



THE FOWWOS NEWS

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

Vol. 7, No. 3 • AUTUMN 2006

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GIRL SCOUTS BUILD TRAILS

Members of Girl Scout Troop 600 have taken Mon trail building and maintenance at the Rogers Preserve to earn their Girl Scout Bronze Award. The Bronze Award is the highest award Junior Girl Scouts can earn. It shows they have made a promise to help others, improve their community and world, and become the best they can be. Some members of the troop are working on the project to earn credit for community service. The girls are 5th and 6th graders from the Village School, the Community Middle School, and the Grover Middle School. Their troop leaders are Carey Bloom and Kate Henkel. The project should take approximately 15 hours to complete, including planning time. It will utilize the leadership skills the girls have learned and will also demonstrate their commitment to their

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Girl Scouts from Troop 600 along with FOWWOS trustee Ron Slinn at the Rogers Preserve.

VOTERS APPROVE REDUCTION OF OPEN SPACE TAX

West Windsor voters on November 7 approved the reduction of the local open space tax rate from the current 5 cents per hundred dollars of assessed value to 3 cents per hundred. The ballot count was 5,375 in favor of the reduction and 1,319 against it. The new rate will go into effect with the start of the next tax year on August 1, 2007. The tax will be collected at the 5-cent rate until then.

At the same time, the portion of the tax proceeds that may be used for development and maintenance of preserved open space properties was increased from 10 percent to 25 percent. This provision was part of the same referendum question that sought the rate reduction. Although many voters felt that the two issues should have been voted upon separately, it was a legal requirement that they be combined in one question because they were also combined in the referendum question that created the latest addition to the open space tax in 1998. The open space tax approved in earlier referendums in 1993 and 1995 contained no specific limitations on funding for development or maintenance.

The development and maintenance question has been the focus of organized recreation groups in the township who would like to see additional facilities provided for their programs. Before the referendum, the FOWWOS trustees opposed the increase to 25 percent, arguing for a smaller increase. FOWWOS pointed out that in order to continue the preservation of open space, the proceeds from 75 percent of the revenue would be inadequate in the face of the much higher property values now prevalent in the township. ❖

ANNUAL MEETING: March 6, 2007 W.W. Town Hall 7:30 PM

Friends Of West Windsor Open Space

P.O. Box 73 West Windsor New Jersey 08550 (609) 799-8372

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In Memoriam

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

E-mail: ek61@juno.com or FOWWOS@yahoo.com
Web site: www.fowwos.org
Meetings: First Tuesday at
Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

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INDIVIDUAL PARCEL PLANS ON THE WAY

Following up on the recommendation of the FOWWOS trustees described in the last issue of *The FOWWOS News*, the township has begun the process of developing Individual Parcel Plans (IPP's) for some of the open space properties that have been preserved in recent years.

The idea is to designate certain properties that may have the potential for development as parks, playing fields, or other public amenities that require a substantial effort and commitment of funds to complete. Many properties, of course, are intended to remain in their natural state to avoid their development as tax-burdensome housing. However, there are some that, because of their size, location, or natural characteristics are attractive for development into useful public areas. The process will provide the township with a systematic approach to the disposition of these properties.

The first steps were discussed last September at a joint meeting of representatives of the township administration and FOWWOS trustees Murray, Appelget, Pickens, and Slinn. They discussed a list of six properties that had been recommended by the Shade Tree Committee as candidates for IPP's. Although three of the six were properties that had been acquired by the township before the open space tax was initiated, they were considered for IPP's in order to provide a guide for their future development. That does not mean their development would necessarily be funded with open space tax revenue.

Since that initial meeting, the group has met several times to refine the process of developing the IPP's and to work out details of responsibility among the participants. To make the process more efficient, the Shade Tree Committee has been represented at the most recent meetings.

At the last meeting, in January, the group heard from the administration how the funds

raised by the open space tax are allocated and managed. In addition, a draft IPP for the Rogers Preserve was submitted to be used as a guide for other IPP's. The draft was prepared by FOWWOS trustee Kevin Appelget, an environmental engineer employed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. At the meeting, it was also decided that the May 2003 report of the Mayor's Open Space Utilization Task Force would be updated and considered for inclusion by the Planning Board in the West Windsor Master Plan. This had been the intention when the report was first issued, but its inclusion had been overlooked.

An important topic of discussion was the use of volunteers to help maintain certain open space properties such as, for example, the Rogers Preserve. To encourage public use of natural, yet environmentally sensitive, areas such as this requires little in the way of equipment or professional skills. Thus the use of volunteer groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts is encouraged. These activities can also provide great educational benefit for the participants. A plan for how the township will approach the use of volunteer groups and individuals will be developed. A story on the first such effort begins on the first page of this issue.

Additional discussion centered on how to approach properties that might be given higher priority by the administration to meet newly developing needs in the township. One such case is the property designated as Duck Pond Park on Meadow Road. This large tract, which was not one of the first six designated, has the potential to be developed as a park similar to Community Park that would serve residents of the western portion of the township.

The effort to develop IPP's will continue until it is determined that a desirable balance is achieved between open space properties that should be left as they are and ones whose development would benefit the township. ☺

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
FAREWELL, HARLEY PICKENS**

Last fall I had the pleasure to sit next to Harley Pickens as we watched a Princeton football game. We exchanged comments on the plays, while discussing his future plans. It was a beautiful fall day and the game was rather good. With Princeton leading late in the game, Harley said his good-byes and went home. Then the game really got exciting, ending with two overtimes and Princeton finally winning. It felt to me that Harley left the game too early, just as he is leaving town—way too early for my liking.

Harley and his ever-supportive wife, Eleanor, are moving out of West Windsor, after being active volunteers for this community for over 40 years. What an accomplishment! Harley has been involved with almost all aspects of the community, from the Parking Authority, to shade trees, to the WW Lions and everything in between. As an advocate of open space, he was a founding member of FOWWOS and a force behind the 1998 open space referendum. More recently, he has left his mark with the creations of the Ron Rogers Arboretum and the 9/11 Memorial, to name just two long-lasting contributions.

I can understand the Pickens' desire to be close to their children, but they are leaving an extended family in West Windsor. Harley is always friendly with my two children and I still have a picture in my office Eleanor took of my six-month old, taken when we were submitting signature for the 1998 open space referendum. I am not alone with this growing sense of emptiness they will be leaving behind.

On behalf of the FOWWOS Board of Trustees, thank you Harley for all that you have done and thank you Eleanor. The township will be losing a champion, FOWWOS will be losing a dedicated trustee and open space activist, and I will be missing a friend and losing a mentor. ☺

**PAUL MURPHY RESIGNS FROM
FOWWOS BOARD**

With the recently announced resignation of trustee Paul Murphy, the FOWWOS board has lost another dedicated member. Paul joined the FOWWOS board in 2002 and has served as assistant secretary since 2003. He has always been a strong supporter of the goals of FOWWOS and has actively participated in its programs to help the township preserve open space. He will be missed. With his resignation, there are now two openings on the FOWWOS board. ☺

**NEW TRUSTEES DAVID SIEGEL AND
ANDREW KULLEY JOIN FOWWOS BOARD**

Two new trustees have joined the FOWWOS board. At the meeting of October 3, 2006, David Siegel was approved to fill the vacant seat that expires February 28, 2009, and at the meeting of November 14, 2006, the board membership of Andrew Kulley was approved for the seat that expires February 29, 2008. These two appointments brought the 15-member FOWWOS board to full membership. However, with the more recent resignations of Harley Pickens and Paul Murphy, there are once again two openings, with their seats expiring February 28, 2007, and February 28, 2009, respectively.

David Siegel has lived in this area of New Jersey since 1990 and moved to West Windsor in 2000. He lives in Princeton Junction with his wife Mary Ann Pedee-Siegel. Since moving to West Windsor, he has been a strong supporter of the township's open space preservation program and has been active in his neighborhood association. A graduate of Michigan State University with a degree in physics, he is a professional computer software developer employed by Cognos Corporation. He has been active for many years in professional organizations in his field and has served as editor of the proceedings of several international conventions. He looks forward to helping FOWWOS in meeting its goals of preserving open space, fostering natural resource conservation, promoting open-space related educational programs, and raising funds in support of these goals.

Andrew Kulley is a native of Princeton and a long-time resident of West Windsor. He graduated from Princeton High School where he captained the football and track teams. Now semi-retired, he worked for more than three decades as a statistician and researcher in academic, federal government, private philanthropy, and corporate positions. His positions included Chief Statistician and Director of Research for NOP World and its predecessors Roper ASW and Response Analysis Corporation. He has also been associated with the Gallup Organization, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the National Center for Health Services Research. At Purdue University, where he earned masters and PhD degrees, he was an assistant professor. He lives in Birchwood Estates with his wife Diane Montagne and hopes to help FOWWOS continue its work in assisting the township in its open space preservation program. ☺

FOWWOS members: Please remember to renew your membership for 2007! There are many new tasks ahead in preserving the best of West Windsor, and we need your support.

Girl Scouts Build Trails, cont.

community and themselves. FOWWOS trustees Ken Carlson and Ron Slinn, who will oversee the project, are working with the troop to educate them about land preservation, trail building, and forestry.

On January 7th, eight members of Troop 600 along with Carey Bloom helped build new trails at the Rogers Preserve. The girls made significant improvements to the existing trail that runs from Cranbury Road to the sidewalk between Berkshire Drive and Landing Lane, including raking the trail, lining the trail with deadfall, and picking up litter. Joining them were Ken Carlson and Ron Slinn, and FOWWOS members Roger Alig and Ace Miller, who taught the Girl Scouts the basics of trail building. Ron also imparted some basic forestry knowledge. The girls were off in no time and blazed a new trail that connects the first trail

they worked on to the trail that leads to Grovers Mill Pond. They were enthusiastic, had a great time in building the trails, and can't wait to do more. ☺

GUIDE TO ROGERS PRESERVE AVAILABLE

The West Windsor Shade Tree Committee has published a pamphlet that describes the Rogers Preserve and its features for the benefit of those who wish to enjoy the hiking trails and beautiful wooded areas to be found there. The pamphlet is in color and features photographs and a map of the preserve and surrounding Grovers Mill area, including Grovers Mill Pond. The background of the preserve is described, and there is a list of preserve rules that are intended to help keep the preserve as close to its natural and undisturbed condition as possible. Copies of the pamphlet are available at Town Hall. ☺

To join FOWWOS	Enclose dues check made out to FOWWOS for one of the following memberships:	
Send name and address to:	Regular (family)	\$25.00 per year
FOWWOS	Silver	\$50.00 " "
P.O. Box 73	Gold	\$75.00 " "
West Windsor, NJ 08550	Membership dues and contributions are fully tax deductible.	

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