



Laconia Area Community Land Trust

Annual Meeting Held at Belknap Mill

Thresholds Newsletter

On October 19th, we held our annual meeting along with a special celebration at the Belknap Mill in Laconia. The evening began with a social hour followed by a brief program and the election of officers and directors for 2006. This special event was made possible by Citizens Bank Foundation who underwrote the event.

Laconia Ward 2 Councilor Robert Luther welcomed a packed audience consisting of LACLT members, residents, and supporters. Luther called LACLT, "an organization following its mission exactly as written giving hope for the future to families with very little". Luther went on to say that, "Every community touched by the work of the LACLT should be proud to be associated with an organization that does such good work and genuinely helps people." Referring to LACLT's many neighborhood revitalization projects, Luther commended LACLT on "replacing blight with beauty".



Bob Curtis, Board Chair

LACLT's Board Chair Bob Curtis reviewed our accomplishments of the past year and shared our plans for the upcoming year. Among the achievements highlighted were the completion of Millview, comprehensive business planning, and the naming of LACLT as 2005 NH Business of the Year.

Matt Mowrey, Managing Editor of *Business NH Magazine*, congratulated the Land Trust on being named 2005 NH Business of the Year in the construction/real estate/engineering category. Mowrey said, "The judges recognized what the citizens of Laconia have known for years—that the Laconia Area Community Land Trust is an important organization doing important work." According to Mowrey, *Business NH Magazine* constantly hears from NH businesses that the lack of affordable housing for their employees is one of the largest problems they face. "The ability of the Land Trust to bring together diverse partners to put once dilapidated properties back on the tax rolls and turn them into homes is inspiring" said Mowrey. "The fact that the Land Trust chooses to pay taxes on all its properties, despite its non profit status also impressed our judges. It shows the depth of commitment this organization has to the community."

Dawn Rideout, a former LACLT tenant and now homeowner, spoke to the guests about her experience as a LACLT tenant. Dawn, a single mother of two children, was recovering from heart surgery. Unable to support her family on Social Security Disability, she and her children were living

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Happy Thanksgiving! We are thankful for your support!



Food Prepared by NH Community Technical



Dawn Rideout, Former LACLT Resident Now



Guests Enjoying the Celebration

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in a homeless shelter. Dawn described how during the months she was on LACLT's waiting list she would drive by the apartments at night. She would look in through the lighted windows and count the days until she had a place of her own. Dawn moved into an apartment on Avery Hill where she "felt safe, and was proud to have her family and friends visit." Subsequently, Dawn attended LACLT's first-time homebuyer seminars and bought a home in Laconia. So inspired by what she learned at the first-time homebuyer seminars, Dawn obtained her real estate license and is now an agent with ReMax Lakes and Mountains.

Special recognition was given to our members of 10 or more years, whose support has been critical to our achievements. Funder Jeff Mosley of Rural Local Initiatives Support Corp. in Washington D.C., was recognized as having traveled the furthest to attend the event and was thanked for his support. Also recognized were two more valued partners, Eileen Cabanel, Laconia City Manager, and our largest funder, NeighborWorks America which has provided LACT with over \$1 million in funding since 2000.

The evening concluded with the election of directors and officers. The following directors were elected to the board for three year terms: Pauline Latuch (Resident Representative), Karen Dorman (Resident Representative), and Stephan Nix (Public Representative). Officers for the upcoming year will be Robert Curtis, Chair; Denise Hubbard, Vice Chair; Stephan Nix, Treasurer; Dwight Barton, Vice Treasurer, Patricia Pike, Secretary, and Nancy LeRoy, Vice Secretary.

The evening was underwritten by Citizens Bank Foundation. Table linens were donated by Lakes Region Linen.

United Way Day of Caring



The Lakes Region United Way held its Annual Day of Caring on September 16th. We are grateful for the many hardworking volunteers who helped us with projects at our properties including painting, landscaping, and clean-up. Special thanks to United Way Volunteers Pam Paquette and Judy Scothorne for organizing the day and to the following businesses who donated goods or services for our projects: Apple Tree Nursery, Asplundh Tree, Belknap Landscape Co., Color Scapes, Gilbert Block, and Petal Pushers. As an expression of our thanks, LACLT staff treated the volunteers to a pot luck luncheon that was enjoyed by all.

LACLT Residents Attend Community Leadership Institute

By Karen Gallant

In September a group of seven Land Trust residents, along with Executive Director Linda Harvey, were among some 500 participants who attended the NeighborWorks Community Leadership Institute (CLI) in New York City. The Land Trust residents who participated in the CLI were Karen Gallant, Kelsey Robinson, Linda Morse, Kerry DeFeo, Kim Norwood, Pauline Latuch and Kathryn Latuch.

The CLI is a regional training conference for residents and emerging leaders of NeighborWorks communities. It is designed to strengthen the voices and skills of residents from neighborhoods and communities served by NeighborWorks America organizations. The conference provides a framework for learning and a forum for discussing community issues. The CLI also provides opportunities for sharing best practices and solutions to problems communities face. At the conclusion of the CLI, participants created an action plan to work with their NeighborWorks organization to effectively bring the knowledge gained at the CLI back to their communities and use it to effect sustainable and positive change. In conjunction with the CLI, NeighborWorks America offers mini-grants to NeighborWorks organizations participating in the CLI who submit a team action plan.

The Land Trust group decided upon a team action plan to institute a resident-to-resident newsletter. The action plan and mini-grant application to help get the newsletter off the ground were submitted in October. Grant awards will be made in December. The group hopes the newsletter will bring a greater sense of community to Land Trust residents. The group also sees the newsletter as a means of getting more residents (including youth) involved and giving them an opportunity to voice their opinions and share their skills, gifts, and knowledge with other residents. Anybody wishing to help can join the group or submit their ideas by contacting any of the group members.



LACLT Action Team in New York City



Transitional Housing Residents Marsha Dupree and Daughter Crystal

Resident Profile

Female, 37 years old, mother of one, college graduate with multiple degrees including a bachelor's degree in child and family services and an associate's degree in paralegal studies, 8 years of service to our country in the Army Reserves, solid work history serving adults with disabilities and working for the American Red Cross, HOMELESS.....How can this be? DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

Marsha Dupree is a Land Trust tenant participating in our transitional housing program for homeless families. Marsha and her 14 year old daughter, Crystal, left an abusive situation in Iowa. With the help of the Salvation Army, they boarded a Greyhound Bus seeking a fresh start in New Hampshire. Upon arrival, they spent a few months living at Emily's Place, a domestic violence shelter in Manchester.

New Year's 2005 brought Marsha and Crystal the fresh start they were looking for when a LACLT transitional housing unit became available. Marsha spent her first few months in Laconia getting Crystal, a special needs teenager, situated in school and connected with area service providers to assist with Crystal's special needs. Crystal has adjusted well and has a 3.8 grade point average.

Marsha is working on cleaning up her credit report so she can buy a car and find permanent employment. In the meantime, she is working temporary jobs, volunteering at Sunrise Towers and Community Health and Hospice, and taking on-line computer courses.

LACLT's Transitional Housing Program combines housing and aggressive case management in an innovative program. Participants, like Marsha & Crystal, receive deeply subsidized housing, support services, referrals, and life skills training. Families set goals and acquire the skills and resources needed to achieve economic independence and secure and maintain sufficient employment and permanent housing.

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Property Spotlight

Residents show holiday spirit at 117 Union Avenue. Home to eight families, this colonial-style building located at Millview consists of 4 one-bedroom units and 4 two-bedroom units. Coin operated washers and dryers are provided for use by the residents. This building is located in close proximity to downtown, shopping, and the hospital.

Our Mission: To assist low and moderate income households achieve economic self-sufficiency through development of permanently affordable housing opportunities and associated support programs.