

BRUNSWICK-TOPSHAM LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2005 #32

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN APPROACHES \$400,000 MARK

Effort Now Focused on Contributors to Last Campaign and Building the Pool of New Prospects

The Crystal Spring Farm-North campaign committee has solicited almost \$400,000 in pledges and donations toward the \$1.7 million goal to double the size of the BTLT's signature holding on the Pleasant Hill Road in Brunswick.

The effort, which began last summer, has produced more than 70 pledges and donations ranging from \$25 to \$50,000. To date the campaign has focused on building its pool of prospects and on the personal solicitation of those who gave to the \$775,000 capital campaign that preserved 160 acres of the Farm south of Pleasant Hill Road. Solicitations to all BTLT supporters and all landowners in Brunswick are planned before the end of the year.

"We have made a good start," said BTLT President and campaign committee co-chair Lloyd Van Lunen. "But this is a great deal of money to raise, and to prevail we will need a number of big surprises plus the support of the Town and other governmental entities, the entire BTLT membership, foundations and businesses.

The BTLT closed on the property last September paying \$300,000 for seven acres of the property adjacent to the Bowdoin Medical Group building. The deal with the sellers, which increases to 322 the number of acres of the Farm owned by the BTLT, features an installment sale. The agreement calls for the purchase of five additional portions of the Farm. The final installment of \$300,000 for 30 acres is due August 31, 2008. The Trust hopes to raise the full amount much sooner than that to keep interest payments to a minimum.

Crystal Spring Farm has been a top conservation priority of the BTLT since it was formed in 1985. The Farm represents the last undeveloped gateway to Brunswick, contains some of the best farmland in the area and is one of the most important undeveloped natural areas in mid-coast Maine. The success of the project will enable farm manager Seth Kroeck to expand his Community Supported Agricultural program and will allow the BTLT to increase the size of the very popular Saturday Farmers' Market and expand the hiking and skiing trails. The BTLT has also formed a committee to explore educational programs at the Farm.

CSA PROGRAM AT CRYSTAL SPRING FARM IS GROWING

Farm Manager Seeks to Double the Number of CSA Members to 150 in Second Season

The farm manager at Crystal Spring Community Farm is seeking to double the number of members of his Community Supported Agricultural program to 150.

Seth Kroeck, the organic farmer who leases Crystal Spring Farm on the Pleasant Hill Road in Brunswick from the BTLT, intends to build on the productive first year in 2004. "It's been an incredible success from our point of view," Kroeck said. "All of our members seemed pleased."

Those who join the CSA pay \$475 upfront and should expect to get more than 400 pounds of 150 varieties of vegetables between June and October with an estimated supermarket value of more than \$1,000. Pick-ups at the Farm this year will be on Tuesdays and Fridays from 3:30 to 6:30 pm.

Kroeck reported that more than members had signed up by early February and that he anticipated reaching his goal quickly. Kroeck already is cultivating some seven acres of land at Crystal Spring Farm-North where the Land Trust has launched a \$1.7 million capital campaign to purchase an additional 162 acres. Kroeck said the best farmland is on the north, and being able to farm it is essential to his eventual goal of attracting 350 CSA members. CSAs typically feature a close relationship between the individual member and the land and farmer, and usually employ organic and sustainable growing methods. **For more information about the CSA, please see the brochure inserted in this newsletter.**

BTLT SIGNS UP 900 PLUS MEMBERS ONCE AGAIN! Record Membership Revenues Raised

For the third consecutive year, the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust attracted more than 900 members and again established a record in raising membership revenues.

The 904 members, 94 of them new ones, donated almost \$72,000 for operations in 2004...the most ever for a BTLT membership campaign. The balance of the total of \$76,500 raised for the year came primarily from special events. Of the 94 new members, 32 signed up at the Saturday Farmers Market at Crystal Spring Farm in Brunswick, the BTLT's signature property. The membership renewal rate in 2004 was 76.8%

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Cross Country Ski Tour at Crystal Spring Feb. 27

Conditions permitting, BTLT President Lloyd Van Lunen will lead a cross country ski tour of Crystal Spring Farm Sunday, February 27th beginning at 2 pm. The tour will cover trails on the Farm on both sides of Pleasant Hill Road. Cookies and cocoa will be served.