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NRT Report

Natural Resources Trust of Mansfield

Volume 9, Issue 1
Spring 2012

Upcoming Events:

41st NRT Annual Meeting
May 17th, 7:00 PM
Village at Willow Crossing
Community Center Club
House, on Cobb Street.
The public is invited.
Refreshments

**Tree Dedication to
Vicky Connor**
May 19th, 10:00 AM
Corner of West and Union
Street (Park on Union
Street)

Check www.nrtma.org for:

Spring Trails Walk
York Conservation Area

Fall Trails Walk
Great Woods

Conservation Fair
May 2013

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Dorothy L. York Conservation Area Dedication

Family members of Dot York attended the dedication of the Dorothy L. York Conservation Area on November 6th.

The property was donated to the NRT in 1997. Dot York was ahead of her time in seeing the need to preserve open space. She was also instrumental in insuring that the town acquired the Marie Streesse Memorial Conservation Area on Ware Street.

The York property is located on Branch Street, near the corner of Ware Street. It contains 25 treed acres, with lovely trails, streams, and wetlands. It is one of the nicest conservation areas in town.

Please take the time to visit the site and walk the trails. There is parking at the entrance. Go to the NRT web site for a trail map.



York family members pull the cover from the sign dedicating the area to Dot York

Conservation Fair a Success

By Marydee Flynn

At an NRT meeting last September, amidst all the heavy-duty agenda talk, a young and energetic voice said, "Hey! We should have a Family Conservation Fair this year to mark our 40 years of conservation work in Mansfield." There was paper shuffling, grimacing, and eye rolling. Finally, a well seasoned voice exclaimed, "No, there's not enough time to plan it." More discussion followed, and now two elders spoke vehemently against the idea. "NO, we've done that for 20 years. It's too much work, and we're too old." When the energetic voice spoke once more, however, it carried the vote, convincing us that surely she had enough energy for all of us. It wouldn't be considered drudgery now and it would be fun.

FUN, HA!! Remembering back to the '70s and '80s conservation fairs, what sticks out most in my mind is the hard work pulling the fair together. Here we are now, 40 years older

and still talking FAIR?! I remember dragging around picnic tables and benches, planting flowers because Janice Meszoely said we needed live flowers, searching for the wrench to turn on the water, setting up miles of fencing for children's art posters, trying to get three judges together in one place, guiding the kids' parade, setting up cattle and sheep corrals (yes, we had cows on the Common!), making sure Janice had help with the pony rides, flipping hamburgers with Bill Flannery, making sure Paul Split had everything ready



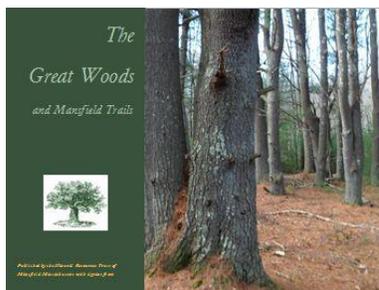
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Odds and Ends

by Lou Andrews

New Great Woods Booklet Planned

The NRT is planning to update and reprint the Great Woods Booklet, originally published in 1971, this time in color. The update will include a section on all the town's conservation land, along with new trail maps. I estimate it will cost five to six thousand dollars to produce. We hope to apply for a grant to defray the cost.



Proposed booklet cover

Wood Duck Boxes Installed

Colin and Greg Cauldwell braved getting wet, and installed a series of Wood Duck boxes on the Canoe River, just north of Mill Pond. I designed the boxes from information on the Internet. The wood for the boxes was donated by Cauldwell Building, and they were assembled by young volunteers at last year's conservation fair.



NRT Helps Defeat Revocation of the Town's Wetlands By-law

Thanks to everyone who supported the Conservation Commission and NRT to defeat Article 40 at this year's town meeting. Proponents trying to abolish our wetland by-law were soundly defeated. We spent a great deal of time to defeat the article. I hope we can now put our efforts back into positive projects. Town meeting also transferred three more parcels from the town to the Conservation Commission.

Trails Update



<< New trails sign posts were installed at Scott/Goyea Farm to help walkers find the orange and red trails.



Trail maps have been added at the key intersections in the Great Woods.

Memorial Plaques Replaced

The NRT replaced aging memorial plaques, for Jean Findlater and Eleanor Brady, with new bronze plaques. The plaques are located on the southeast corner of the North Common.



Conservation History— February 1975



Past NRT President Rob Webb gives award to Stan and Dot York.

More than 60 townspeople attended the awards dinner for Stan and Dot York in February of 1975. NRT past president Rob Webb cited the couple "through whose generosity the town was able to buy a sizable portion of land along the Canoe River" *

The land is a 40 acre piece on Ware Street, named the Marie F. Streese Memorial Conservation Area, in honor of Dot York's mother. Dot York went on to donate the Dorothy L. York Conservation Area on Branch Street to the NRT, in 1997.

*Copy from Feb 20, 1975 Mansfield News

(Continued from page 1)



for game time, checking that the entertainers were lined up and ready on time, and remembering to check that the many vendors had electricity and whatever else they needed. Also, in the early morning, we traveled to Lincoln for Audubon books, to Milton for ice cream, and then to Trailside Museum for birds and snakes and anything else in cages we could scrounge that children might like to see. We needed a lot of volunteers, and everybody pitched in to help those many years ago. So, remembering all this, I'm sympathetic to those dissenting weary sounding voices--and of course, I was one!

But the member with the energetic voice began work almost immediately. I watched with wonder as she did much of the work by computer. What kind of fair would this be? Computer talk, not phone calls? Pretty soon, this new NRT member had everything under control, from contracts and applications to vendors and tables. Everything was ready and looked festive that first day in October.

".. she did have enough energy and she made the fair fun for all."



Pony rides with Janice Meszoely

Denise Brown was right. She did have enough energy, and she made the Fair fun for all. Gerry Huiskamp and his wife Mary Kate Flynn organized a pre-fair pumpkin and largest

tree contest. Colin Cauldwell and John Russo went all over town measuring trees entered into the contest.

The Huiskamp kids sold lots of pop corn. Their dad, Gerry, turned out to be the best pumpkin judge. Ms. Bellavance had Jam Good jelly and jams for sale. Keep Mansfield Beautiful educated everyone about their efforts, and helped with litter control. Our own Conservation Commission, guided by Michele White, had a pertinent and educational display related to things Mansfield. Steve Bishop did his usual great job as MC and gave out Water Dept. brochures. Bill Napolitano, environmental director of SRPEDD, our regional planning agency, explained the great importance of our water resources. Denise even branched out to Rumford Ave., and had Kayaking by Norton Kayak Company, and fly fishing and paddle boarding demonstrations by L.L Bean on Fulton Pond. Animal Shelter Friends were there, next to the creative Mansfield High School face painters. Colin and Greg Cauldwell, and John Russo, supervised the assembly of Wood Duck nesting boxes by young volunteers.

Lenny Flynn talked up Canoe River protection and greenbelt, Garden Club members answered questions and looked for the sun.



Denise Brown hands out awards to non polluting vehicle winners.

Second Nature Farm, headed by farmer Adam Tedeski from Norton, had a bountiful display from his organic garden, and Adela's Bakery was on hand with sweets. Janice and Charles Meszoely traveled many miles with those ponies, and Colin sneaked off to lead a walk in the Great Woods. Jane Sheehan and Lou Andrews handed out trail maps and solicited for new NRT members.

Watching over all this activity was a tireless, happy and smiling and energetic Denise Brown. What a wonderful job she did for the NRT and the town.

Now, that's the way to celebrate your 40th Anniversary ! 

Acquisitions

by Leonard Flynn, Acquisitions Director

Working in concert with the Conservation Commission, the NRT protected 298 acres of land in Mansfield in 2011: 34 acres in fee title and 234 acres in Conservation Restrictions (CR). The patient and persistent work of both parties in these difficult economic times paid off. Lou Andrews' exacting deed research on all the conservation land in town made this possible

Most of the CRs were in the Great Woods, on land that was acquired for conservation before we started to use CRs. Two of these deserve special mention:

- 🌲 64 acres of land in the Great Woods from Mass Highway. This acquisition was achieved only after 22 years of negotiations with Department of Revenue, and the intervention of Governor Weld.
- 🌲 61 acres off Gilbert Street, in the state declared Priority Protection Area. This acreage is significant because it has 7 vernal pools, and is habitat for the Banding's turtle, an endangered species.

Usually in a recession land values drop and we would expect increasing opportunities to buy conservation land. In this recession other investments are so risky or providing such low returns that people are keeping their money in their mattresses. A willing seller is also required to deal.

Grant money for land acquisition is available from the state and federal government. With a recovering economy, I hope the situation will improve.

Our priority acquisition efforts will continue to be in the Canoe River and Wading River aquifers. They are the town's invaluable and irreplaceable assets.

Editors note:

At this year's town meeting 21.5 acres in the rear of the Plymouth Street recreation area, and 12.7 acres on Essex Street, were transferred to the Conservation Commission. All the parcels abut existing NRT and town open space.

Your membership is important to us. It allows us to continue our work protecting Mansfield's natural resources. If you are a member, thank you, and please renew your membership. If not, we always welcome new members. See page 6 on how to join.

A color version of this newsletter is available on our web site.

NRT Goals for Next Year

- 🌲 Increase membership.
- 🌲 Plan for Conservation Fair in May of 2013
- 🌲 Build a 200 plus foot boardwalk along the Great Woods red trail.
- 🌲 Build two small boardwalks on the Great Woods white trail.
- 🌲 Improve access to the Great Woods Taylor's Hill section.
- 🌲 Work with the Boy Scouts to rebuild the bridge on the Dot York property.
- 🌲 Put up boundary markers on conservation land
- 🌲 Work with the Boy Scouts and high school students for continued trail improvements and maintenance.
- 🌲 Get grant money to reprint the Great Woods booklet.
- 🌲 Work with the Conservation Commission to acquire new, and protect existing, conservation land.
- 🌲 Monitor the MMED project, along the old Copeland Road in the Corporal Harding Conservation Area.
- 🌲 Install additional Wood Duck boxes.
- 🌲 Work with the town and other interested groups to develop a comprehensive town wide trails plan.
- 🌲 And more....

Scout Project Approved to Rebuild Bridge

The Mansfield Conservation Commission gave the go-ahead for Eagle Scout Nick DeMassi to rebuild the bridge on the Dot York property. The existing bridge is narrow and dangerous, as you can see in the picture below. The new bridge will be almost three feet wide and will have handrails. Nick also plans on marking the trails. Work should be under way this spring. Thanks to Nick for a great project.



Existing Bridge

NEW RUMFORD RIVER BRIDGE DEDICATED

The NRT dedicated the new bridge across the Rumford River at Judy's Lane, on April 23, 2011.

The new bridge was built to last with cement footings, steel



Pictured: NRT President Lou Andrews, NRT Vice President Colin Cauldwell, Benefactor John Southard, and Selectman Kevin Moran.

I-beams, and pressure treated wood. It also meets ADA standards.

Members of the NRT, Selectmen, and guests were there for the dedication and ribbon cutting.

The construction was made possible with generous grants from John Southard and Mansfield's Non-Profit Gift Fund. NRT VP Colin Cauldwell provided the labor.

After the ribbon cutting, NRT members led a walk past Cobbler's Corner and on to Taylor's Hill.



YORK PROPERTY UPDATE



We have a new sign on our York Property. It was built by Lou Andrews and installed with the help of Colin Cauldwell.

Member Gerry Huiskamp, his friend Tom Hellard, and their sons, cleared the York property trails. The recent storms and tree growth partially blocked some of the trails.

At the same time, Gerry and his son Joey walked the trails and established a series way points using a GPS unit. The data was used to created a new accurate trail map. The map is available on the NRT website.

Please take the time to visit this beautiful piece of property.

Colin is coordinating with the Boy Scouts to mark the trails and rebuild the wood footbridge. We also need to do some cleanup of the old dumping area.

GRANT RECEIVED FOR NEW BOARDWALK

The NRT received a \$5,000.00 grant from the Mansfield Non-Profit Gift Fund to build a boardwalk on the Great Woods Red Trail.

The walk will be over 200 feet, and spans the area over Blueberry Brook. The area has had chronic problems with water and was exacerbated by off road vehicles.

Colin Cauldwell is completing the design and working up a materials list.

The area is difficult to get to and will require an army of volunteers just to move the stock.

We hope to start before summer. We will be looking for volunteers, to move materials and volunteers that are experienced with carpentry.

Contact us by e-mail at land@nrtma.org if you can help.



Boardwalk Rendering

Scouts help clear Great Woods trails.

Thank you to St. Mary's Boy Scout Troup 7 for clearing the trails in the Great Woods. Many trees were blocking the trails from past storms.



Pictured at right. Front (L-R) Scouts Dante DeTrolio, Chris Pinhiero, Sean Farrington, Ben Masison (not shown Colin McGee). Back Scout Master Dick Masison and Scout Leader Joe DeTrolio >>

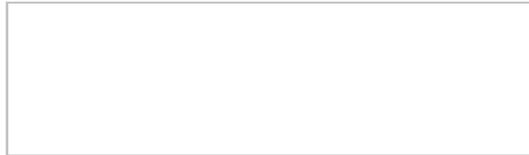


Natural Resources Trust of Mansfield

255 Fruit Street
Mansfield, Ma 02048



*"To acquire and preserve natural resources
for the use and enjoyment of present and
future generations"*



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We're on the web: www.nrtma.org

Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

President: Lou Andrews
Vice-President: Colin Cauldwell
Secretary: Meredith Holford
Treasurer: Denise Brown

Board of Directors

Leonard Flynn, Acquisitions Director
Peggy Flannery
Marydee Flynn
Mary Kate Flynn
Robert Goldman
Steve Holford
Gerry Huiskamp
Janice Meszoely
Charles Meszoely
Betty Roche
John Russo
Jane Sheehan
Deborah Snyder



Membership

Please renew your membership.
Membership is only \$25.00

The NRT welcomes new members!

Mail your dues to the
NRT
255 Fruit Street,
Mansfield, MA 02048

or pay on line with PayPal at our web site:
www.nrtma.org.

The NRT is a 501(C)(3) Corporation

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