

NATIONAL
HERITAGE
CORRIDOR

In Touch

with The Last Green Valley



MEMBER MAGAZINE & 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Volunteers

Make a
Difference

Bald Eagles

♥ Love ♥

**The Last
Green
Valley**

Are Your Woods
Healthy?

From Soil Springs
Life

Soil Conservation
Efforts in The Last
Green Valley



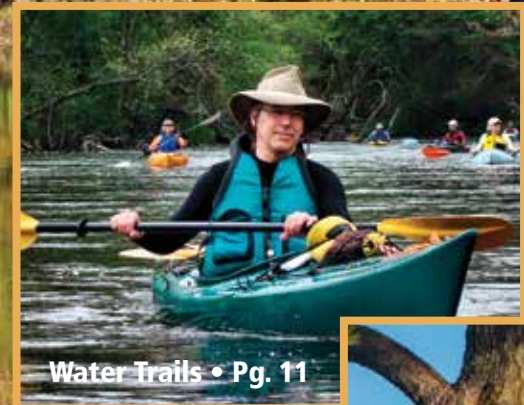
Healthy Woods • Pg. 18



Soil • Pg. 14



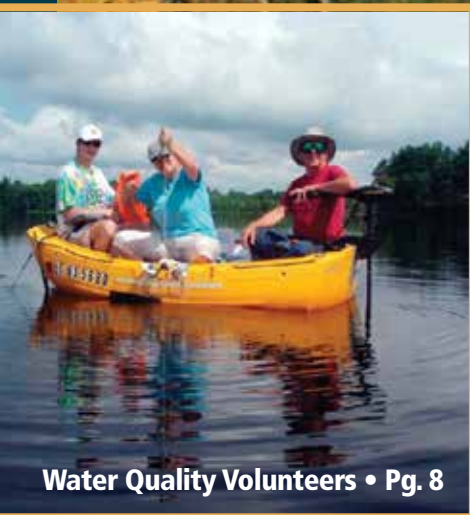
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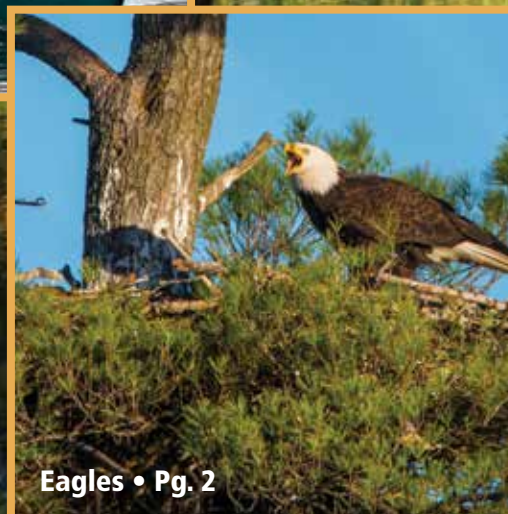
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In Touch

Spring 2016

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Message from the Chairman

Welcome to the first edition of *In Touch*, The Last Green Valley's new member magazine and annual report for 2015. We hope you enjoy this new format, with its emphasis on the spirited, passionate, and creative people who live, work, and play in The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor. We also hope that after reading *In Touch* you will take away at least one new reason to love The Last Green Valley, and find a renewed sense of purpose in helping us to ensure that our unique natural and historic resources – those that give us a sense of place – remain vital and vibrant.

2015 marked another successful year for The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV), and we are pleased to share our accomplishments with you through the pages of this magazine. With your help, we have focused our resources on what we do best – connecting and inspiring people to care for, enjoy, and pass on The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor.

The 25th Anniversary of Walktober produced a record number of walks, talks, bikes, paddles, pedals, and events; Tastes of the Valley continued to grow with more farms, restaurants, sponsors and participants than previous years; and Explore! Outdoor, Indoor, & Around Town Adventures launched with more partners and content than ever before. TLGV Rangers made presentations and attended almost 90 community events; 1,700 volunteers collected 54,770 pounds of trash from our parks, rivers, and roadways; and 70 volunteers monitored our rivers, streams and ponds. TLGV awarded 4 grants for telling stories that matter; connected 2,300 kids to their watershed; and inspired the magic of discovering a new constellation, a freshly-picked vegetable, or a squirmy salamander, in the child in all of us.

We did not do any of it alone. To all of our members, donors, sponsors, volunteers and partners, thank you! Your support makes our programming possible and improves the quality of life in our communities. We work for you in the National Heritage Corridor, and we not only value your support, but your input. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns, or would just like to chat about our work, please contact Lois Bruinooge or me through the office at 860-774-3300.

We look forward to connecting and inspiring even more people in 2016. Together, we can care for, enjoy, and pass on The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor!

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Board of Directors

TLGV Board of Directors 2015 – 2016

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On any given day, at any time of the year, there is a chance to see a Bald Eagle near the waters of The Last Green Valley.

The Bald Eagle is officially back in Southern New England, with increasing numbers calling Massachusetts and Connecticut their year-round home, and The Last Green Valley is becoming a hot spot.

"Eagles have made a pretty remarkable comeback," said Brian Hess, a wildlife biologist with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. "They are one of our more positive conservation stories of the last half century."

It is safe to argue that if not for conservation efforts such as the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 and the banning of DDT, the national emblem could be a thing of history, gone the way of the Dodo.

Being named the national emblem in 1782 was not enough to protect the Bald Eagle. Although the detrimental effects of DDT are seen as the largest single factor in the declining raptor population of the mid-20th century, indiscriminate hunting, the loss of habitat and the other pollutants along the food chain contributed significantly to the decline of the birds.

The eagle population in the lower 48 states was decimated by the 1960s. In Connecticut, eagles were gone by the 1950s. In Massachusetts, the last wild nesting dates back to 1905.



Bald Eagles

For several generations of Southern New Englanders, the Bald Eagle was nothing more than an image on a postcard from some distant place or long ago time. Today, there are six known and active nests of Bald Eagle pairs in The Last Green Valley.

Eagles might not have ever found The Last Green Valley if Massachusetts had not undertaken a reintroduction of the birds in 1982, bringing chicks from out of state to imprint on Quabbin Reservoir after a pair of eagles had been discovered wintering in the region.

Massachusetts "hacked" the eaglets, raising them in cages overlooking the reservoir until they were old enough to fly. Once they were ready, the cage doors were opened and the eagles were free to go.

Marion Larson, Chief of Information and Education for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, said learning from falconers who had successfully reintroduced those birds, the belief was if the chicks imprinted on the area, they might choose to stay.

It worked.

Eagles take five years to mature and by 1989, Quabbin had its first nesting pair of eagles.

In 1992 Connecticut got its first post-DDT nesting pair of eagles in Litchfield County. Those eagles had been born in Massachusetts.

Since 1989 there have been 545 eagle chicks that have fledged in Massachusetts and there are more than 50 nesting pairs as of 2015. Connecticut has counted 369 chicks since 1992 and had 45 nesting pairs as of the 2015 mid-winter count.

Eagles are **34 - 43** inches tall with a wingspan of **6 - 8** feet.



**Eagles have a
25 - 30 year lifespan
in the wild.**

**The largest Bald Eagle
nest on record was 9.5
feet wide, 20 feet high
and found in Florida
in 1963. Estimated to
weigh more than
two tons.**

OVE

Al Huefner of Webster Lake has had a front row seat to the birth of three of those Massachusetts chicks. In 2010 a pair of Bald Eagles chose Webster Lake as their permanent home and Huefner has been documenting their every move since. The eagles, now dubbed George and Martha for their penchant for having chicks that fly on or near the Fourth of July, have been so committed to the lake as their home they rebuilt their nest when Hurricane Irene hit Massachusetts in August 2011, destroying the first nest.

When the pair moved to Webster Lake's lower pond, Huefner had a clear view of their nest about 3,000 feet from his back door.

"I became very interested in actually watching them," Huefner said. "I was in one of the prime positions to actually observe them.

The Last Green Valley

I recorded video and I would then go through the video and record actions. I noted times right down to the minute they would be seen doing something. I didn't know

continued on page 4



**Eagles
can carry
up to about
4 lbs in
their talons
as they fly.**

Weigh 8-14 lbs. Females are larger than males.

EAGLES - continued from page 3

their behavior, but when I saw something different I would go research it.”

Bill Reid, chief ranger for The Last Green Valley, said Huefner’s work has raised awareness of the eagles in The Last Green Valley and also educated many people as to the habits of the eagles. The Last Green Valley assists the state of Connecticut in its annual mid-winter eagle count.

Reid gathers volunteers who scout locations throughout the National Heritage Corridor. On January 9th, 50 volunteers observed 24 locations and had 20 sightings. It is not yet clear how many Bald Eagles accounted for those sightings.

“Eagle conservation is not our primary mission,” Reid said. “What The Last Green Valley is doing is trying to get people to recognize the natural and cultural resources right here in their community. There’s no better way to point to the ecological beauty we have than Bald Eagles.”

Mary-Beth Kaeser, founder of Horizon Wings in Ashford, a nonprofit rehabilitation program dedicated to birds of prey, said the success of the eagles is directly related to the work of The Last Green Valley. Everything from water quality monitoring programs that have directly led to cleaner rivers, streams and lakes in the region, to awareness about conservation of natural habitats the eagles need has been a part of the story.

“What The Last Green Valley has done is critical to the eagles and all birds of prey,” Kaeser said. “The water quality is so critical to eagles. They sit at the top of the food chain and they are



The Bald Eagle doesn't look like a Bald Eagle until it reaches adulthood. They are about 4-5 years old when the distinct snow-white head and brownish-black plumage come in. Until then, they are uniformly grayish-brown and are often confused with golden eagles, however, they are grayer and darker than the golden eagle.

scavengers. If their food sources are contaminated that will impact them directly.”

Larson said that is why DDT was so detrimental to eagles. It polluted everything the eagles ingested and resulted in the production of thin-shelled eggs, many of which never hatched.

Kaeser said the next step in furthering awareness about eagles will include educating people about the dangers of rodent poison and lead shot. Eagles can ingest both while scavenging. It takes as little as a pinky fingernail size of buckshot to poison an eagle. Hunting with lead-free shot would go a long way toward further protecting all birds of prey, Kaeser said.

Huefner first became involved in The Last Green Valley as a water quality monitor for Webster Lake. He sees a direct connection to the lake’s water quality and the arrival of the eagles. Webster Lake, because of awareness and conservation efforts driven by those water quality tests, is now a healthy lake with a robust fish population. The muskrats that had been plaguing the area are now gone too, Huefner said.

More and more frequently George and Martha have had to fend off other eagles eyeing the lake as a potential home, Huefner said. George and Martha used to spend the winter in a different locale, returning to their nest in time to perform any maintenance needed before laying their eggs. A couple of years ago, however, they returned to find other eagles hanging around the lake and fought them off vigorously.

common in the 1700s to extremely rare in the lower 48 states by the 1960s.

"Eagles are very territorial," Huefner said. "But, I'm not sure how long they'll be able to keep another pair from nesting here. There are so many eagles that pass through here now, eventually another pair will settle."

Larson and Kaeser both said eagles base their territory on available food sources. By their nature they won't tend to live on top of one another in southern New England. In Connecticut, the most crowded area is the Connecticut River and its surrounding watershed.

"Connecticut is only so big," Kaseer said. "We have to keep in mind we are not a large state, so it's hard to say how much more growth there might be."

Hess said the state has a very good idea of exactly how many eagles live along the Connecticut River. It is The Last Green Valley that provides the most intriguing area for growth.

The Bald Eagle nests from Alaska and Newfoundland south to Baja California, the Gulf Coast and Florida. The greatest concentrations of Bald Eagles are found in Alaska and from November to March a high concentration of wintering Bald Eagles can be found in the western and midwestern United States. New England has the next largest concentration of wintering Bald Eagles.

Even the midwinter count cannot scout all the potential locations for an eagle to nest, he said.

"There is a strong likelihood they are using The Last Green Valley in places we don't know about and that's kind of a nice thing if you think about it," Hess said. "I think we can safely say we know all of

Natural year-round habitat of Bald Eagles includes lakes, marshes, rivers, or seacoasts, where there are tall trees nearby for nesting and roosting and plenty of fish for eating.

continued on page 6



2016 Eagle Survey Team



**Flight speed
ranges between 36 and 44 miles**

EAGLES - continued from page 5

the nests in the Connecticut River Valley. It's so densely populated. Whereas in The Last Green Valley, basically there are open spaces where nature can just be nature. As a biologist I would love to know where every nest is. As someone who is concerned about preservation, it's nice to know there are these areas that are still somewhat unknown."

Larson said the truth is every eagle pair is also very different. Some don't mind populated areas and even seem to welcome the attention. Others, however, prefer their privacy.

George and Martha have adapted well to the high summer use of Webster Lake, Huefner said. He said they do not seem fazed by people or boats.

Reid said there is a nesting pair in Nipmuck State Forest in Union that on the other hand, seems to notice every person who comes close to their nest.

Bald Eagles feed primarily on fish, however, they are opportunistic predators and scavengers. Their diet can include waterfowl, small and large mammals, including small dogs, and livestock carrion.

Perhaps the most sighted pair of eagles in the Connecticut side of The Last Green Valley live in Putnam. The nest, Reid said, appears to be in a less than opportune place along the Little River. Reid said for viewing it is difficult to get to, but it also would seem to have fewer food opportunities than

another location might. The pair, however, is frequently seen along the Quinebaug River and has been sighted from the heart of downtown on Kennedy Drive.

Reid said one eagle pair nesting along the lower Quinebaug River in Lisbon, on the other hand, seems to have hit the food jackpot, choosing a site near the fish hatchery.

"That's a pretty smart pair of eagles," Reid said. "They have a ready food source and they're pretty easy to find in the area."

More frequent eagle sightings has not reduced the excitement people experience when seeing the birds. In the late 1990s an eagle passing through Norwich on the Thames River generated news stories. Today every eagle sighting does not generate news, but they do still command attention.

Kaeser said Horizon Wings' Bald Eagle Atka is the most popular bird requested at educational programs. She hopes people always remember that eagles were once gone from the region.

Mary-Beth Kaeser, founder of Horizon Wings in Ashford, said eagles are playful and examination of nests have found children's and pets' toys.



s per hour.

"We have to remember we didn't have these birds here not that long ago. We can't just take this for granted now that we are seeing them. We have to remember the years it took to bring them back to keep striving to make the environment safe for everyone."

Mary-Beth Kaeser, founder of Horizon Wings in Ashford

The Bald Eagle was chosen as the national emblem of the United States of America in 1782 by the Second Continental Congress because the species is unique to North America.

The Bald Eagle was first declared an endangered species with the passage of the federal Endangered Species Act in 1973.

In 2007 the Bald Eagle was officially removed from the federal Endangered Species List. Bald Eagles are still protected on the federal level by the Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.



HATS OFF TO OUR Volunteer

They make a difference.

Water Quality Monitoring

Bald Eagle chicks would never have called The Last Green Valley home if other factors had not created a welcoming environment. Since 1994, The Last Green Valley has been creating and promoting programs critical to creating an environment where the eagles could thrive. While the eagles themselves were never the driving part of The Last Green Valley's mission, they are the culmination of many success stories created by TLGV programs, said Lois Bruinooge, executive director of TLGV.

Perhaps the single largest contributor to the health and well-being of the eagles has been water quality. Marion Larson, Chief of Information and Education for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, said without clean water and healthy lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, the eagles would not have their favorite food — fish — in large enough quantities to call the region home year-round. To have healthy fish, the water must not only be clean, it must be the correct temperature and have a thriving ecosystem from microorganisms up to plant life and bugs.

The Last Green Valley initiated its Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring program in 2006 through a partnership with the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District. In 2015 the program:

- Enlisted more than 70 volunteers to assist in the various aspects of TLGV's water quality monitoring program.
- Those volunteers received more than 200 hours of training on water quality monitoring procedures, equipment and techniques. Many of the volunteers also attended additional training on their own.
- Ten lakes and ponds— South Charlton Reservoir, Baker Pond, Glen Echo Lake, Prindle Pond, Little Nugget, Snow's Pond, Webster Lake, Roseland Lake, Avery Pond and Amos Lake — were monitored for water quality.
- Five people were trained to be team leaders for field sampling efforts to monitor bacteria levels in rivers. Thirty-two unique sites were sampled in Connecticut by 11 volunteers who contributed 245 hours to the project. An additional 14 sites were monitored in Massachusetts.



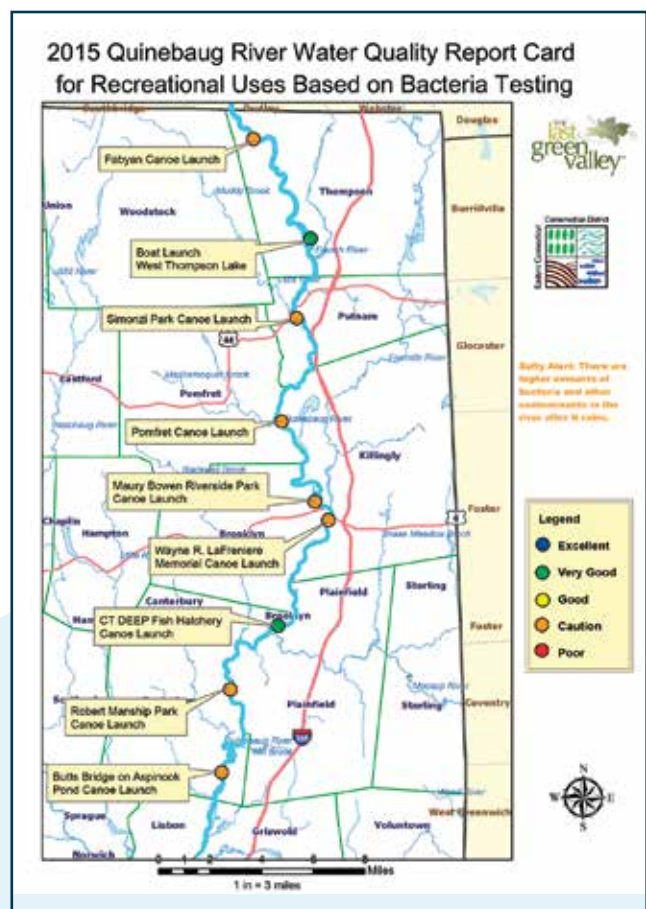
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- Bacteria levels were sampled at nine boat launches in the Quinebaug River. A Water Quality Report Card for recreation was prepared based on the results.
- Connecticut's French River watershed was part of a bacteria source trackdown, which will be used by the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District to develop a plan to improve water quality.
- Six volunteers helped place, implement quality control protocols and retrieve "HOBOS," which measure the water

temperature every hour, at 11 locations in the watershed. Documenting the cold water streams means efforts can be put into developing policies to ensure the watershed's health rather than focusing on remediation after the cold water streams have been lost.

- In August, 28 volunteers were trained in the Riffle Bioassessment for Volunteers protocol, also known as RBV. RBV looks at underwater bugs that are pollution sensitive. Rivers with a diversity of these bugs are deemed to have excellent water quality. Volunteers also looked at low water conditions as a result of lack of rain in the



summer of 2015 at the request of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

- TLGV volunteers assisted in data collection at Amos Lake in Preston that was used by the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District to develop the Amos Lake Abbreviated Watershed Based Plan. The plan aims to reduce algae blooms and improve water quality through the reduction of nutrients in the water.

Since 2006 the program has grown from monitoring eight sites to more than 100 unique sites in 2015.

Water Quality Monitoring efforts will evolve yet again in 2016, as new protocols are under development thanks to funding from the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Keeping The Last Green Valley Clean and Green

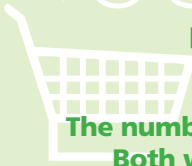
While Earth Day and Earth Month are important globally, in The Last Green Valley, caring for the planet is a year-round effort. In 2015 that commitment resulted in the largest cleanup effort ever by the organization. More volunteers cleaned up more trash from the land and waterways than ever before.

The cleanups are critical because they halt the leaching of chemicals into the land and waterways, prevent animals from ingesting harmful substances and aid in the overall reduction of pollution.

Here is a look at the effort by the numbers:



1: The number of sage green toilets, traffic signals and fake human skulls found during the cleanup. Each qualified as the most unusual find at their respective locations.



TWO

The number of shopping carts found. Both were found in Windham.

The number of groups that participated in the 2015 cleanup.

17

Twenty-One

The hours Reliance House spent cleaning up throughout Norwich.

26: The number of cleanups held in **2015**

The number of computer monitors and TVs cleaned up in Charlton.

27

50

The number of straws and stirrers Willimantic

Whitewater Partnership's three volunteers found in three hours cleaning up 3.5 acres.

The number of volunteers Thompson's Recreation Department marshaled for a two-hour cleanup. The group filled 20 trash bags with about 300 lbs of garbage.

NINETY-FOUR

99

The number of balloons found. Arc of Quinebaug Valley found 13 balloons.

100:

The number of chewing tobacco cans found in Charlton.

130

The miles Thompson Together scoured and cleaned of trash. That included more than 100 hours of volunteer time, 5,000 plates, knives and forks, 1,700 glass bottles, 470 plastic bags, 2 TVs and much more.

335

The number of cigarette lighters found

The number of trash bags filled.

808

1,714!

The number of people who participated in TLGV's 2015 cleanup, which far eclipsed the 2014 record of 1,147 participants.

3,328

The number of beverage cans found.

5,335

The number of plastic beverage bottles found that were 2 liters or less. The Canterbury Lions Club found 553 of them.

54,770

The weight in pounds of all items removed from the environment.

132,188:

The total weight in pounds of items removed by TLGV-supported cleanups since 2012.

See a photo essay of the cleanups on the back page of this magazine

WATER TRAILS



The Water Trails Steering Committee continues to meet and guide water trail development. The Committee worked hard behind the scenes to assess public launches and landings along the Shetucket River and submitted an application for the Shetucket's designation as a National Recreation Water Trail. The NRT application included the lower Natchaug River (from Lauter Park to the confluence with the Willimantic River) as well as an extension of the Willimantic River National Water Trail that includes the new canoe/kayak landing in Willimantic.

TLGV said good bye and best wishes to John Monroe upon his retirement from the Rivers and Trails Program of the National Park Service. John has been at the heart of our water trails program since 2008, and we couldn't have obtained National Recreation Trail status for 60 miles of the Willimantic and Quinebaug Rivers without him. Happy paddling, John, we will miss you!

"Congratulations on the great strokes forward taken by The Last Green Valley in creating an exemplary water trails network on the three major rivers of the National Heritage Corridor."

Helen Scully, National Recreation Trails Coordinator
National Park Service



Twenty-five Years of Walking Has Done Wonders for The Last Green Valley



Walktober 2015 marked the 25th consecutive year there has been a walking event in the National Heritage Corridor. As the largest Walktober ever, the ripple effects of the month-long event are becoming more evident. "Walktober is a huge draw to the region," said Lois Bruinooge, executive director of The Last Green Valley. "What happens here in October draws people year-round to The Last Green Valley."

The Last Green Valley hosted almost 2 million visitors in 2015, Bruinooge said. Almost 20,000 of them participated in walks in 2015, and another 30,000 participated in events. The 25th Walktober featured 190 individual walks with many of those walks repeating, resulting in more than 200 activities for visitors. The event began in late September and walks extended through early November.

As Walktober has grown, so has interest in the National Heritage Corridor. The Last Green Valley might not even exist without the event. Started in 1991 with 20 walks as "Walking Weekend" on Columbus Day Weekend, the event began as a way to highlight the region that was then still trying to get federal designation as a



National Heritage Corridor. The designation came in 1994, and by then Walking Weekend was a hit. By 2007 the event had grown so large it became Walktober.

Marcy Dawley, project coordinator for The Last Green Valley, said volunteers drive Walktober. They come up with the walks and allow the event to evolve from year-to-year. She estimates more than 300 people volunteered for the 2015 Walktober, with two leaders at every walk and some requiring as many as 15.

"We have the best volunteers," Dawley said. "They are so passionate about the walks they do and that's why Walktober is successful. People are excited to be on the walks because the leaders are so excited about the walk they're giving."

Bev York is one of those volunteers. A former Ms. Walktober, York tries to give a

walk every year with a focus on the region's rich history. York's walks occur in Willimantic, one of three locales in The Last Green Valley with so many walks they need their own section in the Walktober guide. "I focus on stories of the people, history and architecture," York said.

York said Walktober is a special event because it connects people to the region, its history and environment. People who attend the walks, whether residents or visitors, are interested in the connection.

"Walking is the only way to fully enjoy the special places in The Last Green Valley" York said. "The sights, the sounds and the awe of stepping on the very place where natives fished, where millers prospered, where immigrants sweated and where heroes trod can never be experienced on any screen."

Bruinooge said Walktober is a reflection of the unique nature of The Last Green Valley. Designated as only the fourth National Heritage Corridor in the nation in 1994, The Last Green Valley was recognized because of a unique array of characteristics, that include history of national significance, agriculture, and natural resources.



Dawley said the Walktober events always offer a variety of themes that encompass all that The Last Green Valley is. "I can't say it enough," Dawley said. "There's something for everyone."

Doris Kennedy was a first-time walk leader in 2015. She hosted two walks, the first on a Wednesday to get her feet wet, centered on her Friesian horses. Kennedy had 73 people at that first walk. The second walk, on a rainy Sunday, drew 87 people.

"I think the horses were a hit," Kennedy said. "I don't think anyone expected that kind of turnout." Kennedy said she knows for certain the walks featuring her horses have led to subsequent visits to The Last Green Valley. Several participants have come again, bringing new guests who could not make the October event. Kennedy said she's also been stopped by people at other events since who attended the walk.

"I always knew the walks were a good thing for the region," Kennedy said.

Dawley said she is constantly amazed at how much effort volunteers put into the walks. The Black Tavern in Dudley brought visitors back to a time in the early 1800s when the tavern was a



major stop for those traveling from Boston to Hartford. That event required at least 15 volunteers.

Dawley said The Last Green Valley also added new ways to promote Walktober this year. She and Chief Ranger Bill Reid hosted half-hour shows on Charter Cable to promote the walks. Dawley said promotions were also done through radio stations WILL in Willimantic, WINY in Putnam and Heritage Information Radio in Norwich, which streams live on the internet.

Volunteers have already begun planning their walks for 2016. "As soon as it's done some volunteers start working on their walks for the coming year," Dawley said. "I think that says a lot about how much people enjoy Walktober and how much it means to the region."

**The CT Economic Resource Center
recognized
Walktober's
25-year
contribution
to economic
growth in
Connecticut.**



Rick Hermonot sees dirt differently than most people. He sees the life in it and the chance to create more life. And he believes the best way to nurture that life is to leave it alone.

Hermonot is part of a growing number of farmers in The Last Green Valley who are looking to soil conservation to improve their businesses. For Hermonot that has meant a return to no-till farming and the use of cover crops. "I'm very passionate about soil conservation," Hermonot said. "I'm a huge believer in no-till."

Soil conservation, of which no-till farming is just one aspect, has been a hot topic among conservationists in the last few years and was highlighted for one full day at the recent United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris.

Hermonot, however, does not need international summits or countless journal articles to tell him soil conservation is real and it can have a very positive effect on the bottom line of local farmers. Hermonot has seen it because he started using no-till practices in 1984 with great success. "I did it when no-till was considered kind of kooky," Hermonot admits.

Back then he and his wife, Elena, rented 500-acres for a dairy farm and used no-till and cover crops with great success. In recent years he didn't have the opportunity to continue the practices on any kind of large scale because he had moved from dairy farming to turkey farming. Hermonot's Ekonk Hill Turkey Farm is perhaps one of the best known farms in The Last Green

Valley, combining agriculture, retail and agri-tourism. But, on 12 acres, the farm was bursting at the seams and the Hermonots had to rent land to keep their business growing.

In mid-2015, however, the family had the chance to purchase the entire 350-acre farm next to their own, where they had been renting land. Hermonot jumped at the opportunity and he's already no-tilled in several crops and replaced them with cover crops after harvest. Much of the first plantings have been designed to reverse the damage done to the land by others who had rented plots on the farm, Hermonot said. He said one renter, through years or repeated tilling and harsh chemicals, abused the soil, but he can already see it rebounding with the planting of hay as a cover crop after harvesting sorghum. Both crops were no-tilled into the land, he said.

"Even with how dry it was in the fall I've been real pleased with how the hay is coming along," Hermonot said. "I would have liked it a little taller for winter, but it will do its job and come up nicely as soon as it gets warmer again. You never want bare soil for the winter. I can't stand to see bare soil anywhere."

What Hermonot is doing at his farm is exactly the kind of practices Lois



From

So

Bruinooge, executive director of The Last Green Valley, wants the organization to help promote. The Last Green Valley has teamed up with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and has a \$230,000 grant to help spread awareness to farmers about a federal soil conservation program and offer them technical assistance to participate, Bruinooge said. Partners include the Eastern CT Conservation District and the AGvocate Program of the CT Resource Conservation and Development Council.

"We're just getting started with this program," Bruinooge said. "This will be a cost savings to farmers in the long run. We're here to help them get into the

program and provide technical assistance and there's money available to them to get started."

For TLGV, the program combines two of the missions at its core; supporting agriculture and land use conservation. Ray Covino, of the USDA's Danielson office, said having a well-known nonprofit that has a track record of supporting and assisting agriculture in the region support the

farmers to convert their entire farm to using no-till and cover crops. But Covino said he is more than willing to show a farmer how soil conservation practice on one-quarter of an acre can reduce costs, yield a healthy crop and keep the soil healthy for the next planting with the hope the farmer will adopt the practices on more land in the future.

"The producers in this area are starting to catch on, and they are becoming more profitable while reducing offsite impacts," Covino said. What we don't want to do is put people out of business. We want the farms here and we want them successful."

Hermonot said he wouldn't be using soil conservation methods if he wasn't seeing the economic benefit of them. As an employee of Farm

Credit East, Hermonot works with farmers to ensure they are economically viable.

"This makes sense financially," Hermonot said. "I spend less on machinery, on fuel for the machinery and the fertilizer for the soil. Do I have to spend money on seed for a cover crop? Sure, but that crop can yield revenue as well."

Covino said by planting using a no-till method, the soil structure stays intact. He said soil is the most diverse ecosystem on the planet and it's quite capable of sustaining itself and providing plant matter with all the nutrients it could need while the plants and the creatures living in the ground, such as worms and insects, also replenish the soil.

Tilling breaks up the structure of the soil and that can most obviously be seen in its ability to soak up rain, Covino said. While it might seem that tilling the land would aerate the soil and make it more capable of soaking in a heavy rain, that tilled soil is far more vulnerable to erosion and far more likely to be compacted so tightly that a heavy rain will run off of it and take plenty of soil and nutrients with it.

"We can build soil health by mimicking what mother nature does," Covino said.

continued on page 16

program is a major plus. Covino said TLGV's involvement assures farmers the program can benefit them. There is no silver bullet to soil conservation or magic formula that will work best on each farm and for each farmer, Covino said.

Soil is a complicated ecosystem, Covino said. He is not asking



TLGV was recognized by the Working Lands Alliance for outstanding achievements in advancing farmland preservation in Connecticut through two decades of programs that have promoted agricultural sustainability and farm-friendly communities.

Spring Life

The ideas are not truly revolutionary, Covino said. Until the post-WWII 20th century, practices that promoted soil conservation were commonplace and his fellow farmers would not have thought Hermonot “kooky” in 1884 as they did in 1984. “This is a new way to do old things,” Covino said.

Covino said the methods not only have a direct positive impact on the farms, they have positive impacts on the land, air and water far beyond the farm and it is that fact that drew the attention of United Nation’s climate change summit.

The Center for Food Safety, a national nonprofit public interest and environmental advocacy organization, participated in the summit to highlight how good farming practices can help fight climate change. “Soil is so much more powerful than most of us realize,” said Diana Donlon, food and climate director at the center. “Through regenerative farming practices, we have the ability to pull carbon out of the atmosphere, where it is wreaking havoc, and store it in the soil, where it is greatly lacking and where it has multiple benefits for food, water and climate security.”

Everyone knows plants pull CO₂ from the air. What most people do not understand is that plants use the carbon, sending it back into the ground where it allows the plants to swap the carbon for nutrients with microorganisms. In the ground, carbon is essential and it is just carbon. When the soil is disturbed and the carbon is released, that is when it joins with oxygen to make CO₂, perhaps the single largest culprit implicated in climate change.

The effects are worse, however, than the damage done to the atmosphere, according to the Center for Food Safety. Their research indicates globally, soil has lost 50 to 70 percent of its original carbon content. That loss of carbon actually makes the soil less capable of producing food, the center said.

Covino said that carbon transfer is just one of the critical processes that occurs when healthy plants and soil coexist. Nitrogen is another essential element to crop growth, he said. Many farmers put nitrogen back into the soil through fertilizers, however, those nutrients are only partially available to the plants. Some crops, such as legumes, do a far better job at restoring nitrogen to the soil, where it is most needed.

“We apply 40 million tons of nitrogen annually,” Covino said. “A lot of that ends up in our streams and water sources where we don’t want it. Legumes can supply 70 million tons of nitrogen. A lot of what we’re trying to change is short circuiting what could already be done for free. Why not take full advantage of mother nature?”

Hermonot said he talks about no-till farming and cover crops to any other farmer interested in listening. He also employs a regular rotation of crops as well. He said his hay fields won’t stay hay fields forever. They may have

a few seasons before he converts them to something else.

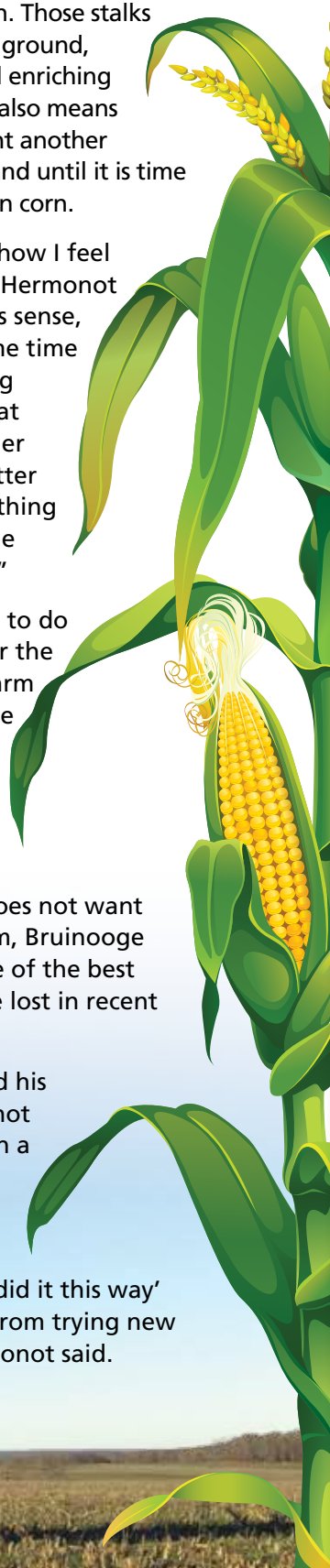
Hermonot is also interested in figuring out the best way to deal with grain corn. Those stalks remain on the ground, degrading and enriching the soil, but it also means he cannot plant another crop on that land until it is time to replant grain corn.

“I’m not sure how I feel about it yet,” Hermonot said. “It makes sense, but at the same time there’s nothing growing in that soil, so I wonder if there’s a better way. It’s something I’m doing some research into.”

It’s that desire to do what’s best for the soil and the farm that Bruinooge and Covino are hoping to cultivate. There isn’t a farmer in the region who does not want a thriving farm, Bruinooge said. But some of the best practices were lost in recent generations.

Hermonot said his advantage is not growing up on a farm.

“I don’t have any of that ‘we always it did it this way’ stopping me from trying new things,” Hermonot said.



Savoring Tastes of the Valley

The 10th Annual Tastes of the Valley was bigger and better than ever.

Held at The Mansion at Bald Hill in Woodstock, CT on Sept. 13, the event had more participants, more patrons and raised more than \$25,000 for The Last Green Valley.

Bella's Bistro in Putnam, CT, won "Best Cuisine" for the third year in the row. The winning dish — Black Currant Braised Short Ribs with Slow Cooked Collard Greens and Leeks, topped with Black Currant and Apple Red Cabbage Relish — used products from 18th-Century Purity Farm, Buell's Orchard, Lapsley Orchard, Maple Lane Farm, New Boston Beef, Palazzi Orchard, Unbound Glory, and Wayne's Organic Garden.

Black Pond Brews of Danielson, CT, and Sharpe Hill Vineyard from Pomfret, CT, shared top honors in "Best Beverage" for the second year in a row. Black Pond Brews' offerings included Tears of Amber and Steampunk Coffee Stout brewed with coffee from Steampunk Café on Main

Street in Danielson, CT. Sharpe Hill's offerings included Ballet of Angels, Angelica Rosé, Fleur Rouge, and Red Seraph.

The event was a success because of all the participants including: 85 Main, Baldwin Brook Farm, Ben's Beans, Bentley Brewing, Blackmer Farm, Blue Slope Farm, Cafémantic, Chase Road Growers, Couët Farm & Fromagerie, Creamery Brook Bison, Devon Point Farm, Ekonk Hill Turkey Farm, G Seven Catering, Good Bug Gardens, Hart's Greenhouse & Florist, Grill 37, Heirloom Food Company, Hosmer Mountain Soda, Marty's of Dudley, Meadow Stone Farm, Oliver Wight Tavern at Old Sturbridge Village, Publick House Historic Inn, Raspberry Knoll Farm, Renee's Working Girl Catering Service, Soleil & Suns Bakery, Taylor Brooke Winery, The Farmer's Cow, The Inn at Woodstock Hill, The Mansion at Bald Hill, The Vanilla Bean Café, Turtle Ledge Farm, We-Li-Kit Farm, Westford Hill Distillers, Willimantic Brewing Company and Woodstock Farms.

The event was also a success because of the businesses who donated auction and raffle items, and the following sponsors:

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Southbridge Savings Bank
The Mansion at Bald Hill
Titan Energy

BRONZE

MaryLou Davis
Farm Credit East
Donna & Bruce Kosa
Village Electric





Are Your Woods

Healthy?

A healthy forest is one that supports the creatures living in it and the families who own it. To have a healthy forest, the forest needs human help rather than a reverence that results in neglect.

"A healthy forest is not necessarily untouched," said Dick Raymond, service forester with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Division of Forestry. "A healthy forest is a managed forest."

Raymond admits the notion may seem counterintuitive to some, but time and practice have proven forestry management to be the key to thriving woodlands.

Connecticut has almost 1.8 million acres of forest, covering 56 percent of the state. Massachusetts has about 3.5 million acres of forest. According to North East State Foresters Association in its report,

"The Economic Importance of Connecticut's Forest Based Economy in 2015," trees are growing faster than they are being taken down. Connecticut's forests grow at a rate of 96 million cubic feet per year, while about 13.7 million cubic feet of timber is harvested.

But, Raymond said, that does not necessarily translate into more forestland or healthier woods. "There are some positive things happening right now for forest conservation, but we also have challenges ahead of us."

Challenge No. 1 is an aging forest throughout The Last Green Valley. Most of the trees are more than 100 years old. But with the majority of that woodland in private hands, education and awareness is the best way for Raymond to advocate for the forests.

About 73 percent of Connecticut's woods are privately owned. The state owns just under 17 percent and municipalities own 10 percent. Massachusetts owns just 310,000 acres of its forests, less than 10 percent. Raymond said he actively urges landowners to develop management plans for their woods with foresters.

Mike Bartlett, a forester with Hull Forest Products, is one of those people who can help a land owner.

Bartlett has been working at Hull, based in Pomfret, for 37 years. He has helped nonprofits, such as the Windham 4-H Camp, and private landowners keep their woodlands thriving.

Bartlett said forestry businesses suffer from misrepresentations on TV that show acres upon acres being cut. In Connecticut, and throughout much of New England, cutting down trees is far more selective.

"We need healthy forests," Bartlett said. "We need the trees to grow and be healthy or we're out of business. It's in our best interest to take the best care of the forests."

Bartlett has worked closely with The Last Green Valley over the years to promote forest conservation. He was named the 2015 Mr. Walktober because of his work with the program and dedication to leading walks centered on woodland conservation.

When the National Heritage Corridor was first designated in 1994, a fair number of residents and businesses were concerned the federal designation would impose more regulations upon them. Bartlett said Hull realized it would have a partner in forest conservation.

"They've done really important work educating people and partnering with other organizations to promote conservation," Bartlett said. "There's more work that needs to be done. If we're not careful we'll lose more and more forest and in 20 years The Last Green Valley won't be so green anymore."

Bartlett said he sees his primary job as protecting the woods from outside threats. The age of the region's forest concerns him, Bartlett said. Those "geriatric" trees are more susceptible to invasive insects and plants, for



"A healthy forest is a managed forest."

Mike Bartlett, Hull Forest Products forester

example. Historically, development has reduced the total acreage of Connecticut's forests, however the economic downturn helped slow the trend. More recently, forest land is being converted into agricultural land, Bartlett said.

Land owners often don't recognize the economic potential of their woods, he said. That potential, however, could relieve the pressure of conversion to other uses.

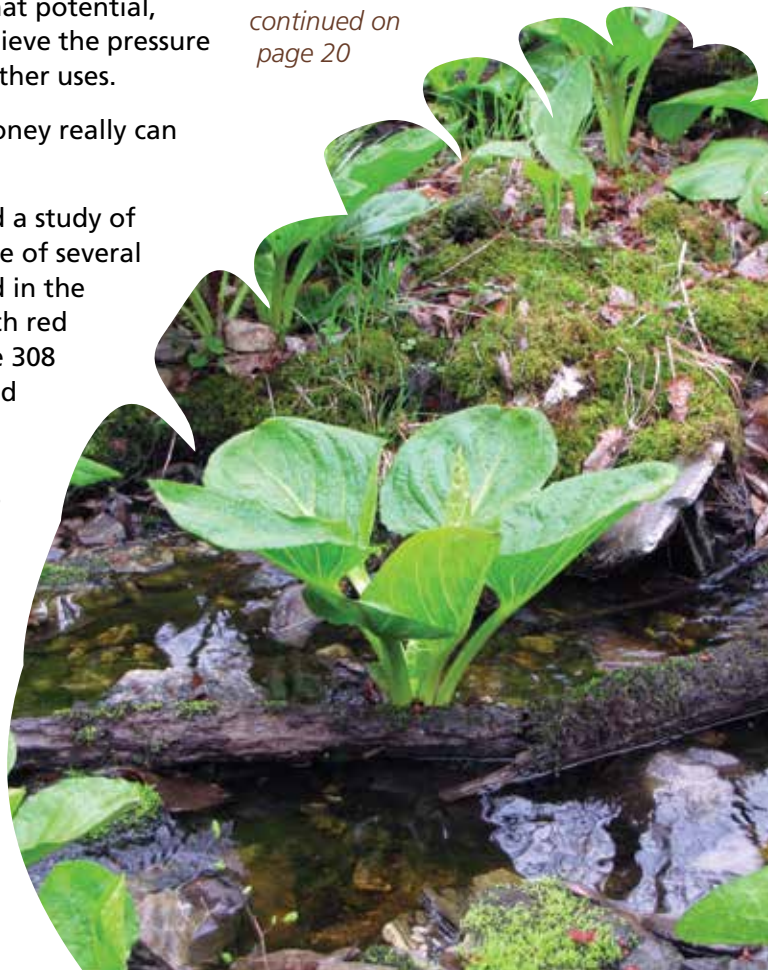
In Connecticut, money really can grow on trees.

Bartlett conducted a study of the economic value of several typical trees found in the region. One 19-inch red oak could produce 308 board feet of wood that would make everything from veneer to cabinets and furniture to pallets. Those final products would put \$3,198.22 into the economy, Bartlett said.

A well-managed 68-acres over 33 years could earn the land owner \$67,561.56 and put \$2.7 million into the economy, Bartlett estimates.

Those figures are a fraction of the billions pumped into the Connecticut economy by forest-based business and recreation,

*continued on
page 20*



according to the North East State Foresters Association.

Raymond said the state has joined with the federal government to purchase the development rights to forest land. The owners continue to own the land and are urged to work with someone like Bartlett to develop a long-term management plan. However, the land can never be converted to another use.

"We want to see working forests," Raymond said. "The landowners can gain significant income by properly managing their land and ensuring the forest stay healthy."

About 700 acres have already been conserved through the program in the Connecticut portion of The

Last Green Valley. Massachusetts also has a similar program.

There are also numerous land trusts that private landowners can work with in the region.

Raymond said Connecticut also has a program where anyone with 25 or more acres can go to their local assessor and have their woods designated as forest land. The designation reduces taxes but also requires the land remain a forest for 10 years or more.

Raymond said the state is struggling to maintain its own forests because of budget cuts. However, there is also recognition that the Connecticut forests are a recreational haven, tourist destination and a way of life, especially in The Last Green Valley.

"It's the back drop of everything we do in eastern Connecticut," Raymond said. "It's the scenery and it's the backyard of everybody and it provides numerous benefits. It helps improve air quality. It helps us maintain water quality and it's habitat for wildlife and recreation for us. It's a big part of the tourism we get in the state. And we're not making many more acres of it. We're always on the decline slightly and private landowners will decide if that continues."



Scenes from The Last Green Valley, Inc.

2015 ANNUAL MEETING

June 13 at Camp Nahaco in Eastford/Woodstock, CT



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

1. TLGV Member and Volunteer Ranger Steve Broderick led a nature hike.
2. Chief Ranger Bill Reid led a paddle on Crystal Pond.
3. Sprite the Northern Saw-whet Owl was the perfect guest at TLGV's annual meeting.
4. Lead Ranger Marcy Dawley found an interesting tree limb and had to climb it.
5. Kayakers enjoyed the warm sun.
6. After a BBQ dinner and business meeting to amend TLGV's bylaws and elect 2015-2016 Officer and Directors, TLGV presented Charlene Cutler with the Founders Award for seventeen years of dedicated service to The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor. Mike Bartlett from Hull Forest Products was named Mr. Walktober 2015 for leading the way on so many fascinating, educational, and always entertaining woodland walks and forestry tours over many years. Denise Coffey was awarded the Voice of the Valley Award for outstanding, in-depth coverage of issues that matter in The Last Green Valley. TLGV thanked Rick Parkinson for contributing his time and talent to The Last Green Valley Water Trails DVD Project, and also thanked outgoing Board Members Norma O'Leary, Jean Sullivan, Elaine Knowlton, and Jason Vincent for their service to the organization. Left to right: Marge Hoskin, Joe Hickey, Charlene Cutler, Lois Bruinooge.
7. Mary-Beth Kaeser from Horizon Wings Raptor Rehabilitation & Education presented Atka, a bald eagle who cannot return to the wild and is now trained to participate in public education events.



DISCOVER

The Last Green Valley

Marcy Dawley treasures the look of excitement and awe that spreads on a child's face when something new is discovered on one of The Last Green Valley's Acorn Adventures.

Acorn Adventures are just one example of programs for both young and old meant to educate and raise awareness of the wonders of The Last Green Valley.

"It's so much fun to see these kids excited about learning," said Dawley, a ranger and project coordinator for TLGV. "They're discovering something new every time we go out."

Education programs are the backbone of so much of what TLGV does. Acorn Adventures, which happen every month in a new location, are more informal than some programs and ensure children and their families experience The Last Green Valley firsthand.

Bill Reid, chief ranger, gears the programs he runs toward an older audience. Together, Reid, Dawley and the other rangers attended more than 70 events and spent 514 hours on educational and awareness programs.

"We don't always have enough rangers to get to every event or group we're invited to, but we get to most of them," Reid said. "We go to fairs and other major events. We're interacting with a lot of different people."

While much of the rangers' work involves sharing the natural landscape, flora and fauna of TLGV with people, Christine Armstrong's work educates participants about the conservation issues facing the National Heritage Corridor. Armstrong is a consultant for TLGV with a background in environmental sciences and public planning, who also is a substitute teacher.

Most of Armstrong's work is directly in classrooms across The Last Green Valley. With a hands-on table-top model called an Enviroscape in tow, Armstrong and her Assistant Educator Liz Ellsworth focus on the watershed and non-point source pollution issues impacting local water supplies. They are busy in classrooms throughout the spring, when many schools study the ecosystem.



Thank you, Putnam Bank, for sponsoring the 2015 Acorn Adventures
Putnam Bank
 TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



"It's hands on and kids especially love that opportunity to see how things work. Now, we're really trying to broaden the programs we can offer."

Christine Armstrong
TLGV consultant

hope your organization will be able to continue this wonderful and informative program for my students in the future."

Armstrong said she is also working with teachers in districts such as Ashford and Norwich, to expand the program to look at the watershed and other environmental issues in a way that will help children understand conservation issues and the impacts daily living has on the region.

Armstrong also brings the program to summer camps where she pulls in elements that show the diversity of the environment and economy of the corridor.

In the late fall Armstrong and fellow TLGV Consultant Jean Pillo teamed up to do a program on how water bugs are important indicators of the health of rivers, streams and ponds.

"People really love these programs, and we can incorporate a lot about The Last Green Valley in what we do," Armstrong said. "It's hands on and kids especially love that opportunity to see how things work. Now, we're really trying to broaden the programs we can offer."

The Enviroscape allows them to show how everything from soap used in washing cars, to feces from walking dogs, can get into the water system and have an effect on everyone.

"I try to explain to students that it's not just what they do, it's what we all do, and they can see how everything eventually gets back into our freshwater systems," Armstrong said.

Armstrong said sixth and seventh-graders get the most out of the program, however, she can adjust it for classrooms as young as fourth grade. The reviews Armstrong gets are always outstanding.

"This is the second year that Christine has presented her program to my students," wrote Marc Barry, a Plainfield Middle School teacher after Armstrong's May visit. "She does an excellent job. She holds the students' attention and really enriches the ecosystem unit that we do. I

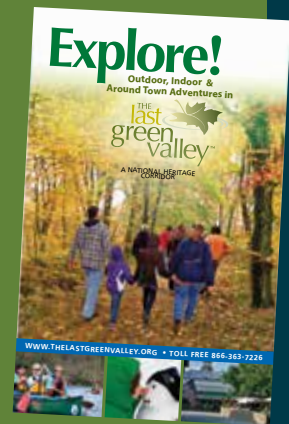
Reaching Out

In 2015 TLGV Rangers :

- Gave 16 presentations to community groups
- Attended 70 events including:
 - 12 Acorn Adventures
 - 7 TLGV Member Programs
 - 45 Fairs, Festivals, and Events

TLGV's Education and Outreach Program touched 2,300 students in classrooms, camps, and community events.

TLGV launched the first edition of Explore! with more content and partners than ever before. From Accommodations and Astronomy to Theaters and Winter Activities, it's your guide to Outdoor, Indoor, and Around Town Adventures in The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor. TLGV's Information Ambassadors distributed 25,000 copies of Explore! in just a few months and plans are well underway for an expanded edition in 2016.



"Hoo's Out there in The Last Green Valley" by Karyn DiBonaventura of Putnam, CT, took first place in TLGV's annual late-summer photo contest and was chosen for the cover of the 2016 calendar.

Telling Stories THAT MATTER

In 2015, TLGV awarded \$10,000 in grants to 4 nonprofit organizations for the interpretation, promotion or marketing of historical and cultural resources. The use of digital technology, social media, or creative and innovative approaches to bring stories from The Last Green Valley to life was encouraged. Fifteen completed applications were received and four were funded. All grants are matched at least one-to-one.

ONE

The Connecticut Audubon Society Center in Pomfret was awarded \$2,500 for "Edwin Way Teale, A Naturalist Writer's Interpretive Trail" at the Trail Wood Sanctuary in Hampton, CT. The grant will fund the research, design and installation of 10 high quality trail kiosk signs plus a virtual trail walk on the Connecticut Audubon website.

TWO

The Dr. Ashbel Woodward House Museum and Town of Franklin, CT, was awarded \$2,500 to digitize and catalog the museum's entire collection. The grant will also fund an interactive touch-screen kiosk to enable visitors to virtually "Explore the Surgeon's Room," a portion of the museum inaccessible to the public.

THREE

Old Sturbridge Village in Sturbridge, MA, was awarded \$2,500 to develop a promotional video series to celebrate 1830s lessons and values still relevant today, such as being a good neighbor and sharing an appreciation of the land. The videos will highlight small house living, field-to-table food, agriculture and horticulture, and mastering a skill, craft or trade, and will be used to promote OSV and the region.

FOUR

The Lebanon Historical Society in Lebanon, CT, was awarded \$2,500 to create mini-documentaries illustrating the interiors of its historic buildings and provide a narrative interpretation of the history and significance of the buildings.



The Last Green Valley, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position as of September 30, 2015
Audited Financial Statement

Assets

CURRENT ASSETS:

Cash	\$342,228
Grants Receivable	26,237
Inventory	2,100
Prepaid Expenses	3,891
Total Current Assets	\$374,456

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT:

Machinery and Equipment	25,842
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(25,799)
Net Property and Equipment	43

Total Assets **\$374,499**

Liabilities and Net Assets

CURRENT LIABILITIES:

Accounts Payable	\$ 8,927
Accrued Expenses	23,309
Grants Awarded	10,000

Total Current Liabilities **42,236**

Total Liabilities **42,236**

Net Assets:

Unrestricted	\$332,263
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Total Net Assets **\$332,263**

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$374,499**

Changes in Unrestricted Net Assets

Revenues and Gains (FY 2015 Income Sources):

National Park Service	\$536,446
Sales – Merchandise	1,437
Grants	16,952
Contributions	770
Memberships/Fees	115,858
Interest Income	561
Advertising Income	18,200
Fundraising Event	29,825
Total Revenue	720,049

Expenses (FY 2015 Expense Allocations):

Programming	504,835
Management & General	78,436
Fundraising	39,413
Total Expenses	622,684

Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets **97,365**

Increase in Net Assets **97,365**

Net Assets – Beginning of Year **234,898**

Net Assets – End of Year **332,263**

Thank you to all of The Last Green Valley's Members, Donors, Sponsors, and Partners

From 10/01/2014 - 12/31/2015 • Includes cash and in-kind contributions

Federal Funding

National Park Service, National Heritage Areas Program
Federal Highways Administration, Recreational Trails Grant, administered by the CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
Regional Conservation Partnership Program Grant, US Dept. of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

\$10,000+

First Niagara Bank
Bill & Silvia Jobbagy
Millennium Power Partners, L.P.

\$5,000+

Keith & Elaine Knowlton
Nancy Polydys
Savings Institute Bank & Trust
Southbridge Savings Bank

\$1,000+

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Charter Oak Federal Credit Union
Jeff Conrad
Elaine Crooke
Charlene & Doug Cutler
Eastern Savings Bank
John & Joan Gray
Betty Hale
Rebecca M. Harvey
Marjorie L. Hoskin
Ivanhoe Tool & Die Co., Inc.
Marty's of Dudley
Mills Family Charitable Trust
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Savers Bank
Taylor Brooke Winery
The Mansion at Bald Hill
United Natural Foods, Inc.
Vienna Restaurant & Historic Inn

\$500+

85 Main
Myra Ambrogio
Joellen Anderson
Angell House Design
Anonymous
Bella's Bistro
John Boland & Susan Preston Boland
Lee & Julie Boltz
Cafémantic
Datzmedia
Marcy Dawley & Bob White

Dexter-Russell, Inc.
Joe & Jean Drake
Thomas & Nancy Dziki
David & Phyllis Emigh
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Women's Fellowship
Frito-Lay, Inc.
G7 Caterers
Grill 37
Heirloom Food Company
Hull Forest Products
Bruce & Donna Kosa
Ellen Lehtimäki
William MacLaren
Jeffrey & Amy Miller
Oliver Wight Tavern at Old Sturbridge Village
Publick House Historic Inn
Renee's Working Girl Catering
Wayde & Mary Beth Schmidt
The Farmer's Cow Café & Creamery
The Farmer's Cow
Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park

\$250+

18th Century Purity Farm
America's Best Value Inn
Artique, LLC
Bed and Breakfast at Taylor's Corner
Dean & Sandra Blanchard
Bogey Lanes
Brooklyn Historical Society
Brush It Off LLC
Buell's Orchard
Margaret Campanelli
Cedar Ledge Tree Farm
Chamber of Central Mass South
The Christmas Barn
Roberta Cook
Creamery Brook Bison
Dog Lane Café
Farm Credit East
Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Sharon Gabiga
Roger & Nancy Gale
Golden Lamb Buttery
Thomas & Donna Hawkins
Richard & Elena Hermonot
Charles F. Kane, Jr.
Doug Kehl
Lakeview Marine - Paddlesport Rentals
Lucille A. Langlois
Gary & Frietha Lawrence
Kenneth E. Mahler & Christine A. Strick
Meadow Stone Farm
Tony & Terri Messa
The Metro Bistrot

Morning Beckons Farm
Nathan Hale Inn & Conference Center
Northeast Connecticut Art Guild
PierceCare
Irving & Dorothea Pulsifer
Janet Robertson
Faith A. Robinson
Sharpe Hill Vineyard
Soleil & Suns Bakery
Titan Energy
Town of Coventry
Town of Eastford
Town of Hampton
Town of Pomfret
Town of Putnam
Vanilla Bean Café
Village Electric
Voluntown Economic Development
Glenn Warner & Marguerite Davis
Willimantic Brewing Co., LLC
WINY-AM Radio Station
William J. Zenko

\$100+

Joseph & Dawn Adiletta
The Adventure Park at Storrs
Allen Hill Farm, LLC
Susan E. Allen
Alpaca Obsession, LLC
Anonymous (6)
The Arc of Quinebaug Valley
Archambault Insurance Associates
Dan & Mary Atwood
Avalonia Land Conservancy
A. David & Margaret Babbitt
Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry
Marilyn & Peter Barlow
Donna Baron
Ann Barry & Dennis Landis
Bed & Breakfasts of Mystic Country
Timothy & Heather Bell
John & Janice Benda
Bentley Brewing Company
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services
Black Tavern Historical Society

Blackmer Farm
Janet & Dennis Blanchette
Booklovers' Gourmet
Richard Booth
Robert & Katherine Boucher
Bozrah Farmers Market
Brialee RV & Tent Park, Inc.
Steve & Karen Broderick
Jim & Helen Bruinooge
Lois Bruinooge
David & Nancy Bull
Business Systems & Incentives, Inc.
Canterbury Historical Society
Canterbury Lions Club
Captain Grant's 1754
Betty Challgren
Chamber of Commerce, Windham Region
Ted & Susan Chambers
Charlie Brown Campground
Chase Graphics
Warren & Marguerite Church
Circle C Campground, Inc.
Clara Barton Birthplace Museum
Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum
Connecticut Repertory Theatre
Cook's Farm Orchard
Richard & Mary Cooper
CT Audubon Society-Trailwood
Cuprak's Cupboard
Peter & Dawn Curry
Carolyn Cutler
Catherine & Julius D'Agostino
The Daniel Rust House
Faith Damon Davison
Daughters of the Holy Spirit
Cornelia Dayton
Anne DeBowes
Christopher & Kathleen Demers
Devon Point Farm
Dudley Conservation Land Trust
Dudley Hill Golf Club
Thomas & Lynne Dufresne
Ann Dunnack
Lucian Dzialo
Eastern CT State University
Eileen D. Brown Charitable Trust
Mary & Ken Feathers
Lenore Felpel & Jim Hamel
Linda C. Felt
Finnish-American Heritage Society
First Congregational Church of Woodstock
John Folsom
Fort Hill Farms & Gardens, LLC
Foster Country Club
Peter Fox
Foxwoods Resort Casino

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people to the places
and stories that
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Frog Rock Rest Stop, LLC
Karen Gallo
Garden Gate Florist
Janet Garon
George's Galley
Tom & Nancy Gerseny
GET Interactive Media, LLC
Ron & Norma Gingras
Dave Goodrich
The Governor Jonathan Trumbull
House
The Governor Samuel Huntington
Trust
LyAnn Graff & Ken Carpenter
Sonia & Kevin Greene
Karen Greer
Ann Gruenberg
Guns of Norwich Historical Society,
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Gurleyville Native Produce
John & Susan Hall
Roslyn Harrington
Russell F. Harris
Hart's Greenhouse & Florist, LLC
Steve & Leesa Heath
Henrietta House B&B and
Red House Farm
Hertan's Shows
Highland Campground
Highland Festival Association of
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A few scenes from volunteer cleanups around The Last Green Valley in 2015.



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