

time safety, I took him inside until morning.

Helping Baby learn to fly was exciting. Perched on one stick, with a second stick held about six inches away and six inches lower, he found courage to make the leap. With a gradual increase in the distance between sticks he was forced to flap his wings, and soon he was flying.

He still hadn't learned to oil his feathers. One day the sky suddenly darkened and brought a drenching shower. I grabbed my only waterproof jacket and ran out to find Baby. He was calling from the top of a birch tree about 15 feet tall. He was soaked but wouldn't come down. I found a very long stick and held it up so it touched his toes. He hopped onto it and I hauled him in, hand over hand. Tucked inside my jacket, he snuggled down into the sheepskin lining and answered my conversation with a soft contented twittering, almost like a cat's purr.

Baby adapted more and more to the wild and was finding some of his own food, but at intervals I'd go out and call him. Instantly he'd screech his reply, then zoom around the corner of the house, swoop low, and come up to land on the perch I held. After a bit of chatter and a bite to eat, he'd fly off to his other world. Whenever I went to the garden I took his perch and food, for he never seemed to be far away. By the middle of August I was feeding him plain hamburger.

That summer was pure joy, though I rarely left the yard until after dark. Bringing up Baby was an experience to treasure.



If you find a baby bird, return it to the nest if possible. If not, watch it for a while to see if its parents are caring for it. If you do adopt it, be ready to accept the responsibility of caring for it properly. Some birds require different foods and feeding techniques. Endangered species must be turned over to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.



For further information the following books were suggested by Gerry Youmans, librarian and author of "Bird Gossip" in *Valley News: Wild Orphan Babies* by William J. Weber, D.V.M. *The Care of the Wild Furred and Feathered* by Mae Hickman and Maxine Guy.

Thank-you
The Officers and Directors of the Land Trust wish to extend their deepest appreciation and sincere thanks to Mr. Roger Lavoie of New Hartford for his tireless technical assistance and guidance in the production of this and previous newsletters.

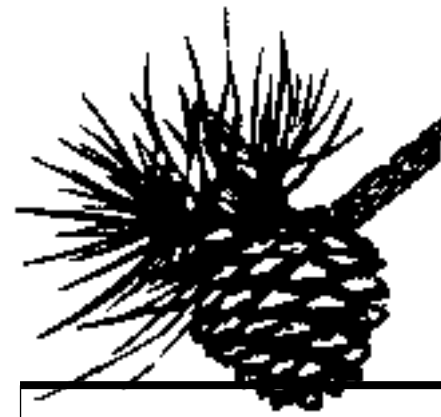


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Spring Hike

June 1 at 2:00 to walk the newly acquired land.
Easy 1 hour walk.
Meet behind Bickford's (Rt.44 and West Avon Rd.)



**WELCOME TO THE AVON LAND TRUST
President's Message**

Many thanks to those of you who made it to the Spring hike at Hunter's Run. It was certainly a day to remember. With thirty-five people in attendance ranging in age from 18 months to 86 years, the turnout for this event was greater than anyone had anticipated. Avon Land Trust Director Rick Dubiel deserves special mention for bushwhacking the main body of hikers (30) back to civilization after they missed a crucial turn in the trail. As in life, though, it is the unexpected turns that yield the most and Rick's group got to see more of the Hunter's Run property than anyone has seen in the last 200 years.

Last February I had the pleasure of visiting my wife's family in Southern Louisiana and, while there, was treated to an early taste of spring. Although it was the middle of winter, the sun was warm, mosquitoes were out and everyone was in shirtsleeves. After a week of this weather I was wondering why I had ever moved back to Connecticut instead of living out my days in a subtropical climate.

Upon our return to Connecticut we were hit with everything the northeast had to offer, and all in two weeks: spring-like temperatures, then sleet, then torrential rain, then 50 mph winds, then 5 inches of snow. A couple of those days were so warm they had me looking for crocuses.

Louisiana, for those who have never been to that beautiful state (especially in the spring), has two weather patterns: warm with rain and hot, also with rain. Occasionally a hurricane comes by to liven things up. The landscape of Southern Louisiana also tends to be repetitive—its flatness allows a person to see a thunderstorm opening up an a parish 75 miles away.

New England terrain is as varied as it's weather. Connecticut has rivers, flood plains, mountains, forests different at each new turn in the road.

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**Avon Land Trust Begins Year
With Major Acquisition**

Avon Land Trust President Dr. Tom Morganti and Dr. and Mrs. Murray Wellner of West Hartford have announced the generous gift of fourteen plus acres to the Land Trust and the people of Avon. The gift is to be known as the Wellner Family Conservation Area and consists principally of wooded slope with impressive hundred year old hemlocks and oaks as well as a variety of wildlife.

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Avon Land Lovers

Ben (Bernardo) Zanolli

It's a long leap from Italy's Swiss border to Old Farms Road in Avon. Young Ben Zanolli made that leap in 1910. With his pregnant wife Regina and one-year-old daughter Esola, he set out to find their future in America. His cash assets scarcely covered the cost of passage, but he was ambitious and resourceful.

After a summer at a Pittsfield logging camp and five years on farms in Southwick and Simsbury, Ben had saved enough for a down payment. He bought the small farm that included the present home of "Rose's Kitchen" and land that extended southward on Old Farms Road to Adolph Roton-do's property.

In 1916-17 he operated a small grocery store in his home, but profits were meager. For five years he raised broadleaf tobacco. When fire destroyed the house next door he bought the property. He loved the land, and through the years he bought additional pieces until he owned about 100 acres on both sides of Old Farms Road, both sides of the railroad tracks, some along the river and some bordering Route 44.

By 1922 Ben and Regina had five children. He bought the first of what became a large dairy herd. Barns sheltered the cows in winter and at night, but most of their time was spent in the pastures. Whenever he looked over his beautiful fertile land, Ben was struck by the contrast between these lush green fields and his native San Zeno di Montagna where villagers daily drove their goats and cows up into the Alpine foothills in search of grazing space.

Ben's total schooling in Italy had amounted to three days, but now his children were being educated in free public schools for ten months a year, and he had taught himself to read and write English.

The children were responsible for many of the farm chores. The older ones delivered milk to Avon customers, driving a horse and wagon or, in winter, a red sleigh. This



family's roots were deep in the land of Puccini, Verdi and Michelangelo. Not surprisingly they all had a love for music, and each of the children enjoyed some form of creative art. Regina loved opera, Ben played harmonica and concertina, and they all loved to sing. When the day's work was done, the house was often filled with music.

Ben bought a 1927 green Chevrolet pickup, one of the first trucks sold by O'Neill's dealership. Esola did all the driving while a neighbor taught her father to handle this wonderful new vehicle.

In 1933 Regina died of cancer at age 45. There were now eight children, and Bernadette, the youngest, was not yet three. Always close, the family worked together to care for one another. In 1936 Ben sold the cows and established a poultry farm. Son Tony sold eggs in town and Ben delivered them to the Hartford Market. The children helped feed the chickens and gather the eggs. It was Bernadette's early-evening job to visit

the forty coops and shoo any stray chickens inside to keep them safe from foxes. Anyone who has had experience "shooing" chickens knows how frustrating it can be. If one bird squawks in alarm the others may scatter and scurry in all directions.

The 1938 hurricane brought Avon its share of wind and flood damage, but Bernadette recalls most vividly the sight of hundreds of pumpkins floating downstream in the floodwaters. Ben worked the farm for forty years. The land was good to him and he took good care of it. He regularly rotated crops and pastures. Cows took nourishment from the land and gave back rich fertilizer. When Ben finally sold the land it was probably in better condition than when he had bought it.

This handsome, robust man instilled in his children respect for authority, their parents themselves and others. He set the example himself. The children knew the value of work and responsibility, and they shared a love for the land and the animals.

In his later years Ben occasionally expressed a hope that he would die sitting in his chair, not in some institution far from his beloved land. On March 30, 1974, he died sitting in his chair waiting to watch his favorite TV program. He was ninety-one.

Ruth Maher

What Used to be There?

Not all changes in Avon's landscape have been regrettable. In the big field east of Columbus Circle there was once a huge open sewerage bed. For many years it processed waste from homes in the area and discharged effluent into the Farmington River. In the 1970s, under the Clean Water Act, Avon installed sanitary collection interceptors that effectively disposed of this and all the town's other open sewerage beds. These were noticeable features of old Avon that are missing today but missed by no one.

President's Message continued from page 1

On June 1 the Land Trust will lead a hike to sample a different type of terrain: the recent donation of 14 acres made by Dr. Murray and Mrs. Susan Wellner (see page 1). These rolling hills and quiet sunlit glades belie the fact that that they are a stone's throw from Route 44. Crisscrossed by ancient logging roads, the Wellner piece may have served as a source of wood for Northington before "Avon" even existed.

I would describe this as an "easy" hike, compared to the near verticals of Hunter's Run last year. Since the property is

Bringing Up Baby

He was naked, cold, homely and all mouth, but he was alive. He was a very young baby bluejay. Luckily I had saved a 1965 article written by Dr. Helen Braem for the Farmington Valley Herald. It gave detailed instructions for the care of baby birds.

First the baby must be kept warm. I placed him in a small berry box lined with soft tissues that could easily be changed. The box was covered with a warm cloth and placed on a towel-wrapped heating pad at low setting. Until he was covered with little feathers he must be kept out of drafts and direct sun.

Next he must be fed. Formula for a baby less than two weeks old is:

Mashed yolk of an egg boiled 25 minutes
1 teaspoon cottage cheese
1 slice Pepperidge Farm whole wheat bread
1/4 teaspoon very finely grated carrot

Mix well and place in covered container. Take out a small portion for daily use. To this portion add water so it's moist enough to be swallowed easily. (Don't give the bird plain water.)

less overgrown and considerably less disorienting than Hunter's Run, we probably won't get lost this year—unless it snows, of course.

Tom Morganti, *President ALT*

Avon Land Trust continued from page 1

The gift is particularly significant in that it provides a beautiful vista as one travels westward on Route 44, defines the ridge there and will now provide a permanent aesthetically pleasing backdrop to the central area of town. The total parcel is to be preserved in its natural state for passive recreation and wildlife habitat. These are uses consistent with the philosophy of the Trust which holds in excess of three hundred acres of land in thirty parcels reserved for conservation, wildlife habitat, esthetic enhancement, passive recreation and scientific environmental studies. As the town continues to develop new areas for housing and related infrastructure, it becomes more and more evident that the open spaces held by the town and the Land Trust will have increasing significance in the future. As one Board member of the Trust recently observed, "Future generations in Avon will not know our names but they will certainly be glad we were here."

When the bird's feather lines are covered with little pin feathers, he's older than two weeks and needs more solid food. The formula then consists of:

1/3 hamburger
1/3 Calo dog food
1/3 original baby formula.

At first "Baby" had to be fed every 15 minutes during daylight hours. I split a popsicle stick lengthwise and smoothed all edges. Picking up a little formula on the narrow end of the stick, I put it into his gaping mouth until he closed his beak and swallowed. I talked to him constantly. He let me know just how far to insert the stick into his mouth and how quickly to withdraw it. When he'd had enough he stopped opening his mouth.

Before long, when Baby was pretty well covered with little feathers, he learned to perch. I curled his toes around a small stick and gently supported him. At first he failed to hold tight and lost his balance, but he learned quickly. All summer we used that stick as his portable perch. Now he could perch on a low branch of a small "feeding tree." Until he learned to fly, he spent hours there each day. I watched him closely and fed him regularly. Before sunset, when birds instinctively move upward from branch to branch for night-