



## Fall 2009 NEWSLETTER

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

*Years from now, when you and your future generations walk the natural paths and places of Dennis, take pride in knowing that your continued efforts helped preserve them.*

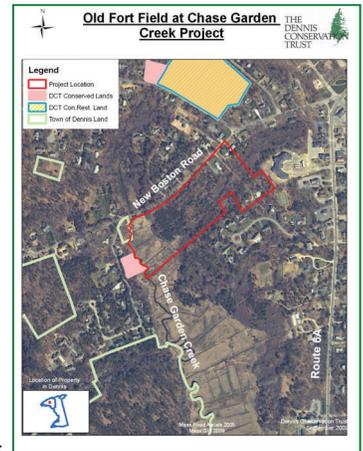
### DCT STRIVING TO PRESERVE THE “OLD FORT FIELD AT CHASE GARDEN CREEK”

The Trust has a unique opportunity to purchase and preserve approximately seven acres of land in Dennis Village. This acquisition would protect rare plant and animal species as well as local water resources near the head of Chase Garden Creek. It also would preserve intact the site of the pre-Revolutionary “Old Fort Field,” where colonists constructed the first defensive outpost in Dennis, according to many local historians.

The “Old Fort Field at Chase Garden Creek” project will preserve the land from development and at the same time, will protect a link to the Trust’s and the Town of Dennis’ adjacent conservation parcels, safeguard a sensitive rare species habitat, including that of the Eastern Box Turtle – a Species of Special Concern in Massachusetts – and provide approximately 1,500 feet of roadside greenbelt for travelers on New Boston Road. Preserving this land will also ensure that the wetland resources draining into Chase Garden Creek, the Town’s largest Northside estuary, will be preserved, protecting the water quality for shellfish beds downstream.

Many historians recognize this parcel as one of the most culturally significant properties in all of Dennis. In the 1640’s, this property became part of a homestead owned by Thomas Howes. The significance of the area around Chase Garden Creek for colonial Dennis is noted in the siting of the first fort there. In 1643, the Plymouth Court decided that each town should build a fort as a shield against possible native uprising, and New Boston Road was the site of one of the two that were built. For many years, both sites were known as Fort Hill, but the hill in each case has since eroded. (Paraphrased from *Dennis, Cape Cod; From Firstcomers to Newcomers, 1639-1993*, Nancy Thatcher Reid, 1996., pp. 42-43.)

We hope you will support this important purchase with a tax-deductible contribution. We hope, too, that you might be willing to reach out to other friends, neighbors, and businesses to help save the “Old Fort Field at Chase Garden Creek” property. To donate, send a check to P.O. Box 67 East Dennis, MA 02641. For more information please contact Kris Ramsay, DCT Administrator, at 508-362-3422 or e-mail [CompactK@cape.com](mailto:CompactK@cape.com).



### JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING

The DCT Annual Meeting will be held November 14th at 9:30 a.m., at The Sea View Restaurant, 76 Chase Avenue, Dennisport. DCT will be reporting on the activities of the past year and looking ahead to what’s anticipated for the coming year.

## FAREWELL TO FOUNDING TRUSTEE ED GELSTHORPE



In November 1978, a group of people came to talk with Edward Gelsthorpe about creating a Dennis Land Trust; the group decided to proceed with the project and unanimously elected Ed as the first president of the Dennis Conservation Trust. Just a few years later, Ed set a conservation record while sitting as President when the fledgling DCT arranged the largest-ever gift of land to a local land trust on Cape Cod: 205 acres of Chase Garden Creek marsh and Black Flats dunes near Chapin Beach, a record that stands to this date.

Ed's business career included positions at many companies – Bristol-Myers, Hunt-Wesson, and H.P. Hood, for example. But it was his work at Ocean Spray, where he successfully marketed their new cranberry-apple juice, that earned him his nickname, "Cranapple Ed."

As a businessman, Ed argued that conservation and open space also benefit the economy. "One of the main things that motivates conservation on Cape Cod is the recognition that the basic economy depends on the environment ... tourists, summer residents, and retirees all come here because of the environment," he stated in a 1994 *Dennis Register* article. Ed made personal visits to potential land donors, held most, if not all the Trust meetings at his house in East Dennis, and was well known for his antique cars and a collection of antique toys that delighted the children of Trustees who attended monthly meetings.

Mark Robinson, Executive Director of the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trust, recalls, "Ed was an important fixture in establishing The Compact as a solid non-profit regional organization, bringing his environmental vision and corporate know-how to bear in a unique and useful way. He was just as interested in, and important to, the Cape's quality of life as he was to Dennis." Ed's vision and commitment continue in today's DCT. He will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.



## DCT'S SUMMER EVENING 2009 AUCTION AT THE SEA VIEW

From the East Dennis oysters and the Dennis clams to the freshly-brewed coffee, cookies and pastries and everything delicious in between, the DCT's 8th annual auction was a great success. It was indeed a "delightful and delicious" evening, and a wonderful night for conservation and preservation in Dennis!

The DCT relies on this annual event for critical operating and preservation expenses. This year's auction netted nearly \$30,000. We want to thank everyone who helped make this evening a smashing success. As Auction Manager Connie Mooers said, "We couldn't have done it without you!"

Thanks to "Auctioneer Extraordinaire" John Terrio, to our corporate, small business, and individual donors, The Sea View Restaurant, and everyone who attended the auction. And of course, a special thank you to Connie Mooers and her incredible group of dedicated and hard-working volunteers.

## LIVE BIRDS OF PREY!

Join in the fun with a video and live presentation by Shawn Carey and Joey Mason of the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch Association. The program includes a demonstration with two live Kestrels, so bring your camera to capture memories of these beautiful birds!



*“Hawk watching has become one of the most popular types of bird watching. This program examines why people watch hawks, explains some of its long, storied history, and explores some of the prime locations for viewing hawk migration in the Eastern U.S.”*

The “Hawk” event is on Saturday, November 21, from 10 a.m. -12 Noon at the West Dennis Graded School, 67 School St., West Dennis. Admission is \$10 adults; \$5 children; families of five +: \$25. The Dennis Conservation Trust is hosting this event, and all profits benefit the DCT and its land preservation and conservation efforts. To pre-register, send your checks and the number of tickets you want to the DCT, P.O. Box 67, East Dennis, MA 02641 no later than Nov. 16. Seating is limited, so get your tickets early. After Nov. 16, contact DCT administrator Kris Ramsay at 508-362-3422 or e-mail [compactK@cape.com](mailto:compactK@cape.com).

For more information about the event, visit [www.DennisConservationTrust.org](http://www.DennisConservationTrust.org). To learn more about the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch Association visit <http://massbird.org/EMHW/>. Our thanks to the *Harwich Oracle* and the *Register* newspapers for their support of this event.



## RESERVE YOUR TABLE COME ENJOY OUR FABULOUS FALL FEAST

The Dennis Conservation Trust Wine Dinner will be at The Red Pheasant on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 with a Welcome Reception at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. The Wine Dinner menu includes local specialties paired with selected wines, for a scrumptious three-course dinner, tax and gratuity at \$100 per person; the Wine Dinner is open to all while space is available. For menu highlights visit [DennisConservationTrust.org](http://DennisConservationTrust.org).

For reservations, call Connie Bechard at 508-385-9990 or e-mail [connie@capebvi.com](mailto:connie@capebvi.com). Reserve early, seating is limited. Please specify main course choice (fish or beef). Mail your check payable to: Dennis Conservation Trust Wine Dinner, PO Box 67, East Dennis, MA 02641. Reservations must be received by November 17. Our thanks to the *Harwich Oracle* and the *Register* newspapers for their support of this event.

## LAND STEWARDSHIP

The DCT Land Stewards conducted their first property inspections earlier this spring, and now that fall is here, they will be back in the field inspecting their assigned properties, looking for things like abutter encroachment, dumping, cutting, and invasive species. Following the initial inspections, DCT worked for a week to clean up the sites. Special thanks to volunteer Michael Johnston and to the Town of Dennis's Department of Public Works for all their help.



P.O. Box 67, East Dennis, MA 02641  
[www.DennisConservationTrust.org](http://www.DennisConservationTrust.org)

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## Bridge Street 2008 Partnership Award

In 2006 Paul Prue, a DCT Trustee and a commissioner of the Dennis Water District, sold 6.5 acres to the Trust as a conservation sale. Two years later, this sale was, according to Paul McCormick, Town of Dennis Selectman and DCT Trustee, "... the linchpin in securing a high ranking for our National Coastal Wetland Grant application for the Sesuit Creek Bridge Street project."

In a ceremony last spring, the townspeople and taxpayers of the Town of Dennis were awarded the 2008 Coastal America Partnership Award for the Sesuit Creek Bridge Street Project. This award is the only environmental award of its kind bestowed by the White House and by the President of the United States. The award was given in recognition of the initiative of the Town of Dennis in restoring the wetland, improving the water quality, and restoring the salt marsh. It was a collaborative effort between state, federal and local agencies. This is yet another example of the value of the relationship between DCT and the Town.

## 2009 Special Gifts

The DCT thanks the families and friends who recently made donations in honor of:

E. Howard Sears	Martel and Tom Reilly	Curt Livingston	Patricia Johnston
Theodore and Amelia Vozzella	Ted Romanick	Edward White	Ann Price
Michael Peters	Donald C. Day		

A gift to the Dennis Conservation Trust is a special way to honor or memorialize a friend or loved one. Please consider a donation to the Trust, knowing that your gift will have lasting value in helping preserve our natural environment. Contact our Administrator, Kris Ramsay, for more information (508-362-3422), or [compactK@cape.com](mailto:compactK@cape.com).

### THE POWER OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND SUPPORT

Please join the DCT. Your \$30 membership dues and other contributions help the Trust in its land preservation efforts and operations. Mail your check to DCT, P.O. Box 67 East Dennis, MA 02641. For donations of land, contact Kris Ramsay, 508-362-3422 or [compactK@cape.com](mailto:compactK@cape.com).