

Waltham Land Trust

is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources for the future through education, open space acquisition and protection.

JOURNAL SPRING 2015



FORMER FERNALD WETLANDS

George A. Darcy III

On Tuesday, December 23rd, 2014, the City of Waltham officially closed on its acquisition of the Walter E. Fernald Developmental Center property located at 200 Trapelo Road. Waltham Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy and Massachusetts DCAMM Commissioner Carole Cornelison signed the relevant documents.[1] The signing occurred on the 15th floor of the John W. McCormack building located at One Ashburton Place in Boston. It was attended by several Waltham city councillors and state representatives.

The Fernald site comprises 195 acres of land, with 66 structures, totaling approximately 1.35 million square feet. The entire Fernald site is listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The purchase price was a modest \$3.7 million dollars, which amounts to \$18,974 dollars per acre. The state acquired the land from Waltham farmers during the latter part of the 1800s and early 1900s.

The entire northwest quadrant of the Fernald parcel remained relatively undeveloped until the 1950s. The Greene Building, a large patient care facility, was constructed in 1953. At some time between 1956 and 1971, the state filled in a sizable pond slightly northeast of the present day Greene Building.

There was more alteration during the 1970s. At that period Massachusetts District Court Judge Joseph L. Tauro mandated that the state upgrade the living conditions at Fernald. That requirement included building 11 cottages where Fernald residents could live in a less institutionalized environment. The Cottage Complex contains 11 one-story mansard-roofed duplexes. Brookside, Woodside, and Site 5 buildings were constructed in 1981. Malone Park was built in 1986. Other structures in the northwest quadrant include two farm homes, Cardinal Cottage (ca. 1850) and Baldwin Cottage (ca. 1860) on Trapelo Road, both of which predate the Fernald's Waltham inception in 1887.

Having no significant uplands available at Fernald, the state chose to build the Cottage Complex on open

lowlands containing significant wetlands. In doing so they culverted a naturally flowing unnamed stream, and filled in a large pond and bordering vegetated wetlands. These ponds had previously provided critical flood storage for the Beaver Brook watershed. The filling of some of these wetland resources occurred after the state's own passage of the Wetlands Protection Act in

1972 (M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40^[2]). To the author's knowledge, no compensatory wetlands or flood storage was ever created to compensate the filling of these wetlands.

Beaver, Chester and West Chester Brook Watersheds

The map shows three large watersheds in Waltham – the Beaver, the Chester and the West Chester Brook watersheds. The Fernald site is entirely located within the Beaver Brook watershed. The Beaver Brook watershed extends into neighboring Belmont, Lexington, Arlington and Watertown. All three watersheds eventually merge at Linden Street where the water is culverted into a large pipe running from Main Street

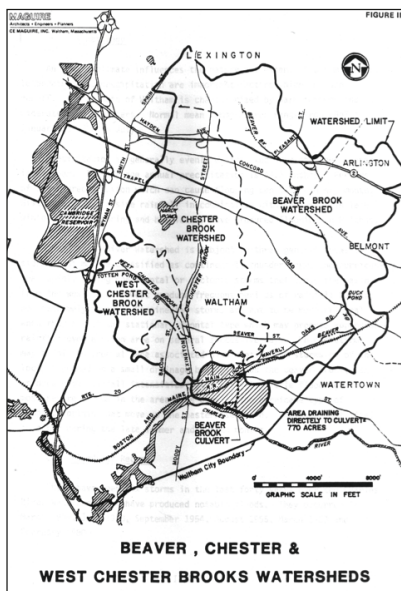
to the Charles River near Newton Street.

The filling of the Fernald wetlands has reduced overall flood storage volumes in the Beaver Brook watershed. This matter was previously written about in a Belmont Citizens Forum article "Fernald Center Wetlands Ready for Revival" by then Waltham Land Trust Vice-President Marie Daly.^[3] The City of Waltham funded CE Maguire report "Beaver Brook Flood Mitigation Program" dated February 5th 1981 details the need for additional upstream flood storage as a crucial component of attenuating the continual flooding at the Waverley Oaks Road and Linden Street neighborhood near where the Beaver Brook culvert is located.^[4]

Where were the Fernald wetlands located?

Locating the precise locations of the former wetlands in the northwest quadrant involved combing through many historical maps, city atlases, federal aerial photographs, and other Fernald related documents^[5].

continued on page 4



WLT Urges City to Take Stand

On April 6, 2015, Waltham Land Trust submitted the following letter to the editor of the Waltham News Tribune, Mayor McCarthy, and the City Council.



Waltham Land Trust, Inc.
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www.walthamlandtrust.org
781-893-3355

A non-profit organization dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources through open space advocacy, education, acquisition, and protection.

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**Protecting
Waltham's land
...forever.**

Part of the mission of the Waltham Land Trust is to ensure that our natural resources are permanently safeguarded, even after they have been acquired and set aside as protected open space. Currently, there is a serious threat to the protected status of part of Prospect Hill Park. This letter aims to make the public more aware of this threat, and to ask our elected officials to remove it.

There is a large communications tower on the side of Prospect Hill, just outside of Prospect Hill Park. The owner has begun the permit process to build a new tower on the site because the existing one is allegedly in deteriorating condition. The Waltham Land Trust firmly opposes this new construction due to the severe impacts on Prospect Hill Park.

Aside from the visual blight caused by a structure situated so close to park property, the most severe impact on the park concerns the access road. The tower sits in the corner of a five-acre parcel of land that contains a very steep cliff. The bottom of the cliff is accessible by city roads, but vehicles can only reach the tower site at the top of the cliff by driving through Prospect Hill Park. Therefore, all construction and maintenance vehicles have been and will continue to drive through the park. This represents a serious safety concern for park visitors, in addition to detracting from the enjoyment of all that the park has to offer.

According to documents filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals, this use of the park as a service access for the tower began in 1962, as the result of an informal arrangement between the owner of the tower and then-mayor Austin Rhodes. Based on this arrangement, the owner of the tower then proceeded to build a driveway on park land. The only purpose of this driveway (now identified as the Whitney Trail on park maps) is to access the privately-owned tower site. The specific terms of this informal agreement were never written down, never signed, and never discussed or voted on in the City Council. This is in sharp contrast to Polaroid's contemporaneous acquisition of an easement to use parkland for its private purposes. The Polaroid easement was granted using the proper process - action by the City Council, approval of the state legislature, filing with the registry.

The original purpose of the access road for the communications tower can be inferred from the 1962 building permit for the tower. This permit

was issued for the construction of a 75-foot tower for "personal use for radio communications." Therefore, the driveway was to be used only by the owner of the tower for personal use. In the intervening years, however, the tower has been enlarged twice to its present height of 293 feet, and the use has been converted from personal use by an individual to commercial use by numerous antenna owners who rent space on the tower from the owner.

This conversion has taken place without building permits, without approval by any city departments, and without approval by the City Council.

With this change in use, Prospect Hill Park is now being used as a driveway for commercial customers of the tower. If the construction of a new replacement tower is allowed, there will be even more commercial customers and therefore even more commercial traffic in the park.

Prospect Hill Park was established over 120 years ago by the citizens and taxpayers of the time. It was their vision that the park would always be protected from external encroachments and would be available for the enjoyment of future generations. If the City of Waltham continues to allow this dangerous and illegitimate use of park land for the private financial gain of one property owner, it will be dishonoring the memory of those forward-thinking citizens of past generations who bequeathed this spectacular park property to us. We have an obligation to ensure that the park is available in as unspoiled condition as possible for the enjoyment by future generations of Waltham residents and visitors.

The Waltham Land Trust calls on the City's elected and appointed officials to put an end this inappropriate use of park land. The property owner has had over 50 years to profit from this tower, partly through the abuse of our city's park. Enough is enough. The owner should be informed that access to this commercial site through Prospect Hill Park will no longer be tolerated. The existing driveway should be converted to a hiking trail that is accessible to all park visitors.

Waltham Land Trust Board of Directors.

[Board members George Darcy III and Stephen Rourke, who are also members of the City Council, did not participate in the WLT discussion and vote on this matter.]

Rock Out with the Love Dogs

Scott Shurr

Come on out to our 11th annual Green Space Blues Jam for an unforgettable night of music, food and celebration! The party is on from 7 till 11 on Saturday, May 16, at Dassault Systemes at 175 Wyman Street. Thanks to Tom Dusel, President and CEO of Hobbs Brook Management LLC, for again offering this excellent facility.

Enjoy a delicious buffet and drinks, and shop for fabulous items at our silent auction. Our musical guests are The Love Dogs, who rocked the Paine Estate at our 2011 GSBJ. Based out of Boston, this hard swinging septet just celebrated its 20th year wowing audiences and critics alike with their combination of great musicianship and pure fun. The Dogs combine elements of jump blues, New Orleans R&B and early rock 'n' roll into their own powerhouse sound. Check out their website, <http://www.thelovedogs.com/>.

Our silent auctions at past events have included gift certificates to local restaurants and services; tickets to sporting and cultural events; hand-made jewelry and crafts, and trips to vacation spots. All proceeds



The Love Dogs

from this fun event and the silent auction items will directly benefit our mission to create a legacy of land conservation in Waltham. Tickets (\$50 for WLT members and \$65 for nonmembers) are available at our website, and will get you all the food, beer, wine and soda you can enjoy, access to the fabulous silent auction, and dancing to tunes from The Love Dogs. We hope to see you there!

HELP WLT GO PAPERLESS!

Join the 120 Land Trust members who have selected to have their Journals sent to them electronically. By opting out of the mailed hard copy, these supporters are helping WLT reduce our carbon footprint and save on costs associated with printing, postage, and transportation. You can also receive the Upcoming Events postcards electronically. Please send an email

with your name to swadman@walthamlandtrust.org, with the subject header "Electronic Journal" (and/or Event postcard) if you'd like the next Journal (and/or postcard) emailed to you. **Please remember that receiving The Journal is a privilege of membership.** Be sure you are up-to-date with your dues so you don't miss the Fall 2015 Journal!

WLT Joins the Chamber

Nadene Stein

This past winter, the Waltham Land Trust became a member of the Waltham West Suburban Chamber of Commerce. This is a great opportunity for us for a number of reasons.

It broadens our connections with other area nonprofit organizations. Over 60 other nonprofit groups are members. The Chamber has a Nonprofit Council who works to provide 3 - 4 seminars for nonprofit organizations each year.

This membership strengthens our connections with businesses, as well. The Chamber will be able to help us to directly network with local businesses in order to develop important working relationships.

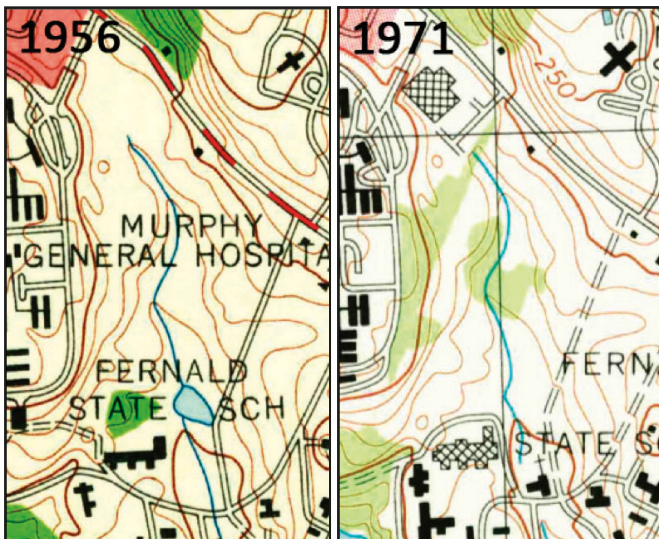
The Chamber will help us to spread the word about WLT events through their website and social media. It will be great to share events such as our Green Space Blues Jam, educational programming and walks with more folks in order to share information and have fun.

John Peacock, the Executive Director of the WWSCC, is excited about this connection. In a recent interview, he spoke of these benefits as well as the potential for us to attend Chamber events with our information to share and connect with other businesses. There are two events in April, "Women in Business Breakfast" and "Multi-Chamber Program Network Business Card Exchange."

For more information on the Chamber, visit their website: www.walthamchamber.com.

The Triangle Pond

Below are two USGS topographic maps showing the Fernald northwest quadrant. ^[6] The 1956 USGS map on the left shows a large triangular shaped pond situated slightly northeast of the present day Greene building. The pond is missing from the 1971 USGS map on the right. Lawrence School neighbors remember skating on the pond during the winter with Fernald staff and residents. ^[7]



The Cigar Pond

To the right are four aerial photographs depicting the Fernald northwest quadrant before (1938 and 1971), during (1978) and after (2001) the construction of the Cottage Complex. ^[8] Trapelo Road is shown at the top of the photos. The 1971 photo below shows various farm fields and sizable vegetative wetlands on the left side of the photo. Note that the triangular shaped pond shown on the 1938 aerial (black triangle in lower left corner) and 1956 USGS map has been filled in.

The 1978 photo shows the construction of the Cottage Complex. Nine of the eleven cottages are completed in this photo. The large cigar shaped pond and bordering vegetative wetlands on the left side were filled in to provide land for two additional cottages and two other buildings. The unnamed stream had been already culverted. The 2001 photo shows the Cottage Complex fully constructed. The two new cottages, the Woodside building and the Site 7 building occupy the area where the former wetlands existed.

Wetland Restoration

The top map on the next page shows existing conditions in the northwest quadrant with 11 cottages, associated buildings, and ring road. The base map is from the City of Waltham GIS website ^[9]. The map below it shows a potential wetland restoration

superimposed on the base map. The cottages and asphalt roadway are removed, the ponds are restored to their historical locations, the stream is daylighted, and the vegetated wetlands are fully restored. The green color represents bordering vegetated wetlands. Restoring the topography and ponds to their original elevations and locations offers the best chance for the wetlands to function properly again.

The potential flood storage volumes for the combined two ponds given a depth of four feet may be as high as 1.8 million gallons of water. ^[10] The removal of the asphalt roadway would also increase the pervious area, hence further reducing storm water runoff to the south.

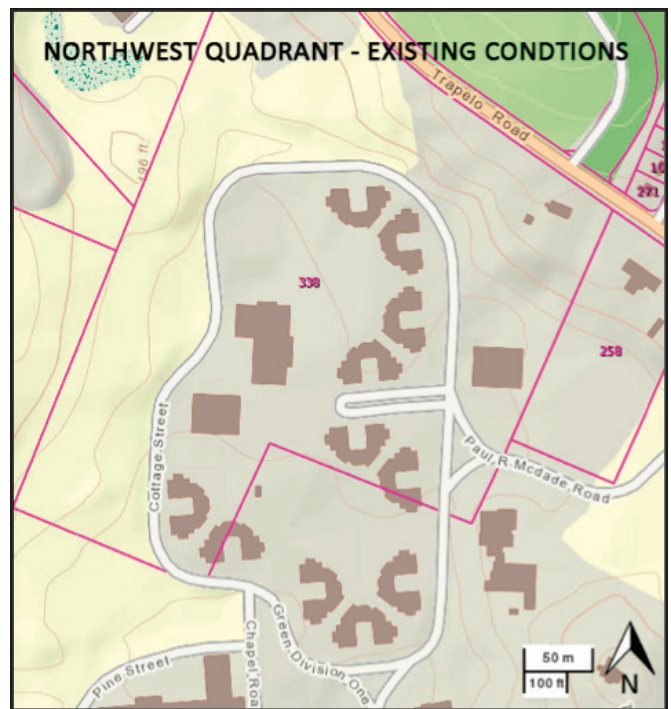
Restoring filled wetlands in a suburban area is rarely done due to both the sheer lack of available land and the high cost of acquiring such land. A historic opportunity



exists in Waltham to restore former functioning wetlands and upstream flood storage to provide wildlife habitat and mitigate the annual downstream flooding events at Waverley Oaks Road, Beaver Street and Linden Street.

Notes

1. DCAMM = Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance.
2. Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act legislation: <http://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXIX/Chapter131/Section40>
3. "Fernald Center Wetlands Ready for Revival", Belmont Citizens Forum, Vol. 5, No. 6, November 2004, <http://www.belmontcitizensforum.org/newsletters/2004/BCFNov04.pdf>.
4. "Beaver Brook Flood Mitigation Program", CE Maguire, Feb. 5, 1981.



5. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Walter E. Fernald State School, 200 Trapelo Road, Waltham, MA, 12/8/1993 (United States Department of the Interior).
6. United States Geological Survey (USGS) Topographic Maps, <http://www.usgs.gov>.
7. Discussions with Lawrence School neighborhood resident and historian Marie Daly.
8. Aerial photographs, <http://www.historicaerials.com>.
9. Waltham GIS, <http://webgis.city.waltham.ma.us/GPVParcelSearch/Default.aspx>.
10. Cigar pond volume: 100' (width) x 350' (height) x 4' (depth) x 7.48 = 1,047,200 gal
Triangle pond volume: 250' (width) x 200' (height) x 0.5 x 4' (depth) x 7.48 = 748,000 gal

Celebrating 15 Years

Diana Young

The Waltham Land Trust celebrated its fifteenth birthday at its annual meeting on October 23, 2014 at the First Parish Church in Waltham. This was a joyous night to celebrate the past and focus on the future.

Nadene Stein, WLT President, opened the meeting. City Councillor Kathy McMenimen read a congratulatory resolution signed by the entire City Council. Other City officials in attendance included Mayor McCarthy, who made a few remarks, Councillors Stephen Rourke and George Darcy, both WLT founders, Representative Tom Stanley and Councillors Dan Romard and Bill Fowler.

Sonja Wadman, the WLT Program Director, presented Laurel Carpenter with the Inge Uhler Environmentalist of the Year award for her outstanding work as part of establishing the Land Trust's stewardship program and for her work on the Western Greenway. Laurel gave a presentation on the Mass. Central Rail Trail, with special emphasis on some of the special repairs required to make the Trail a reality in Waltham.

Other speakers were George Darcy who explained how a group of local citizens formed the Land Trust in 1999, and Marc Rudnick who discussed progress on the Western Greenway and on WLT campaigns that have resulted in over 100 acres for protected open space in Waltham (see chart) as well as a community wide understanding of imperiled open spaces. David Kehs showed a number of new maps that he has created showing major Waltham Open Space and Diana Young gave examples of events that the Land Trust has held to encourage residents to walk our many trails and understand the environment. Nadene Stein and Joyce Nett talked about special events like the Green Space Blues Jam and the Western Greenway Race and our outreach to local businesses.

The business portion of the meeting saw the election of three new board members: Martha Creedon, Natalie Berland and Brian McCormick. The membership also voted to return Betsy Lewenberg, Joyce Nett and Diana Young to the Board for additional three year terms.

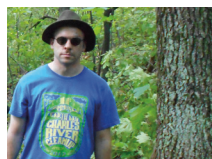
After the formal meeting, members enjoyed some delicious goodies, including Toscanini's ice cream, and a number of great conversations.



Martha



Natalie



Brian

Major Parcels Protected by WLT Campaigns as of October 2014.

NAME	ACREAGE
<i>Shady's Pond</i>	34
<i>Sanderson Heights</i>	26.3
<i>Chester Brook Woods</i>	26
<i>Bow Street</i>	6.4
<i>Jericho Hill Summit</i>	6
<i>Grove Street Meadow</i>	2
<i>Smith Point on Hardy Pond</i>	0.2
TOTAL	100.9

Winter is for Building Birdhouses

Joyce Nett

On a snowy February day, a group of Waltham children met to learn about birds and birdhouses. In the comfortable lodge at Prospect Hill Park, surrounded by several feet of snow, these future ornithologists listened as Harry Kimball, owner and principal of Harry's Bird Houses (harrysbirdhouses.com) spoke of the chickadees that would use the houses built that day. Harry enlightened his listeners with interesting chickadee facts, such as chickadees are "cavity nesters" and "openings on chickadee houses must be big enough for entry but small enough to keep out other species."

The students, sitting at large tables set up to face Harry, were each given a bird house kit and a set of tools (hammer and Phillips head screw driver). Patiently and clearly, Harry described each piece in their respective kits, noting not only the names of the pieces but also their subtle differences. "There are two smaller rectangles, then a piece that looks like the end of a house. That piece is called the gable," explained Harry. "Now, when you go home today, you can find that on your own house." Kits had a bottom square, two rectangular side walls (one with a pre-drilled perch hole and opening), two gabled sides, a long roof rectangle, a short roof rectangle, a perch and the nails.

Students found the bottom square, lined up the piece with a side wall, and started tapping their hammers. Some parents and adult helpers bravely held pieces and steadied nails for their child carpenters! A few children proceeded with confidence and speed, and then helped friends by holding wood, setting nails and giving encouragement. Other children mustered their patience as they learned a few new carpentry basics and straightened bent nails. The room filled with the chatter and clatter of dedicated work! In all, 25 local children produced charming chickadee houses to take home to welcome new occupants.

Thanks to Waltham Cultural Council for providing funding for this activity!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Earthcare—Eyes Wide Open Presentation

Wednesday April 15, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Waltham Public Library, 753 Main St.

Noted global ecologist and science educator, Dr. Douglas Zook of Boston University, will provide a multimedia lecture about global ecology, climate change and the need for Earth-centered ethics. Dr. Zook has given over 150 invited presentations worldwide. Recently, he received a Fulbright Distinguished Scholar award and was sponsored by the European Union to present lectures in Poland. Dr. Zook promotes a Humboldtian view of the world, including meshing art with nature and global ecology.

Guided History Walk Along Charles River

Saturday May 9, 1 – 2:30 p.m.

Meet in Landry Park and the Moody Street Dam

Join us for an easy walk along the Charles from the Moody Street Dam downstream to wildlife viewing platforms east of Newton Street and back. WLT Board Member and noted Waltham historian Marie Daly will share her vast knowledge of the Mill and its environs as we trek over the new DCR boardwalk by the *Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation*. After Elm Street, we'll be on paved pathways and will look for wildlife at various locations before returning to the Watch City Festival. Costumed participants encouraged!

11th Annual Green Space Blues Jam

Saturday, May 16, 7 – 11 p.m.

Dassault Systemes, 175 Wyman St.

Enjoy a fun night of dancing, eating, drinking and bidding on fabulous silent auction items at our major fundraiser. We're thrilled to have the swinging, rocking, rhythm and blues band, The Love Dogs are back to entertain us—they torched the Paine Estate at the 2011 GSB! Tickets are available by calling WLT's office (781-893-3355) and through our website.

Wagon Wheel Fundraiser

Saturday, May 23, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Wagon Wheel Farm Stand, 927 Waltham St, Lexington

It's Memorial Day weekend, time to buy garden supplies! Pick up your seeds and soil, plus groceries, deli sandwiches, flowers, fruit baskets, fish, etc. Tell the cashier you love the Waltham Land Trust, and we get 20% of your purchase. No certificate needed, but bring the enclosed sheet to remind you! Not valid on mulch orders, landscaping services, or deliveries.

Boston Greenbelt Walk

Saturday, May 30, 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Starts in Newton (Waban or Riverside MBTA), ends in Malden (Oak Grove MBTA)

Join a group of long-distance walkers (or go on at your own pace) in tackling 30 miles of the proposed 90-mile Boston Greenbelt Trail in one day. Coordinated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, FreeWalkers (a long-

distance walking organization), the WLT, and several other local trail organizations, the trek is planned to maximize the use of public transportation from beginning to end (and in between). There will be public transit options back to Newton if you don't want to go the whole way. This walk is not guided. To learn more and sign-up, visit <http://www.bostongreenbeltwalk.org>.

Managing Invasive Plants Lecture and Lyman Environs Tour

Saturday, May 30, 10:30 a.m. – noon

Lyman Estate, 185 Lyman Street

Join us for a fun, illustrated lecture from Brandeis Ecology professor Dr. Eric Olson on invasive plants species in our area. Afterwards, learn from Waltham Fields Community Farm (WFCF) farmer Mirian about invasive removal methods, and practice invasive identification/removal "in the field" with WFCF and the Waltham Land Trust. Co-sponsored by Historic New England, WFCF, and the WLT. The program is free but registration is appreciated: <http://shop.historicnewengland.org/p-7446-managing-invasive-plants-lecture-and-lyman-environs-tour.aspx>

National Trails Day

Saturday, June 6

time and location tbd

Help restore a Waltham trail during this annual national-wide event.

Walks at Stonehurst

Sunday, June 7, 1 – 3 p.m.

Stonehurst, 100 Robert Treat Paine Drive

Trek the most recently built part of the Western Greenway from the Stonehurst parking lot to Beaver Street. One way is less than 0.5 miles, but we'll leave a few cars at Meeting House Way to drive folks back if needed. Please wear appropriate footwear and bring a water bottle. Healthy Waltham and the Friends of Stonehurst will also offer activities during this jointly-sponsored family event.

Waltham Riverfest

Saturday, June 20, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Meet in Landry Park and the Moody Street Dam

Kick off the 7th Annual Waltham Riverfest with the same easy stroll along the Charles we are doing during Steam Punk. We'll discuss the history of the river, look for signs of wildlife, and return to Waltham Riverfest activities in time for the Opening Ceremonies and Pet Parade. All day long, festival attendees can soak up live music, observe artists painting along the river, buy crafts from vendors on a closed Moody Street Bridge, enjoy kids activities, and rent canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards for cruising the river. Remember to register with Charles River Canoe and Kayak for the Moonlit Paddle happening on Friday, June 19 at 7 pm. Ticket price includes a three-hour guided canoe tour and dinner on the river!

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An electronic file (pdf) of this newsletter is available on our web site, <www.walthamlandtrust.org>.

Officers: Nadene Stein (President), Joyce Nett (Vice Pres.), David Kehs (Clerk), Marc Rudnick (Treasurer)

Directors: Natalie Berland, Martha Creedon, Marie Daly, George Darcy, John Dieckmann, Maureen Fowler, Betsy Lewenberg, Brian McCormick, Daniel Melnychuk, Stephen Rourke, Lesya Struz, Jim Walker, Susanne Whayne, Diana Young

Please renew or join

To renew or join please use the enclosed membership application and send to:

Waltham Land Trust
PO Box 541120
Waltham MA 02454-1120

Printed on recycled paper.

Waltham Land Trust's Mission

To create a legacy of land conservation in Waltham by promoting, protecting, restoring, and acquiring open space.

We envision growth in public appreciation of natural resources, preservation and restoration of native habitat, and increased biodiversity to foster a healthier environment.

• SPECIAL GIFT MEMBERSHIP •

Have a friend, neighbor, or relative you think would enjoy being part of the Waltham Land Trust? Why not give them a gift membership? **We are offering a special promotion for a limited time: 6 months for only \$10!** (The normal price of an individual membership is 12 months for \$25). **Support open space for a birthday, special occasion, or the holidays!**

*Like Waltham Land Trust on Facebook.
Follow us on Twitter @walthamlandtrst
See videos at youtube.walthamlandtrust.org
See photos at flickr.walthamlandtrust.org*

Please send any comments to the return address, or email to <memberlink@walthamlandtrust.org>.

If you're not already a WLT member and have received this complimentary copy, please consider joining today!

Wagon Wheel Nursery & Farmstand

WLT FUNDRAISER

Saturday, May 23, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

927 Waltham Street, Lexington

It's Memorial Day Weekend, time to start the garden and yard projects. Buy seeds, plants, garden supplies, groceries, deli sandwiches, flowers, fruit baskets, fish, etc., and the Waltham Land Trust gets 20% of your purchase with this coupon. Not valid on mulch orders, landscaping services, or deliveries.

I am a Waltham Land Trust supporter!

Visit walthamlandtrust.org or call
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