



ESSEX COUNTY TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Preserve, Maintain, Respect

Vol. 28 No. 2 Fall/Winter 2010

Chairman's Report

Susie Banta

Another year is speeding along and with it the many activities of ECTA. We are moving at a lightning fast pace: if we were out running on the trails at this speed, we would be doing four minute miles! As you will read on these pages, we have been active on trail maintenance and repair projects; we are increasingly focusing on the importance of preserving our trail systems for the future and partnering with our fellow conservation organizations to make sure this happens (see the Director's Report); we have been holding and supporting events to help us fund our work; and, we are working hard to increase our membership and ECTA's visibility in our communities.

2010 was the beginning of our new rolling membership. With a rolling membership we eliminate the problem of short-term end of year memberships (why join now, I'll just wait until next year....) and we spread out the administrative tasks associated with membership. But more importantly, this change represents a change of focus.

By becoming a member or renewing your membership, you are supporting open land and public access to the trails we maintain in Essex County.....approximately 450 miles of trails!!! Our membership categories now reflect this idea: membership is a statement of support for this invaluable resource. What you get in return, along with your membership card, are all the activities you read about here or on our website that keep the trails open and protected. And, looking at the big picture, you support the quality of our communities. Essex County is unique in its abundance of parks and conservation lands, in the generosity of its landowners to allow access to and across their land, and its many miles of trails. It is not likely that in the future we will see more

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ECTA Fall Foliage Walk on private land included popular equestrian trails.

From the Director

Alex Van Alen

Trail Easements - Working with families to protect the integrity of the trail network over private property

By the time this newsletter reaches your mailbox, ECTA will have celebrated, along with its conservation partners and the Raymond family, the protection of 247 acres and a mile and a half of trails on Maplecroft Farm in Ipswich. ECTA, as the holder of the trail easement, has taken on a responsibility in perpetuity to maintain the trail for passive recreation and "public use in a reasonably safe, aesthetic and passable condition." The Board and staff of ECTA have taken a long look at the 450 miles of trails in the ECTA network, and it has become clear that, while many trails are on public lands, the majority of our trail network is in private hands. We rely heavily on the generosity of landowners to permit access across their trails, but the fact is that our network is fragile and vulnerable.

Trail easements are legal agreements between landowners and in this case, ECTA, that allow access over trails. They can be written with flexibility, meaning that a landowner can occasionally close a trail for specific purposes such as when agricultural operations might present safety issues, or when trail conditions are poor. They are the single best way to protect the integrity of the trail system that we all cherish, and ECTA is placing greater emphasis on obtaining easements from willing landowners.

To that effect, we, along with our conservation partner Essex County Greenbelt, are working with the Donovan family on a 4 mile trail that traverses their Sagamore Hill property in Hamilton, Essex and Ipswich. The Donovan's have been enthusiastic

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ECTA Events 2010

ECTA's events and those that benefit us in 2010 have all been great successes. Many, many thanks to all of those who came, volunteered and supported ECTA throughout the year. These events brought together the trail community and we look forward to many more in 2011. Always keep an eye on our website for more information.

January

- ✓ Cross Country Ski to the Black Cow
- ✓ Myopia Sled Dog Race

February

- ✓ Beaver Ecology Lecture

April

- ✓ Vernal Pond Walk at Manchester Essex Woodlands
- ✓ Annual Meeting
- ✓ Volunteer Trail Day at Pingree Reservation
- ✓ Equine Expo
- ✓ Park Serve Day at Bradley Palmer

May

- ✓ Trail Society Party
- ✓ Pan-Ipswich Challenge
- ✓ Ipswich Landowner Party

June

- ✓ National Trails Day
- ✓ Trail Walk in West Newbury
- ✓ Volunteer Trail Day at Bradley Palmer
- ✓ Solstice Ride at Moon Hill

July

- ✓ Waldingfield Driving Event
- ✓ Groton House Summer Classic

August

- ✓ Hillview Dog Show

September

- ✓ Myopia Horse Show Opening Night
- ✓ ECTA Raffle
- ✓ Run for the Trails
- ✓ West Newbury Landowner Party

October

- ✓ Groton House Fall Classic
- ✓ Maplecroft Trail Celebration
- ✓ Ipswich and Hamilton Landowner Parties
- ✓ Volunteer Trail Work Day at Bradley Palmer
- ✓ Boardwalk Building at Willowdale State Park

Upcoming

- ✓ November 4 - Open Board Meeting at Hamilton Wenham Community House
- ✓ November 14 - Hamilton/Wenham Landowner Party - Ledyard Farm
- ✓ December 4 - ECTA Holiday Bash
- ✓ January 15,16 - Myopia Sled Dog Race



An energetic fall foliage walk



Fun, fundraising, and glamour at the Myopia horse show party (photos by Tracy Emanuel - to see more visit www.cameragirl61.smugmug.com)

Maplecroft Trail Open in Ipswich

On a rainy and windy October 6, ECTA joined with its conservation partners and about 100 attendees to celebrate the protection of Maplecroft Farm and the official opening of the trail across this working farm. Enjoy the trail and respect both Maplecroft and surrounding properties.

Please:

- **Stay only on the marked trail.**
The public is not permitted elsewhere on this or on neighboring properties.
- Maplecroft is a working farm, therefore no dogs or bikes are permitted.
- Please close gates behind you.
- The trail is open from 8AM to Sunset.
- In order to make this and other trail easements work, all ECTA members and trail users should follow these regulations and encourage others who may not know them to do the same.

from the Director (cont'd from page 1)

supporters of ECTA and the creation and maintenance of trails throughout the area, and this permanently protected trail will become one of the gems in our network. As a part of a deal that will transfer the soccer fields on Sagamore St to the Town of Hamilton, and add more acreage to the Donovan's extraordinary farm, the Donovan trail will start and end at the soccer fields parking area. Final details will be worked out before settlement on the project and ECTA is looking forward to opening the trail for public use sometime in the Spring of 2011.

Within our 6 towns, we are blessed not only with extraordinary lands and 450 miles of trails, but also with extraordinary landowners who have the foresight to protect their lands and the access to them for us to enjoy. Over the last 28 years, ECTA has become the leader in protecting that access, and we are dedicated to continuing and increasing our work with landowners like the Raymonds and Donovans to further protect, in perpetuity, our otherwise vulnerable trail system.



Maplecroft trail off of Route 133 opened in October.

Thank You to Our 2010 Sponsors

Leadership Sponsors

**Berry
EBSCO**

Kristal Pooler Associates

**New England Running
Company**

Event Sponsors

National Trails Day

REI

Institution for Savings

Myopia Horse Show Opening Night

J. Barrett and Co.

Ipswich Ale

**Community Package Store
of Hamilton**

Run for the Trails

Foster, Dykema and Cabot

**First National Bank of
Ipswich**

Manchester Athletic Club

Ipswich Brewing

Coastal Greengrocer

**Foundation and Public
Agency Grants**

**New England Biolabs
Foundation**

**New England Biolabs
Giving Program**

Institution for Savings

**Massachusetts Dept
of Conservation and
Recreation**

Bruce J. Anderson Trust

Kent Lucas Foundation

REI

EnTrust Fund



6th Annual Run for the Trails

A five and ten-mile race along some of the most beautiful privately-owned and public trails was held Saturday, September 18th to benefit the Essex County Trail Association.

The Run for the Trails, now in its 6th year, has become a favorite event among individual runners as well as running clubs, with funds going to help ECTA preserve and maintain trails through six towns in Essex County. For the third consecutive year, John and Linda Donovan hosted the race at their Devon Glen Farm in Hamilton. Runners and volunteers alike appreciated the special opportunity to enjoy these private trails, their beautiful farm and the hospitality of the Donovans.

New England Running Company of Beverly hosted the North Shore Trail Series. This is the first year the North Shore Trail Series has been held and the ECTA was asked if they could include the 10 mile run as part of the series. The ECTA was thrilled to participate! New England Running held the packets for preregistered runners. Early registrants had the chance to win a Free Pair of Montrail trail shoes.

The Run for the Trails was sponsored by EBSCO; Berry; Foster Dykema & Cabot; FNBI; MAC; Kristal Pooler Assoc.; Mercury Brewing; New England Running Company, and Coastal Greengrocer.

A list of runners and their times is available on the ECTA website under Online News. We look forward to next year!

Sport a Schooling Field Sticker & Show Your Support

Support access to the Myopia Schooling field, a treasured resource. Learn how your tax deductible dollars can help. Visit www.ectaonline.org.



Trail Maintenance Projects in 2010

- Willowdale State Forest (Ipswich)
- Bradley Palmer State Park (Topsfield/Hamilton)
- Pingree Reservation (Hamilton)
- Harvard Forest (Hamilton)
- Sagamore Hill/Air Force Radar Base (Ipswich/Hamilton)
- Black Oak Farm (Hamilton)
- Miles River Rd to Gordon College (Hamilton)
- Riverbend Reservation (West Newbury)
- Ledyard - Myopia (Hamilton)
- Ipswich River Watershed Association (Ipswich)
- Myopia Schooling Field/Devon Glen (Hamilton)
- Bay Circuit/Marini Farms (Ipswich)
- New England Biolabs (Ipswich/Hamilton)
- Highland St. Culverts (Hamilton)
- Maplecroft Farm (Ipswich)
- Don Byrne Way (Hamilton)
- Beal/Chapman trail to Ellis (Wenham)
- Moulton Street Trail (Hamilton)

Trail Maps

Trail maps are available online at www.ectaonline.org or at select stores in Essex County. Visit the website for details.

Upcoming Events

Watch for updates by email or visit www.ectaonline.org to subscribe to the ECTA email newsletter and announcements.

Membership Renewals

Is your membership expiring? Now that we've switched to a rolling membership, please check your membership card for your upcoming renewal date.

Makeover for West Newbury's River Road Trail

Felicity Beech

A trail along the Merrimack that links Coffin Street and Way to the River was renovated in the last week of June by ECTA. Workers widened, filled, graded and leveled the trail. The Indian River Bridge was repaired to make it safer by shoring up the bridge corners with new granite curbs and filling the eroded trail to the level of the bridge.

"This is an abandoned town road that had deteriorated over the years due to frequent flooding and lack of maintenance. Some parts were impassably muddy last spring," said Deborah Hamilton, Board Member of ECTA. "It's now much more inviting for walkers, horseback riders, cyclists, and in the winter, cross-country skiers".



Volunteers have spent countless hours clearing the smaller trails winding through this beautiful property and linking up to Pipestave Hill and Mill Pond. Boy Scout Jeremy Baker helped with marking the trails and members of the Open Space Committee created new maps and signage to make the routes easy to follow."

West Newbury Riding and Driving Club contributed \$2100 toward the \$5000 upgrade to the River Road Trail and the Department of Public Works provided some of the materials as well as ongoing mowing of some of the open field areas.

Approximately four miles of trails are now open to the public. Maps are available online on our website or at the trail.

ECTA has been active in funding efforts to keep the main trails open at Riverbend for several years," said Hamilton, "but this is the first reconstruction project in West Newbury".



New Board Members Share Long-Distance Running Knowledge of Trails

Pamela Mansfield-Loomis

ECTA's Board of Directors welcomes two appointees who bring a new perspective on outdoor fun, serious exercise, and trail appreciation to the ECTA community. Rob Martin and Rick Silverman, Topsfield and Ipswich residents respectively, are both local business owners and share an extensive knowledge of countless miles of the trail system that they have traversed to prepare for marathons, ultramarathons, triathalons, and Iron Man races.

Rick Silverman, who has served as an ECTA Advisor in past years, looks forward to helping to shape the diversity of trail usage, optimizing the use of the trails for multiple disciplines - walking, running, riding, biking, and skiing. Bringing the different trail users together in a mutually respectful way is a vision he has for the future. He'd like to see harmonious enjoyment of the trails without overuse by any one type of recreation, especially during spring and fall when the trails can be wet.

Rick has been a serious runner for 20 years, and lent his expertise to the recent Run for the Trails, one



Rick Silverman



Rob Martin

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Equine Expo

Kay Joseph and
Pamela Mansfield-Loomis

The ever popular ECTA Equine Expo held each spring in the arena at the Topsfield Fairgrounds is one of our major fundraisers. The 2010 Equine Expo, held April 24, was - as always - organized by Kay Joseph and Sue McLaughlin with a number of dedicated volunteers. The event featured a full day of demonstrations - Canadian Horses by Margo Killoran; New England Equine Rescues and Mary Martin with NEER's "spokespony" Boo; Gypsy Drum horses from Nautilus Farm demonstrated by trainer and judge Kendra Owen-Riley, Western riding demonstrated by trainer Scott Laffey of Evenstride Farm, and sounding by Sharon Smith. ECTA had tables laden with good bargains on

used tack and equipment, and also raised funds through a silent auction with many generous donations from supporters. Vendor booths showcased many useful and creative items for horse lovers. The event is a favorite attraction in the area for equestrians looking for a bargain, special gifts and unique items, and one of the season's first opportunities to get out and mingle with fellow horse enthusiasts.

ECTA would like to thank the many volunteers who helped throughout the day and the days leading up to the event: Susie Banta, Terry Burns, Susanna Colloredo, Liz Coigley, Rolanda Dane, Karen Delffusco, Sharon Elliott, Cindy Foote, Tammy Gardner, Laura Graf, Judy Gregg, Susan Lawrence, Molly Lister, Harry Lister, Alex Van Alen, Augusta Macrokanis, Ed Cugno, Deborah

Stanton, Rick Loomis, Pamela Mansfield-Loomis, Judy Milano, Sally Soucy, Dorothy Stookey, Elaine Robson, Kim Hackett-Ort, and June Schwarz.

Save the date for the 2011 Equine Expo

Our 16th annual Equine Expo and Paraphernalia Sale will be held **Saturday, May 7** at the Topsfield Fairgrounds. Due to scheduling issues, this is the first time we have held the event in May. Planning is underway and information will be posted on the ECTA website (ectaonline.org). We are looking for demonstrations, vendors, and volunteers. Donations can be taken at any time. Please contact either Kay kljoreo@aol.com or 978-768-6275 or Sue McLaughlin 978-468-7715.



Clockwise from left: Judy Gregg manned the ECTA membership table; Kendra Owen-Riley demonstrated Gypsy Cobs; Heidi's Herbals is a popular vendor; Susanna Colloredo, Augusta Macrokanis, Susie Banta, & Alex Van Alen.

Hayrides Music

Bird Watching

Bike Races

Snakes TRAIL CLEANUP Food

Fun for all!

Many thanks to REI and Bradley Palmer State Park, The Farm Bar and Grille, Colby Draft Horses, Daisy Nell and Captain Stan, Jim Berry, our sponsors and partners, and all the volunteers. See you next June!



New Board Members (cont'd. from page 5)

of ECTA's most successful events. In addition to regularly running on the trails, he also takes to the adjacent waterways by paddling his kayak on the Ipswich River. Sensitive to trail maintenance, it's not unusual for him to take time out from a run or paddle to pick up trash or downed limbs along the watershed. He also enjoys technical rock climbing in New Hampshire, ice climbing, and biking - to the extent that he has competed in 500 mile bike races. A physical therapist with an office in Ipswich Center, he has met many ECTA members and fellow trail enthusiasts through his business.

Rob Martin grew up in Topsfield with miles of trails closeby. He runs nearly every day - distances ranging from six to 42 miles while in training - and appreciates the fact that he can avoid roads and follow contiguous trails from Pingree Reservation to Bradley Palmer to Willowdale to Georgetown-Rowley State Forest. He has run from Rowley to Tewksbury and done a 50-mile race just on the network of trails inside the densely foliated Willowdale State Forest.

Rob knows Willowdale well, with the exception of one or two new trails, and was only lost once when he missed a turn during a snowstorm. In the past 25-30 years he has seen an increase in trail usage, and with it both good and bad results. Thanks to greater interest, routes are better marked, maintenance has increased, and bridges spanning the rivers are all improvements, while an uptick in trash and the occasional conflict between different types of trail users are issues he'd like to help resolve as a Director.

He hopes to see more and more people participate in the many and varied ECTA events - possibly even an ECTA triathlon - and, as owner of Mercury Brewing Company, known for Ipswich Ale, his sponsorships and support have already helped with all-important ECTA fundraisers.

Join us in welcoming these two very active, very insightful, and very helpful new Directors.

Chairman's Report (cont'd. from page 1)

open space, so we must continue to support the conservation and use of what we have now.

So, whether you are an active trail user or a trail "believer", thank you for your membership and your support and we wish you happy trails throughout the year!

Visit www.essexcountyaonline.org for events, information, trail maps, and more! Trail maps can also be purchased at several Essex County businesses. Check the website for more details.



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