

An Important Link Preserved

By Christine Bailey

Katherine Brandon Plunkett and Frank Plunkett recently sold a 5.5-acre parcel in Patterson to the Putnam County Land Trust. This acquisition was made possible through the NAWCA grant, a combined effort of 14 groups including the land trust and FrOGS. The parcel connects surrounding Land Trust property and provides a wildlife corridor and a future trail system that will ultimately connect about 500-acres. The property has been in the Brandon family for over 100 years!

This parcel of land was part of a thriving farm. Phineas Baker bought 102 acres of farmland which included this parcel in the late 19th century. The Baker family sold it to Patrick and Martha Brandon in 1899. Patrick and Martha, Katherine Plunkett's paternal grandparents, raised six children on what became the Brandon Dairy Farm. After Patrick died in 1924, Martha ran the farm with the help of her two sons John and Eugene. Eugene Brandon married Katherine Farrell in 1926. Eugene and Katherine Brandon became Katherine Plunkett's parents.

On their farmland, the Brandons grew potatoes and sweet corn. In the 1940's they sold the corn for a mere 35 cents a dozen. One of Katherine's jobs on the Brandon Dairy Farm was collecting eggs from the hen house. Katherine's fondest memories of growing up on the farm are her endless hours playing in the apple orchard. She recalls running through the orchard and picking and eating the Green Delicious apples that grew abundantly. Sadly the last of the apple trees has died, a victim of a recent wind storm.

Wildlife is abundant on this swath of land which is mostly forested ridgeline with areas of exposed rock cliff faces. Turkeys, rabbits, deer, coyotes, skunks, copper head snakes and even bobcat has been spotted. Many birds visit the property as well including cardinals, blue jays, woodpeckers, sparrows, morning doves, owls, and turkey vultures.

Record Membership Turnout for Annual Meeting

Twenty six members attended and forty proxies were received for the Annual Meeting of the Putnam County Land Trust held on Sunday, September 16th at Trinity Lutheran Church on Route 6 in Brewster. The agenda included the election by the membership of new trustees to the board and a proposed amendment to the by laws. This amendment, which passed, sets the date of the annual meeting to be within 75 days of the end of the fiscal year. This replaces the requirement that the annual meeting take place by June 30th.

Following the recommendations of the Nominating Committee, Brian Alberghini, Linda Lund, Robert Maddock, Sal Tripi and Judith Terlizzi were elected to the Board for a three year term. Deb Biebesheimer, David Ehnebuske and Judith Jones were elected to fill open one year terms on the board.

Following the business meeting, Beth Herr, gave a power point presentation featuring the Preserves of the Putnam County Land Trust.

At its organizational meeting in October, The Trustees of the Putnam County Land Trust elected its officers for the year as follows: Jude Jones, Recording Secretary, Linda Lund, Treasurer, Sal Tripi, Secretary, Brian Alberghini, Vice President and Judith Terlizzi, President.

What's Inside!

- *DEC Summer Program Grant*
- *From the President's Desk*
- *Lindera Loop Trail Update*
- *Black Bears are Back!*
- *Girl Scouts Create Pollinator Garden*
- *Dover Stone Church Hike*
- *Great Swamp Canoe Trip*
- *Volunteer Notes*

