



**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](http://www.CavendishCCCA.org)

**Fall 2012 Volume No. 9, Issue No. 3**



CCCA enjoyed another busy but successful year in 2012. As the pictures above show – we had fun too! Clockwise from upper left, the summer concert series on the Proctorsville Green drew appreciative crowds to enjoy the music and the warm summer evenings while socializing with friends, here listening to everybody’s favorite, Gypsy Reel. Sensible Shoes was a band new to Proctorsville, but they’ve been playing in central Vermont for many years and were an instant hit with Cavendish folks. In the spring we tromped through the woods and checked the emergence of reptiles and amphibians under the tutelage of expert Jim Andrews. And the Community Fund annual fundraiser was a great success with a superb dinner of localvore and an evening of great conversation.



## **A Message from Robin**

Dear members and readers – here we are, at the brink of 2013! It has been a year of steady recovery from Irene and still we can see that changing weather patterns are everywhere. Our sympathy and hearts go out to all the people of Long Island, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut...all who have been impacted by the recent winds and rains of hurricane Sandy. Those who wish to make contributions to the relief efforts are encouraged to do so. There are so many truly remarkable organizations that came to the immediate aid of so many people in our community when we desperately needed it. Our organization continues to be proactive in our community, with all committees taking steps to promote and safeguard a healthy and bright future for Cavendish.

As commented on in a previous newsletter, the Conservation Committee was able to create a liaison with the Upper Valley Land Trust, thus enabling us to partner with them on projects that require stewardship into the future. To foster this relationship we have created a separate fund for Land Conservation for those who would like to earmark CCCA donations specifically for this purpose. These funds will help us purchase easements on parcels considered valuable for wildlife habitat, agricultural benefit or scenic preservation. The Conservation Committee has also been a key participant in acquiring a Grant Award of \$94,590 from the Vermont Department of  
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Environmental Conservation to the Town of Cavendish to provide protection for water quality, and to enhance flood resiliency and mitigation along a crucial reach of the Black River. The grant will allow the Town of Cavendish to acquire development rights and key parcels just upstream of the areas of greatest devastation. As a result these areas will remain undeveloped and provide flood relief and protection of crucial infrastructure, including the water and sewer lines which connect the two villages. It will also provide opportunities for public recreation and enjoyment of the river frontage. The Upper Valley Land Trust will also be involved for future protection of these lands. This is exciting news, and a harbinger of what promises to be a year of new and positive growth for our community.



I also want to alert you to the first of our 2013 Walk and Talk Series events. On Friday January 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 7:30 at the Cavendish Town Elementary School the Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences (VINS) will present “Raptor Encounter”. Come meet live ambassador raptors from VINS and learn about their winter habits, predator-prey relationships and the interdependence of the systems that support life. This first-hand encounter enables participants to understand the defining characteristics that make a bird a raptor and to observe their adaptations for life as a predator on the wing. Touchable artifacts and hands-on materials round out this special event. Please make plans to attend now.

# **The CCCA Energy Committee Presents: "PACE"**

In an ongoing effort to help reduce energy consumption in Cavendish the CCCA Energy Committee is sponsoring a new program that is finding overwhelming support in Vermont. The PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Program will provide participating local residents with the means to make their homes energy efficient at a very low cost. So far 34 towns and cities statewide have voted to join this effort and several states around the country run this program. The program is designed to cost the town absolutely nothing. The participants bear the cost, but save money through energy savings enough to pay for the program. Basically, a homeowner improves his or her home using PACE funds and pays back the fund using money saved as a result of the energy improvements. Interest is kept low and the term is stretched out to reduce costs to the homeowner.

The fund is created by borrowing in the name of a "PACE District." In order to create this district, Cavendish voters must approve it at Town Meeting. Once the district is established the town can borrow money, pay it out and collect repayments, or it can contract with a program administrator to accomplish all of this. An administrator's office is already established at Efficiency Vermont and some fourteen towns have already joined together to use their services. Cavendish would do likewise.

From the perspective of a homeowner who wants to make his home more energy efficient, this is a winner of a deal. Before borrowing the money the homeowner must get an energy audit of his home. The auditor will produce a written assessment of the energy savings that will result from the proposed work. It will show how much money the homeowner will save and thus

how much will be available to repay the fund.

Repayments will coincide with payments of taxes. Those are quarterly payments in Cavendish. The town will send out an annual bill and the homeowner will make payments at the same time that he pays real estate taxes to the town.

Only homeowners who are not delinquent in paying their taxes qualify for the program and the amounts that they can get are limited. The minimum amount that can be financed through the PACE Program is \$3,500. The maximum amount that can be financed is 15% of the assessed value of the property, capped at \$30,000. The total amount financed by PACE plus any outstanding mortgages on the property cannot exceed 90% of the assessed value of the property. Only approved contractors can do the work. Efficiency Vermont approves contractors to do energy efficiency work in our state and maintains a database of those approved contractors on its website. PACE will finance renewable energy or energy efficiency improvements. Examples of what homeowners can do include, but are not limited to insulating, weather sealing, replacing windows, doors or skylights, installing new efficient heating, cooling or hot water systems, installing solar hot water, photovoltaic electric generation, geothermal heat systems and so forth.

The details of how the program works, how it is established, how it is administered and who and what qualifies are all on line at Efficiency Vermont's website and at their wiki website: <http://pacevermont.wikispaces.com>. Members of the CCCA Energy Committee will be speaking with the selectboard and will be making presentations before and at the next town meeting to answer as many questions as possible. This is a program that we should all support since it will help local residents and businesses. For more information, please contact Cheryl Leiner at 226-7820.

## 2012 Walk and Talk Series Concludes in the Cavendish Woods



*Deryl Stowell, who led this final Walk and Talk has spent over 65 years treading the woods and fields of Vermont*

The final “Walk and Talk” of 2012 featured Deryl Stowell of Chapman Road, who lead a walk on his 410 acre property. Deryl and his wife Jennifer manage their land for agriculture and timber. A logger, woodsman and hunter for over 65 years, Deryl uses his ample experience and keen eye in the woods to manage for different purposes: a healthy forest providing trees that meet current market standards for timber and allowing for new, healthy growth of diverse native species, wildlife habitat and trails and pathways to encourage human enjoyment in the woods. Jennifer and Deryl work to keep logging roads open and marked for hikers. ATVs are not permitted.

Deryl discussed at length different invasive species and diseases that have changed Vermont's forests over time. He encouraged walk participants to keep their eyes open for current pests such as the Woolly Adelgid that impacts hemlock stands, the Asian Longhorned Beetle that attacks hardwoods such as Vermont’s maple trees, and the Emerald Ash Borer that attacks ash trees. He also discussed how gooseberry and current bushes are host to the white pine blister. Deryl cuts any pine that

shows signs of white pine blister in order to prevent the spread of this killing disease.

On the walk, Deryl answered questions about the pros and cons of different logging practices. Walk participants were interested to learn, for example, that thinning spruce causes the ground to heat up, eventually killing the remaining spruce trees. Spruce can be very lightly thinned, but if a significant number of trees are ready for harvest, the best practice is generally to clear cut the stand to prevent loss of the remaining trees. This is not the case with many other species. Best practice in pine and hardwoods includes careful thinning including taking ready for market trees and those that are impeding the healthier trees. This practice encourages straight timber with limited limbs, which improves its value at the saw mill. Deryl estimated the number of board feet in several trees, indicating the where heavy limb growth rendered that section of little or no value. For landowners without Deryl’s experience, State foresters can provide guidance to plan for the best stewardship of the land.

Participants on the walk saw evidence of deer and moose, and learned about their habitat and forest impact. Beaver dams were also in evidence. Earlier this year, Deryl and Jennifer had welcomed CCCA hikers and Alma Beals of the Audubon Society to look for birds on their property. Their stewardship of the land and commitment to conserving it for forest and agriculture provides Cavendish with a treasure trove of trails for hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and, in the winter VAST snowmobile trails cross their land.

The CCCA reminds all land users to seek permission from landowners before entering their land, to park cars on the road, not in the fields, and to take out the garbage you bring in. These practices will ensure that landowners like the Stowells continue to allow access to these beautiful properties.

This was the final 2012 Walk and Talk program, but CCCA has more events lined up for 2013. 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 Fall Grant Awards**

The Cavendish Community Fund has announced that it awarded three grants to local organizations for educational projects that will benefit Cavendish residents. The first grant went to the Proctorsville Fire Department to help fund its Junior Firefighter training program. Junior firefighters are youth ages twelve to seventeen who have an interest in becoming the next generation of firefighters. The program gives these youth skills and confidence to be fully functional when they reach the age to join as full members of the department. More specifically, the grant will pay for face masks and other equipment to help outfit the junior firefighters so their training achieves its goals.

The second grant went to Stepping Stones Preschool to enable it to partner with the Grafton Nature Museum in order to offer students a variety of nature classes and studies. The programs are indoor and outdoor, hands on explorations geared to maximize preschoolers' grasp of nature topics. Topics include bats, amphibians, beavers, insects, owls, wetlands, and animals in winter. The grant will pay for the materials necessary to teach the series of classes.

Finally the Cavendish Fletcher Community Library received a grant to train Cavendish residents free of charge in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) techniques. The class will be limited to twenty local residents with the goal of making Cavendish a "Heart Saver Town."

Currently less than twelve percent of individuals who go into cardiac arrest survive. The survival rate doubles or triples if CPR is administered immediately. The grant will pay the cost of residents' tuition to the classes.

The Cavendish Community Fund has awarded more than \$22,000 in grants since 2007 to local groups and individuals for programs of an educational, artistic or cultural nature. The next round of grants will be awarded in the spring and the application deadline will be announced in late winter. Applications can be submitted anytime, but will only be considered twice a year as announced by the fund. Applications and inquiries should be sent to CCF, P.O. Box 605, Cavendish, VT 05142. For more information on the CCF, please visit the website [www.CavendishCCCA.org](http://www.CavendishCCCA.org) and click on Cavendish Community Fund. You can also call Barbara Dickey at 802-226-7187, or Peter LaBelle at 802-226-7250.

## **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: \_\_\_\_\_