



*Citizens for
Lexington
Conservation*

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Citizens for Lexington Conservation is a non-profit organization that relies on dues paid by members to cover its expenses. Look at your mailing label to check your membership status. If it says "Dues paid 1999," you are up to date. If it says "Dues paid 1998" (or earlier), then it is time to renew your membership for 1999. If it says "Complimentary Copy," you are receiving a complimentary copy of our newsletter because you are a Town Meeting Member or other public official in Lexington. We hope that those who receive complimentary copies will find our organization of value and will become dues-paying members. To join CLC or renew your membership, please send \$7.00 for a regular membership or \$10.00 for a sustaining membership to CLC, P.O. Box 292, Lexington, MA 02420-0003.

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Publication Number	Title	Pick-up price	Mailing price	No. copies	Total cost
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LG-2	Ferns of Whipple Hill	0.80	1.20		
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P-7	Checklist - Birds of Whipple Hill	0.20	0.60		
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P-9	Geological History of Lexington	1.10	1.95		
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P-11	Guide to the Great Meadows: A Walking Tour.	1.00	1.70		
TOTAL					

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New Goals Proposed for Town Solid Waste Program

By John Andrews

Lexington needs to redouble its efforts to reduce the amount of waste it sends away for disposal. That is the conclusion of a new town study committee report presented at the March 8 meeting of the Lexington Board of Selectmen. The Lexington Solid Waste Action Team (SWAT) was appointed in 1998 to review the town's solid waste program and promote participation in the town's recycling efforts. Its first report focuses upon the health impacts and the costs of the town's solid waste program.

Recent Health Findings Spur Reexamination

SWAT Chair, Dr. Jill Stein, reported that recent discoveries linking practices such as incineration to food contamination has given new emphasis to finding better ways to manage municipal solid waste. Stein noted that municipal waste incineration is the principal source of mercury and dioxin emissions in Massachusetts. These two substances possess two very disturbing qualities. First, they do not degrade in the environment to any appreciable extent. Second, they are "bioconcentrated". This means that safety is not achieved when an incinerator disperses the toxins at low concentrations in its exhaust plume. Instead, biological processes reconcentrate the toxins and result in significant food contamination. For example, mercury released to the environment is bioconcentrated in fish by a factor of 100,000. When contaminated fish are eaten, the mercury accumulates in fatty tissues.

Mercury in food products is now exceeding the levels at which significant neurological harm has been observed. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has defined a "reference dose" that should not be exceeded to ensure safety. The EPA estimates that among women of child bearing age who eat fish, half exceed the reference dose and 25% are ingesting at least twice the reference dose. Mercury in tuna has reached levels that make the consumption of more than 1/2 pound per week unsafe for women of childbearing age. Scientific research continues to reduce the threshold at which mercury is known to harm human health. Recent studies suggest no threshold level below which mercury exposure is totally safe. The result is an emerging public health crisis in which the most serious health injuries are to children, infants, and to the fetus before birth.

Dioxin, another pernicious product of trash incineration, is an endocrine-disrupting chemical that has effects on thyroid and steroid hormones at extremely small concentrations. It has been conclusively linked to cancer, endometriosis, immune system impairment, diabetes, neurotoxicity, birth defects (including fetal death), decreased fertility, testicular atrophy and reproductive dysfunction in both women and men. Over 90% of human exposure to dioxin occurs through diet. Americans currently ingest a daily amount of dioxin that is 2 to 60 times higher than the EPA's "safe" dose. A primary source of dioxin is the burning of plastics. According to a 1994 EPA study, municipal trash incineration was responsible for 34% of know dioxin emissions to the air. An additional 54% of emissions were due to incineration of medical waste.

Alternatives Assessed

The SWAT identified four waste treatment alternatives available to the town: waste prevention, recycling, landfilling, and incineration. The SWAT concluded that waste prevention programs and recycling are clearly superior to other alternatives on the basis of cost, public health, environmental protection, economic benefits, and liability risks. Incineration was found to be the least desirable alternative. Landfilling was considered preferable to incineration because it offers the advantages of low costs and flexibility, as well as containment of toxics, but it is clearly inferior to waste prevention and recycling.

Because the town pays very little to dispose of each additional ton of recyclable materials that is collected, increased recycling diverts trash from the incinerator and saves money. But under the current NESWC contract, the town does not receive full value for its recycling since the "guaranteed annual tonnage (GAT)" provisions of the current NESWC contract require the town to pay for 11,396 tons of trash each year regardless of the amount sent to the incinerator. When the town does not use its entire GAT, DPW Director George Woodbury can sometimes sell the unused tonnage on the open market, and return the revenues to the Town.

Long-term Goals Proposed

The SWAT proposed a long-term goal of reducing the total amount of waste generated for disposal by 50% and increasing the rate of recycling to 60% of that. According to the SWAT, substantial progress toward these goals can be achieved through local action alone, but fully achieving the goals will probably require changes in regional or state solid waste policies. For example, recycling may need a boost from state or federal incentives to make products in a way that allows them to be recycled. Experience in other New England towns has shown that waste prevention programs can reduce the total cost of solid waste expenditures by 25%. The SWAT feels that Lexington is an ideal candidate for such programs due to the high trash tipping fees in the region, the desire to keep town expenditures under control, and a high level of environmental awareness that increases citizen support for waste prevention and recycling.

The SWAT report can be viewed and downloaded from the committee's home page on the Internet at <http://www.lexingtonma.org/swat/HomePage.htm>. A 250-page information package on solid waste issues is available at the reference desk at Cary Memorial Library. Anyone wishing to learn more about SWAT activities is invited to contact Jill Stein (781-674-1377) or John Andrews (781-862-6498).

Figures for Lexington's Solid Waste Program

Number of households	11,000
Number of residents	29,900
Tons of solid waste discarded (annual	11,100 tons
Tons from Residents (less schools and municipal facilities	10,000 tons
Average pounds per resident/year.	625 lbs.
Lexington's recycling rate (1997, excluding yard waste, including bottle deposit returns)	34%
Guaranteed Annual Tonnage (GAT) bought from NESWC	11,396 tons
Tipping fee at NESWC incinerator (FY99	\$105/ ton
Regional tipping fee (non-NESWC)	\$50-\$55 / ton
Collection costs for mixed trash (FY99	\$670,000
Collection costs for recycling	\$353,800
Annual trash tipping fees	\$1,186,059
Percentage of trash remaining as ash after incineration (by weight	25%
Year NESWC contract ends	2005
Percentage of air emissions of dioxin in U.S. due to municipal waste incineration	32%
Amount of human exposure to dioxin that occurs through diet	90%
Half-life for elimination of dioxin from the human body	7-11 years
Dioxin exposure for 1 cancer per million people exposed	0.006 picograms/Kg/day
Frequency of dioxin emission tests at NESWC incinerator	once every 9 months

Lexington's Jill Stein Recognized as Citizen Activist

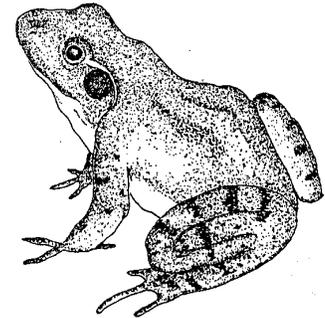
Dr. Jill Stein, a Lexington resident and a member of the CLC Board, received one of three citizen activist awards at the Toxics Action Conference held at Boston College on March 27-28. The awards are given each year to citizens in Massachusetts who have distinguished themselves by working to reduce toxic chemical exposures and protect public health. Stein was cited for her research, writing, and statewide efforts to alert Massachusetts residents to the risks associated with rising levels of toxins such as mercury and dioxin in food and breast milk. Stein practices medicine at Simmons College Health Center and Beth Israel Hospital. She works as a volunteer with Physicians for Social Responsibility, and serves as chair of Lexington's Solid Waste Action Team.

Conservation Information on the World Wide Web

Check these out:

1. CLC is developing a web site. We have a number of ideas of what to include, such as:

- CLC-Sponsored Spring and Fall Walks
- CLC Publications
- Links to other conservation sites of interest to Lexington
- The Solid Waste Action Team Report to the Selectmen
- Upcoming Activities
- Information About Conservation
- Relevant legislation
- Maps of conservation land in Lexington
- Past newsletter articles which are worth re-reading
- What is CLC?
- An Outdoor Calendar for Lexington



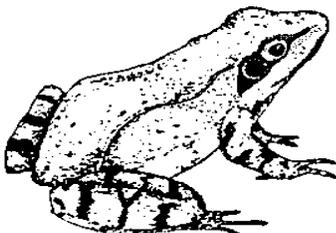
If you have suggestions or more ideas, please e-mail them to kfricker@tiac.net.

2. The Conservation Commission Web Site

David Kaufman has set up a web site for the Lexington Conservation Commission at <http://www.lexingtonma.org/conservation>. The site has maps and descriptive information about the larger conservation areas, an electronic equivalent of the printed "Guide to Lexington Conservation Lands." It also has information about the Conservation Commission and its regulatory roles, and a short section about CLC and the Stewardship program.

3. The SWAT Team Website

The SWAT Team (The Solid Waste Action Team) of Lexington has a web site at <http://www.lexingtonma.org/swat/HomePage.htm>. Read about their suggestions for trash disposal.



4. The New DEP Recycling Home Page

This site is a gold mine of information about recycling: <http://www.state.ma.us/dep/recycle/recycle.htm>

Polystyrene Is Being Recycled in Boston

NOVA Chemicals Environmental Products Group has a recycling facility in Roxbury, where polystyrene used in food service products in cafeterias can be recycled into a product which can be substituted for up to 25% of the polystyrene in new food service products. If this operation proves successful, it will "close the loop", recycling waste material back into the same products it came from. Perhaps Lexington will eventually be able to recycle polystyrene.

Wastemaker Awards

The Massachusetts Recycling Initiative Campaign has named ten companies for its annual Wastemaker Award:

- For selling products in unnecessarily small containers: **Nabisco** and **Keebler** sell "Snack Packs", individually packaged snack boxes with additional plastic covering the set of snacks. **Proctor and Gamble** sells "Sunny Delight 8 Pack", consisting of eight individual eight fluid ounce bottles shrink-wrapped together.
- For continuing to use polyvinyl chloride plastic packaging despite the fact that it is a known precursor to dioxin, one of the most toxic substances known: The **CVS** company and the **Clorox** company
- For using packaging that is completely unnecessary and excessive: **Microsoft** for its software packaging, and **Bristol Myers** for its Ban Roll-On deodorant that comes in a box.
- For complications it adds to the business of recycling: **Hood**, Inc. for its opaque white milk bottle, which lessens the value of recycled plastic.
- The Lifetime Wastemaker Achievement, a special 10th anniversary "honor": **Oscar Meyer** for "Lunchables", and **Kraft** for "Kool-Aid Kool Bursts". These manufacturers have been on the wastemaker list at least twice before in the last 10 years, and have still refused to change their wasteful ways.

CLC suggests: When you purchase products, avoid those that contain excessive packaging. Write to companies that generate excessive waste from unnecessary packaging and ask them to redesign their packages.

The Trees for Lexington Committee

CLC members will be interested in this new committee of the Lexington Field and Garden Club. It aims to protect and preserve Lexington's existing tree population and encourage planting of new and replacement trees. It hopes to develop a public awareness of the value of trees in our ecosystem, teach respect for the beauty and benefits that trees bestow, advocate for a new gain in Lexington's tree population, and encourage the study and understanding of trees' contributions to our personal health and the health of our environment. For more information call Gerry Whiting at 862-6972.

CLC Annual Meeting

We are currently planning for the CLC Annual Meeting, which will take place in November or December. If anyone has suggestions for a speaker, please contact Eileen Entin at ebe@alphatech.com or 862-6418.

Hazardous Household Product Collections

The Minuteman Facility on Hartwell Avenue will be open between 9am and 3pm on the following dates in 1999: April 24, May 8, May 22, June 26, July 24, Aug. 28, Sept. 11, Sept. 25, Oct. 23, and Nov. 13.

Residents may bring these products for safe disposal:

- **Cleaning Products:** Bathroom cleaners, drain openers, oven cleaners, mMetal or furniture polish, spot removers
- **Automotive Products:** Motor oil and oil filters, brake or transmission fluids, antifreeze, solvents, auto batteries, polishes and wax
- **Pesticides:** Weed killers, fungicides and herbicides, insecticides & pest strips, fertilizers with weed killer, wood preservatives, rat poisons
- **Paint and Paint Products:** Paint and paint thinners, paint removers, stains and varnishes, aerosol cans (not empty ones), epoxies and adhesives
- **Other Products:** Batteries, fluorescent lights, thermostats, driveway sealer, pool chemicals, hobby or photography chemicals, waste Fuels (e.g. gasoline), propane tanks (up to 22 lbs.)
- **Do Not Bring:** Ammunition, fireworks, explosives, asbestos, commercial hazardous waste, empty aerosol cans, fire extinguishers, gas cylinders (other than propane), infectious or biological wastes, medicines or syringes, PCBs, radioactive materials, smoke detectors, tires.

For more information call Beverly Anderson at the Town of Lexington Health Department, 781-862-0500 Ext. 237.

Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Amid the discouraging news about degradation of the environment, we sometimes forget that there are a number of things that individuals can do to reduce harmful effects on the environment. The following four methods can reduce pollution by reducing the amount of trash we send to the NESWC incinerator:



1. **Refuse:** Don't buy what you don't need, and don't accept anything you don't need. Refuse to buy things which are wrapped in excessive packaging. Turn off new junk mail by writing Direct Marketing Association at PO Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008. Ask them to remove your name (Include all the names you can be addressed by.) from mailing lists. You can keep post cards to mail to companies that already send you unwanted mail, asking them to remove your name from their mailing list. If you want to stop even more mail, check out this web site: <http://www.cpsr.org/cpsr/privacy/junkmail.html>.
2. **Reduce:** Buy less. Buy goods which last, thus needing less replacement. Buy fewer disposable products. Use both sides of paper. Buy in bulk to avoid packaging.
3. **Reuse:** Try to find someone who can use your unwanted things (garage sales, classified ads, web auctions, Morgan Memorial). Buy things made of recycled materials whenever possible, and ask for them if your store doesn't carry them. Buying recycled helps create a market for recycled materials.
4. **Recycle:** Surprisingly, although recycling is important, it ranks fourth in the list. Only metals and glass can be recycled into the same original materials, and their recycling process uses large amounts of energy. Others, such as paper and plastic, degrade with each recycling and eventually have to be discarded.

Suggested Plants for Xeriscaping

Xeriscaping pertains to landscaping with plants that don't need much water, and thus reduce the waste of water resources. A recent issue of the Charles River Watershed Streamer recommended the following landscaping plants.

Ground Covers – Large Areas

Ajuga
Daylilies
Sedums
Low shrub roses
Junipers

Ground Covers – Crevices and Walkways

Ajuga
Phlox subulata
Dianthus
Sedum
Lambs Ears
Thymus

Edging Plants: Stay Low and Neat

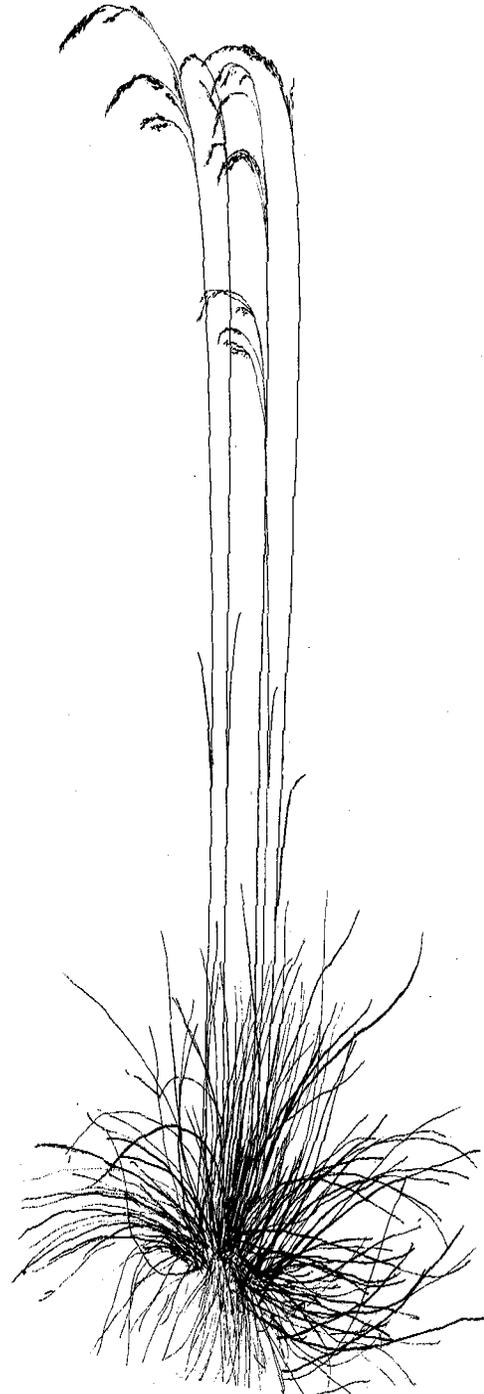
Epimedium
Lambs Ears
Iberis
Grasses (Blue Fescue, Fountain Grass)
Sedum 'Autumn Joy'
Coreopsis verticillata
Lavender
Dicentra 'Eximia'
Cotoneaster
Ilex 'Crenata Heller'
Hosta

Vertical Accents

Yucca
Salvi
Iris
Daylilies
Taller Ornamental Grasses

Exceptionally Long-Blooming

Achillia
Coreopsis 'Verticillata'
Dicentra 'Eximia'
Daylilies
Iberis
Phlox subulata
Geranium
Spirea 'Gold Mound'
Sedums
Rudbeckia 'Goldstrum'
Shrub roses
Ornamental Grasses



Look for CLC at Discovery Day, May 29.

Stop by at our Discovery Day display. We're usually located in the area near Fancy Flea. We'll have samples of CLC publications, and a map highlighting Lexington's conservation areas. We'll also show you how Lexington's brooks and streams connect to the major rivers in the metropolitan area. We'll have photos of some of Lexington's conservation lands, and this year we're planning a contest to see how many people can match photos to the conservation area in which they were taken.

Fight for Clean Elections Moves to Beacon Hill

By John Andrews

Last November, voters enacted a far-reaching and historic campaign finance reform initiative in Massachusetts by a two-to-one vote. The Clean Elections measure won in every county, state Senate district, and state House district. Clearly, voters are fed up with a campaign system in which 1 percent of the voters provided over 80 percent of the money. The existing money-driven system has resulted in special interests manipulating the legislature to transfer tax burdens from corporations to average citizens, raise consumer prices, and undermine environmental protection. The voters spoke loud and clear—and in our democracy, where government is of the people, by the people, and for the people, that is the final word.

Or is it? Perhaps voters underestimated the arrogance of office holders and their contempt for democracy. It appears that the reigning political interests on Beacon Hill still have hopes that they can sabotage the Clean Elections system and continue the comfortable relationship between big money donors and incumbents. A key battle is now underway to determine whether the Massachusetts legislature will provide funding to run the Clean Elections system. In January, Governor Cellucci submitted a \$21 billion budget which included nothing (zero!) for Clean Elections. The funding required is only \$13 million – less than 1/10 of one percent of Governor Cellucci's budget.

Funding in this year's budget is the most important since it will be a sign to potential candidates that they can plan to run as clean money candidates in 2002. Without this assurance, they will be forced to launch conventional fundraising activities, going hat-in-hand to the moneyed special interests that have dominated the State House for so long.

Adding the funding in the House may not be easy since House Speaker Thomas Finneran is known to be unenthusiastic about cleaning up a system that currently gives powerful incumbents like himself decisive funding advantages against potential challengers. So a lot depends upon the voters insisting that incumbents respect the will of the people as expressed in the initiative victory.

The work for Clean Elections funding is being led by public interest groups like Mass Voters for Clean Elections, the League of Women Voters, and Common Cause. Lexington representative Jay Kaufman, State Senator Susan Fargo, and State Senator Robert Havern have all announced that they will vote for fully implementing the Clean Elections system. To find out what you can do to help, call Mass Voters at 617-451-5999. In Lexington, contact John Andrews, 781-862-6498.



Conservation Trusts

By David Williams

Lexington's Trustees of Public Trusts is the collective enterprise of many people, past and present, whose vision, leadership and generosity serve Lexington today and in the future. Its mission is to improve the quality of life in Lexington in five areas: beautification, celebration, recognition, scholarship and education. Its role is to administer, invest and disburse funds of (at this writing) 71 trusts that have been bequeathed or donated to the town for specific purposes.

Within the beautification area there are trusts that relate to the care and keeping of conservation land. These are relatively new funds in the life of the town, for the first fund the Trustees manage was started in 1873; i.e. the Jonas Gammell Trust, the income from which is to "purchase luxuries for the town poor."

The Conservation Commission is now attempting to encourage the creation of trusts for all of the major conservation areas, so that in the future the town's expenditures for land management and maintenance can be augmented by these "private" monies. In the ideal scenario, enough monies would be available to fund summer interns, open and maintain new trails, rebuild rock walls, build bridges and augment the natural plantings found at the different sites.

What follows are the conservation-related funds that now exist and the balances as of 12/30/98.

- **Jack Eddison Blossom Fund** – Established 1993. Three-fourths of the annual net income to be used to help preserve the character and green spaces of Lexington and its Bikeway, through maintenance, new projects and the planting of flowers and trees. Principal balance \$42,854. Income balance \$4,593.
- **Gordon/Souza Juniper Hill Fund** – Established 1991. Three-fourths of the annual net income shall be used to help preserve the character of Juniper Hill Conservation Land; such income may be spent for plantings, signs, maintenance projects and land acquisition. Principal balance \$17,276. Income balance \$1,284.
- **Lexington Nature Trust Fund** – Established 1992. The income, and if necessary the principal, is to be used by the Town of Lexington Conservation Commission for the acquisition, promotion and management of its properties. Principal balance \$20,827. Income balance \$226.
- **Hayden Woods Conservation Fund** – Established 1998 The income is to be used by the Town of Lexington Conservation Commission for the acquisition of land plantings, signs and management of Hayden Woods. Principal balance \$5,000.
- **Dunback Meadows Conservation Fund** – Established 1998. The income is to be used by the Town of Lexington Conservation Commission for the acquisition of land, plantings, signs and management of the Dunback Meadows Conservation Area. Principal balance \$5,000.
- Income from some other beautification trusts can be used, by a vote of the trustees, for conservation purposes; for example, the George W. Taylor Tree Fund.

The Conservation Commission and the Trustees of Public Trusts welcome monetary additions to any trust. Donations are tax deductible and are part of the matching gift programs of many companies.

Any person or organization can create a named trust with a minimum gift of \$5,000. Establishing a trust is a simple and quick procedure. The trustees can accept a wide variety of assets (e.g. real estate, appreciated stock, etc.) and can accommodate a donor's financial and estate planning objectives, taking care of all of the paperwork at no cost.

Each trust represents the love the donors and individuals being honored have for Lexington and its citizens, and their wish to contribute to the town's betterment. Knowing that a trust is in perpetuity, that it will be managed by the Trustees (i.e. the town) at no cost to the trust, that gifts will be used locally as the donor planned, and that it is tax deductible is most satisfying to donors. The establishment of memorial trusts is very rewarding to families, and is a growing practice nationwide and locally. Anyone wishing information on a specific trust or on how to establish a new trust/fund can call David Williams, Joyce Miller or Norman Cohen.

Two Conservation Articles Passed by Town Meeting

Hennessy's Field, located behind Estabrook School and adjacent to the Paint Mine Conservation area, is now conservation land, and no longer in danger of being considered for development as a soccer field or for other active recreation uses. In 1998 CLC worked with the Friends of Hennessy's Field to pass Warrant Article 46 to transfer the land to conservation, but that article did not receive the requisite two-thirds majority vote. An ad hoc committee established last year by the Board of Selectmen at the request of Town Meeting recommended the transfer of Hennessy's Field to the Conservation Commission (and identified land adjacent to Harrington School as suitable for the development of a needed soccer field). This year, at its April 12th session, Town Meeting passed Article 16, which transferred Hennessy's Field to the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission. The Friends of Hennessy's Field have worked diligently to insure that this valuable land is preserved as open space, and CLC is grateful to them and to all the Town Meeting members who supported Article 16.

There are other parcels of land identified in the 1996 Land Acquisition Planning Committee Report as critical to the Town's long range open space plan. This year Town Meeting passed Warrant Article 34, which appropriates \$3 million for acquiring land for open space and conservation purposes. The appropriation does not actually allocate funds for any particular purchase. When valuable parcels of land identified in the 1996 report become available for purchase, the conservation commission will have to request funding to purchase them at future Town Meetings. What passage of the article does do is support conservation as a core Town value, and serve as a signal to potential sellers that the Town is earnestly committed to the purchase of properties that have been identified as critical to meeting its long range open space goals. CLC thanks all those Town Meeting members who voted in favor of this article.

Special Thanks

CLC wishes to thank the volunteers who lead our walks. The fall walks were led by Fran Ludwig, Rosemary Green, Meg Leschack and Nell Walker. We are grateful also to Jill Stein and Gina McCarthy for their presentations at our annual meeting on November 9, 1998.

