

FOWWOS NEWS



Friends of West Windsor Open Space, P.O. Box 73, West Windsor, NJ 08550
www.fowwos.org • joinFOWWOS@gmail.com

The Mission of the Friends of West Windsor Open Space (FOWWOS) includes:

- To promote and work for the **preservation** of open space and the **conservation** of natural resources;
- To encourage and assist local governments in their open space and conservation programs;
- To raise funds for financing the **acquisition of land for open space** and **recreation** purposes;
- To foster knowledge and study of ecological and natural resources conservation;
- To encourage **farmland preservation**; and
- To engage in other charitable and **educational enterprises** related to the above goals.



LIKE AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK:
 @FriendsOfWestWindsorOpenSpace



Visit the FOWWOS website www.fowwos.org for the latest news, pay your dues, join our e-mail list, and more.

FOWWOS's Work is Often "Behind the Scenes"

FOWWOS members are keeping their eyes on the remaining undeveloped parcels in West Windsor and are in "quiet phase" discussions with several property owners. The Township cannot acquire land from a private owner unless and until they are ready to sell. And even then, if the owners sense we are too eager, they could start steps like subdividing the property, seeking zoning changes, or submitting development applications to the West Windsor planning board only to increase the potential sale price. So, secrecy and diplomacy are important components of FOWWOS's work. It is often "behind the scenes" until the final negotiated action can be announced.

Another important part of FOWWOS's service toward land acquisition is our ability to pay for appraisal and environmental investigation work of parcels before the township has allocated capital funds toward the property. These costs are typically \$5,000 to \$10,000 per property. FOWWOS's support helps the Township officials move more quickly through the time-sensitive pre-purchase process.

Finally, FOWWOS's "behind the scenes" work includes seeking grants from the New Jersey Green Acres program and Mercer County toward purchase of properties. Since the Township can also apply for grants at the same properties, the grant funds can be doubled and amount to more than 50% of the final purchase cost!

25 YEARS OF FOWWOS

FOWWOS incorporated in 1996 with 6 executive officers and 15 trustees. **Founders Robert Murray and Alison Miller are still officers of FOWWOS 25 years later!**

Some notable FOWWOS achievements in its nascent years (1996 – 2001) include:

- First coordinates the Townships' New Jersey Clean Communities Program with litter cleanups, environmental education programs, and "Adopt a Highway, Park, or School" programs. Through the years, FOWWOS has collected thousands of bags of trash from the parks and along roads and earned thousands of dollars toward open space preservation (1996)
- Purchase of Blyman Farm on Windsor Road with 15% from Mercer County (1998)
- Passed 5 cent increase per \$100 assessed value in property taxes dedicated to Open Space (1999)
- Created Ron Rogers Arboretum across from West Windsor Plainsboro South High School (2000)



Leave That Tree Alone!

Incorporated and in business to save undeveloped land are the Friends of West Windsor Open Space, a non-profit group. Celebrating their new corporate status are board of directors members (left to right) Adesoji Adelaja, George Levin, Ted Begun, Harley Pickens, Vice President Bob Murray, Susan Conlon, Secretary Mike Lynch, Alison Miller, President Bernt Midland, Mary Weaver, Attorney Robert Kenny and Assistant Treasurer Jim Ruch.

- Received the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's first annual Environmental Excellence Award (2000)
- Purchase of 538 acres across 10 sites owned by Bruce Thompson (2000)
- Received \$500,000 grant toward the purchase of the Liao-Lin property, marking the first FOWWOS purchase with Green Acres grant money (2000)



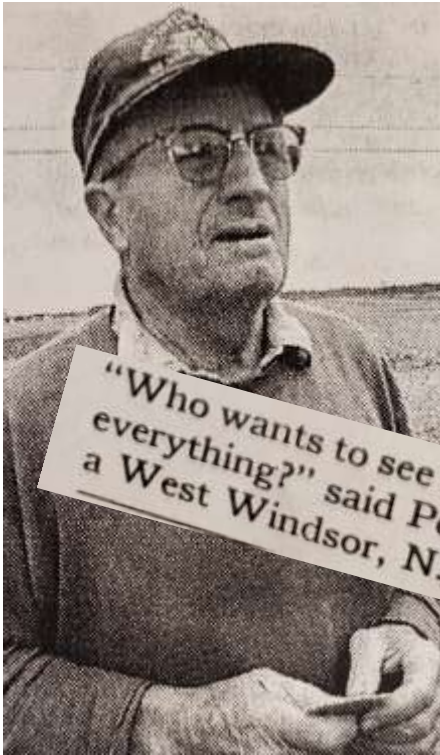
Ron Rogers, 1997

Ron Rogers works at pruning a tree in his Grover's Mill Christmas tree farm during the 1997 holiday season. *New Eagle staff photo*

- Purchase of 213-acre Maneely Tract, later to become Duck Pond Park (2001)
- Formed the "Bike Path Committee," later to become an independent 501(c)(3) - West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance www.wwbpa.org
- Designed and fundraised for 9-11 Memorial at Rogers Arboretum (2001)



West Windsor acts to permanently preserve Crawford Woods



"Who wants to see asphalt all over everything?" said Pete Grover, 76, a West Windsor, N.J., farmer.



Members of Friends of West Windsor Open Space survey the Ilyman Farm with N.J. Green Acres Planner Bamhe Cross, West Windsor Business Administrator Robert Bruschi and land owner Frank Pietrinferno. Pictured, from left to right, are Bruschi, Ron Rogers, Dick Snedeker, Pietrinferno, Jim Ruch, Cross, and Helen Rancan.

Ground broken on 9/11 memorial

Dedicated to West Windsor residents

Builders see opportunity developing in WW fields



West Windsor Township Clerk Barbara Evans reviews a petition for a November referendum on an increase in the township's open space tax submitted by Friends of West Windsor Open Space (FOWWOS) last week. Pictured, from left to right, are FOWWOS member Harley Pickens, FOWWOS member Ron Rogers, FOWWOS member Helen Rancan, Evans, FOWWOS member George Levin and Deputy Clerk Karen Geiger.



Local open space advocate Michael Schuit was at the forefront of efforts to raise West Windsor's open space tax this year.

Staff photo by Mark Czajkowski



Guess the varieties of mushrooms we found along the summer Plainsboro Preserve trail? Only when nature runs its own course of growth and decay can we find 29 such different wonders along a short half-mile trail.

Be friends of nature, preserve West Windsor open space.

FOWWOS IN 2020

In 2020, FOWWOS focused on beautifying parks, supporting projects in town, and educating residents about the joys of West Windsor’s open spaces, especially during this unprecedented year. FOWWOS activities this year included:

- ✓ Installation of 2 park benches - at Nash Park and the Ron Rogers Arboretum
- ✓ Start of a Lawn to Meadow project at Duck Pond Park – more to come in 2021!
- ✓ Mentorship of a Girl Scout project to create a prairie at Zaitz Park
- ✓ Clean up of litter on West Windsor streets, parks, and municipal complex
- ✓ Providing \$300 award money for West Windsor Shade Tree Commission’s Arbor Day Art Contest
- ✓ Granting \$2,500 to Dutch Neck Elementary School Green Committee for an educational garden
- ✓ Providing trail maps for Zaitz Preserve, Rogers Preserve, Rogers Arboretum, and Millstone East trails

2020 Officers & Directors

President	Kristin Epstein
1st Vice-President	Bob Murray
2nd Vice-President	Becky Marks
Treasurer	John Sabino
Asst. Treasurer	Kristin Epstein
Secretary	Alison Miller
Asst. Secretary	Yan Mei Wang
Directors	Sylvia Kay, Andrew Kulley, Mark Pepper

*Preserving farmlands
and open spaces in
an era of malls and
construction booms.*

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

1. Clean up with FOWWOS – 3/20, 10am

FOWWOS will host a litter cleanup on the morning of March 20. Email joinFOWWOS@gmail.com to suggest a location. Please wear a mask and maintain social distance while keeping West Windsor beautiful. It's fun - come join us!



2. Pick up Debris and Let FOWWOS Know About It

Going for a walk and picking up some litter along the way? Simply email your time and area cleaned to FOWWOSwestwindsor@gmail.com. FOWWOS will receive \$ through the NJ Clean Streets Program for every minute of time spent cleaning West Windsor.

3. Propose a Project for Volunteers or Funding

Do you have an idea for project that will benefit open space in West Windsor and meets one or more of the goals of FOWWOS's mission? Email us. Include a brief description of the project, your timeline, and amount of money you are seeking. FOWWOSwestwindsor@gmail.com

4. Plant Native Species, Reduce Chemicals, Add Habitat

Native species are easier to maintain as they are more acclimatized to our zone AND wildlife such as birds and butterflies are adapted to them. Think of plants that will provide shelter and food year-round. Don't take down dead trees or remove dead logs unless they are a hazard. Try not to rake your leaves as many pollinators winter in the debris. Convert some of your grass to meadow. Reduce or eliminate pesticides and fertilizers.

5. Become Educated about Open Space in West Windsor

Join us at our monthly meetings on the third Tuesdays at 7 pm. We also encourage you to attend Township Council Meetings and speak during public comment period about issues that you care about. Information about Township Council meeting dates are listed here: <https://www.westwindsornj.org/mayor-council/council>

7. Shop with Amazon Smile

If you shop at Amazon.com, designate "Friends of West Windsor Open Space" as your charity of choice. By using the special link to smile.amazon.com when you shop, Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchase price to FOWWOS.



Annual Meeting

Tuesday, February 16, 7 P.M.

Virtual Meetings, Zoom info below

We urge you to attend the upcoming FOWWOS Annual Meeting or any other meeting find out more about the positive impact of FOWWOS on your community, and voice your thoughts about the future of open space in your town. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to get involved, as well. Open space issues affect us all.

2021 Meeting Dates (all at 7 P.M.)

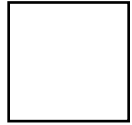
Mar 16 • Apr 20 • May 18 • Jun 15 • Jul 20 • Aug 17 • Sep 21 • Oct 19 • Nov 16 • Dec 21

For all 2021 Meetings, use the Zoom app or visit <https://zoom.us/join> Or call: (646) 558-8656

Meeting ID: 831 5117 0201 Passcode: 861018



Friends of West Windsor Open Space
 P.O. Box 73
 West Windsor, NJ 08550



MEMBERSHIP

Please join or renew your membership in FOWWOS and help preserve and maintain open space in West Windsor.

Name(s): _____ Email: _____

Street: _____ City: _____

Phone: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Select Membership Type:

Student \$15 Adult \$25 Family \$40 Supporter \$50 Benefactor \$100

Make checks payable to "FOWWOS" and mail to: FOWWOS, P.O. Box 73, West Windsor, NJ 08550.
 To pay by credit card, visit www.fowwos.org/membership. EIN: 22-3419086

