

The Planting of a Garden

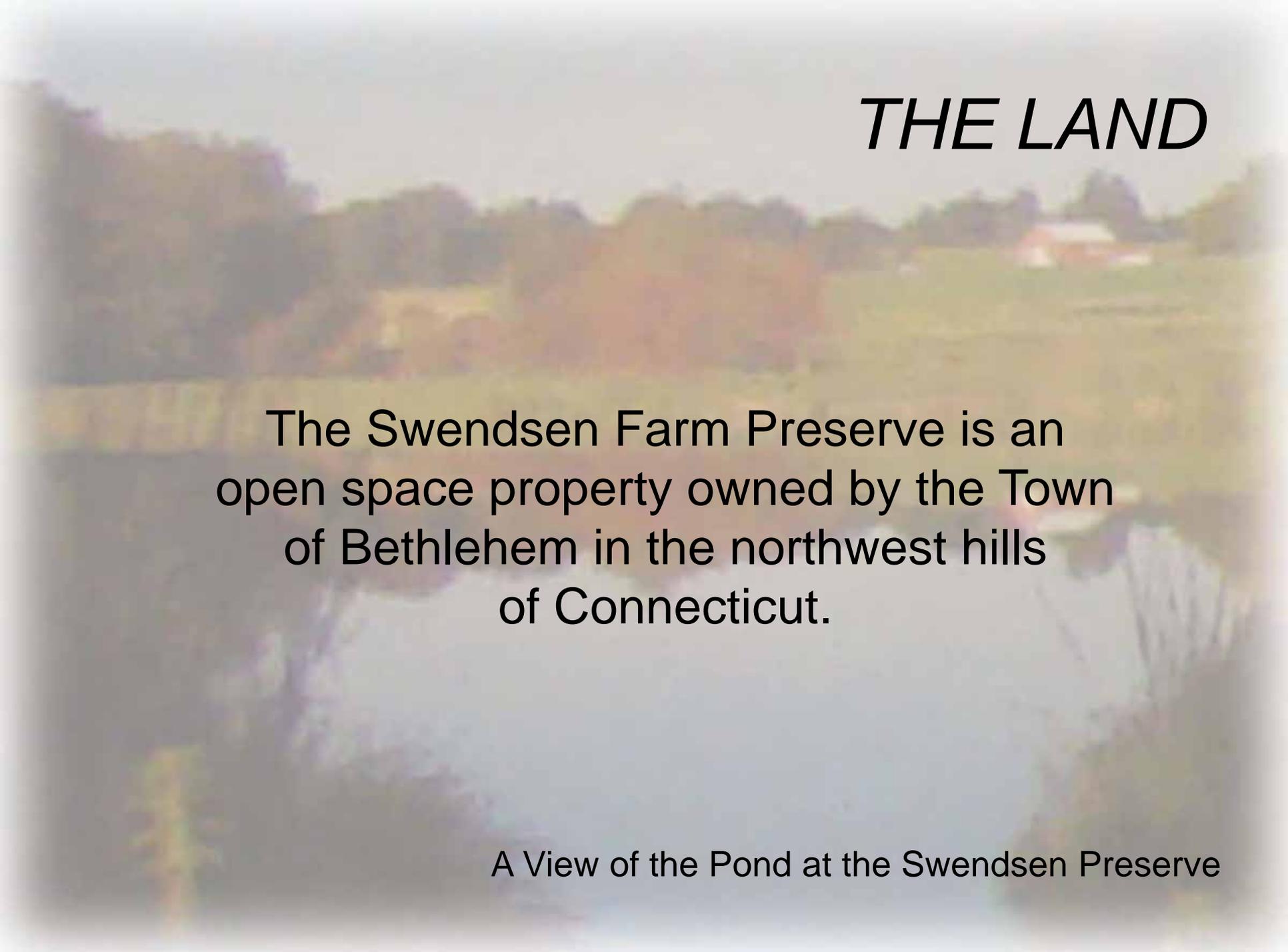
A Celebration of Land, People and Community



Thoughts about sustainable living, and locally grown, organic food prompted a core group of Bethlehem residents* to gather many volunteers to create a community garden on the SWENDSEN PRESERVE.



*Core Group Members: Gerry Assard, Lynn Baker, Tony Bosko, Jack Nelson, Anneke Rothman, Sandra Ruzicka, Jeanne Sargent and Nancy Stein



THE LAND

The Swendsen Farm Preserve is an open space property owned by the Town of Bethlehem in the northwest hills of Connecticut.

A View of the Pond at the Swendsen Preserve



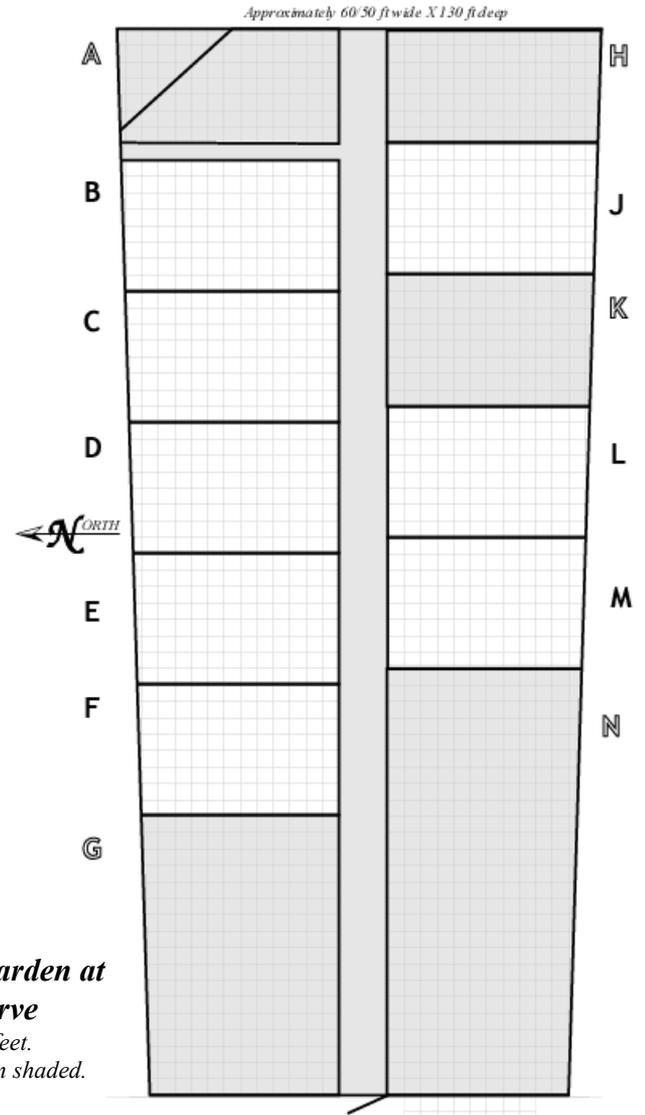
February 2010: As stewards of the Swendsen Preserve, the Conservation Commission offered a piece of the preserve's sandy loam soil close to the parking lot for the 8,400 sq. foot community garden.



February 2010: Al Avitable provided space in Columbine Gardens' heated greenhouse and guided core group gardeners in planting and transplanting onion, tomato, broccoli, beets, eggplant, basil, pepper, and marigold seeds.



March 2010: The Ruthann Leever Donor Advised Fund at the Leever Foundation donated \$3,000 for student stipends and gardening materials.



March 2010: A town informational meeting was held at the library to share guidelines for independent plot holders and adopt a crop gardeners. Half of the garden was divided into nine independent plots.



April 2010: Students and staff from Woodhall School joined the Baker family to test the soil. Paul Reid advised the core group about fencing materials and delivered soil samples to the testing lab.



April 2010: Preschool children learned how to plant pole beans at the Bethlehem Library.



April 2010: Members of Girl Scout Troop # 64045 joined seniors at North Purchase Senior Housing to make two large scare crows.



April 2010: Students and staff from Woodhall School planted asparagus crowns at North Purchase Senior Housing.



April 2010: Lee Steiner donated three water tanks. Bethlehem Masonry Supply donated 12 pallets. Ryan Taylor from the Fire Department provided water to the installed tanks.



May 2010: The New England Grassroots Environment Fund donated \$1,000 toward the project's expenses. Selectmen, Ed Rodan and Jeff Hamel, plowed and harrowed the garden.



May 2010: Woodhall students and staff worked with future gardeners to remove sod and rocks. They then spread lime and horse manure donated by the Hawvermales and delivered in part by Brody's Construction.



May 2010: John O'Neill donated several loads of cow manure. Stuart Rabinowitz and Jack Nelson augured 25 holes for the 12' red cedar poles donated by the Baker and Nelson/Sargent families.



May 2010: Benches were made by Woody Mosch and Coz Arnette. In June, Desiree LaFontaine and Jen Ayers dug the holes and mixed and poured the cement with help from Ryan Taylor.



June 2010: Michael Hutter roto-tilled the garden.



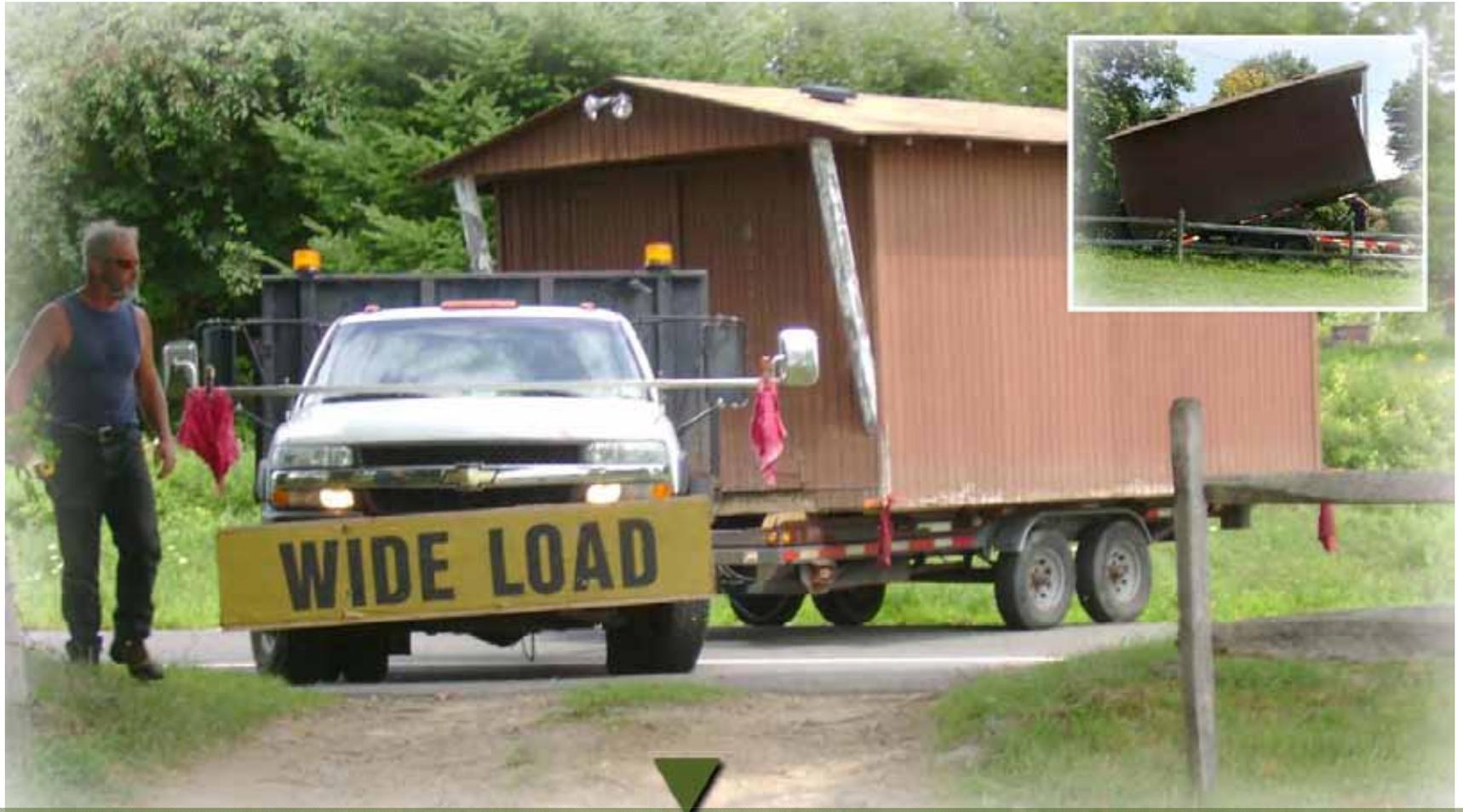
June 5 and 12: 38 volunteers turned out to install the fence...



June 5 and 12: ... and plant seedlings. Two student interns were hired to assist the Core Group Gardeners.



June 2010: Gardeners initially watered their plants the hard way.... with jugs of water from the stream. Later, Ryan Taylor from the Bethlehem Volunteer Fire Department began providing water to the installed tanks.



May 2010: A shed donated by Pamela Swendsen to the Conservation Commission was installed a few steps from the garden for use by gardeners to store tools and supplies.



June 2010: Through the dry early weeks of summer, volunteers and gardeners took daily care of the young plants. Visitors and passing hikers paused to marvel at the progress and share growing tips.



June 2010: Jack Nelson built and installed a communication center near the new gate and hung the sign created by Stuart Rabinowitz for the "Sam and Dot Swendsen Community Garden."



July 2010: Community and individual plots – lush with greens and ripening produce. Gardeners and volunteers came mornings, afternoons or evenings to water, weed and check the communication board for daily information.



July and August 2010: Vegetables were picked Wednesday mornings and distributed by 10 a.m. to seniors at North Purchase Housing and the library. Recipes and prepared vegetables were shared with seniors at North Purchase.



July and August 2010: Volunteers harvested tomatoes, kale, cucumbers, beans, eggplant – enough for another gathering on Saturdays.

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a red, blue, and green plaid shirt, is bent over a blue plastic bin filled with fresh vegetables. She is holding a bunch of green leafy vegetables in her left hand and reaching into the bin with her right hand. The bin contains various items including red-stemmed chard, green tomatoes, and other leafy greens. The background is a lush green field. The image has a white border and a soft glow effect.

*Plenty to Put in the
"Community Basket"*

August 2010

July and August 2010: Surplus vegetables were regularly delivered to area shelters and food pantries.



August 2010: A raised garden bed at North Purchase Senior Housing was built by Randy Adams and Tony Bosko. Painted by Jen and Ed Hampton.



September 2010: A gardenside pot luck luncheon was held on Sunday, September 26, from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. for all interested gardeners, seniors and friends of the garden....



September 2010: ... with seed saving demonstrations by Jeanne Sargent and Gerry Assard.

Sharing the Bounty

Community and Individual Plots
TOTAL Harvest: 3,400 pounds

Half of the Garden Harvested for Seniors
SHARED: 1,691.5 pounds

RETURN on INVESTMENT
More than \$7,000 worth of Organic Produce



Bethlehem Community Garden Wish List

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ✓ Communication center | Spades and iron rakes
Wheel barrow
Watering cans |
| ✓ Emerg. caravan shelter | Pick axe
Hoops and row covers
Starter soil |
| ✓ Picnic table | Organic fertilizer
Solar powered water pump |
| | Funds to buy, plant and protect fruit trees/bushes. |

October 2010: The Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation, Inc., responded to the garden “wish list” with a \$800 contribution for a picnic table, emergency caravan shelter and materials for the communication center.

Thank You !

The following people and organizations made this possible.

AUGUST 2010



Randy Adams
Jeff Addis
Denise Arturi
Gerry Assard
Al Avitable &
Columbine Gardens
Jen Ayers
Bill, Kendra and Lynn Baker
Patty Bauer
Bethlehem Masonry Supply
The Staff of Bethlehem True
Value Hardware
Tony Bosko
Diane Boisvert
Brody Trucking
Carol Ann Brown
Kristine Burns
Carole & Joe Carona
Ian Chase
Shane Collette
Ari Dorf
Frank Errico
Josh Fand
Ben Flemming
Ruth Gardner
Girl Scout Troop #64045

Marian Goddard
Luciana Greco
Marianne Greco
Matt Greene
Jeff Hamel
Ed & Jennifer Hampton
Bob and Liz Hanahan
David Harkness
Greg and Mary Hawvermale
Fern and Ray Hungerford
Jennifer and Larry Hunt
Michael Hutter
Yvonne Kelly
Sam Kenney
A.J. Kessler
Oliver Kinkel
Betsy Rogers Knox
Desiree and Hannah Lafontaine
Agatha Lassauge
Ruth Ann Leever &
The Leever Foundation
Ray Lewis
Andrew Lillis
Sam Londer
Doug Mahard

Don Massey
Maureen McCarthy
Nancy McMillan
Fred Merrill, Jr.
Liz Millsbaugh
Arthur Milnor
Woody Mosch
Jack Nelson
The New England Grassroots
Environment Fund
Henry O'Keefe
John, Michael & Theresa O'Neill
Garry Parmelee
Tashi Phuntsok
Mark Picarillo
Jane Pittari
Cynthia & Stuart Rabinowitz
Paul Reid
Ed Rodan
Anneke Rothman
Dave Rusinko
Sandra Ruzicka
Bob Rycroft
Vania Samoska

Conrad Sansoucie
Jeanne Sargent
Herb Schettler
Shirley Severson
Kelly Seymour
Anne Small
David, Joe & Nancy Stein
Lee Steiner
George Sutherland-Howard
The Swendsen Family
Kelly and Ryan Taylor
Thomaston Savings Bank
Foundation, Inc.
Trish Traver
Janet Turner
Barbara Verrastro
Greg Wasserstrom
Phyllis West
Bart Westdijk
Alex White
Joan Wiltshire

The Dot & Sam Swendsen Community Garden



*A Renewing Celebration
of Land, People and Community*