



Cavendish Community and Conservation Association

Our Vision: *CCCA is committed to a vibrant Cavendish/Proctorsville community that supports its human and natural resources, building a legacy of health, integrity and vitality for future generations.*

www.CavendishCCCA.org

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CELEBRATING MARDI GRAS!

Again this year we had a successful and fun Mardi Gras celebration in Cavendish. On the evening of February 10th Crow's Bakery and Opera House Café on Depot Street in Proctorsville might as well have been on Bourbon Street in New Orleans (until you stepped out the door – brrrr.). The music was terrific as we stomped to the Cajun beat of Yankee Chank, and the food was superb as we devoured shrimp, rice, and a plethora of Louisiana delights, including King Cake. This is a tradition not to be missed. It is the annual fundraiser for CCCA and the proceeds of the evening pay for a number of activities, many of which are written about below. Whether you were there or if you missed it this year, please watch for our announcements next year! Spring 2012; Page 1



A Message from Robin

Spring is here, summer is upon us, and as the faint covering of snow disappears we see the remains of Irene's passage. Many people have commented on how terrible our landscape looks, trees and roots akimbo, erosion, sand, mud, debris...our landscapes damaged and changed. It can be hard to look upon without wanting to step in and clean up, tidy the stream banks, remove trunks and branches. Marie Caduto, Watershed Coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources gave a presentation to the Town of Cavendish and to the board of the CCCA about what is known and recommended regarding the management of the damaged streams and land. What I found of particular interest was that much of what we see as "ugly roots, snarled timber etc." is in fact a homemaking paradise for all kinds of creatures and critters and many animals will benefit from the wreckage. She cautioned once again to not push driftwood back into the waterways. Another point of interest was that the land that was flooded along the Black River's banks has been tested and found uncontaminated. There is a good resource paper on how to go about dealing with our streams, rivers and banks on the Agency of Natural Resources web site, which is found at www.anr.state.vt.us/site/html/wq_final_debris_in_water.pdf, or simply go to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and click on the site relating to Irene flood damage on the right hand column.

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On another note, we had a great turnout for the presentation by Forrest Hammond of Vermont Fish and Wildlife on moose and bear.

Forrest brought many interesting facts to our attention. Moose used to be very rare in our area but in the past 20 years their population has grown. They definitely prefer the higher elevations and conifer zones and do not do well in warm weather. In winter months moose eat bark, mostly of the hardwood species and for this reason can be in conflict with foresters. Once a moose strips the bark off a tree, the wood can never be of good quality. An astonishing fact is that a moose can be host to as many as 10,000 ticks (moose ticks only feed on moose), and can even die of anemia! A moose that has lost a great deal of blood to ticks is called a ghost moose.

The black bear of our woodlands is the most successful of all the bear species. In Vermont the black bear is called the "umbrella species" because if we have what the black bear needs to survive than we have what other species need as well. Forrest said that thanks to Act 250 we have enough conserved land to protect black bears and wildlife for the future. Bear hunting is well regulated and this year more permits will be given for the hunting of bears because the population is healthy. Bears are SUPER-intelligent according to Hammond and can become what is called problem bears so it is important to pull in the bird feeders and if a young male comes poking about in your back yard, give him a good scare! A fire cracker, banging on pans or a gun shot into the air. There is an interactive site on the Vt. Fish and Wildlife website where folks can report sightings of moose and bear and Hammond encourages people to let the department know what they see in their area.

The CCCA Energy Committee News

In an ongoing effort to help reduce energy consumption in Cavendish the CCCA Energy committee solicited a plan to place solar panels on the roof of the Cavendish Town Elementary School. As expected, the cost of the panels is prohibitively expensive, even after rebates and state incentives, since it would add significantly to the tax rate. So the next step is to find outside sources of financing that will reduce the need for tax revenues.

The committee is also studying the new legislation that mandates recycling in Vermont. Cavendish has very limited recycling and from observation at the transfer station, what little recycling we have is routinely ignored. We anticipate some changes from this new law, but it is too early to tell what the local impact will be.

Another program under scrutiny is the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program, designed to help qualifying homeowners invest in specified energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements. It provides a means of financing for Vermonters to increase home energy efficiency. Funds raised through the issuance of bonds are lent to homeowners at very low rates. Repayments are made quarterly along with the owners' tax payments. This program can only be implemented after a favorable vote by town meeting members. Some 23 towns in Vermont approved the program last March and we expect it to grow significantly next year. The actual financing and administration of the program is accomplished through the VT Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC).

If you have a desire to help Cavendish reduce its carbon footprint and reduce costs too, please call Peter at 802-226-7250. We can use your help.

2012 Walk and Talk Series Continues

As more completely described in Robin's column above, on March 22nd at the town offices the CCCA Conservation Committee sponsored Forrest Hammond of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and his standing room only talk about moose and black bear in Cavendish. It was extremely well received and set the tone for the presentations this season.

The next presentation in the series occurred on May 5th, again at the town offices, but continuing as a field tour. James S. Andrews, professor at Middlebury College and principal of the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas Project spoke on the varieties of species that inhabit the Cavendish area and the rest of Vermont. The Atlas is a project to document all reptiles and amphibians – snakes, salamanders, frogs, turtles, etc. that live in Vermont. He has listed them by town and he distributed to attendees a list of species that need to be documented in Cavendish.



Jim Andrews shares the results of a search through a vernal pool in the Cavendish woods.

While learning about the natural world of the vernal pools and streams that exist in our back yards can be fun, visiting them and exploring them is even more enjoyable. In this case, Mr. Andrews illustrated his talk by taking the attendees to the woods where he found an abundance of egg masses for frogs and salamanders, and several kinds of salamanders

too. Recent rains had filled many small pools and it was easy to walk in the woods from pool to pool, looking for wildlife while listening to the birds and the peepers.



One of many finds during the walk event.

For more information on the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas project you can visit www.vtherpatlas.org. Professor Andrews encourages participation by anyone to help fill in the gaps of knowledge. If you frequent the woods or your back yard, or even if you just walk on back roads, keep an eye out for salamanders, frogs, turtles and snakes and snap a picture of those you see. For example, although we all know that snapping and painted turtles exist in Cavendish, he has never received a confirming report or picture. If you see one of these in town, report it on the website or send him an e-mail at jandrews@middlebury.edu.

We've had discussions of Moose and Bear, and we've examined reptiles and amphibians in our woods, now it's time to look up. CCCA will present the next event in the series on May 28th when Alma Beals of the Mt. Ascutney Audubon Society will lead a bird walk off Twenty Mile Stream Road. This will be an early morning walk, expected to start at 7:00 a.m. Please reserve the date. Further details will be published in the newspapers immediately before the date.

We can always use help to coordinate and present events, so if you'd like to participate, or just want more information on the series, please contact Tim O'Donoghue at 226-7023.

CCF Announces Several Spring Grant Awards

The Cavendish Community Fund has announced that it has distributed five awards to local individuals and organizations in the spring 2012 round of grants.

The first award was made to the Cavendish Historical Society for a community oriented educational project called "Hands on History". The project will include classroom workshops for elementary school students and community programs to be held on Saturdays for all Cavendish residents. This program will build on the success of the Historical Society's Young Historians' program.

The second grant was awarded to the Cavendish Community Theater to underwrite its 2012, yet to be named production. The play is being written by Cavendish residents Stan and Jane Hart who have previously written skits that were presented in Ludlow's Town Hall Auditorium. Both have distinguished careers in writing, including Stan's career writing television comedy. The money awarded will purchase badly needed equipment to be used in future productions.

A third grant was awarded to the operators of the Six Loose Ladies fiber store in Proctorsville. The store is operated by a non-profit group that promotes education in the area of fiber arts. The grant will pay for new equipment that will help presentation of classes on the store premises.

The Chronic Conditions Information Net, Inc., a 501(c)(3) charitable organization received the fourth grant to help it conduct workshops for people facing aging and/or a chronic/life threatening condition. The workshops will focus on creating and keeping a health notebook for self or someone being cared for.

Finally, the CCF provided a grant to the folks who are recreating the flood damaged Greven Field so that it can be used again by the many children of Cavendish. The grant was specifically given to underwrite the highly successful fund raising concert held at Green Mountain High School by classical pianist Ignat Solzhenitsyn.

For more information about the Cavendish Community Fund, please see the web page at www.CavendishCCCA.org or call Barbara Dickey at 802-226-7187.

Applications can be submitted anytime, but will only be considered twice a year as announced by the fund. The next round of grants is expected to occur this fall. Applications and inquiries should be sent to CCF, P.O. Box 605, Cavendish, VT 05142.

Join Us as a Member of CCCA!

Dues are a nominal \$35 per year for full membership. In order to join CCCA, please fill out the information below and send with a check payable to Cavendish Community and Conservation Association to:

CCCA
P.O. Box 605
Cavendish, VT 05142

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____