



Essex County News Trail Association

Volume 24 Number 1

Winter/Spring 2005

From the President

Don Curiale

It was a cold November afternoon. Snow hadn't arrived just yet. Susanna Colloredo, Bradley Palmer officials, Chip Cheston, environmental professionals, and I were able to walk and inspect the Hay Scale Trail off Highland Street into Bradley Palmer.

Our mission was to assess the possibility of repairing the ruts, erosion, culverts, and drainage problems on one of the most heavily used walking, jogging, and riding trails. We were wisely advised to close the trail down immediately. Safety was the prime concern for man and animals.

ECTA received its first estimate. It was a staggering estimate of well over \$30,000. What to do? Panic set in. Susanna took charge: Peter Britton to the rescue. He and Billy Woods repaired the trail in record time and with an invoice ECTA could handle. In addition, Peter donated a lot of his time and expertise to ECTA. We are all indebted to Peter and Billy for a job well done! Thank you. And the snow fell.

Appleton Farms

ECTA and Appleton Farms are working together to open a new trail along Waldingfield Road up to Goodhue Street. This is a very beautiful, tree-lined avenue along the inside of the stone wall. This trail will keep the riders off Waldingfield Road and on one of the most scenic "rides" Appleton Farms has to offer. We



hope this trail will be open for spring. Please see enclosed letter from Appleton Farms Manager Wayne Castonguay.

ECTA Coordinator

ECTA's Coordinator, Carol Lloyd, is working very hard on many fronts. Carol's agenda:

- 5 - 7 West Newbury easements
- 2 Ipswich easements
- 1 Hamilton easement
- Permitting and permitting fees for each beaver deceiver
- 2 Topsfield beaver deceivers
- 1 Ipswich beaver deceiver
- Repair of 1 Hamilton deceiver
- Patridgeberry development in Ipswich

Carol is also working to increase our

presence in various local and national coalitions who share our mission and goals. In addition, she is meeting with local planning boards, conservation commissions, open space committees, and health agents. We wish to thank the local conservation boards for their cooperation and support in our mission.

Updates

Stephen Engle of Quebec Labrador Foundation is coordinating a community-based map of the Manchester/Essex trails. ECTA is helping with volunteers and financial support.

Turner Hill trails are open but limited during the winter months. The trails are marked, conditions and trails change in the spring. Please be sure you are aware of where you are permitted to go. Call VP Leslie Brooks for further information.

Absolutely NO SNOWMOBILES should be in Willowdale Wildlife Sanctuary. Please call your local police if you see violations.
Topsfield Police - 978-887-6533
Hamilton Police - 978-468-1212
Environmental Police - 800-632-8075
Bradley Palmer Supervisor Peter Carlson - 978-887-5931

Equine Paraphernalia Sale takes place at the Topsfield Fairgrounds on April 23, 2005. This is always a very exciting

(continued next page)

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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Lois Cheston	

Trail Advisor

Holly Pulsifer

Legal Advisor

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We sincerely thank all ECTA members to date who have given above their membership dues in 2005, including:

Helen Ayer
Lorraine Beal
Amy Bresky
Rebecca Brooks
Sam & Tracey Byrne
Carole & Jamie Cabot
Ellen Cabot
Stori Cadigan
Robert & Elizabeth Carroll
Chip & Disa Cheston
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Freddy & Susie Winthrop
Josh & Wendy Wood

FROM the President

(continued from page 1)

event and is a principal source of income for ECTA. Don't miss the bargains, prizes, and fun. Kay Joseph and Sue McLaughlin have worked very hard to give you the best show possible. Mark the date!

MUD SEASON is fast approaching. Please be respectful of landowners' property and grounds...do not make ruts. If you are not sure, then you shouldn't be there! Please wait for the trails to dry.

Membership Renewals

This is membership renewal time. Please renew today. We are spending at record rates to keep your trails open. Your membership

and donations are very important to us. Please renew today! A donation of \$100 or more gets you a free ECTA hat.

Email Announcements

We need your email address to help us reach you quickly when we have an important announcement. Don't forget to include it in your renewal package.

ectaonline.org

Make ECTA online your electronic connection to your trail organization.

Bookmark

www.ectaonline.org

Mud Season

is inevitable! Please respect our
landowners and the land.

Do not ride your horse on muddy trails
where hoof prints will leave lasting
impressions and damage fragile growth
and pathways.

New Trail Tags for 2005

Trail tags were mailed out in February to all 2005 members. There are now two types of tags that are easily discernable. One is an oversized, fluorescent orange tag, meant for riders who are also members of The Trustees of Reservations. This tag was purposefully made large to make it easy for Appleton Farms personnel to verify, from a distance, that a rider is an ECTA AND a TTOR member.

Only riders who are members of both organizations will get this tag and will be allowed to ride at Appleton Farms.

Riders, walkers, cyclists, and other trail enthusiasts who are members of ECTA in 2005 received a smaller, white tag. This is the traditional size



The small white tag with green imprint is for ECTA members only. The large orange tag is for members of both ECTA and TTOR.

that riders have normally clipped to their bridle. The large orange tag is probably best clipped to the saddle or the rider's clothing.

If you are a member of BOTH organizations, and did not indicate that in your renewal, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to membership secretary Judy Gregg, 210 Sagamore Road, Hamilton, MA01982. and she will return a form to you that you can complete with the required information and your membership number with TTOR. New trails are opening at Appleton Farms for riders, and these trails, Appleton Farms, and the TTOR are worthy of our support.

ECTA Calendar of Events

April 23rd	Equine Paraphernalia Sale/Expo, Topsfield Fairgrounds Arena
April 28th	Annual Meeting
Late Spring	Day at the Races Fundraiser -- look for your invitation in the mail
Late Spring	National Trails Day
September 18	Poker Trail Ramble, Bradley Palmer State Park

Celebrating Trails in Winter

by Pamela Mansfield-Loomis

Since the first big snowstorm in January, lawns, side-walks, and trails have been under a blanket of deep snow. There have been few opportunities to ride our horses on the trails, and even the quiet back roads where riders might enjoy a short hack have been dangerously narrowed by mountains of snow piled higher and higher on either side.

On a perfectly sunny day in February, it seemed like the only way to get outdoors was to put the cross-country skis in the back of the car and head for the trails. See how they looked from skis instead of the back of a horse. See how out of shape I had become. And maybe try some new trails not open to horses, but, still worth a look.

I'd recently heard how nice the skiing was at Appleton Farms' Grass Rides, but had never been to that part of the farm before. Fortunately, there was a generous supply of maps at the head of the trail in what is known as Lamson Field and I tucked one into my pocket. There was plenty of parking, too, at the entry to the trails just off of Highland Street, but the spots filled up quickly as people arrived to walk their dogs, or quickly strap on skis and disappear down the tree-lined path. To either side of the path lie familiar trails opened for horses a couple of years ago in Lamson Field, now covered in snow. It was a great spot for my husband, Rick, and I to reacquaint ourselves with the skis before venturing into the Grass Rides.

Once we were sure we could stay upright and move along at a reasonable pace, we headed down the narrow tree-lined path, but after a few hundred yards came to a hill rising ominously before us. A trail branched to the left, but I could see that it would head back to more familiar



areas of the farm. The trail to the right looked as though it started the loop we were looking for, but not being the best of navigators I didn't trust my map-reading skills. Nonetheless we went ahead and were delighted as the trail opened wide before us, leading us along a sunny, gently sloping route that didn't overly challenge us on our first time skiing in two years. The path kept beckoning and didn't disappoint us by becoming narrow, rocky, or too steep. The entire trail was bathed in

sunlight and though we passed lots of walkers, dogs, and people on snow shoes, there were ski tracks that made the going easier.

We opted to stay on what looked to be a main trail, as we passed a trail on our right. Eventually our trail intersected with another. From our left a steep hill plummeted down to the wide trail we were on, but to our right the trail looked just as wide and nearly level as the one we were on. Finally our friendly trail curved to the left as the map indicated, and I went ahead to get my bearings when I saw the Great Pasture in the distance. Coming back to the main trail, we continued till we saw a narrower trail to the left, and it was worth the spill I took before gliding any further just to check that it was indeed the same steep hill we'd seen from the other side. By cross-country skiers' standards, it would have to be a black diamond!

Shortly afterwards we were greeted by a joyful Saint Bernard, and he would indeed have been a welcome sight to a stranded skier with his friendly face. He and everyone else we met along the way were very

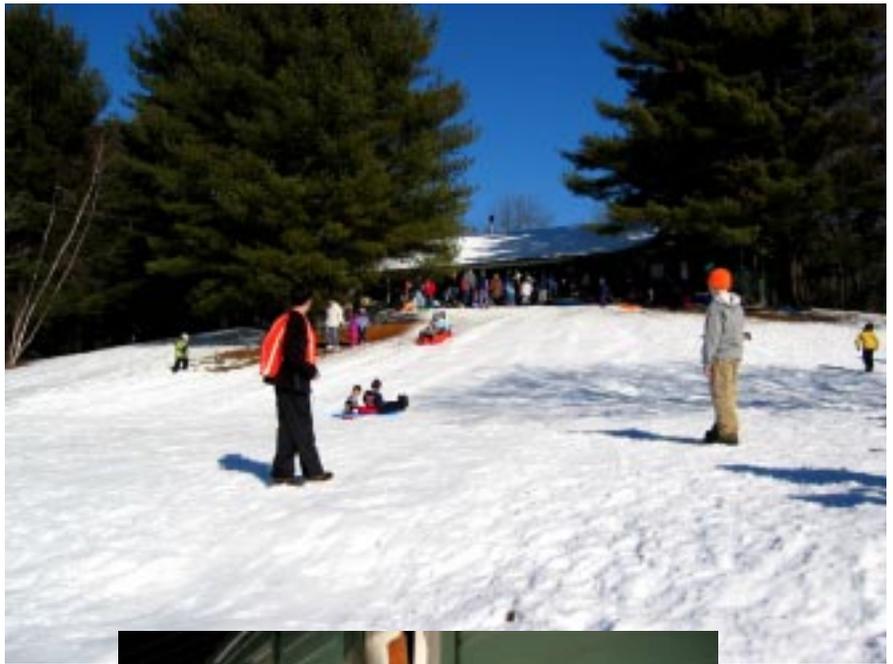
friendly and happy to be outdoors on such a beautiful day. Even the white West Highland Terrier who eluded his owners while he ran through the snow was having a great time.

We remarked how the Grass Rides would be a beautiful place to walk at any time of year, and we'd like to try some of the many routes that branch off of it. We missed seeing the central clearing known as the "Roundpoint," the hub of the wagon wheel of the five "rides" or trails that converge on it. There we would have seen one of the four granite pinnacles given to the Appleton family by Harvard College after the demolition of the former library, Gore Hall. About 45 minutes or an hour after we'd started, we reached the end of the trail, the wide hill that had confronted us at the very beginning. Maybe next time we'll be able to handle it, but we called it quits at that point and planned on coming back again sometime, snow or no snow! Though it would be a thrill to ride there on horseback, the five miles of trails through wetlands and woods can be enjoyed on foot any time (or on skis and snowshoes, in winters like this one). To see the map of the trails, visit www.thetrustees.org and select Appleton Farms Grass Rides link. Another favorite place for cross country skiers is Chebacco Woods in Hamilton. Though the trails are narrower, they offer varying scenery and easy hills. Maps are available at the entrance to the trail, and ECTA events coordinator Sue McLaughlin still guides anyone interested in learning the trails on the first Sunday of every month. Contact Sue for more information.



West Newbury Winter Carnival

From sledding contests to nature walks, snow shoeing to animal tracking, the Winter Carnival on February 6th offered something for everyone. There was even hot food and seating on a sunbathed porch overlooking the frozen Mill Pond and snowy trails at the Mill Pond Recreational Area adjacent to the Pipestave Equestrian Center off of Route 113. What a perfect day! ECTA Directors Mary Lee Mahoney and Ellen Alden were on hand to greet people and tell them more about our favorite trail organization. Helping out were Don and Cyndy Bourquard. Don is the Chairman of the Open Space Commission in West Newbury. He and his wife, Cyndy, are also members of Friends of Our Trails in Newbury, and instrumental in helping with trail easements in the area. Riders, walkers, and trail enthusiasts can enjoy a network of trails behind the popular cross-country course and dressage rings. Don indicated existing and possible future trails on maps he had on hand. Cyndy is a naturalist who also leads programs for the Massachusetts Audubon at the Joppa Flats Education Center. She offered walks during the winter carnival to help trail enthusiasts learn to identify the tracks of wild animals. Her demonstration included some wonderful examples of beaver, coyote, rabbit, and mouse tracks.



Photos from top: Sledding competitions, complete with prizes and loudspeaker interviews, thrilled the multitude of children; Don Bourquard helps out with introducing ECTA to carnival-goers and brought along a vast collection of maps; Cyndy Bourquard holds up examples of beaver tracks and handed out little cards you can carry to help you identify tracks on the trails; Mary Lee Mahoney and Ellen Alden manned a table and met newcomers to the area as well as residents to tell them about ECTA's mission.

Spring Is in the Air

Kay Joseph

The 10th Annual Equine Paraphernalia Sale/Expo will be held at the Topsfield Fairgrounds indoor arena on Saturday, April 23, 2005, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Exhibitors booths are moving quickly as are the plans for this year's fabulous Expo.

We have our advertising in full swing in all the major horse publications. In April, we will be doing cable, newspapers, and radio ads.

Demonstrations are being put together with Friesians, Fjords, Donkeys, Mules, Missouri Fox Trotters, Mustangs, and Windrush Farms Therapeutic Equitation presentation.

Anyone wishing to be a sponsor or patron of the Expo is much appreciated to defray the cost of such a large event by paying for the building, advertising, postage and printing.

We are also looking for donations for the ECTA Sales Table of any items related to horses. If you have any saddles, bridles, bits, stirrups, pads, wraps, buckets, forks, riding apparel, blankets, sheets, books and pictures, we would appreciate it. We are happy to pick up any items or you can call for a drop off place near you. We are trying to arrange drop off boxes in larger barns to help with collecting. We would like all items the first week of April so they can be sorted and marked.

The addition of a silent auction was a great success last year, so we hope to continue it this year and would like items and services for this table.

Volunteers are needed for sorting and marking donations on a date to be determined and also helping with various jobs on April 23rd. Working on the Expo can be a fun thing to do so please help.

This is the major fundraiser, so please plan to help us make it the success we need it to be.



This year's demonstrations at the Equine Paraphernalia Sale/Expo include Friesian horses in Medieval costume.

ECTA Equine Paraphernalia Sale

*Large Marketplace of New and Used Equestrian
Items and Services*

Demonstrations

Door Prizes

Free Parking

Food Vendor

\$3.00 Admission

Saturday, April 23, 2005

Topsfield Fairgrounds - Arena

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

See you there!

For information on exhibitor spaces, sponsorships, patrons, or donations of items to ECTA, call Kay Joseph at 978-768-6275 or Sue McLaughlin at 978-468-7715, or email kljoreo@aol.com

A Letter from The Trustees of Reservations

On behalf of The Trustees of Reservations and The Appleton Farms Equine Advisory Committee, we are writing to update fellow horse enthusiasts on the exciting progress last year at the farm and plans for the year ahead.

In the five seasons since Joan Appleton turned over the farm to The Trustees, equine use has continued to increase. This past season witnessed as much equine activity as ever. In addition to the daily use by the local equine community, we hosted the largest ECTA annual trail ride to date, welcomed the Myopia Hunt on six dates and the annual Waldingfield Driving Event, and hosted the Estate to Estate carriage drive organized jointly by the Myopia Driving Club and the American Driving Society. The new Lamson trail, which eliminated the dangerous Highland Street crossing connection to Groton House, continues to be extremely popular. Myopia Hunt Club has also built three jumps on the farm. Perhaps as exciting as any of this was the opening of the spectacular Great Pasture this fall for passive equestrian and general public use when not being used by cattle.

We've put the finishing touches on our largest capital improvement project yet undertaken at the farm, the exterior stabilization and renovation of the main farmstead buildings. This project included our three historical equestrian buildings: the Carriage Barn, the Carriage Barn Stable, and the Draft Horse Stable. Thanks to our donors and supporters (including many in the equestrian community), we've invested \$150,000 to date in the horse barns to prepare them for public and equine use.

We also have big plans for the equestrian community for next season. Work is underway on a new equine-only trail along Waldingfield Road in Ipswich and Goodhue Street in Hamilton. This trail, to be ready by spring, will allow for a wonderful new loop in the northeast corner of the farm. By spring, we'll install a new hitching post and water trough on the trail across from our new public restrooms, which will afford both horses and equestrians the opportunity for much-needed breaks while on the trails. And perhaps most excitingly, plans are being developed for the interior renova-



Letters

tion of the Carriage Barn, Carriage Barn Stable, and Draft Horse Stable which will house our Visitor Center, and historic Carriage Barn museum and future equine programs. Look for more news soon on becoming part of this project, as we'll need everyone's support to make this exciting new addition to the farm.

In closing, we thank you for your support and enthusiasm for this glorious property and look forward to working with you in the year ahead. See you on the trails!

Respectfully Yours,

Susanna Colloredo-Mansfeld
Chair, Appleton Farms Equine Committee

Wayne Castonguay
General Manager, Appleton Farms

Hello – and Happy New Year!

I have just yesterday received my membership renewal and will be sending out the just-completed forms separately. I absolutely love your organization and the wonderful work you do for equestrians, and others, in the area. Life with our horses would not be as it is without you! The amount of trails we have access to here is second to none and please believe a lot of us know it! Thank you for your efforts, past and future, and your foresight.

Kate Dwyer
Wenham, MA

Annual Meeting and Day at the Races

Check your mail in a few weeks for more information on the upcoming Annual Meeting to be held Tuesday April 26. Be sure to plan on coming. It's a great opportunity to find out more about the trail organization's work, meet other ECTA members, and ask questions!

And plan to join fellow ECTA members and friends for a day at Suffolk Downs, a luncheon, and a closeup view of the horses at our fundraiser, A Day at the Races. Look for your invitation in the mail. We're planning for a date in the late Spring.

Poker Trail Ramble

Kay Joseph

On Sunday, September 18, 2005, we will hold a Poker Trail Ramble at Bradley Palmer State Park in Topsfield, MA. People may start at 9:30 a.m.; last out will be 11 a.m. The marked trails will take about 1 ½ hours to complete. Lunch is included with every entry. There is no rain date. In the event of rain, entries will be returned.

Each person is given a playing card on leaving the start; three additional cards are in buckets on the trail and the final card is given on return. The best poker hand wins a cash prize.

We welcome walkers and equestrians on separate routes.

Please come and enjoy the day with us in the park.

For more information, please call Kay at 978-768-6275 or Sue at 978-468-7715.

Beaver Deceivers in East Hamilton Will Re-open Trails

By Sue McLaughlin

This past fall the ECTA funded the installation of two beaver deceivers between Becks Pond and Chebacco Lake. Most of the trail around Becks Pond has been under water for over a year. The trails link to Essex Street, Chebacco Road, and the Chebacco Woods. They are used by walkers, cyclists, and horseback riders. The water level is dropping so the trails should be useable by spring.

Essex County Trail Association
Post Office Box 358
Hamilton, MA 01936

