

POLLINATOR PATHWAYS

Helping bees and other native insects survive

By Joy VanderLek
The Cheshire Citizen

Insect apocalypse. Bee colony collapse. Monarch butterflies decimated. Migratory birds and flyways in decline.

These headlines are positively frightening. It's like one of those scary, end-of-the-world movies. Only it's not. We see and hear about these concerns just about every day.

So, *somebody* do something already!

Well, someone is doing something. Her name is Louise Washer and she is making noise. Washer is president of the Norwalk River Watershed Association and she is getting people's attention, moving them to take positive steps to change those headlines from terrifying to terrific.

She's not doing this alone though. Instead, she's welcoming anyone who is inter-



Native plants such as milkweed are an important food source for many kinds of butterflies and other pollinators.

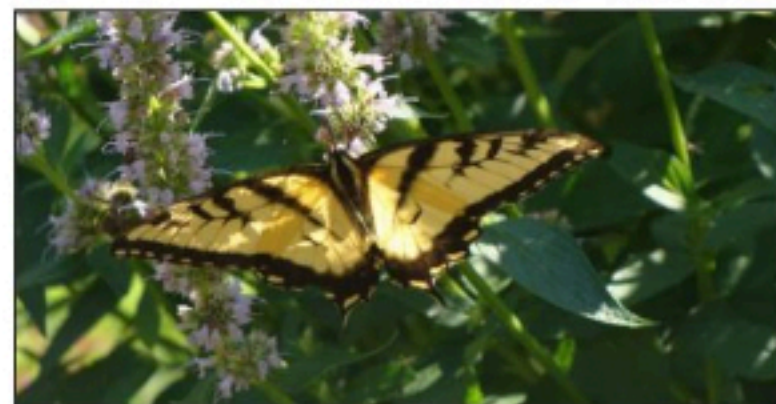
Photos by Olivia L. Lawrence, The Citizen

ested to join her in adding miles and gardens to the Pollinator Pathway. So far 45 towns are involved and there seems to be no end to volunteers. "It's really a grassroots movement," said Washer.

I recently joined a group of conservation alliances and concerned individuals who gathered to hear Washer talk about the Pollinator Pathway at a recent Southington Land Trust program held at Southington Community Cultural Arts.

Southington's Shari Guarino, a master gardener and Southington Land Trust member hosted. Among the attendees were former town councilor Dawn Miceli, CT-DEEP Wildlife Biologist Peter Picone and his wife JoAnne, Jayne Neville of Southington Songbird Sanctuary, Southington Land Trust's Properties Manager Val Guarino, Southington Land Trust's Katy Hanlon, Pam Roach, Southern Connecticut Regional Council of Governments and Cheshire Land Trust, Karen Schnitzer, Cheshire Land Trust and Hamden Land Conservation Trust President Gail Cameron.

Those who attended were interested in doing something about the declines in pollinators. It was Washer's intention to load up these community group leaders with all the information they needed, so they could begin to advocate for pollinators.



Anise hyssop is a fragrant and beautiful perennial for the garden and invites in pollinators, like this swallowtail.

See Pathways, A9

History of Masons, town closely linked

By Joy VanderLek
The Cheshire Citizen

Atwater. Dodd. Brooks. Humiston. Hine. Durand. The names may be familiar to you as the name of a school or street or business for example. These names and an impressively longer list of others, come from the membership rolls of Cheshire's Masonic Lodge No. 16.

The Masons counted among their members, teachers, salesmen, physicians, farmers, chemists, food inspectors, merchants, firefighters, state legislators, reporters, politicians, first selectmen, architects, and many veterans beginning with the Civil War.

"Take it with a grain of salt, but without the Masons, Cheshire would not be the Cheshire we know today," said David Stewart, historian for the Masonic Temple Lodge No. 16.

Stewart is passionate about the Masons and the history of the lodge. In his past 10 years as historian, he has published a history of the lodge, and is working on another and continues to research and document Masons who have had a place in the Cheshire temple. The records are well-kept. Amazingly enough, Stewart said the Masons Lodge No. 16 has the original minutes from the very first meetings.

See Masons, A6

Dozens helped with back-to-school needs

By Joy VanderLek
The Cheshire Citizen

There's nothing like the smiles you see on a child's face with the prospect of new clothes and supplies for back to school. It's even more precious when you know there are children who do not take it for granted they will even have new shoes and a backpack.

As a hand-up to less fortunate children, the Cheshire Community Food Pantry holds a Back-to-School Drive each year.

According to the pantry's Executive Director April Duquette, the average cost for getting a child ready for school each year is about \$250. "This can be a huge burden for families and we feel it is our duty to help alleviate that burden as much as possible," she said.

A total of 40 children, from pre-K to grade 12, were sponsored locally this year. The work to get the supplies handed out to them will be completed in time for school.

See School, A5