

# WOODBIDGE PARK ASSOCIATION INC.

Founded in 1928

Trustee: THE ALICE NEWTON STREET MEMORIAL PARK

Entrance from Meetinghouse Lane

P.O. Box 3883, Woodbridge, CT 06525

[www.woodbridgeparks.org](http://www.woodbridgeparks.org)

## Annual Letter 2015

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Dear Friends,

“There’s an app. for that!” How many times have you heard that? The technology that surrounds us is truly amazing. There are applications for everything we need, it seems, for use on our personal electronic devices. We don’t even have to keyboard in to the devices anymore as voice recognition understands what we are saying, even in harsh environments. There is no app. that can replace a walk in the park. We at the Woodbridge Park Association are very proud of our pre-eminent property, the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park in Woodbridge center, and invite you to take an hour away from the apps. and hike in our park!

If you are new to town, or if you have been town for a long while, it doesn’t matter. It is time for a walk in the park. We work very hard and with diligence on maintaining the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park, and we cordially invite you to come out and enjoy the park this fall with your friends and family. The entrance is just off the west side of the Woodbridge Green between the Woodbridge Town Hall and the Parish House of the First Church of Christ. There is plenty of parking in the rear parking lot of the Parish House.

Yes, we do now have an app. for that. To the right, you will find a QR code that with the right app. you can scan into your personal device that will bring you to [www.woodbridgeparks.org](http://www.woodbridgeparks.org), the home page of the Woodbridge Park Association. There you will find lots of information on us as well as trail maps for our properties.



This has again been a busy year for the Woodbridge Park Association, a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as President. We have enormous strength and diversity in our present 21-member Board of Directors who actively support our work for open space and conservation.

The Woodbridge Park Association was incorporated on October 4, 1928 and on January 14, 1929, the Board of Directors, consisting of eight members, was elected. Records indicate that the latter date has since been viewed as the founding date for the purpose of marking anniversaries. We believe the Woodbridge Park Association is the fourth oldest land trust in Connecticut according to the listing maintained at the Convocation of Connecticut Land Trusts. From our Articles of Association recorded in the Woodbridge Land Records on November 21, 1928, the Park Association has the following purposes:

“To acquire by gift or purchase lands within the town of Woodbridge and to hold the same for any or all of the following purposes: to establish such lands as a bird refuge and for the preservation of birds, fish and other animal life, and of trees, shrubs and plants; for the planting and care of trees in accordance with the principles of scientific forestry; to build roads and paths therein and to make accessible to the public any historic locations therein; to establish its holdings as a park for public use and recreation, in accordance with such rules and regulations as it may adopt...”

I want to acknowledge the dedicated service of Becky Daymon to the Woodbridge Park Association and thank her for her years of support. She has served as a Director since 2003 and been very active with the Board. Becky also chaired the Woodbridge Park Association Nominating Committee and along with her husband Jay assisted with numerous maintenance activities. Thank you Becky!

Maintenance activities in park properties continue throughout the year. We conduct workdays at the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park both spring and fall. Check our website and come ready to assist us! The spring workday occurs annually near Earth Day; please let us know if you are interested in assisting us with future workdays.

Woodbridge Trailmaster and Superintendent Michael Walter, Assistant Superintendents Paul Konwerski, Jr. and Paul Acampora and our Maintenance Committee chaired by Nate Case oversee maintenance and clean-up throughout the park. You may notice a huge effort undertaken this year to remove and trim problematic trees near the park entrance. Much of this is to respond to our ash trees being the victims of the emerald ash borer. The Alice Newton Street Memorial Park is the preeminent hiking area in the town of Woodbridge, and gets lots of use.

Douglas Emmerthal, Supervisor of Forest Practices Act Program, Connecticut Forestry Division, came to visit us to walk through the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park in the early summer with Immediate Past President Leslie Martino and Director Nate Case and advise on natural habitat, invasive species, and general forest management in the park.

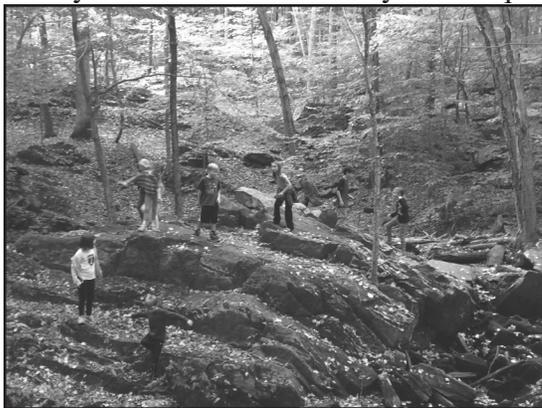
Leslie Martino has also contacted the Connecticut Audubon Society and is coordinating a “Habitat Assessment” in the park. The Connecticut Society has also begun a “Forest Bird Initiative” to create bird-friendly habitats and communities throughout the state to assist us and offer recommendations.

We continue to work closely with the Boy Scout Troops in Woodbridge and congratulate all of the local Boy Scout troops for their service to the town of Woodbridge. Without the scouts and other volunteer groups assisting, our tasks would be much more difficult. As an example, Eagle Scout candidate Dean Pokowicz will be conducting a tree identification project for us soon.

We have an excellent “Harvest Hike” in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park with students, teachers and parents from Beecher Road School every October to enjoy the fall park beauty and introduce to those who have never visited. I would like to especially thank Director Tim Kelley for chairing this valuable event which was held on Wednesday, October 14 this year.



At our annual meeting May, I was elected for the first of potentially three years as President. Our by-laws require term limits and you may



remember me serving as president previously 2003 – 2005. I and the Board of Directors express our most sincere appreciation and gratitude to Leslie Martino for serving so capably as President the past three years. Leslie is a very hard act to follow. Her in-depth knowledge of issues we face, her tireless energy, her always positive approach and her ability to get work accomplished is unmatched. We are thrilled Leslie is continuing to assist us with some key initiatives.

We have three active committees: Maintenance, Technology and Nominating. If you have suggestions regarding our use of technology and social media, we would love to hear from you. Also, we are very interested in any service you are willing to provide us, please let us know. You will note a great photo taken by Abbott Brush in this newsletter of a red tail hawk looking over the meadow area in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park this past summer. I also want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Officers and Directors for their dedicated stewardship of the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park and our other properties. We are following the requirements put forth by the Park Association’s founders, and conduct energetic efforts in moving toward preservation goals. I am also grateful to attorney David W. Schneider for his wise and expert guidance in the increasingly complex issues surrounding open space preservation.

We need your assistance and especially the necessary donations to help us continue to preserve and maintain open space in Woodbridge. Please consider our work and donate generously to us this year. Please also consider us in your estate planning; we are ready to assist with this.

When you consider your tax-deductible donation in the enclosed donation envelope; remember we function solely on the voluntary contributions from Woodbridge residents. The Park Association also gratefully wishes to acknowledge the essential support through donations of in-kind assistance from several companies. We encourage all company matching gifts; please provide details about your company's gift program.

Directors of the Woodbridge Park Association continue to work closely with the Woodbridge Commission on Publicly Owned Properties, the Woodbridge Conservation Commission, the Woodbridge Land Trust, and the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society on open space issues. It is important to note in Woodbridge our open space efforts are served by two land trusts who work together: The Woodbridge Park Association and the Woodbridge Land Trust. I find sometimes our work is confused; we are two separate non-profit legal entities.

Please walk in the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park frequently and encourage others to enjoy all the fabulous forestland in Woodbridge. I especially invite you to hike some of the lesser-used trails. We encourage you to visit our website at [www.woodbridgeparks.org](http://www.woodbridgeparks.org). Please also feel free to contact us at any point at [president@woodbridgeparks.org](mailto:president@woodbridgeparks.org). We sincerely welcome your support and active involvement in the dedicated work of the Woodbridge Park Association.

With all best wishes,  
Dr. Richard J. Forselius  
President 2015-2016



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### **Alice Newton Street Memorial Park in Autumn**

*by Woodbridge Park Association Director  
Jeff Gee*

The change in seasons has been swift, the rush from the last dregs of summer to fall always seems confounding. It's not just the color changes or the temperature relenting, not the leaves on the trails or the increased visibility with the diminishing verdure, it's the quality of the light that heralds the most profound difference.

At the height of summer, when the sun is strongest and mostly overhead, trying to pound its way through the chlorophyll-laden leaves, the green light is suffused through the entire park (excepting some open spots such as the cedar grove). The dense canopy provides extraordinary cover, diminishing sightlines, and closing the walker into the lush surroundings.

This all changes in steady, intractable fashion as the cold creeps in through late September into October. The dry leaves whip around the sere landscape (especially this year with the dearth of rainfall) and the sun, with earth speeding away from its perihelion, stretches its rays into the longer, redder and darker wavelengths; this is the light that transforms the park utterly.

The walker can now see the houses on the perimeter, but activity these days is scarce. The streams have been somewhat replenished by a few wet days which the clots of leaves attest to when the rushing waters carried them. The leaves crunch underfoot incessantly and the lesser paths are hard to navigate without occasionally checking the blazes on the trees. But especially in the early mornings and late afternoons, the light burnishes all, giving the park a last flight of warmth and golden hue, before the inevitable cold overtakes all.

This is the light of Edward Hopper, the painter, and the painterly aspect is profound. The long shadows and muted colors draw the walker deep into the park, rousing the squirrels along the way as they minister to their winter feeding. All seems quieter, stiller, even deader as the giant oaks, still with a few leaves, are more visible and lord over the surroundings. The uniqueness of the light at these times at the Alice Newton Street Memorial Park links us together with the arboreal tracts throughout New England as we head towards the holiday season and it's inevitable blanketing of snow.

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