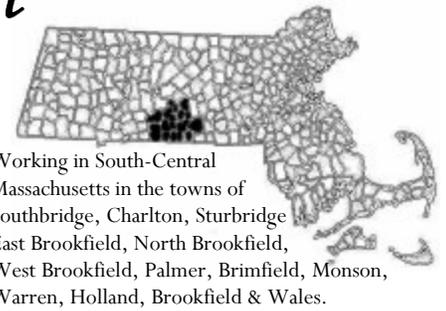




# Opacum Land Trust

PO Box 233  
 Sturbridge, Mass. 01566  
 Phone/Fax (508)347-9144  
[www.opacumlt.org](http://www.opacumlt.org)



Working in South-Central Massachusetts in the towns of Southbridge, Charlton, Sturbridge, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, Palmer, Brimfield, Monson, Warren, Holland, Brookfield & Wales.

## 144 Rice Corner Road, Brookfield: Opacum's NEW Conservation Project

Opacum Land Trust is very pleased to announce that it is accepting a Conservation Restriction\* on approximately 105 acres of land on Rice Corner Road in Brookfield. The generous donors, Dr. Gwen Broz and Mr. Tim Simon, are putting into action their wish for permanent conservation of their farm.

To be able to steward this Conservation Restriction now and in perpetuity, Opacum is immediately launching a fundraiser for \$15,000 to pay for this transaction, and to invest in its long-term Property Stewardship Fund. We must complete this fundraiser by December 31, 2007.

The purposes of this Conservation Restriction will be to permanently preserve:

- About sixteen acres of pasture and hayfields that provide breeding and nesting habitat for grassland birds including bobolinks and bluebirds.
- Approximately 89 acres of forestland and treeline that buffer the pasture and function as upland habitat for predatory animals, migratory birds, and for rare and common species of animals and plants including turtles and amphibians.
- The forest, of mixed age and various native trees, which will be allowed to mature.
- A cranberry, black spruce & sphagnum hummock bog.
- Several vernal pools.
- Three amazing old growth trees that dot the treeline at the pasture, and provide shade for grazing animals.
- The scenic views for everyone who travels along Rice Corner Road in Brookfield.

Conservation of this property creates a buffer and expands wildlife corridors for MassWildlife's "Hamilton Woods", which is located on Gay Road in Brookfield, and abuts this property. This property falls within Supporting Natural Landscape on the state's BioMap published by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program of the MA Dept Fish & Game. Preservation of this property will contribute significantly to conservation of the native biodiversity in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



*Donna Neylon (right), secretary to the selectmen in Brookfield, witnesses and notarizes Dr. Gwen Broz's signature on the Conservation Restriction.*

**Opacum must raise \$15,000 by December 31, 2007.** Make a donation today! Earmark your contribution for the "Broz/Simon CR, Brookfield, MA". There are three easy ways you can make a contribution:

- Make a secure, online donation right now by visiting our website at [www.opacumlt.org](http://www.opacumlt.org)
- Send your check to: Opacum Land Trust, P.O. Box 233, Sturbridge, MA 01566
- Contact Carol Childress at 508 347-9144 and pledge a donation to be made no later than December 31, 2007.

*Thank You for your support, and for doing your part to preserve our beautiful countryside!*

### *\*What is a Conservation Restriction?*

A conservation restriction is a legally binding and recorded agreement between a landowner (grantor) and a holder (grantee) - usually a public agency or a private land trust; whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values.

# Eco-Art Silent Auction Nets Trust \$5,200

Opacum Land Trust would like to thank everyone involved in our Eco-Art Auction fundraiser held on July 29<sup>th</sup> in the newly reopened Oliver Wight Tavern at Old Sturbridge Village. We sincerely thank Jim Donahue and Paul Wykes for generously donating the Tavern, as well as Craig Arnold, Pam Lozier, Tracy McCormick and the staff at OSV for their assistance in making the event a success. This fundraiser was the first of its kind held in the Tavern since reopening, and is a true testament to how perfect the venue is for such events. Through OSV's new food vendor Sodexo, our guests were able to experience a professional staff and fabulous hors d'oeuvres, including a fried ravioli station that was outstanding. Our 130 guests enjoyed themselves, and we certainly appreciate the generosity of Old Sturbridge Village.

We thank On-Line Credit Card Services, Globe Sign Company, Southbridge Savings Bank, Savers Bank, Southbridge Credit Union, McCurdy Insurance, Smith & Jones Advertising, Sterling Engineering, Norcross Wildlife Foundation; and Millennium Power for sponsoring tables at the event.

Thank you to Senator Stephen Brewer for providing Opacum's executive director Carol Childress the opportunity to read a letter regarding his continued efforts in the legislature to conserve the Commonwealth's natural and cultural resources. Thank you to State Rep. Todd Smola, for attending our event and speaking about the Environmental Bond Bill and other important political conservation issues.

Seventy items were auctioned, all either made from or inspired by nature. Many were pieces donated from local artists and businesses, and included an interesting mix, met with enthusiasm by each auction-goer. We owe special thanks to those artists who helped to make this event a success: Tobi Hoffman, Charles Gaulin, Richard Johnson, Kathleen Coggins, Matt Burne, Gayle Magwood, Michael Glaser, Phil Eckert (OSV tinsmith), Jean-Jacques Rivard, Nature's Gallery & Art and Soul Studio Collaborative: Linda Early, Anna Ozolins, and Trisha O'Brien; Loretta Medeiros, Bee Savides, Glenn Clark, Jennifer Ohop, Nancy Bryant, John & Jane Freeman, Pat Jeffries, Maryann Adams, Barbara

Rhodes, Sarah Jeppson, Sherry Zitter, Darlene Kuliza, Sandy Acly, Jerry Suprenant, Sarah Lyon, Danielle LeMay, and Lorraine Langevin.

Also, Alina Eisenhauer of Sturbridge Baking Company; Auntie Cathie's Bakery & Roadside Stand, Wales; Rob Morin of Morin Jewelers, Southbridge; Bonnie DiPietro-Lovely of Afterglow Jewelry Designs, Charlton; Roger & Paula Kohler of IndiPendants, Sandisfield; New England Graphics, Fiskdale; TipTop Country Store, Brookfield; John Meyer and Carolyn Mills Meyer, and Joan Mills Gray of Wildaire West Farm, Southbridge; Capen Hill Nature Sanctuary, Charlton; Artfull Eye Antiques of New Jersey; and Dr. Gwen Broz of West Brookfield.

A special note of gratitude goes to local artist Michelle DeMarco, whose latest work was unveiled at the event. The painting, *Bhumisparsha*, or Earth-touching Mudra, emerged from her time spent visiting Opacum Woods in Sturbridge through the Fall and Winter of 2006. DeMarco is an award-winning egg tempera painter, and Opacum is pleased to offer limited edition prints of *Bhumisparsha* with more than 90% of the proceeds going directly to Opacum Land Trust to help fund its mission: conserving land for a better tomorrow. The prints are available through special order at a cost of \$100 each, and can be purchased by calling Opacum at 508-347-9144, or via e-mail: [info@opacumlt.org](mailto:info@opacumlt.org)

We must thank our Opacum members and donors who came to support this cause, volunteers who assisted at the event, as well as the newspaper journalists and editors who helped us to get the word out and provided great coverage of the Eco-Art Auction. It was not just a fundraiser, it was fun, and we owe a debt of gratitude to each and every one of you who made this event a success.

With Sincere Thanks,

### The Opacum Land Trust Board of Directors:

Carol Childress, President & Executive Director, Sturbridge; Jennifer Ohop, Vice President & Temporary Clerk, Holland; Jennifer Morrison, Treasurer, Sturbridge; Alan F. Smith, Worcester; Gidge Miller, East Brookfield; and Leslie A. Duthie of Monson

## Thank You, TipTop Country Store!

In June of this year, Tip Top began donating 1% of their store sales to non-profits that nourish people or the planet. Every two months, a different charity benefits. Opacum was the recipient for June & July, 2007. For August & September, Worcester County Food Bank will benefit. Kudos to TipTop, for thinking of people, the planet and sharing their profit. The TipTop Country Store is located at 8 Central Street in Brookfield, MA (next to the town hall), or you can visit them online at [www.tiptoponline.us](http://www.tiptoponline.us)



## Ho! Ho! Ho!

Oh, no, no, no! That holiday is in three months!

Here are a few ideas to make your shopping easier:

- Gift memberships to Opacum Land Trust, a great gift for all your pals (people or your pets)!
- Limited Edition Prints of *Bhumisparsha*, painted by local artist Michelle Demarco exclusively for Opacum. A framed print of *Bhumisparsha* will be on display beginning October 6 at New England Graphics, 559 Main Street (Route 20), Fiskdale, MA.

More details are available on our website, [www.opacumlt.org](http://www.opacumlt.org)

# Calling All Volunteers!

Good news! Opacum is expanding! We continue to conserve, protect and preserve more and more of our local lands and waters. Now, the rubber meets the road, and we need VOLUNTEERS!

Opacum's Board of Directors is putting the finishing touches on a long term strategic plan and has recognized the need for more hands to help. In order to expand Opacum's capabilities in preserving open space, the Board of Directors is seeking additional Board members, volunteers or staff for the following roles: Fundraiser, Land Stewards, Land Steward Coordinator, Town Liaisons, Marketing Support Volunteers, Grant Writers, and Office Operations Manager. So, you ask, what do these duties entail?

**Fundraisers** are volunteers who help raise funds to support land acquisition projects, ongoing operations and to build up the investment fund for our existing holdings. Example goals would be to assist in raising \$15,000 during the remainder of 2007 for our current conservation project in Brookfield; to help to raise \$12,000 in unrestricted funds for operations annually; or recruit a volunteer fundraising committee from Opacum's membership and supporters.

**Land Stewards** are volunteers who coordinate the maintenance and improvement of Opacum's conservation properties. A Land Steward may be responsible for one or more land parcels, as fits their needs and desires. Responsibilities revolve around maintenance and improvements, and could include trails, signage, invasive species removal, etc.

A **Land Stewardship Coordinator** will work with land stewards and other volunteers who work on specific maintenance and improvement projects on our conservation properties. This person will oversee property stewardship and be a direct liaison to the Opacum Board of Directors.

**Town Liaisons** are community representatives who coordinate our land acquisition projects with town governments and agencies. Liaisons should be familiar with open space priorities within their town, and will assist in developing or updating their Open

Space Plan and/or Master Plan. They will also assist towns in funding open space acquisition, (e.g. Community Preservation Act implementation, grant development, etc.) and develop working relationships with town officials and volunteers. Current Opacum liaisons are George Miller in East Brookfield, and Leslie Duthie in Monson, and Carol Childress in Sturbridge. Opacum has vacancies for ten more liaisons, one for each of the thirteen communities in which we work.

**Marketing Support Volunteers** will help implement marketing plans to establish positive attitudes toward Opacum and an understanding of our mission and goals. Example responsibilities would be to develop a public relations plan (newspapers, local events), determine the land conservation environment in a geographic area, determine largest potential market, segment market, etc. If you are interested in marketing, this is an excellent opportunity to hone your skills. Interns are welcome.

**Grant Writers** are needed to establish an ongoing or ad hoc grant writing program to raise funds for land purchases and operations. Example goals would be research and write grants to raise \$15,000 for the duration of 2007 for our current conservation project in Brookfield, or to identify and apply for grants that would go towards at least \$12,000 in unrestricted funds for operations.

Last but not most certainly not least, Opacum is in need of an **Office Operations Manager**. This is a position that our board has identified as crucial to our growth, organization, and communication with our members. This is a very important position; one that we feel merits a paid, part time staff person who will manage the land trusts' office operations. Responsibilities will include maintenance of membership database, advertising placement, letter creation and mailing (e.g., thank you, fundraising, etc.) and other ad hoc office projects. We are currently seeking and researching funding that is available for this position, and we may share this staff resource with other local land trusts.

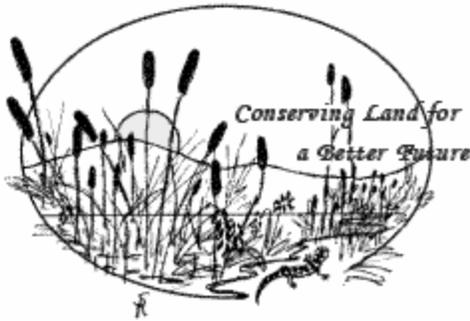
If you are interested in volunteering even just a little of your time for ad hoc projects, please email us at [info@opacumlt.org](mailto:info@opacumlt.org) or call 508-347-9144. Come to our Volunteer Potluck Dinner on December 6th- location TBA. Please RSVP.



## Opacum Welcomes New Board Member

Leslie A. Duthie of Monson is the newest member of our all volunteer Board of Directors. She has been an active supporter of Opacum since our humble beginnings in 2000. Many of you may recognize her from our perennial plant sale. For over 25 years, Leslie has been employed as the Horticulturalist at the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary. She has an extensive background in botany, and volunteers for the New England Plant Conservation Program. She is the current Chair of the Monson Conservation Commission, and has worked to promote many conservation issues within the Town of Monson.

Leslie is Opacum's town liaison for Monson, one of the thirteen communities in which Opacum Land Trust operates. This will enable Opacum to communicate, partner and assist the town with land preservation (you, too, can be a town liaison for your community, see the article on volunteering, above). Leslie was a driving force behind passage of the Community Preservation Act in Monson, and she looks forward to sharing her knowledge with other Opacum communities interested in passing CPA. *Welcome Aboard, Leslie!*



 Thank you for keeping your membership up to date!

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*Opacum Land Trust is an all-volunteer, non-profit conservation organization. Founded in 2000, our mission is to conserve, protect and preserve, in their natural condition, the lands and waters of South Central Massachusetts for the benefit of present and future generations. All donations are fully tax deductible, annual memberships start at \$25. For more information, call (508) 347-9144 or visit [www.opacumlt.org](http://www.opacumlt.org)*

## Quaboag Paddle

Saturday, October 6, 2007

*We will meet at White's Landing, 9:00am*

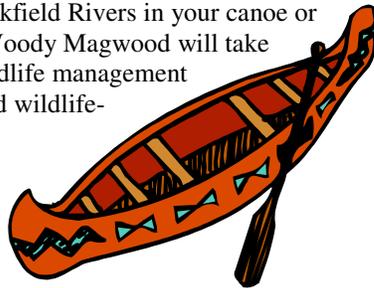
Paddle the Quaboag & East Brookfield Rivers in your canoe or kayak! Guides Gidge Miller & Woody Magwood will take you through two state-owned wildlife management areas providing excellent bird and wildlife-watching opportunities.

The trip will last three hours or more depending on paddle speed, covering 6-9 miles. Bring your own canoe or kayak,

or rent one at White's Landing (reservations highly recommended, visit [www.whiteslanding.com](http://www.whiteslanding.com) or call 508-867-5561 for rates). Everyone must wear an approved PFD.

**Please RSVP by contacting Gidge Miller by calling (508) 867-6665 or e-mail: [gidgeMiller@yahoo.com](mailto:gidgeMiller@yahoo.com)**

White's Landing is situated along the banks of the Quaboag River, on Rt. 148 in Brookfield. They offer coffee and lunch at the Quaboag Cafe, hold cookouts, music events, serve beer & wine, and are available for private and corporate events. They sell bait and tackle, have fishing pole rentals, and offer seasonal canoe/kayak rentals, river fall foliage cruises, and historical cruises. The lobby is full of information about local places to visit and special area events; historical information about the



## Autumn Raffle



**Tickets on Sale Now!**

**1st prize: Recreational Kayak**

**2nd prize: \$75 Gift Certificate to The TipTop Country Store** (they have a little bit of everything, including excellent sandwiches!), 8 Central Street in Brookfield or [www.tiptoponline.us](http://www.tiptoponline.us)

**3rd prize: Two Bottles of Dr. Gwen Broz' Home-made Wine.** Gwen Broz and Tim Simon have partnered with Opacum Land Trust to permanently protect their farm in Brookfield (see page one). Raffle proceeds will go towards our \$15,000 goal needed to complete this project, which has a deadline of December 31!

**Tickets are \$10.00 each, or 3 for \$25.00**

To get yours, e-mail [info@opacumlt.org](mailto:info@opacumlt.org), or contact Carol at 508 347-9144.

*Drawing to be held at Opacum's Volunteer Potluck Dinner, Thursday, December 6, from 6:30 to 8:00pm location TBA. Would you like to join us? RSVP to 508-347-9144 or e-mail [info@opacumlt.org](mailto:info@opacumlt.org) and we'll tell you what to bring!*