

Peek a Blue Hikes Are a Big Hit with Parents and Tots!

On May 6, the Friends of the Blue Hills launched Peek a Blue Hikes, a free guided weekday hike for parents and small children. On a perfect spring day, over 50 people attended the first hike



Amy Masferrer and son Thomas, Theresa Jolley, Jen Shea and daughter Fiona all of the Milton Junior Woman's Club take a break after the first Peek a Blue Hike on May 6.

and proclaimed it a big success! The new initiative is part of the organization's 35th year celebration and is made possible by a startup grant from the

Milton Junior Woman's Club.

Parents can choose between two groups, depending on the age of their children. There is one hike for parents with babies in backpacks and another for parents with toddlers. The former is more challenging, while the latter is tailored to "new walkers" with a focus on nature exploration. The hikes are offered every other Tuesday (weather permitting) from 11 a.m.-noon and start at Houghton's Pond, 840 Hillside Street, Milton. Healthy snacks, juice and water are provided, and everyone is invited to bring a picnic lunch to eat at the conclusion of the hike.

Well-known child advocacy expert Richard Louv has written extensively about the staggering divide between children and the outdoors, directly linking the lack of nature in the lives of today's wired generation—he calls it nature-deficit—to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as the rises in obesity, attention disorders, and depression. In his book *Last Child in the Woods*, Louv brings together a new and growing body of research indicating that direct exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development and for the physical and emotional health of children and adults. Peek a Blue Hikes are intended to address the nature deficit by exposing young children to the natural wonders of the Blue Hills Reservation.

For more information and a complete schedule of Peek a Blue Hikes, visit www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/peekablue or email info@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org.

DCR Invests in Renovations at Ponkapoag Golf Course

Since famed architect Donald Ross designed Ponkapoag Golf Course in 1936, the course has seen better days. Some golfers still love its low cost and have fond memories of learning to golf on this historic course, but over the past two decades, funds for proper maintenance have been scarce. Storm water management structures have deteriorated, and storm water has flooded the course from adjacent prop-

erties. As a result, the course has fallen into disrepair; several holes are regularly underwater and large holes scar the fairways.

But help is on the way. The Department of Conservation has invested \$2.6 million to restore the golf course, including the two holes that are currently underwater. As part of the restoration, the DCR will address the impacts from storm water that flows from off-site (including Blue Hills Regional Vocational School, Massasoit



Karina Connolly and Tala Rezk from Milton were among more than 100 volunteers at our recent Green Up event. For more photos, please see page 5.

Continued on page 3)

Renowned Stable to Get a Facelift

In 1997, the Park Ranger Mounted Unit was started in the heart of the Blue Hills Reservation. The horses were stabled in what was then called the Hillside Stable. The shingle-style stable, constructed in 1899, was the first structure in the Blue Hills Reservation on this flank of Great Blue Hill. This Cadillac of stables was designed by the renowned architectural firm of Stickney and Austen and exhibited the most current conveniences and high standards of design. The stable is listed on the National Register of Historic Structures.

The stable, subsequently renamed the Brian T. Broderick Stable, unfortunately fell into disrepair over the years, and today is no longer used to stable the horses. However, thanks to a recent state grant of \$350,000 the stable is getting a partial facelift.

Passersby will notice the scaffolding and work currently underway which includes new wood columns, roof beams, stone and brick repointing, and new shingles installed. The most interesting piece of this work will be the replacement of the missing “eyebrow arch” over the entry way. The existing gable over the archway was assumed to be the original or a copy of it. However,

upon careful inspection of the lone photograph from the stable’s early years depicting a view of this entrance, it was discovered the roof had originally been an arch as well.



Broderick Stable renovations are expected to be completed by the end of June.

Sign up for Monthly Giving and You May Win a \$250 Shopping Spree at LL Bean!

If you love the Blue Hills and want to support the important work that Friends of the Blue Hills does to preserve and protect the Reservation, please consider becoming a **Blue Hills Sustainer**. By making a monthly donation to FBH, your tax deductible donation will provide a steady and reliable source of income for FBH and will ensure that your membership never lapses! Of course, you may stop the donations at any time by calling 781-828-1805 or emailing us at info@friendsofthebluehills.org. **Even a small monthly donation will make a huge difference to our work.**

And when you enroll in our monthly giving program, you will be entered into a raffle for a \$250 gift certificate for LL Bean!

YES! I want to protect the Blue Hills Reservation!

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Membership – \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Ponkapoag Protector – \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hancock Hill Hero – \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Skyline Steward – \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chickatawbut Champion – \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Guardian – \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Payment Frequency (Choose one)

- Lump sum donation
 Monthly donation of \$ _____

Become a Sustainer: Yes, have this gift renew automatically

- I've enclosed a check made payable to Friends of the Blue Hills
 Please charge my Mastercard Visa Discover

Card Number _____ Exp. date (MM/YY) _____ Card security code _____

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Please mail to Friends of the Blue Hills

P.O. Box 416, Milton, MA 02186

You may also donate through our secure server at FriendsoftheBlueHills.org.

Thank you for your generous support!

Join us for a Hot Time at Cool Summer Fest!



**Saturday, July 26,
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at
Houghton's Pond**

Join us for the wackiest, wettest summer festival around! Cool Summer Fest will be held on Saturday, July 26, from 10 am - 3 pm at Houghton's Pond, 840 Hillside

Street in Milton. The event will feature a parade around Houghton's Pond with lively musicians, family entertainment, arts and crafts, live wildlife from the Trailside Museum, fishing fun with Mass Wildlife and more. Free equipment loans for fishing or bring your own rod and reel. Cool Summer Fest is

sponsored by Friends of the Blue Hills, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Blue Hills Bank, and Doctors Express in Braintree and Dedham. For more information, visit FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/summerfest.

Strive for 35 Challenge Engaging Many in the Blue Hills

The Friends of the Blue Hills introduced the Strive for 35 Challenge in January to commemorate its 35th year and encourage people to see and do 35 specific things in the Blue Hills Reservation. David Gouthro of Braintree was the first person to complete the Strive for 35 Challenge. He will be entered in a raffle for the grand prize, which includes a weekend stay at the AMC Ponkapoag cabins and a \$250 gift certificate to LL Bean. For more information and to register for either Challenge, please visit www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/challenge.



David Gouthro, of Braintree, was the first to complete the Strive for 35 Challenge. Shown here with Amanda Popp of LL Bean in Dedham in front of the AMC Cabins

Ponkapoag Golf Course continued from p.1

Community College and residential properties). Mitigation and restoration efforts will include planting approximately two acres of "wet meadow" areas with native wetland species and allowing 38,880 square feet of the fairway to revert to a natural state.

If you visit Ponkapoag golf course, you can see that the work has already begun. For a more complete description of the project, visit our website at FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/ponkapoag_golf_course_restoration.

Companies Lend a Hand in the Blue Hills

Many thanks to the employees at Dedham Savings Bank who volunteered for a day to maintain the trails this spring. We're also grateful to Dedham Savings Bank for donating \$5,000 to sponsor the Friends of the Blue Hills Annual Celebration on October 9.



The Friends of the Blue Hills newsletter is produced four times a year.

Editors: Anne Comber, Judy Jacobs, Barbara Kirby

Layout: Owen Hartford

Visit us on the web at www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org or call 781-828-1805

for membership, maps and schedule information.

P.O. Box 416, Milton, MA 02186

Engaging the Community

Friends of the Blue Hills Offers a Chance to Sponsor A Trail!

Looking for the perfect gift for someone who loves the Blue Hills? Whether it's for a birthday, a graduation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, or any occasion at all, the Friends of the Blue Hills is offering the opportunity to Sponsor a Trail! For \$35, you will receive a certificate with the recipient's name, occasion, and the name of the sponsored trail along with a Trail Map so the recipient can see where his/her trail is located in the Blue Hills Reservation. We will either mail the certificate to you or to the recipient with the information you supply. Best of all, your gift will help Friends of the Blue Hills maintain the trails so that everyone can enjoy them! For more information, please email info@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org.



As part of her mitzvah project for her 13th birthday, Maya Feldberg-Bannatyne organized friends and family to remove the invasive plant garlic mustard from Ponkapoag Pond. She also fundraised for Friends of the Blue Hills and dedicated the funds to Sponsor a Trail.

Is the Blue Hills in Your Will?

Protect the Blue Hills for Future Generations. Consider making a bequest to the Friends of the Blue Hills in your will.



Bequests can be made without dipping into your savings or other assets. You use your assets as you need them while you're alive and bequeath them to others after your lifetime.



Max Montalto of Westwood stands next to the water barrels that he built at Ponkapoag Pond as part of his project to become an Eagle Scout. Max also recruited volunteers to pull out the garlic mustard around the cabins and worked with FBH Board member and Boston University professor Rick Kesseli to test the effectiveness of different methods of removing the weed.

Take a Hike!

Be sure to check our website for the list of guided hikes, opportunities to maintain the trails, protect the forests, and have fun in the Blue Hills throughout the summer. Visit www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/events for more information.

Send us your photos and news! Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @FriendBlueHills!



Engaging the Community

Over 100 Volunteers Pitch in to Green Up the Blue Hills!

On a perfect spring day, more than 100 volunteers spent the afternoon at Ponkapoag Pond pulling invasive weeds that threaten the forests in the Blue Hills. The day wasn't all work and no fun, though-- volunteers enjoyed food, live music, crafts, a scavenger hunt and face-painting while they worked! Special thanks to the Milton Garden Club for sponsoring this year's Green Up and to REI and Randolph Savings Bank for their support.



Seventeen volunteers from Quincy High joined the Green Up effort!



Sara Kaufman from Mansfield entertained volunteers with her guitar.



John and Daniel White and Duane and Eric Joseph all from Brockton Boy Scout Troop 17 helped with the effort.



Jeff Stoodt and Mannie Fernandez, both of Milton, joined many others in pulling weeds. Jeff teaches science at Pierce Middle School in Milton and offered extra credit to any student who volunteered at Green Up.



Katie Comber volunteered as a face-painter, shown at left painting a cat on Karina Connolly. Both are from Milton.

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SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL CELEBRATION!
 Thursday, October 9, at Fuller Village in Milton.
 Celebrate our 35th year by joining us for this
 special evening of food, friends and festivities!
 For more information, visit
www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/Celebrate35



Friends of the Blue Hills
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