



# THE FOWWOS NEWS

Newsletter of **FRIENDS OF WEST WINDSOR OPEN SPACE**

Vol. 3, No. 3 • AUTUMN 2002

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## **FOWWOS ANNUAL MEETING, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2002, 8 p.m. West Windsor Township Hall — All members are urged to attend**

### **BIKE CONTEST WILL CONTINUE**

Since mid-April FOWWOS has been running a contest among local students through 12th grade as part of its annual membership drive. To date, five students who signed up a total of 100 FOWWOS members have each received a check for \$230 to be redeemed for bikes and helmets at Dick's Clothing and Sporting Goods in Nassau Park. Winners who already own bikes can use their checks for other merchandise at Dick's. Several more students are reported to be well on their way toward reaching the 20-member goal. Because it has been so successful in familiarizing the students, their parents, and new members with FOWWOS and its goals, the contest is being extended indefinitely.

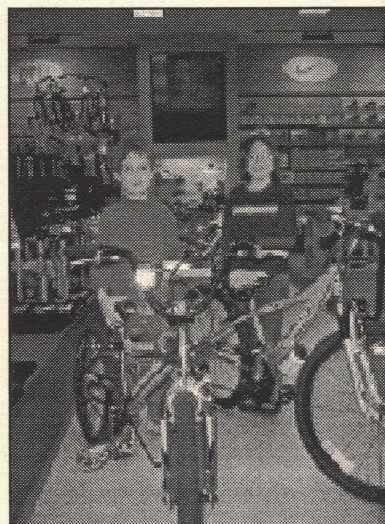
One of the winners, Sabina Carlson, decided to  
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### **"GREEN TOWN" AWARD FOR WEST WINDSOR**

West Windsor has been named the first recipient of the "Green Town" award, to be presented each year by the Environmental Education Fund and the New Jersey Environmental Lobby. Criteria for this statewide award include a town's success in recycling, tree planting, traffic plans, environmentally sensitive zoning, energy conservation, and storm water and waste water management. To qualify for the award, towns must upgrade their environmental profile each year.

West Windsor has been active in pursuing environmental preservation and improvement for many years. Beginning in 1972 with the formation of the Environmental Commission, it has compiled a long list of achievements, including

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Bike contest winners. At far left are winner Sabina Carlson (left) with Judy Hutton, director of Anchor House, to which Sabina donated her bicycle. Anchor House is a home for runaways in Trenton. At the near left are (l-r) Brian and Kimberly Meersma of Sherbrooke Estates who each won a bicycle for raising \$500 in new FOWWOS memberships. The contest will continue indefinitely.



# Friends Of West Windsor Open Space

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## In Memoriam

Bernt Midland (1927–1998), Founder  
Gil Gilmore (1922–1998)  
Ron Rogers (1929–1999)

E-mail: [ek61@juno.com](mailto:ek61@juno.com) or [FOWWOS@yahoo.com](mailto:FOWWOS@yahoo.com)  
Web site: [www.princetonol.com/groups/fowwos/](http://www.princetonol.com/groups/fowwos/)  
Meetings: First and third Tuesdays at  
Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

The newsletter *The FOWWOS News* is produced three times a year by Dick Snedeker and Alison Miller, co-editors  
FOWWOS is a nonprofit organization incorporated under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Recreational Trails and Bikeways Committee of FOWWOS was created to serve as an advocacy group for bicyclists and pedestrians in West Windsor (see *The FOWWOS News*, Winter 2002). The committee has been meeting regularly and has been formulating a strategy to improve access within the town for bicyclists and pedestrians. Among its activities in 2002:

Cataloged existing conditions for cyclists and pedestrians in the town

Developed a bicycle/pedestrian master plan, essentially a township map showing proposed bikeways and recreational trails.

Sponsored the first West Windsor Bike Tour with Mayor Hsueh in April 2002, an event to raise awareness of existing conditions for cyclists and to point out proposed projects. Approximately thirty residents biked with the mayor on a seven-mile course starting from Community Park. We hope this will be an annual event.

Held several meetings with the Project Manager of the Penns Neck EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) Process to help the EIS team understand the need for improved conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians in the Penns Neck area in relation to the road improvements that will occur with the Millstone Bypass.

Drafted a memo to the Penns Neck EIS team advocating the construction of a dedicated bicycle/pedestrian bridge over Route 1 in Penns Neck.

Met with officials from various funding sources to discuss the grant application process for local projects.

One immediate goal of the RTBC is to work via the EIS process to promote a dedicated bicycle/pedestrian bridge over Route 1. Such a bridge would provide access to both recreation (e.g. the D&R Canal path) and employment centers (e.g. Carnegie Center) and provide passage over a major barrier (Route 1) for bicyclists and

pedestrians. For further information on this issue, see our position paper in the Penn's Neck EIS web site at <http://policy.rutgers.edu/tpi/pennsneckareais/docs/wwrtbccorresp093002.pdf>.

Another goal is to apply for funding to develop hiking/biking trails at two locations, one on an existing wooded path near Duck Pond Run between Penn Lyle and Clarksville Roads, and the other on newly acquired township land along the Millstone River. We are also applying for funding to develop bike lanes on Lanwin Boulevard, Southfield Road, Edinburg Road, and South Mill Road. Of note, many of the members of the RTBC are doing double duty on the newly appointed Mayor's Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force. The RTBC is serving in an advisory capacity to the mayor's task force, and is working with the task force to reach out to community organizations to further identify the bicycle/pedestrian needs of the town. If anyone would like to contact the committee with ideas or concerns, please e-mail Ken Carlson ([kecarlson@comcast.net](mailto:kecarlson@comcast.net)) or Ken Naglak ([naglak@earthlink.net](mailto:naglak@earthlink.net)).

## A NEW PARK PLAN

The former Maneely property—now called Duck Pond Park after Duck Pond Run, the stream that runs through it—will soon be developed to meet the current demand for new sports fields. Located on Meadow Road, the 164-acre park has plenty of room for organized recreation without affecting its wetlands or greenbelt areas.

The draft design shows one field for football and lacrosse, three fields for Little League baseball and softball, one field for T-ball, and four 300 by 390-foot soccer fields, any of which could be striped for use as one or two fields. The design also includes two playgrounds, a fully linked system of walking and biking paths, parking lots and rest rooms. An open patch is left that could accommodate a sledding hill or some other

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:  
SAVING WEST WINDSOR'S RURAL SPACES**

Ever take a look at the West Windsor Township seal? It suggests the rich rural and agricultural tradition of West Windsor. Because many of us live in developments where the builders scraped off the topsoil when our homes were built, we may not realize that our town was once known for having some of the best soil for farming in the country. You may also have read in a recent *New York Times* article that every minute the nation loses two acres of farmland to development.

Nevertheless, the agricultural character of West Windsor is alive and well in the southern part of the township. Two sizable areas, one east and one west of Assunpink Creek constitute the last two enclaves in the township that can be considered rural in character.

The eastern, or Assunpink, enclave, bounded by Old Trenton Road, Village Road East, the Washington Township border, and Assunpink Creek, comprises 16 properties with a total area of approximately 660 acres, much of it agricultural land under cultivation. Approximately 71 percent or 467 acres of this land have been preserved, either by township open space purchase or through the farmland preservation program.

The western, or Old Trenton Road enclave, lies on both sides of Old Trenton Road west of Assunpink Creek and in the vicinity of Mercer County Park. This area comprises 22 properties of 644 total acres. Much of it, too, is now under cultivation. Approximately 87 percent has been preserved.

In considering the ultimate use of this land, I agree with the statement of the late Ron Rogers, co-author of the 1999 report of the Mayor's Open Space Task Force: "The maintenance of the existing rural ambience in these two enclaves is, the task force believes, essential to the retention of a substantial agricultural base in the township." West Windsor farmers have a tradition of excellent land stewardship, and leasing land to farmers benefits the township through revenues and reduced maintenance.

What can be done to preserve this land for agriculture depends on many factors, including farmers who are interested in farming it, as well as the needs of other interested groups who may desire its use for purposes that require public access. The Mayor's Open Space Utilization Task Force is currently discussing this knotty issue. I hope that FOWWOS members will let the task force and township officials know how they feel about preserving what remains of West Windsor's rural character before it disappears. ☺

*Bike Contest Will Continue, cont.*

donate her bicycle to a local charity. She chose Anchor House, a home for runaway children, in Trenton. Judy Hutton, Director of Anchor House, commented, "This is a very generous donation and will make a big difference in the lives of our kids. These children have so few possessions."

Contest winners have reported that it was much easier than they expected to interest prospective members. Many new members said they had been interested in FOWWOS but did not know how to join.

Students wishing to take part in the contest may download membership forms and information about FOWWOS from its web site at [www.princetonol.com/groups/fowwos/](http://www.princetonol.com/groups/fowwos/). Forms may also be picked up in the vestibule of the West Windsor Library. Forms and membership dues should be turned in to Lucar Hardware by the end of the business day on Fridays to be eligible for awards given the following week. There is no limit to the number of awards each week. FOWWOS strongly suggests that a parent accompany younger children if they are soliciting memberships door-to-door. For more information call Ken Carlson at 275-6355 or Paul Murphy at 799-5252. ☺

**UPDATE ON OPEN SPACE UTILIZATION**

The Mayor's Open Space Utilization Task Force (MOSUTF), which was formed last spring, is expected to report its findings to the mayor in the near future. Its report will analyze the ways to meet community needs and desires in the use of township open space.

To this end, input is being gathered from local youth sports organizations, senior citizens, environmental groups, and recreation programs. Members of the task force include leaders from youth sports leagues, members of the township Environmental Commission, and members of Township Council. Additionally, FOWWOS board members Elliot Kleiman and Rhea Rogers serve on the task force.

The MOSUTF is currently assessing all the properties listed on the open space acquisition inventory to determine their possible recreational uses. The assessments are based upon such criteria as the presence of environmental restrictions, the presence (or absence) of greenbelt, and the topography and size of each parcel. For example, large parcels with smooth topography and few or no environmentally sensitive areas could be considered for development into sports playing fields.

Perhaps more challenging than playing fields is the task of defining passive recreational needs.

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*Green Town Award, cont.*

the state's first greenbelt plan in 1975, the solid waste management report of 1977, and a natural resource inventory, compiled in 1979. The Shade Tree Committee was formed in 1976 and the Storm Water Management Committee in 2000.

Other milestones include the adoption of its open space acquisition plan (1998), an open space and recreational plan (1999), a forestry management plan (2000), an updated environmental resources inventory (2001), and a revised master plan (2002) that includes new emphasis on environmental preservation. Since its founding in 1996, FOWWOS has provided significant support for many of these efforts, including its promotion of the 1998 open space tax referendum.

As a result of these many efforts, West Windsor has received numerous awards from environmental and other organizations. ☺

*Update on Open Space Utilization, cont.*

Passive recreation typically includes those activities that do not require formal playing fields, for example, hiking and walking, birdwatching, picnicking and fishing. One key need is bike paths, and the task force has been collaborating with the Recreational Trails and Bikeways Committee of FOWWOS to ensure that bike paths will be an integral part of any open space utilization plan. Beyond this, the task force will recommend passive recreational uses based on the unique characteristics of West Windsor's open space. ☺

*A New Park Plan, cont.*

amenity. Fields, roads, and paths will be lighted so the park can be utilized for night games.

The Mayor's Open Space Utilization Task Force is developing these plans so construction can begin in 2003. ☺

*To join FOWWOS*

Send name and address to:

FOWWOS  
P.O. Box 73  
West Windsor, NJ 08550

Enclose dues check made out to FOWWOS for one of the following memberships:

Regular (family)	\$25.00 per year
Silver	\$50.00 " "
Gold	\$75.00 " "

Membership dues and contributions are fully tax deductible.

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