



Essex County

Trail Association

News

Volume 23 Number 2

Spring 2004

From the President

Don Curiale

West Newbury Joins ECTA

The town of West Newbury has officially merged with the Essex County Trail Association. ECTA will now maintain six towns: Topsfield, Ipswich, Hamilton, Wenham, Essex, and now West Newbury. Our mission remains to preserve, repair, and maintain trails and open space for passive recreation.

West Newbury comes to ECTA as a well-organized community broken into 13 sections or areas with one person in charge of each area. West Newbury will have three Area Reps with one Rep acting as the chief liaison to the Board of ECTA.

We are very excited about the addition. West Newbury brings ECTA new energy, territory, focus, manpower, brain power, and skills. It is a very organized community with years of experience. Mary Lee Mahoney, Ellen and Bob are veterans of West Newbury, open space, and the trail system. They are well-versed in dealing with the boards and committees in their town.

I want to make it clear that the West Newbury Riding and Driving Club continues to exist as its own organization and will remain independent.

WELCOME WEST NEWBURY!!!!

Annual Meeting

ECTA held its Annual Meeting on April 6th, 2004 at the home of our Membership Secretary, Judy Gregg.



Susanna Colloredo (top photo) presided over the annual meeting; Gail Wong (bottom photo, middle) brought a hand painted tack trunk for a raffle to support the Topsfield Equine Park.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Gregg for their gracious hospitality and warm smiles.

Director Susanna Colloredo presided over the meeting and thanked the 50-member audience for attending. The 2003 ECTA calendar was reviewed.

One of the several topics discussed was the 40B development of the Pescosolido property in Ipswich, called "Two Rivers." The developer has applied to Massachusetts State Housing. Mass State has now requested comments from Ipswich. Ipswich organizers and ECTA member, Joe Sandulli, has headed a neighborhood watch group to oversee the project of 24 units. There will be six low-income units selling for approximately \$178,000. Each detached single family home will have a \$799,000 price tag. The units will be clustered on ten acres with 22 acres remaining as open space.

Our concern is the trail system. There are three trails that presently merge on the property and lead to Greenbelt property and then into Appleton Farm. ECTA is working to formalize a trail easement on the property.

Ipswich Dog Watch

If you or your friends are walking dogs at New England Biolabs, we strongly encourage you to leash your dog. Please...it is for your safety, your

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The Essex County Trail Association is dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of open trails in our local communities for the purpose of passive recreation and the benefit of the environment. The ECTA works to build coalitions with national and local associations, to serve as liaison between membership and landowners, and to encourage responsible trail use.

Visit www.ectaonline.org.

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Trail Advisor

Holly Pulsifer

Legal Advisor

Dorothy Stookey

From the President

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Don Curiale presents Legal Council Dorothy Stookey with an award for her work with landowners.

dog's safety, and your fellow trail user's safety.

Executive Director Position

The Board of Directors is discussing a possible formation of a part-time Executive Director position for ECTA.

The Trail Association is growing. Now, we must maintain our presence in six towns. We must continue to fulfill our mission and goals in three towns along with the growing list of demands.

Have fun on the trails!

Appleton Farms Permits

Membership Secretary Judy Gregg sent you an Appleton Farm's application permit in the membership renewal package back in January. We are asking those equestrians who plan to ride in Appleton to fill out and mail back the permit application. Judy also urges you to become a member of The Trustees of Reservations who own the property. It is not required but ECTA feels it is important that we support TTOR's work in Appleton Farms.

Those who complete the form with their membership renewal receive a GREEN tag which allows you to enter and enjoy the farm. If you didn't return the form, you receive a YELLOW tag. This yellow tag allows you to ride on trails other than Appleton's.

Annual Equine Paraphernalia Sale

Saturday, April 24, 2004 turned out to be a spectacular weather day and a spectacular fun day for the public and the Essex County Trail Association. The Equine Sale was fantastic. What bargains! What finds! What fun! If you were not able to get there, you missed a wonderful event. There were horse clinics, sidesaddle demos,



Kay Joseph and Sue McLaughlin were honored for their fundraising successes and work on the Equine Expo.

western riding, show eventing and so many other activities too numerous to mention. This was all going on as people shopped the vendors and made deals.

I would like to thank Kay Joseph and Sue McLaughlin for putting together the Ninth Annual ECTA Equine Sale and Expo Fundraiser. And, of course, I thank all the hardworking volunteers, Officers, Area Reps, and friends who helped to set up, organize, and break down the event. Kudos and congratulations to all. Don't miss it next year!

Observe footing and landowners' requests.

Did You Say Llamas?

An ECTA member has informed me that she intends to begin walking her llama through Appleton Farms. Remember...we have to share the trails...so beware!

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David Pancoast Speaks at Annual Meeting

The Essex County Trail Association was honored to have David Pancoast as its Guest Speaker at the Annual Meeting. David is the Ipswich Conservation Agent.

David is always helping ECTA. He helped greatly in coordinating efforts for the Muddy River Cleanup in Ipswich a few months ago. His knowledge of the surface conditions of local trails and marginal trail areas help ECTA make decisions in maintenance. He did enormous work to secure the Marini Easement on Linebrook Road that establishes a connector trail to Willowdale for walkers and equestrians.

When you listen to David speak, you clearly see the consistent, positive approach to problem solving. He tackles the project with constructive thinking and know-how. His approach is how do we get this job done legally, correctly, and reasonably.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank David for his talk and valuable information he shared with ECTA members.

-- Don Curiale

Mark Your Calendar

- ✓ **June 5th**
National Trails Day
ECTA trail walk through Appleton Farms (see article for details)
- ✓ **September**
Look for our upcoming event "A Tribute to the Founders of ECTA."
- ✓ **September 19th**
Poker Trail Ramble

Trail Maintenance

It has been a wet spring following a bitter winter. Cleanup has been underway. Chip Cheston will be going into the Pingree Reservation, New England Biolabs, the Beal Easement, and specific areas where trees and brush have fallen. He will inspect Beaver Deceivers for problems as soon as it is dry.

ECTA Director Moves North to Maine Trails

ECTA Board of Director Elly Andrews will be moving to Maine this summer to live in Northeast Harbor on Mount Desert Island, Maine.

Elly joined the board in 1999 and has been a primary promoter of trails among ECTA's walking community. She has led many of our walks -- especially on National Trails Day. As Chairperson of the Appleton Farms Steering Committee, this Hamilton resident has helped to develop new Appleton Farms trails and reopen old ones. She has been a loyal participant at our meetings and a tireless worker at our events.

Elly will continue her conservation efforts in Maine, specializing in native plants and, of course, the trails in Acadia National Park and those nearby.

ECTA, and the Board, are very sorry to lose Elly. We will certainly miss her -- her energy, her style, and her cheerful dedication. We wish her and her family the best as she starts her new adventure.



Equine Paraphern

April 24, Topsfield

Malta Sale/Expo

and Fairgrounds

Into the Woods

by Pamela Mansfield

It's too early in the season. A puddle blocks the entry to the outermost trail, foretelling deep mud further ahead. Nature is busy with its spring work and the ground is soft, fragile and yielding. The dark swath leads up the rocky hill to what a riding friend and I call the Wayback Trail, the one that skirts the edge of Bradley Palmer State Park. We avoid it in spring, unless it has been dry, for we don't want to leave deep hoof prints in the mud or pull a shoe.

Riding alone today, I choose the main, drier trails, passing the pond where — despite the warmth of the spring day — there are no green frogs chorusing yet and no lily pads on which to stage their concerts. Banjo frogs, I call them, for their constant call sounds like the repeated plucking of a single banjo string. The skunk cabbages, which just a few weeks ago were tight green and purple buds poking up like tulips from their watery beds, are now opening their broad leaves. A decaying log lies at the edge of the trail, covered in scale-like fungus, looking like a long fish on its side in the shallow water.

My equine partner, Dory, is contemplative. He walks slowly, gaining some kind of spiritual renewal from the woods after a long winter on the farm. I call him my Thoreavian horse, for like Thoreau he likes to observe, to take in all that he sees at his ambling pace.

The silence is interrupted by the twitter of chickadees — a winter sound. A few months earlier, near this spot, we passed slowly under the silent gaze of a barred owl. He never moved from his leafless tree limb, his grey feathers camouflaging him against the grey bark. Only his head rotated by degrees as he followed our progress.

The wild inhabitants of the woods seem to permit our presence. Is this

because I am not walking on two feet, but am part of some larger, more peaceful animal who trods this ground on four?

Once, Dory and I were trotting along a brush-lined trail when a doe crashed through the woods and bounded beside us for several strides.



Good-natured and accepting as he is, he never shied or spooked. Another deer, statuesque and on the alert, blocked the trail on another ride. Dory stopped abruptly. Horse and deer stood just ten feet apart, taking the measure of one another for what seemed like long minutes until I, impatient human, finally urged him on, causing both animals to spin away from one another.

Today as we canter to the crest of a rise and burst onto the open, grassy field called Blueberry Hill, we find three crows. They soundlessly hover in the breeze like glossy black kites above a lone evergreen. It seems they are held there by strings. They land silently, the boughs bending under them. Corvids are inherently wise and seem to see right into your soul to determine your intentions. I keep my eyes down as we pass so as not to

unsettle them.

Blueberry Hill is a vast, open field in the heart of these woods. It is carpeted in long golden grass, the straight, sleek tresses carefully combed by the wind. Even on this quiet day the wind rushes past us, cavorting through the grass and reminding me of wheat

fields in Nebraska marking the invisible steps of gusty, shapeless creatures.

Where the golden grasses meet the woods, a single tree shades a flat granite marker embedded in the ground. The stone is engraved with the words "Arthur — A Loyal Friend — 1970-1989." Someone's favorite horse died here and was buried. He is permanently a part of this ground now, and a part of these woods. Dory always pauses at this spot and we stand while he takes in the branches of the tree blowing slightly with the breeze and the bit of open ground underneath. We move on. We have other places to go.

Hidden on the many trails throughout the seven-hundred acres bequeathed to Massachusetts in 1944 by a Boston lawyer, philanthropist, and equestrian named Bradley W. Palmer, are other people sharing this tamed, yet

wild space, but we seldom see them once we're out so far. We branch off toward the river path, taking a less direct route. A yellow and black snake slithers aside and waits for us to pass as we head up into darker woods. Then dark gives way to light with a parting in the overhead branches, and we canter to the top of Moon Hill, a high, inverted bowl of a field that seems to touch the sky. It is an odd, bald pate of land, as desolate as the moon — a barren landscape capped in short green grass.

Once we came upon a group of people at the highest part of this mound, sitting at the feet of a man in a black robe, his long white beard tugged by the wind. We never know who is worshipping what in Bradley Palmer. Everyone has his own reason for being here.

Alone on Moon Hill, I'm alert, edgy, and my stomach sends out whispers of fear. Can I remember the entrance to the right trail out of here? I look for landmarks, but there are few in this vast, strange field. Thoreau, who could find his way in the woods in the dark, said, "...not till we are completely lost, or turned round, — for

I've insisted he take one turn, and he has insisted on another. We retrace our steps when I discover my error, and he heaves a righteous sigh.

I'm relieved to find the right trail, looking for the marker I know is always there. On the long descent, Dory picks his way along the rocky, overgrown path.

We arrive at the dark river path. The footing is perfect for horses, and we pick up a steady trot. His ears stand alert, for ahead lies Dory's Hill. He owns this hill, friends who have ridden with us agree. He conquers it with a warring spirit. I learned, after many tries, that if I stopped holding him back, I could find my balance to let him gallop. He cannot tolerate my interference on this hill, nor can he tolerate another horse trying to be first. This is what he asks of me. To indulge his biggest thrill. To let him touch his wild side, he who is otherwise a domesticated, peaceful animal.

He slides into the canter of his own will, the transition so smooth it is barely detectable. The hill rises in front of us, and he lowers his body, getting into the stride now, his hooves

pounding the drum-tight dirt and we fly, oh we fly, faster with every stride. The gallop is smooth; there is no undulation of his back under me. I remain still and balanced securely over my feet in the stirrups, my knees shock

absorbers. Moving in harmony with him, all I feel is the power of his shoulders and haunches and the pull of his legs as they cover the ground.

The wind makes my eyes tear, and I laugh out loud. Only when we reach

Celebrate National Trails Day

The first Saturday in June is designated National Trails Day in the United States. Join trail enthusiasts throughout the country on June 5th, 9:30 a.m. by taking a walk! ECTA is hosting a walk through Appleton Farms – both existing trails and trails that may soon be opened – as well as some very special, private trails. Our walk will be led by Elly Andrews, ECTA Director and Wayne Castonguay, Manager of Appleton Farms. Meet at the Waldingfield parking lot.



the top do we come to a halt. He stands, mane and tail blowing in the wind, his nostrils distended more because he is feeling a sense of machismo than because he is breathing hard.

Together, we survey the grassy fields below, then head down slowly to the trail that exits the park.

As Thoreau advised, we can never have enough of nature, and Dory and I are transported to it at Bradley Palmer. I would never want to walk there without him, for it would not be the same. Thoreau felt that walking was the only way to truly get close to nature, but I think perhaps he could have come to love a certain horse.

a man needs only to be turned round once with his eyes shut in this world to be lost, — do we appreciate the vastness and strangeness of Nature.”

I've relied on Dory's sense of direction more than once. Other times



Equine Paraphernalia Sale/Expo 2004

by Kay Joseph

A shopping day not to be forgotten...great weather, great crowd, great demos!

The ninth annual sale/expo was our largest yet, with close to 1000 attendees. We had 75 booths where vendors were selling new and used tack and apparel, pottery, jewelry, model horse tack, hooked rugs, trailers, gifts, and clipper service, as well as booths for rescue organizations, pony clubs, horse publications, and jumps, to name a few.

- ✠ Thank you to all for your many donations to the ECTA table. We are accepting donations for next year at any time.
- ✠ Our new enlarged program was made possible by our advertisers, sponsors, and patrons – thank you to all.
- ✠ The new silent auction was a hit and will be enlarged next year.
- ✠ We gained 22 new memberships and gave away many maps and pamphlets.
- ✠ The demonstrations were as follows:
 - ✠ Tim Harvey, a certified Pat Parelli instructor from Rhode Island with five of his students showing Parelli's natural horsemanship.
 - ✠ Rhonda Watts from New Hampshire gave us sidesaddle at its best.
 - ✠ Deb Kovak and Bonnie Fewtrell from western Massachusetts showed us Mammoth donkeys under saddle.
- ✠ Donations are still coming in so a total is not available as yet.
- ✠ Thanks to everyone who gave and helped as we could not do this event without you.
- ✠ Next year is our tenth anniversary. Look for special notices in future newsletters.



At the main table of the Sale Expo, in the Topsfield Fairgrounds Arena, ECTA Area Rep Augusta Macrokanis answers questions about the sale and silent auction.



Letters

Dear Don,

Sorry for the delay in writing to thank you, but the cold this year has kept us busy as well. Beavers!

Thanks - a huge thanks -- to you and the trail association for your help in getting the end of Mitchell Road cleaned up. It's awesome! As shown on the front (postcard shows picture of beaver work) -- new neighbors have moved in around the trail on Mitchell Road. Thank you again, -- Petr & Kelley Jane

ECTA,

I do not own a horse and I don't ride but my close friend almost lost her horse in the Revere/Saugus Riding Center fire. She has asked me to help her pass around this article written in *Horse Illustrated* that would like to promote safer standards in all animal housing facilities. A start would be getting local fire departments more involved in making sure there are posted escape plans, knowing where "filled" fire extinguishers are (and how to use them and when!). Most important, training boarders, employers, everyone, what to do with the horses during a fire. The only thing people see is what's on t.v. Maybe there is a video in existence??

If anyone in your association is interested in supporting this effort, please write to the National Fire Protection Association. The address is in the article. Thanks, -- Kathy Quinn

West Newbury Broadens Mission of ECTA

by Marylee Mahoney

We trails enthusiasts in West Newbury are thrilled that ECTA has given us the opportunity to become a member town. Three of us met with the ECTA board last December and made a proposal to include West Newbury. As we left the meeting, Ellen Alden's cartwheeling down the vast halls of 55 Waldingfield Road was a pretty good indication that we were well received.

Subsequently we met with various West Newbury boards including the planning board, members of the Conservation Commission and Mill Pond Committee, the Open Space Committee and ultimately the board of selectmen. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Three newspaper articles were written (two local and one *Boston Globe*) from which no negative feedback has emerged.

We are an enthusiastic group who are looking forward to devoting time and energy to this venture which should not only benefit West Newbury, but will also broaden the mission of ECTA.

Safer Standards for Stables

Reprinted from Horse Illustrated. (ECTA newsletter schedule did not coincide with deadline in article.)

"Of course horses are a far cry from cardboard boxes stored in a warehouse, yet animal housing facilities, including barns, are considered "storage occupancy." However, racetrack barns are not, because they are covered by a different standard. In an effort to protect non-racing animals, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is currently considering expanding the NFPA 150 Standard on Fire Safety in Racetrack Stables to include all animal housing facilities. Such a change would make animal housing facilities adhere to safer

Report to the Essex County Trails Association on the Dow Brook Conservation Area Recreational Trail

The town of Ipswich, through the Department of Planning and Development, is proposing to construct a non-motorized recreational trail and a six-car, unpaved handicap accessible parking area on the Dow Brook Conservation Area located at 326 High Street in Ipswich (Highway 1A/133), adjacent to White Farms Ice Cream. The trail will extend from the parking area on the frontage portion of the property for a total length of approximately 515' from the parking area to an existing trail on the property. Approximately 80' of the new trail will be elevated over an area of wetlands.

It is anticipated that this project will serve hikers, joggers, cross-country skiers, snowshoers, wheelchair persons, birders bikers, school groups and other non-motorized recreational users. The 34-acre Dow Brook Conservation Area property, owned by the Town of Ipswich, is located within a 3000-acre greenway, and links to the Bay Circuit Trail. The connection to the Bay Circuit Trail on the property is via the existing trail, which the newly constructed trail will connect to. Creating this new public access at the Dow Brook Conservation Area enhances the limited number of public access points to this larger greenway.

The property was walked in early March with representatives from both the Town and ECTA, and it was determined that the new trail crossing over the wetlands would not be conducive for a horse crossing, but that horse riders can access the existing property either through Prospect Hill on Rt. 133 in Rowley, or off of Mile Lane in Ipswich. The Town has submitted a grant to the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Recreational Trails Program, to assist with funding of the construction of the new trail and parking area, which ECTA has endorsed. ECTA has also been supportive of providing annual trail maintenance on the new trail. Permitting for the project will proceed through the Conservation Commission and is currently scheduled to be presented in June 2004.

Beth O'Connor, Open Space Coordinator, Ipswich, MA



Thanks to the Marini family for trail access between Willowdale State Forest and Bay Circuit Trails. The trail skirts this pond on Marini Farm in Ipswich...and links to this Willowdale entrance



standards, such as sprinkler system installation in barns. The NFPA will be collecting input on the subject through April 2004. If you're interested in becoming a committee member or want to share your thoughts on the subject, write to the Codes and Standards Administration, NFPA, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101 or e-mail stdf_admin@nfpa.org.

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