders were now involved in the group that had held six just a moment ago. They had become a whorl of squirming black and yellow salamander skin. To make things even more confused (and amusing), as these are air breathing critters, every so often one of them would break off from the frenzy and pop up to the surface for a gulp of air, returning immediately to the writhing mass below.

Soon we noticed that one of the pairs had separated and the male had moved off to the side. As we watched, his tail formed a hump near the base and he began to move it slowly side-to-side. After about twenty seconds of this he quit, swam a short distance away and there it was – a tiny white pellet

on the leaf below. We stood transfixed, as the female sauntered over to the spot and with little fanfare settled on the spermatophore. She in turn moved slowly side-to-side and when she left about a minute later the white spot was still there but the smile on her face told us the sperm cap was inside her. We had witnessed a remarkably cool event, something few people have ever seen, but an incredibly important cog in the most important process of any organism; reproduction of its species.

Raising my gaze from the pool I realized that my drenched baseball cap was draining in a thin rivulet down my back and that in fact, I was rather miserable. Betsy admitted to being in a similar condition and we all agreed to leave the lovers in peace. We walked back to the cars, Betsy picking up and examining various toads on the road, and all of us chattering about the astounding ways that nature adapts to conditions, finding ways to accomplish its needs over all kinds of obstacles. We said goodnight and headed home.

*Editor's note: Steep Rock's reservations are open to the public from sunrise to sunset. Exceptions may be made when Trustees or other professionals wish to conduct research that necessitates work during evening hours.*

### **Steep Rock Association**

Telephone 860-868-9131 FAX 860-868-5034

[www.steeprocksassoc.org](http://www.steeprocksassoc.org)

#### **FOUNDER**

Ehrick K. Rossiter

#### **TRUSTEES**

Michael C. Jackson, *President*

Susan F. Payne, *Vice President*

Sheila M. Anson, *Secretary*

John A. Millington, *Chairman of the Board*

Lars Andersson

Robby Barnett

Randy Bernard

Manny Clark

Jane A. Conn

William A. Davidson

R. William Fairbairn

Gustave M. Hauser

Yolanda Joseph

Chapin Miller

John Potter

Stephen G. Solley

Mark Averill

David A. Behnke

James L. Brinton

William Coleman

Betsy Corrigan

Natalie H. Dyer

Mary Anne Greene

Peter R. Houldin

Henry R. Martin

Wendell Minor

Richard Sears

Peary D. Stafford, Jr.

Edmund J. White

#### **HONORARY TRUSTEES**

Merrell E. Clark

Robert L. deCourcy

#### **STAFF**

Susan Branson, *Executive Director/VISTA Editor*

Clark P. Gifford, *Land Manager*

Amanda Branson, *Administrative Assistant/Photographer*

**Please Become a Member  
of Steep Rock.  
We Need Your Support!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

POB /  
Street \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

State,  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Send To:  
Steep Rock Association

## Annual Membership Drive

Steep Rock's Annual Membership Drive began October 1, the beginning of our fiscal year.

Please renew your membership now, and if you're not yet a member, please join us. You may have already received our Appeal letter with an enclosed return envelope. If not, you may use the form at left to send in your donation.

Our dedicated board of trustees and core of volunteers work hard to stretch our dollars, as does our modest staff, but we need more help. With rising insurance costs and increasing operating expenses, we count on our members to help us keep Washington's beautiful natural places safe and secure.

This year's budget is over \$250,000, and we must rely on gifts from members for more than two thirds of that amount. We thank you for your past support. With your help we can continue to fulfill our mission of preserving and protecting open space.



*Children at the petting zoo at this year's picnic.*

## Hats & Maps For Sale

We now have stunning hats for sale for \$15.00. The hats feature our new logo on the front panel and show our website address on the back.

Trail maps of the three reservations are still available too. A set of three maps costs \$8.00.

Maps are for sale at the office, the Hickory Stick Bookstore, and the Gunn Library. The hats are available at the office.



Steep Rock Association  
PO Box 279  
Washington Depot, CT 06794

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit #11  
Washington Depot  
CT 06794

**Postal Patron or Boxholder**