

theSteward

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Cornwall Conservation Trust Protects Local Woods and Wildlife

Just as the land echoes the history of Cornwall—the colonial farmers who worked with oxen and steel in the umbra of majestic views—it too reflects the present and future of Cornwall—an eclectic mix of weekend visitors, part-time residents from New York City, and families who can trace their heritage back hundreds of years.

More than its woods, hills and rocky places, the 46.3 square miles of historic houses, fields and farms of Cornwall are home for generations of people, plants and animals, then, now, and far into the future. The Cornwall Conservation Trust (CCT) intends to protect that home.

Keeping Cornwall, Cornwall — Growing a Love for Natural Places

CCT was formed in 1987 by a small group of forward-thinking citizens who gathered together in the evenings to discuss immediate needs and long-term goals for the town. They wanted to preserve the rural nature and the tight-knit community of Cornwall. Through these evening discussions, they established the Cornwall Association, the *Cornwall Chronicle* and CCT.

Long-time Cornwall resident Constance Gloeckner was known for her love of Cornwall. Community members were saddened when she passed away unexpectedly and surprised when they learned she had left a bequest to CCT that included 35 acres of land and the financial resources to manage it. That single act of kindness set CCT and the town of Cornwall well on their way to reaching their goals.



The entrance to the Cooley Farm Preserve trail

With her gift and the gifts of hundreds of others, CCT now cares for more than 2,000 acres of land maintained by 23 funds that support land management, the acquiring of land, conservation, and environmental and ecological studies.

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Community Crossroads – Where we are now and where we are headed



Community Crossroads is an extensive research project focused on the demographic composition of Northwest Connecticut communities now and in the future and core community wellbeing indicators, such as housing, employment, education, healthcare and crime.

The Community Foundation's goal with this report is to educate community stakeholders and inspire community discourse in order to build collaborative strategies to protect and enhance the welfare of our region.

Read *Community Crossroads* at www.northwestcf.org/community-crossroads

Cynthia Conklin: A Legacy of Nurturing, Nourishment and Boundless Care of Others

A longtime nurse, Cynthia Conklin was well known as a caretaker for the elderly and a nurturer to all who crossed her path. Driven at a young age to care for the sick and the vulnerable, she attended Dana Hall School in Massachusetts, Sweet Briar College in Virginia and the University of New Hampshire earning a Master of Science degree in nursing.

For many years, she specialized in maternity care at White Plains Hospital in N.Y., where she rose to the position of senior nurse. When her parents began finding it difficult to live independently, she moved into their home in Sharon to care for them, and soon realized that several elderly aunts who lived nearby needed caring for as well. She looked after all of them and continued caring for others as a part-time nurse at Sharon Hospital.

She took great pleasure in buying gifts for her grandnieces and nephews. She was known for hiding gifts throughout her house and in her yard, sending the children on treasure hunts to find them with rhyming clues. She made brownies for the post office staff and brought hot coffee and muffins to snow plow workers.

"There was no end to her generosity in every way, of her time, of herself; she was always thinking about others," said Cynthia's sister-in-law Carol Pierson.



Cynthia Conklin & Family Fund For Pets in Need works to alleviate animal suffering by supporting nonprofit organizations that serve animal welfare, and by providing support for emergency medical care for sick, injured and/or neglected animals.

Caring for so many didn't keep Cynthia from embracing the Sharon community. She was invaluable to several local nonprofits, volunteering her time and talents to serve on numerous committees. She served on the Board of the Sharon Historical Society & Museum, the Sharon Woman's Club, and the Sharon Housing Authority.

"She had a way of understanding other people's problems. She enjoyed helping people," said Cynthia's brother, Hank Conklin.

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Donors Get Kids Back in the Saddle

A drive up serenely quiet Tophet Rd. in Roxbury yields peaceful pastoral views that have remained unchanged for hundreds of years, but glance away from the hills and you might enjoy a different sight – a field abounding with ponies trotting along with little riders, weaving in and out of obstacles, standing in their stirrups reaching for colorful rings – signing in American Sign Language: red, blue, and yellow.



Little Britches rider balances on his pony, Jules, with his occupational therapist and sidewalker at his sides.

imagined a cutting edge program that combined children's love of horses with their need for therapeutic treatments, a program that would get children with special needs outside and make their therapies more enjoyable.

Peg completed training in therapeutic riding and convinced friend Betty Lou McColgin to let her use her farm. It wasn't long before Peg began receiving calls from teachers, doctors and nurses recommending children they felt would benefit from her unique program – a program that got children out of wheelchairs and steel braces and onto a pony in the great outdoors of Litchfield Connecticut.

"Those early students inspired a lot of what we do now," said Stuart Daly a long-time friend of Peg's who worked with her in the early days of Little Britches and who currently serves as Vice President of the organization.

"They were new to working with horses. They had spent their therapy sessions in gyms with weight straps and medicine balls, which are very effective, but not always fun. Some of them had a reputation for being difficult."

"But, as Peg often said, 'everyday magic happens here at Little Britches.'

"Once we got them on a pony, the children were different. They wanted to listen, and they wanted to become better riders," said Stuart.



A Little Britches rider greets her pony, Lucy, before her session.

You have stumbled upon Little Britches Therapeutic Riding, where more than 60 children with conditions including Autism, Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and complications from Microcephaly come to build strength, balance, and confidence all while having fun in the outdoors with their favorite pony.

Little Britches was developed by Northwest Corner native Peg Sweeney almost 40 years ago. She

According to Alice Daly, Little Britches Executive Director and riding instructor, that magic has many parts. For children with Attention Deficit/Hyper Attention Disorders just the presence of the ponies can reduce anxiety. For those with physical disabilities, such as low-muscle tone and paralysis, riding a pony mimics the gait of human walking, building strength and muscle memory.

For these reasons, occupational therapists guide riding sessions, which depending on the needs of the rider, may include riding with their arms up and out or standing in their stirrups to improve balance and build core muscles, or reaching for colorful rings while balancing, which promotes motor planning, coordination, and improves color-recognition.

Staff and volunteers are trained in American Sign Language to better communicate with riders who often have speech delays due to low-muscle tone. Volunteers walk alongside riders, instructors and therapists adding a sense of safety and proving positive social interactions.

Growing Stronger in the Northwest Corner

After many years of successful therapies and happy riders, Little Britches began operating a second location – now the organization's main location – at Stuart's family farm in Roxbury, where staff, volunteers and six well-loved ponies work with growing numbers of children from Bethlehem, Goshen, Litchfield, Morris, Torrington, Washington and several other Connecticut towns.

"Children do not sit on waiting lists," said Stuart. "We find a way to fit them in."

"Our program is very physical and very interactive," said Alice. "Our riders work hard on their individual goals, but for them, at the end of the day, they just had a great time outside riding their pony."

"We have come to the Community Foundation for various needs over the years," said Stuart – grants for therapist training, pony rentals and subsidized fees for our little riders.

"The help that we have received from the Community Foundation is immeasurable. Little Britches has always been a community effort. The Community Foundation has been part of that effort for more than 15 years."

[View photos of Little Britches Therapeutic Riding at www.northwestcf.org/littlebritches](http://www.northwestcf.org/littlebritches)

Grants in Support of Therapeutic Riding

Margaret C. Tupper Fund – \$1,000 in support of fundraising efforts

Carlton D. Fyler and Jenny R. Fyler Fund – \$12,088 in support of therapeutic riding lessons for children and training for occupational therapists

Marion Wm. & Alice Edwards Fund – \$3,500 in support of therapeutic riding Lessons

Seth Tracy Memorial Fund – \$100 in support of therapeutic riding Lessons



Narrator Jane Coughlin records a book in the recording booth.

Donors, Volunteers Provide Digital Books for the Visually Impaired

The all-volunteer Connecticut Volunteer Services for the Blind and Handicapped (CVSBH) prepare fiction non-fiction and children's books in a digital format for the more than 430 visually impaired residents of Litchfield County and 7,000 throughout the state.

Established in 1974 by the late Margaret Reventlow as a local program to record books for the blind in the town of Litchfield, CVSBH receives requests from the Connecticut Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped for reading materials throughout the Northwest Corner and across Connecticut.

A grant from the **Khurshed Bhumgara Fund** and the **Northwest Connecticut Philanthropy Fund** provided for the digitizing of 80 of these books, which will be made available to the local visually impaired community free of charge through the Connecticut Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.



Howard Goldstein reads with a playback device from the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

What matters to you? Tell us at northwestcf.org/contact

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Cornwall Conservation Trust

In the same spirit of Constance's altruism, most of the land under the protection of CCT was donated by local families who wanted to keep their land the way it has always been. Some land was given for the purpose of keeping it undeveloped and available for others to enjoy for recreation. Some was given to preserve farm land, and is leased by CCT to local farmers at a very low fee per the land donors' wishes. Some preserve flora and fauna habitat.

In their efforts to keep Cornwall's natural places, CCT works to ensure a balance between conservation and development.

"Conservation and development are not exclusive," says Hector Prud'homme, former CCT President. "They can go together. It's not conservation at any cost or development at any cost. It's smart conservation and smart economic development."

Preservation is Good Business

For CCT and the town of Cornwall, smart development means preserving land in three ways that are beneficial to everyone—supporting local farming, ensuring that preserved land is open to everyone to enjoy, and providing natural open spaces for Cornwall's first residents, thousands of species of plants, animals and birds.

CCT preserves about 200 acres of farmland that reaps locally grown produce as well as hay that supports nearby equestrian and organic cattle farms.

Seven properties are open to residents and visitors for hiking, encouraging tourists to explore the quaint community and rural areas through trails and scenic vistas.

Much of the forested acres are left untouched for the benefit of local wildlife. CCT considers wildlife habitats when acquiring properties, including the recent purchase of Trinity Forest, a 300 acre area directly abutting state forest, which created 1,000 acres of uninterrupted forest habitat.

"Public access is an important aspect of our properties," said Barton Jones, CCT president. "At the same time, if we are given a property, we are responsible for it, forever—to keep it in the condition it was when it was given to us."

CCT's funds, invested with the Community Foundation, help maintain the properties under their care as they were meant to be maintained, as well as to accrue new properties, and create recreational areas.

Funds with the Community Foundation

CCT established its first fund with the Community Foundation in 2005. Since then, CCT's funds and their partnership with the Community Foundation have grown to more than 20 funds.

"We are in the land preservation business, not the financial business," said Hector.

"We appreciate the importance of professional long-term investing – having a local, like minded organization watch over our funds.

"We were looking for a neutral, local organization that had the same view of the world that we do—coupled with the knowledge that the Community Foundation allows us to have a more diversified portfolio and have access to sophisticated types of investments—The Community Foundation is a nice home for us."

[Donate to the Cornwall Conservation Trust at \[www.northwestcf.org/donate\]\(http://www.northwestcf.org/donate\)](http://www.northwestcf.org/donate)

Cornwall Conservation Trust Inspires Students

Through the CCT Student Grants Fund, CCT awards scholarships to local high school and college students who participate in ecological, forestry, biological activities or the Future Farmers of America organization.



Johan Winsser of the Cornwall Conservation Trust supervised interns as they worked to clear trails on the Cooley Farm Preserve.

In 2017, CCT was awarded a grant from the **Ruth and Robert Cron Endowment Fund** for 6 high school interns to learn about environmental stewardship through trail creation, trail blazing, boundary marking, and property inspections.

"Students leave us with a better understanding of and appreciation for land trust conservation work and our beautiful area," said Barton Jones, CCT president.

Life-long Torrington Resident Helps Hotchkiss-Fyler House Enchant Visitors



Repairs in progress in the Gertrude Hotchkiss bedroom of The Hotchkiss-Fyler House

The Hotchkiss-Fyler House of Torrington is a favorite for locals and visitors alike. The lovingly restored late Victorian era home belonged to Orsamus R. Fyler his wife, Mary, and their daughter and son-in-law, Gertrude and Edward Hotchkiss.

The home, bequeathed to the historical society by Gertrude Hotchkiss, is listed by *Fodor's New England* as "one of the better house museums in Connecticut."

But, said Executive Director Mark McEachern there was one room that was often a disappointment for visitors, Gertrude's bedroom, which was not restored to its earlier glory.

"For years, we had to show visitors photos of what the room looked like when Gertrude lived in the home," said Mark.

The Torrington Historical Society received a grant from the CT Department of Economic and Community Development to restore the bedroom, but needed a matching grant to complete the funding process, a grant that could not have been a better fit for the **Lucia Tuttle Fritz Fund**.

The Fund was established by life-long Torrington resident and former Torrington Historical Society Board Member Lucia Tuttle Fritz as a flexible resource to support the unanticipated needs of local nonprofits, especially those in her beloved home of Torrington.

The grant enabled the Torrington Historical Society to restore hand painted wall murals, custom match wallpaper and install historically accurate carpeting, upholstery and window treatments, restoring a Torrington treasure.



Be What's Possible...

You've been giving charitably for years—perhaps gifts of cash, the valuable gift of your time or both. Your gifts large and small have an immediately positive impact on your community.

But, did you know that your gifts can continue to create positive change forever? With a gift of \$10,000 or more or a bequest of \$50,000 or more, you can establish an endowed fund that never stops caring for the people, animals, and causes that create positive change in your community.

Imagine a savings account that supports your favorite cause or nonprofit in your name, forever. You can do just that with an endowed fund at the Community Foundation.

For more information, contact Bradford Hoar, VP of Philanthropic Services at bhoar@northwestcf.org or (860) 626-1245.

Contribute to your favorite fund online at northwestcf.org

Foundation Focus

Community Foundation Welcomes New Board Members



Vincent Inconiglios's fine art has been recognized in regional and national exhibitions in the U.S. and Europe. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Miami University, where he was an undergraduate fellow. After completing graduate studies with artist Richard Anuszkiewicz, he was artist-in-residence at the Dayton Art Institute.

Mr. Inconiglios's first solo exhibition in New York was held in SoHo in 1972. He was a featured artist of "10 Downtown" in the 1970s. Noted by Barbara Rose in *New York* magazine, reviewed in *Art Forum* and seen in the *New York Times*, his work is in private and public collections, including Chase Manhattan Bank, The Norton Simon Collection and AT&T.

Throughout his career, Mr. Inconiglios has produced work in a broad range of mediums. Recent exhibitions include "Paintings from the Donut Series" and a show of major collage works, "The Gansevoort Girls."

Mr. Inconiglios has had a parallel career in creative design and communications. He is president of Apptex International, a creative consultancy firm whose clients have included The Nielsen Company and Esteé Lauder Companies. He served as president and COO of Bobbin International, and he is past president and publisher of *American Fabrics & Fashion* magazine and the creator of several publications for *Women's Wear Daily*.

Passionate about education, Mr. Inconiglios has taught and lectured in fine art studio classes and creative teaching engagements. He currently is working with the Winchendon School on the development of an innovative micro school in Brooklyn for high school students.

Mr. Inconiglios serves on the board of Wave Hill, New York's 28 acre world-class public garden, education and cultural center. He is also active in his home communities of Falls Village, CT and the Meatpacking District in New York City.



Larry Power led the highly successful, award-winning New York City Public Relations Firm McGrath Power Associates for more than 30 years, working with companies including American Express, Ben & Jerry's, Conde Nast, Phillips Petroleum's Fiber Division, and Reebok, and establishing subsidiary firm, McGrath Power West, in Silicon Valley to provide on-site support for tech clients.

While in New York, Mr. Power was an active member of the Public Relations Society of America, and served on the Board of The Theatre Wing of The Museum of the City of New York, and he mentored students living in under-privileged areas.

A resident of Northwest Connecticut for more than 40 years, Mr. Power served as president of The Sharon Land Trust for 17 years, revitalizing the organization and reshaping its vision. He created an endowment, and through state and federal grants and local funders, worked to preserve more than 3,000 acres through direct purchases, easements and gifts, including working with the Salisbury Land Trust to preserve much-loved Twin Oaks Field.

Mr. Power served on the Sharon Planning & Zoning Board, where he was instrumental in producing a town plan for growth and development. He currently serves on the vestry of St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Amenia, New York.



Barbara Spiegel served as the executive director of the Susan B. Anthony Project for more than two decades, tirelessly advocating for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse. Prior to that, she practiced law; taught at Northwestern Connecticut Community College; and led outdoor adventure programming at Minnesota Outward bound and the Connecticut Wilderness School. Ms. Spiegel was awarded the Rotary Paul Harris award and the Litchfield County Liberty Bell Award. She was named Woman of the Year by both the *Register Citizen* and the United Way.

Ms. Spiegel is a past president of the Torrington Rotary and led a Rotary Group Study Exchange to Nepal. She currently serves as president of the Norfolk Library Board of Trustees and is an Emergency Medical Responder with the Norfolk Volunteer Ambulance. She holds a BA in Psychology, an MA in Counseling, and a JD.

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Cynthia Conklin: A Legacy

When her parents passed away, Cynthia opened her home to travelers as a bed and breakfast. She planted beautiful gardens and baked countless loaves of bread and sheets of cookies for friends and guests – and cared for stray cats, which she would teasingly complain about, but doted on and often prepared salmon balls for as a treat.

Just before her death, Cynthia fulfilled a life-long goal of gathering her family for a week-long reunion in Maine. Once home in Sharon, Cynthia passed away. But true to her spirit and in keeping with her life's work, she was not done caring for others.

Through a bequest in her will, Cynthia made possible the **Cynthia Conklin & Family Fund For Pets in Need**. The Fund continues her life's work and enhances her legacy of caring for others through grants that support the work of nonprofits that serve animal welfare and alleviate suffering.

[Donate to the Cynthia Conklin & Family Fund For Pets in Need at www.northwestcf.org/donate](http://www.northwestcf.org/donate)

Also online...

Nonprofits Gather for Educational Conference

Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation present nonprofit conference: Institute for Trustees. Breakout sessions include: The Culture of Collective Impact, Empowering Board Members for Successful Leadership, and Investing for a Sustainable Future.

[More at www.northwestcf.org/trustees](http://www.northwestcf.org/trustees)

LEAP 2018 is Underway

The 2018 LEAP Cohort is in session. LEAP is an intensive seven-week program designed to build skills in all areas of nonprofit leadership. Presented by Danosky & Associates, LLC, LEAP builds a foundation of skills and awareness for nonprofit professionals.

[Learn more at www.northwestcf.org/leap](http://www.northwestcf.org/leap)

Chuck Loring Comes to the Northwest Corner

Chuck Loring CFRE, MBA is considered one of the nation's top authorities on board governance and board fundraising.

[Learn more at www.northwestcf.org/fundraising](http://www.northwestcf.org/fundraising)

The Women & Girls Fund Hosts Comedic Luncheon Fundraiser

Velya Jancz-Urban, teacher, author, former Brazilian dairy farm owner, and expert on New England's colonial women joins the Women & Girls Fund for a humor-filled luncheon and fundraiser.

[Learn more at www.northwestcf.org/womenandgirls](http://www.northwestcf.org/womenandgirls)

Nonprofits Awarded Spring Grants

The Community Foundation has awarded 21 area nonprofit organizations more than \$100,000 during its spring discretionary grant cycles

[Read more at www.northwestcf.org/spring](http://www.northwestcf.org/spring)

NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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