



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

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February 2014 was a busy month for the Cavendish Community and Conservation Association. One of our annual events is the informational meeting that we broadcast a week before the 2014 Town Meeting. All citizens are invited to attend and LPC-TV records and replays it through the week. All issues that are raised in the town meeting warning are discussed and candidates for office are encouraged to speak. For many years in Cavendish the Grange would hold such a meeting to educate the populace and to encourage participation at town meeting. With the passing of the Grange, we took up the project and have run it each year since 2006. This is part of democracy in action and CCCA is proud to be a part of it. Above are pictures from this year's event. Top photo, left to right is Town Manager Rich Svec, Moderator Will Hunter, Select Board chair Bob Glidden, and vice-chair George Timko. Bottom photo, left to right is CTES principal George Thompson, Mr. Hunter, School Board chair Dr. Eugene Bont, and members Sharon Huntley and Brenda Gregory.



A Message from Robin

Winter is alive and well in February with mountains and mountains of snow. We hope our readers fare well in the drifts and the cold and we extend our condolences for those who have suffered setbacks in these darker months. □ Last year the Town of Cavendish with the assistance of the Conservation Committee of the CCCA was given an Ecological Restoration Grant to plant a riparian buffer along stretches of land sensitive to erosion that are directly exposed to the Black River and to create an overall corridor protection area with restricted uses so that natural vegetation can flourish and the river will remain free to change course as required. This will provide pressure relief for floodwaters and minimize erosion and damage downstream due to flooding.

Erosion is a dynamic process where the movement and distribution of organic materials create a diversity of habitats. In a river or stream that is in “equilibrium condition” erosion is evenly distributed and thereby minimized along the water’s pathway.

When someone buys a piece of land they generally expect their property lines to stay in the same place. Because a River is dynamic, when land borders a river this principle does not work. Riverbanks erode and silt and other material that is carried away by the draw of the

water will be deposited in new locations. Water can also create new channels and old channels may dry up. Human activity alone does not create erosion, but what we do along our riverbanks can accelerate the erosion process. The removal of natural vegetation such as trees, bushes and plants that root and grow along the riverbank weakens the natural resistance to erosion. Also the stabilization of banks and the manipulation of the river into a particular path impacts a river’s course and it’s effects on the land.

There are three primary ways to manage our rivers when landowners want to keep their land from further erosion; 1) armoring, 2) channel structures and 3) vegetative plantings. Armoring is any type of barrier that creates resistance to the force of water along the riverbank. Riprap (stones) is a common form of armoring. When the river hits the large stones it can’t scour the riverbank and so erosion is reduced. Channel structures are another way to control the movement of the water where walls meant to contain the flow even at flood levels are built into the active pathways of the river. Channel structures can be less damaging than riprap but they also contribute to more serious problems. Vegetative methods include the planting of fast rooting shrubs, trees and plants, which act as a softer resistance to erosive water. This is the method most in harmony with the natural functioning of the river. Water resistant bank stabilization such as riprap or channeling along one stretch of the river can cause the river to impact the opposite bank and contributes to channeling. Channeling the water into a confined area (by creating cement walls for example) will increase the river flow velocity and cause higher degrees of erosion downstream.

The River Management Division of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has determined that the best way to manage our rivers and help minimize the devastating effects of flooding as recently experienced during Irene

is to allow them to meander in a more natural way and where fields are open to the river, encourage landowners to use planting as the softer form of resistance. This is by no means an easy process - an adequate buffer zone of vegetation requires 30 to 50 feet of plantings and there is no guarantee that the next high water level won't carry some of those plantings away! A landowner with land in active agriculture along a riverbank is not in an easy position. This we have learned.

The process of working on this grant with the State of Vermont River Corridor Protection Program, the River Conservancy, the Town of Cavendish and the various landowners involved has been a tremendous learning experience in the difficult choices we must make regarding land management, and in this case, our beautiful and sometimes dangerous Black River. If you are interested in becoming involved with our Conservation committee, please feel free to contact me.

Robin Timko

Applications Now Being Accepted for Cavendish Community Fund Grants

The Cavendish Community Fund is now accepting applications for grants that will be awarded this spring. The deadline for applying is April 15, 2014. In 2007 the fund inaugurated its program of giving cash grants to organizations for educational, artistic or cultural projects, programs or events. Last year grants went to several organizations including the elementary school for a drama-based collaborative project with the Weston Playhouse, to the Raise the Roof concert series Winter 2014; Page 3

at Gethsemane Church, and to the Historical Society to help edit a book on the life of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

Applications and guidelines are available at the Cavendish Community and Conservation Association's website: www.CavendishCCCA.org under the Community Fund tab. Hardcopies are also available at Crow's Bakery in Proctorsville and at the Cavendish town office.

Projects, programs or events must directly benefit the Cavendish community in some way. A panel of local citizens reviews all applications and recommends the ultimate grantees based on the quality and feasibility of each proposal. Grants are not expected to exceed \$1,000 each and will depend primarily on the number of applications and the amounts requested.

For further information on applying, on eligibility or on any other aspect of the grant program, or for help completing the application, please call Peter LaBelle at 226-7250 or Barbara Dickey at 226-7187.

Walk and Talk Series Presents on Big Game – Health of the Deer Herd

On Thursday, February 27th Adam Murkowsky of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department discussed Big Game – Health of the Deer Herd at the Gethsemane Church meeting hall on Depot Street in Proctorsville. Mr. Murkowsky talked about Vermont's current, comprehensive review of deer management, and about results of the current public survey on the health of deer herds in Vermont.

He also discussed several of the debates over various regulations surrounding deer hunting in Vermont, and in a PowerPoint slide show he

compared statistics gathered from the past several deer hunting seasons to show that the herd is both stable and healthy. In a question and answer session he addressed concerns over the growing coyote presence and its affect on the deer – he believes that there is an affect, as well as the effects of invasive plant species on deer habitat, which he believes is negative. In discussing the current harsh winter weather he declined to predict whether winter will diminish the heard or its health.



Adam Murkowsky makes a point to the audience during his lecture.

The CCCA Conservation Committee regularly holds informational and educational programs that are free and open to the public. Topics are usually related to our natural world and often focus on animals and plants that are indigenous to Vermont.

The next program takes place on April 10, 2014, also at the Gethsemane Church meeting hall. We will hear about Rattlesnakes In Cavendish from Doug Blodgett, snake biologist with Vermont Fish and Wildlife. He will give a presentation with Power Point and videos on the nature of rattlesnakes and their habitat in Vermont.

We also have scheduled our annual bird Walk Winter 2014; Page 4

and Talk for Sunday, May 18th at 8 a.m. when we join Alma Beals of the Mt. Ascutney Audubon Society for a stroll and a lookout for our local feathered visitors as they settle in for a summer of raising their young. We will meet at Crows Bakery on Depot Street in Proctorsville. For further information, and if you have an idea for a Walk and Talk event, please contact Robin Timko at 226-7736.

Another Successful and Fun Mardi Gras!



Yankee Chank performs at the Annual Mardi Gras Party in Proctorsville

On Saturday, March 1st, Proctorsville partygoers enjoyed a fun evening with the sounds of Vermont's own Cajun band Yankee Chank. The crowd experienced lots of dancing and lots of great food as more than forty people packed into Crow's Bakery on Depot Street for the annual Mardi Gras celebration. This has become a Proctorsville tradition as each year CCCA and Yankee Chank team up to present an entertaining evening for all.

The menu included pulled pork with fresh Crows Bakery French bread, Seymour's Famous Shrimp Étouffée, cornbread, rice, coleslaw, vegetarian gumbo, shrimps with cocktail sauce, orzo salad, chips and pretzels, and Mardi Gras cupcakes for dessert.



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: _____

There was also a best Mardi Gras mask contest, with the winner getting a bottle of Champagne. This year the honor went to a party of four – the van Schaiks and guests. But there was lots of competition. If you missed this year's festivities, please don't miss out next year. We will announce the date as soon as it is available.