

# 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 FALL 2023

## WLT Launches 2023 Supporter Survey

*Dan Berlin, WLT Board Chair*

The mission of the Waltham Land Trust (WLT) is to protect and care for the amazing green spaces we have in the City of Waltham. As part of this mission, we strive to provide activities and events that inspire members of the community to take advantage of the city's outdoor spaces. To better understand the community we serve, the WLT has launched a survey where we hope to learn what you, our supporters, would like from the organization. The survey is open to all, but as a current WLT member, we especially want to hear from you! And please feel free to share it with others. The more people we hear from, the better informed we will be about how to best serve our wonderful community.

In the survey, you'll have an opportunity to give us feedback about past WLT events and provide ideas for activities that you would like to see us run in the future. The survey will also supply the WLT with accurate demographic information about our supporters, which we often need when applying for project grants. This is why a conservation organization's survey asks about age, gender, and other personal details. Please know that the survey data and results will not be shared with anyone outside of the WLT Board of Directors. A member of the Board will do the analysis and reporting, and the data will be securely stored.

Another goal of the survey is to find people who are interested in potentially filling the open spots we have

on the WLT Board of Directors. We are looking for a few motivated people who want to help run our ever-growing organization. When I joined the board three years ago, it was very eye-opening to see how much went on behind-the-scenes: grant writing, keeping



the website updated, land advocacy, organizing the Green Space Blues Jam and the Western Greenway 5K, and the administrative duties that keep it all running smoothly. As we look towards the future of the WLT, we'd like a few more Board Directors to fill out our ranks. Please remember that there are limited Board positions to fill, so not everyone who raises their hand will be able to join the Board. But don't worry! There are many ways to volunteer for the WLT on one of our committees!

As an added incentive to complete the survey, we'll randomly choose five people and send them a \$50 gift card. The survey is available in English (<https://bit.ly/WLTsurvey2023>) and Spanish (<https://bit.ly/WLTencuesta2023>), and we ask that you share the survey with anyone who you think uses the various green spaces that Waltham has to offer. We look forward to hearing from all of you!



## Member Spotlight

*In each Fall Journal, we highlight a member of the Waltham Land Trust who helps us achieve our mission of creating a legacy of land conservation in Waltham. If you've been at any stewardship activity in the past few years, chances are likely you've encountered Bob Primak. A WLT member since 2018 after moving to the Hardy Pond watershed in 2017, and a solid volunteer from the get-go, Bob was our Environmentalist of the Year in 2020. He has been instrumental in picking up tools from the WLT tool shed, transporting them to various work-days across the city, and putting them to use. We hear once he is assigned to a task, Bob commits 100% to accomplishing it, which doesn't surprise us at all. We asked him to take a break from his busy volunteer schedule to answer a few questions.*

**WLT:** What is your first memory of enjoying open space and nature?

**BP:** When I was a child, my Dad was a nationally known mountaineer. So he often took us (my brother, my sister, my mom and me) from our home in suburban Chicago up north to Devil's Lake Wisconsin, and out west to the American Rocky Mountains in Colorado and Wyoming to take part in his and his fellow mountaineers' outdoors activities. There we mingled with other families of mountaineers and heard (and sometimes got to witness) the many climbing feats our family members had accomplished. (I have no climbing skills myself.) Along the way, we got to experience the grandeur and beauty of nature, wide open spaces, and the contrast with the very closed-in, urban places where we spent the rest of our time.

I loved and still love the forest preserve system around Chicago. It's called the Burnham Corridor, and it's like Boston's Emerald Necklace only many times larger geographically. In that Corridor, much as in the Emerald Necklace, I often saw (and smelled) the effects of pollution and land misuse, and the resulting fouling of the wetlands and waterways. This was in the 1960s primarily, so environmental awareness was just becoming a big thing. Since I love riding my bike along trails and near rivers and streams, the loss of native plants and animals and the encroachment of subdivisions and the resulting flooding issues were painfully evident. That's how I learned that something must be done to preserve and restore our open spaces, wherever we may live. And to plan and manage development to be compatible with flood-prone areas.

When I started learning about Hardy Pond's history from Land Trust members, I saw the same urgency,

only with about forty years more time and more "people power" efforts having been turned toward preservation and restoration.

**WLT:** We know you are very active volunteering with stewardship activities around Hardy Pond, at Wellington Fields, and in Woerd Woods on the Charles River.

Thank you! What is the oddest and/or most beautiful thing you've encountered while volunteering?

**BP:** You never know what sorts of trash and metal objects will show up along the Charles River or Hardy Pond. I was involved in "magnet fishing" along the Charles one Saturday, and we pulled up two kids' bicycles, a large wooden cabinet, and some car parts. No intact cars!

But I also have seen some misguided strangeness among people who want to help, but seem unwilling to work with our group or any other organized group of volunteers. One time at Prospect Hill Park, I encountered a woman literally sweeping the leaves off a trail. She just couldn't understand that the leaves were supposed to be there, and that the solution to "slippery trails" is better walking shoes. We are here as an organization to help people understand what stewardship really means, and how to do it in effective ways.

It also strikes me as strange that some people, including some civic leaders (not all of them in Waltham), consider native plants in natural ecosystems to be "messy" or even "undesirable." Then they plant non-native or even invasive plants and call the resulting landscape "beautiful." I guess that's all in the aesthetics, but why actually kill off oak trees and declare them "undesirable?" Or declare that domestic bushes like barberry and burning bush are "prettier" than our native shrubs, which don't crowd out other plants? I find that sort of thing visually jarring and very strange, though I grew up in a place where such thinking was very commonplace.

**WLT:** Why should someone consider becoming a volunteer steward with the WLT?

**BP:** The Land Trust has great, enthusiastic leaders



and volunteers. We have a lot of fun, as well as getting the feeling of really accomplishing something worthwhile on nearly every one of our work parties. Some of us really enjoy the smaller tasks like planting native wildflowers, while others like me love to dive in and rip out a big Asiatic Bittersweet or uproot a buckthorn or three. It's also great fun and a learning experience when we help build something like a bog bridge or an improved trail, or prepare and plant a grove of trees or a field of wildflowers, while learning new skills and making new community connections. All in a day's work! And all in the interests of making our Waltham open spaces more enjoyable and more useful for everyone.

**WLT:** Do you have a favorite natural place in Waltham that you can share with our readers?

**BP:** Not many have seen it, and it isn't open to the public yet, but Waltham Woods next to Camp Cedar Hill on Forest Street is a beautiful spot. One reason is that with fewer people using this space, some of the plants and animals there are not found easily elsewhere in the city. But for accessible places, I really can't decide between the view from Little Prospect in Prospect Hill Park or the open fields at Wellington Fields. Both are spectacular in their own ways. And both are gems in our city. Then again, I must put in a plug for the awesome view right here on my own porch at Windsor Village, overlooking our beloved Hardy Pond.

**WLT:** Why do you support the Land Trust?

**BP:** I feel that the Waltham Land Trust really makes a difference in the quality of life our city enjoys. This, through advocating and standing up for open spaces and sensible land use, as well as in putting out the actual effort of restoring, preserving, and maintaining Waltham's system of trails and open spaces, woodlands, and fields. In a time when we really need to act to improve our city's climate change resilience, this work is all the more important. And as the recent Pandemic showed, people have a basic human need to get outside and experience nature in uncrowded spaces. The Land Trust fits in very well with these needs.

## Save Waltham Wildlife: A Waltham Land Trust Initiative

*Alan Richardson, SWW member*

*Save Waltham Wildlife* began last February when several of us, all trail stewards volunteering with the Waltham Land Trust, attended a presentation in Lex-

ington by Laura Kiesel, the founder and driving force of *Save Arlington Wildlife*. The primary goal of both groups, at this time, is to limit and eventually ban altogether the use of Second-Generation



Anti-Coagulant Rodenticides (SGARs), which have been killing our local raptors (including, now, three eagles). Because SGARs act slowly, the rats have time to wander out into the open and, as they are dying, to become the prey of hawks, owls, eagles, foxes, and, sometimes, family pets. In digesting the rat, the predator also ingests the poisons, leading to internal bleeding and all too often to death.

Since banding together, our main activities have been raising awareness, lobbying local officials, and gathering information. In terms of raising awareness, one of our first major initiatives was to bring Laura Kiesel here to Waltham, where she gave a presentation on SGARs and alternative methods of rodent control at the Waltham Public Library on May 6. We sent invitations to Mayor McCarthy and all of our City Councillors; only the Mayor attended. Laura's talk was informative, inspiring, and also touching, as she talked about the relationships she had formed through regularly watching owls and eagles in Arlington, and then having to deal with their deaths from SGAR poisoning.

Some of us attended a meeting of Waltham's Economic and Community Development Committee meeting on March 6, when a recommendation was passed to fund the use of Contra-pest (a rodent birth-suppressant) in place of SGARs and other rodent poisons on city properties. We will continue to lobby for city-wide banning of SGARs and for a more holistic approach to rodent control, involving better trash management (including the provision of large, rodent-safe trash bins to all Waltham residents) and greater use of both Contra-pest and snap traps. We are currently urging those on the SWW mailing list to contact candidates for the upcoming municipal elections regarding their awareness of and stances on these important issues, which involve both public health and the preservation of our local wildlife.

To learn more and become involved with SWW, please email [savewalthamwildlife@gmail.com](mailto:savewalthamwildlife@gmail.com).

## WG5K Run/Walk Celebrates Its 10th Year

*Nadene Stein, WLT Board President, Special Events Committee Chair*

Join us for the Western Greenway Trail 5K Run/Walk at 1 pm on Sunday, October 29! It is hard to believe that we are about to run our tenth - yes tenth - Western Greenway 5K! This fundraiser first took place in 2013 and has developed into one of Waltham's most-loved 5K races. Proceeds from entrance fees and sponsorships go directly to help the Waltham Land Trust continue to protect open space in Waltham.

Our race is different from many others since it takes place right in the nature of Waltham: beginning at the McLaughlin Building on Metropolitan Parkway North, the course goes through and around a variety of habitats in Beaver Brook North Reservation and Rock Meadow, including cattail marshes, forests, vernal pools, and open meadows. This type of course is perfect for runners, as running in the woods is more forgiving than running on pavement. Grassy, woodland and earth paths are usually easier on the legs.

The course is also perfect for those who prefer walking! Your 3.1-mile stroll through the beauty of the forest and meadows will be enhanced by the up close views of colorful fall foliage.



Not a runner or a walker? No worries - you can still be a part of the day as a volunteer. We'll need folks at the sign-in table to register attendees and give out bibs/goody bags. Parking attendants are needed to direct people to the ample, on-site parking. We'll have snacks and water after the race that will need to be shared with race participants. When the event is over, we will need to clean up the area so that others can enjoy the space

once we're done. To volunteer, email Anna at [arichardson@walthamlandtrust.org](mailto:arichardson@walthamlandtrust.org)

We are thrilled to share that this year's lead sponsor is The Mighty Squirrel Brewing Company, a local establishment that produces a favorite IPA, Cloud Candy, among many other varieties of beer. You'll be able to pick up your bib AND celebrate with post-race festivities at their Waltham site at 411 Waverley Oaks Road.

It is not too late to sign up as a sponsor! There are several levels of sponsorship available; your name or your company's name will look fantastic on the official race tote bag! For more information on sponsoring, visit [walthamlandtrust.org](http://walthamlandtrust.org) or email Sonja at [swadman@walthamlandtrust.org](mailto:swadman@walthamlandtrust.org).

Online registration ends midnight on Friday, October 27. The fee will be \$5 more to sign up in person at the bib pick-up at the Mighty Squirrel, or on the day of the race. Please note that because WLT relies on the proceeds from the race to fund its work and we expend certain costs, race registrations are not refundable.



## Mighty Squirrel Brewing Co. Excited to Sponsor WG5K

For the 10th Annual Western Greenway 5K, we're thrilled to announce that local brewery Mighty Squirrel, headquartered on Waverley Oaks Road, is equally excited to serve as the lead sponsor of our Race for Open Space. We asked co-owner and Waltham resident Naveen Pawar, who coincidentally was the overall winner of last year's WG5K, to answer a few questions about their support.

**WLT:** What made you choose Waltham as the location for Mighty Squirrel?

**NP:** Our location is Waverley Oaks in Waltham was the perfect location, meeting all our search criteria: in the heart of a thriving community, next to a Beaver Brook reservation, in a really fun city!

**WLT:** You were the winner of last year's Western Greenway 5k! When did you get into running and why?

**NP:** I started running seriously for the first time in



2021. I was able to run with runners and friends at Waltham Trail Runners, who consistently advised and encouraged me.

**WLT:** The craft beer community and the running community are great supporters of each other. Why do you think craft beer and running go together so well?

**NP:** Most grownups (21+) pick up running for two main reasons: to stay healthy, and to socialize with friends and fellow runners in the post-run session. Freshly brewed beers at a cozy craft brewery provides the best spot and ambiance for post-run socialization.

**WLT:** What made you choose to support the Waltham Land Trust and the Western Greenway 5k?

**NP:** Mighty Squirrel respects the vision and mission of Waltham Land Trust and Sonja has been a great friend for a long time, and we are proud to support the Western Greenway 5K.

**WLT:** Is there a new beer our runners should try or other exciting upcoming events at Mighty Squirrel they should know about?

**NP:** Please try our GABF Gold Medal Winner (2022) Oktoberfest!

## Contemplating the Importance of Water

*Sonja Wadman, Waltham Land Trust Executive Director*

*This essay was part of materials created for “Flow: A River Walk and Participatory Art Installation about Water” with local artist and WLT member (and steward) Naoe Suzuki. Please come see the exhibit at the Lincoln Arts Project Gallery located at 289 Moody Street and share your thoughts about your relationship with water on September 30. Event and exhibit details are listed in our Upcoming Events in this newsletter. Photos are from the Flow events held September 8th and 9th.*

When Naoe asked me if the Waltham Land Trust would consider partnering with her to do an art exhibit and public programming about water and one’s relationship with it, I couldn’t say “yes” fast enough. I’ve known Naoe for a few years—she became a Land Trust member in 2021 shortly after she began volunteering to restore the woodlands of the Charles River as a WLT trail steward—and we’ve had conversations about the need for more platforms to showcase local artists. I was happy to collaborate with her on a grant application to the Waltham Cultural Council to support *Flow: A River Walk and Participatory Art Installation about Water* and am thrilled it has been funded in part by the WCC and the Puffin Foundation.

The importance of water in our world cannot be understated. We all know that water comprises 71% of the Earth’s surface. Oceans, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and temporary waterbodies such as vernal pools contain countless numbers

of critters essential to our web of life. In the northwest corner of Waltham, Hardy Pond, the Watch City’s only *Great Pond* (any pond or lake that contains more than 10 acres in its natural state) is home to a wide variety of ducks, birds of prey, fish, and turtles, as well as muskrats, otters, and the iconic Great Blue Heron. People of all ages and backgrounds enjoy admiring the pond’s wildlife, along with kayaking, canoeing, and fishing in its waters.

The mighty Charles River courses through our city and similarly provides ample opportunities for wildlife observation and water-based recreation. American Bald eagles have been seen fishing its waters from treetops in Mount Feake Cemetery on its edge and an endless number of other birds have been observed by Waltham Land Trust supporters throughout the years. The events the Land Trust offers along the river are some of my favorites, and many of our most popular. But what I enjoy seeing the most when I’m passing by

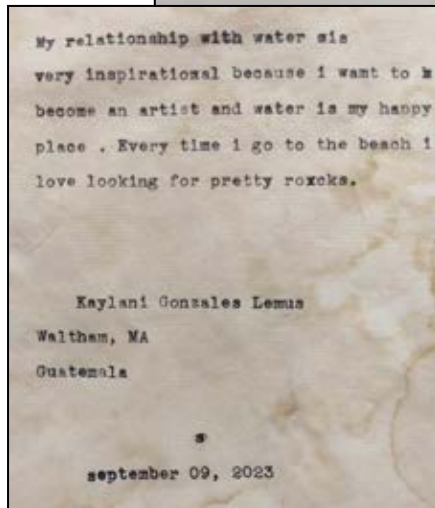
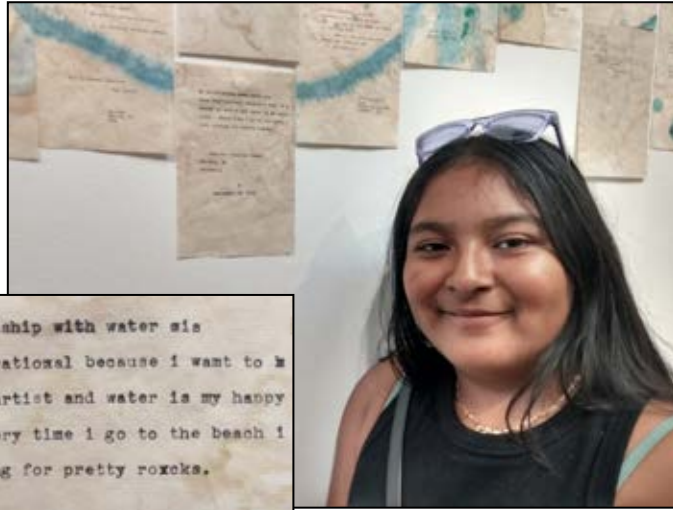


on the Moody Street bridge are the diverse multi-generational families promenading along the paved pathway, mom pushing a baby carriage and grandma strolling with a walker.

My relationship with water is extensive. Some of my earliest memories are of me as an infant with my family at the bow of my dad's boat, licking salt off my lips as we cruised the Westport River into the ocean and alongside the shoreline of Horseneck Beach each summer. As a child, I learned to swim in Walden Pond, taking beginner's swimming lessons several years in a row because I kept failing the final test—the Crawl was my nemesis. Growing up, I spent a great deal of time playing by the Sudbury River, which ran along my neighborhood in the southeast corner of Sudbury, and fishing with my dad at Westport and in local ponds, lakes, and rivers.

After college in my second year of AmeriCorps, I worked in San Francisco's East Bay restoring culverted creeks in the Berkeley area and teaching students of all ages about the importance of clean, flowing streams with healthy ecosystems and connected pathways. In 1996, I founded *Friends of Five Creeks*, now one of the largest citizens' group in the East Bay focused on creek and watershed restoration, maintenance, understanding, and enjoyment. I regularly white-water rafted in California and Oregon, that is until I had a near-death experience on the Rogue River one *El Nino* February when the river was particularly surging.

As an environmental and public engagement consultant in Sacramento, most of our firm's projects were focused on water—it was California, after all. I worked on dam removal proposals and water conveyance



studies at the local, state, and Federal level. I witnessed firsthand and was challenged to moderate the struggle between those wanting to control California's rivers, bays, and estuaries, and those advocating to let them flow freely.

In my interview for the job with the Waltham Land Trust in 2010, I recalled other memories from my childhood—feeding the ducks on the Charles River with my grandmother across from the Newton Marriott (a practice I now know is bad for wildlife). I explained how the Charles River was important to both sets of my grandparents, who raised my folks in Auburndale south of the Pike, blocks away from the river (where coincidentally, I now live with my partner). I told the Land Trust that as an adult, when I'd come home for visits from California

throughout the year, my family frequently took long walks along the Charles River in Waltham.

I'm very much looking forward to seeing how our participants describe their relationship with water, especially the children. Which each passing year, climate change and the stresses it puts on natural water resources plus man-made infrastructure throughout the world grab headlines and forces us to think about the future. We must do all that we can to protect and respect this vital, life giving and nurturing aspect of our Earth's composition.

## HELP WLT GO PAPERLESS!

Join the 125 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. Please send an email with your name to [swadman@walthamlandtrust.org](mailto:swadman@walthamlandtrust.org), with the subject header "Electronic *Journal*" if you'd like the next *Journal* 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 Spring 2024 *Journal*!

## Upcoming Events with the Waltham Land Trust

### Wellington House Lands Work Party

*Saturday, September 23, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.*  
*Park on Sherwood Lane, Abbot Road, or Temple Road*

Celebrate National Public Lands Day by clearing the fields and seeding ground cover at the historic Wellington site. There will be tasks for all ages and abilities. Tools and instruction provided. Wear closed-toe shoes, long sleeves/pants, sunscreen, and bug spray.

### Bistro 781 Give Back Night

*Tuesday, September 26, 4 – 10 p.m.*  
*Bistro 781, 336 Moody Street*

Thank Bistro 781 for supporting local causes like the Waltham Land Trust by eating dinner there or ordering take out. We get 15% of all food sales with a certificate found on our website.

### Flow: A River Walk and Participatory Art Installation about Water

*Saturday, September 30, 1 – 3 p.m.*  
*Park/meet at 35 Woerd Ave (DCR Boat Launch)*  
*Registration required through [walthamlandtrust.org](http://walthamlandtrust.org)*

Dive deep into thinking about water through art, storytelling, and a river walk with community members. This participatory art installation by Naoe Suzuki offers time and space to contemplate our relationships with water. Participants receive a piece of original artwork in exchange for their response to the query, “What is your relationship with water?” Art activity is preceded with a one-hour nature/history walk along the Charles River.

Want to be a part of the installation but don't have time for the River Walk? Stop by the Lincoln Arts Project gallery (289 Moody) on Sept. 30 between 3-6 p.m. or email [naoe@naoesuzuki.com](mailto:naoe@naoesuzuki.com) to make an appointment.

### Waltham Farm Day

*Saturday, October 14, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.*  
*Waltham Fields Community Farm, Waltham Field Station, 240 Beaver Street*

Learn about and celebrate Waltham's only community-supported-agriculture (CSA) and our last operating produce farm! Enjoy agricultural demonstrations, fun activities, and games for all ages. Groove to live music while strolling through the farm fields and visiting outreach tables from various non-profit groups like the WLT.

### Western Greenway 5K Trail Run/Walk

*Sunday, October 29, 1 p.m. start time*  
*Start/end at McLaughlin Building, Metropolitan Parkway, off Trapelo Road opposite Forest Street*

Be part of our 10<sup>th</sup> annual fall *Race for Open Space* fundraiser as a walker, runner, or sponsor! Following more-or-less the same course since 2013 with the start/finish line and staging area at the atmospheric McLaughlin Building in the Met State property, the route travels through various habitats in Beaver Brook North Reservation and Rock Meadow along the Western Greenway and other trails. Registration fees (\$25 for WLT members before October 28) and race sponsorships help raise money to keep building this community path and outfit our volunteer stewards. Walkers will begin shortly after the runners depart. Families welcome and costumes encouraged!

### Western Greenway Hike

*Saturday, November 11, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.*  
*Meeting location to be determined*

Join WLT Board Vice President and frequent walk leader Barbara Jacobs for a hike in the woods along the Western Greenway trail and other paths in open space parcels north of Trapelo Road. The trek will go over roots, rocks, and stumps. Please wear appropriate footwear. Space is limited, registration will be required.

### Waltham Land Trust 24th Annual Meeting

*Thursday, November 16, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.*  
*First Parish Church of Waltham, 50 Church Street*

Help celebrate our 24th anniversary by attending our annual meeting. Our guest speaker will be Lorenz Finison, an avid cycling historian, who will present on Kittie Knox, a biracial Boston cyclist from the 19th century who broke racial and gender barriers and won a women's cycling costume contest at the Waltham Cycle Park in 1895. We'll also provide updates on the projects we're tackling, celebrate our *Inge Uhlir Environmentalist of the Year*, and vote on returning WLT Directors.

### #GIVING TUESDAY

*Tuesday, November 28, all day*  
*Online at [www.walthamlandtrust.org](http://www.walthamlandtrust.org)*

Reclaim the true meaning of “the giving season” by joining people worldwide donating online the local charities like the WLT on the Tuesday after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Give through our website: [walthamlandtrust.org](http://walthamlandtrust.org).

WALTHAM



Waltham Land Trust  
PO Box 541120  
Waltham MA 02454-1120  
[www.walthamlandtrust.org](http://www.walthamlandtrust.org)  
*Protecting Waltham's land...  
forever.*

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### Waltham Land Trust Journal

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Waltham Land Trust, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation, and is a member of the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition.

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

*Officers:* Nadene Stein (President), Barbara Jacobs (Vice Pres.), Anna Richardson (Clerk), Marc Rudnick (Treasurer), Dan Berlin (Chair)

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*Executive Director:* Sonja Wadman

*Published material represents the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the Waltham Land Trust.*

### 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 or special occasion!**

To renew or join, visit our web site:  
[walthamlandtrust.org](http://walthamlandtrust.org)  
or call 781-893-3355

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Please send any comments to the return address, or email to <[info@walthamlandtrust.org](mailto:info@walthamlandtrust.org)>.

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

Printed on recycled paper.





When you present this flyer for dine in or take out, 15% of your food bill will be donated to the **Waltham Land Trust**.

**Tuesday, September 26, 2023, 4 p.m. – 10 p.m.**

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