

## Beat the Winter Blues at Winter Fest!



Join us on Tuesday, February 27,  
from 5-8 p.m. at Blue Hills Ski Area

Join the Friends of the Blue Hills and the Blue Hills Ski Area for an evening of winter fun at Winter Fest! Come for a night hike or get your exercise on the slopes downhill skiing. Whether or not you choose the outdoor activities, there is plenty of inside fun too: you can tap your feet to the spirited Irish tunes of Songs for Ceilidh, taste chili from some of the best local restaurants, entertain the kids with crafts, and warm up to the

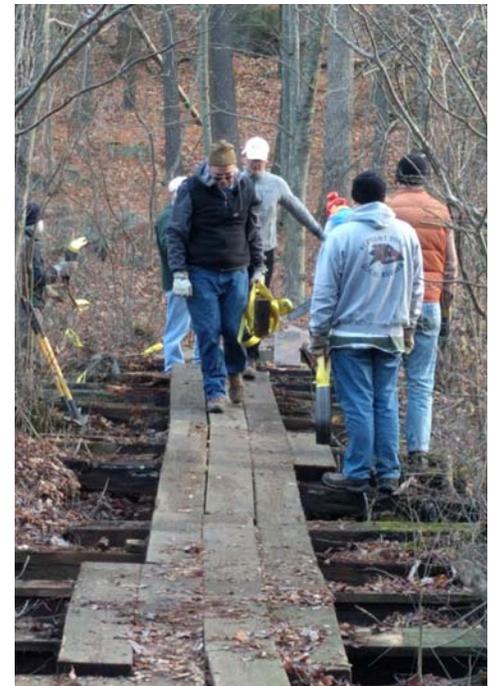
company of old and new friends.

Blue Hills Ski Area will be offering discounted ski tickets for the night. If planning to ski, print the front page of [www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org](http://www.FriendsoftheBlueHills.org) or the FBH Facebook page and bring it to the event. For more information, email [info@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org](mailto:info@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org).

Join us as we celebrate the best of winter... while it lasts!

## Building Bridges in Blue Hills Protects Trails and Visitors

Bridges Built in Partnership with REI and New England Mountain Bike Association



We depend on the bridges throughout the Blue Hills to protect the trails from erosion and to keep visitors safe, whether they are hiking, biking or horseback riding. After years of use, though, bridges decay and must be repaired or replaced. This past summer, the Friends partnered with the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) to build one new bridge and repair two others. We are extremely grateful to REI who provided a \$5,000 grant to purchase the needed supplies, and to NEMBA who provided the bridge building expertise!

## Blue Hills Wetlands Protected from Development

By Denny Swenson, Friends of the Blue Hills Board

Three years ago, the part of the Blue Hills called Fowl Meadow was threatened by a proposed 276-unit development, called Milton Mews. The four- and five-story buildings would have been built on forest land that abuts the Blue Hills and would have destroyed the park's adjacent wetland habitat.

Fast forward three years, and instead of apartment complexes and dried up wetlands, the land will contain just two

more homes and most of the land will be conserved.

That's a tremendous win for the Blue Hills and the community.

After years of negotiating, the successful solution concluded when the Department of Conservation and Recreation purchased over one third of the land that was originally slated for development. While this

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*This blue spotted salamander is one of the rare species found on Hemenway Drive in the Fowl Meadow area. The salamander and many other rare plants and animals were threatened by a large development, but after years of work, they are now protected by conservation restrictions.*

## Controlled Deer Hunt in the Blue Hills

For the third year, the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Mass Wildlife organized a controlled deer hunt in the Blue Hills to manage deer populations. The hunt reduced the population by a total of 67 deer. This year's hunt included 11 days of permitted archery hunting in November in designated areas in the Reservation. In late November and early December, there were four days of controlled shotgun hunting.

## Trail Leader Earns Accolades and Funds for the Friends

Congratulations to Caleb Blankenship who was recently honored by Fox 25's Cox Conserves Heroes. Caleb is our longtime co-chair of the Trail Maintenance Committee and was a finalist in this year's contest. The Friends received a \$5,000 grant to support trail maintenance in Caleb's honor.



### Be a Blue Hills Sustainer!

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, tax-deductible donation, you will provide a stable and reliable source of income for FBH. To learn more, visit [FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/Sustainer](http://FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/Sustainer).

Thank you for your generous support!

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

Editors: Anne Comber,  
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Visit us on the web at [www.FriendsOftheBlueHills.org](http://www.FriendsOftheBlueHills.org) or call 781-828-1805 for membership, maps and schedule information.  
P.O. Box 416, Milton, MA 02186

### 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](http://FriendsOftheBlueHills.org).

**Thank you for your generous support!**

## Eliot Tower Renovation Complete

The Eliot Tower underwent extensive renovations last fall that included replacing the roof of the tower and installing a new synthetic roof on the adjacent pavilion. The repairs were made to improve the safety and appearance of this historic structure. The tower and pavilion reopened in December.



## Three Generations of Blue Hills Enthusiasts

*Rebecca Murphy recently became a member of Friends of the Blue Hills and attended the New Member Hike at Ponkapoag Pond. We asked her why she joined the Friends...*

My parents took my sisters and me to the Blue Hills when we were very young, and I have been enjoying it ever since. We would go with my cousins and hike, check out the animals, enjoy the Trailside Museum and even ski every once in a while. I have such great memories as a kid playing in the streams and hiking the trails with my family. I continued going as a teenager and young adult with hikes on the Green Dot Trail to the Skyline Trail and everything in between. I now take my two young boys there at least once a week. My dad takes the boys to Houghton's Pond in the summer, and we all love to participate in the "First Day Hike" on New Year's Day. I grew up in Quincy and now live in Hyde Park. I think it is one of the most wonderful places, and thankfully it's now right in my backyard.

We greatly appreciate Rebecca—and all of our members—for helping to give back to the Blue Hills!



*Rebecca Murphy and her son Thomas enjoy the Blue Hills!*

## Volunteers Map the Noise



This past fall, dozens of Friends' volunteers hit the trails with a special app on their iPhone to measure sound in the Blue Hills. The volunteers were part of a Boston University research project, led by Professor Richard Primack and doctoral student Lucy

Zipf. The BU research team recorded the data delivered by volunteers to create a sound map of the trails around Ponkapoag Pond and between Route 138 and Buck Hill. To see the map, go to [FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/soundmap](http://FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/soundmap).

## Blue Hills Wetlands Protected from Development

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parcel will still contain two single-family homes under the agreement, the DCR's purchase means that these homes will be surrounded by protected conservation land. The remaining properties have also agreed to single-family homes and conservation restrictions.

The Friends of the Blue Hills worked with the local community to demonstrate the unique value of this conservation land, which contains wetlands and is designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The proposed number of apartment buildings would have threatened numerous rare and endangered plants and animals who depend on the rare intersection of three habitats: wetland, upland and meadow.

This effort took years of patient persistence by numerous advocates and community groups including the Friends of Blue Hills, Fuller Village, The Neponset River Watershed, the Wakefield Estate and generous, thoughtful people in the surrounding neighborhoods and broader community, including Senator Walter Timilty and former Senator Brian Joyce, who all steadfastly sought creative solutions.

In the end, we are very happy to have reached a win-win-win solution for the property owners, the community and the ecosystem. The final deal shows that it is possible to bring people with differing goals together to reach a better result for all.

## Blue Hills A-Live: Your Weekly Guide to the Blue Hills

Beginning this January, you can learn about the Blue Hills in a weekly Facebook Live video, called Blue Hills A-Live, your guide to the Blue Hills. During these short, weekly videos on Thursdays at noon, you will meet guests like Molly Ross, Blue Hills Ski Area Manager, who will help you explore the park's recreational opportunities, new places in the park, history... and more!

For the start date and to receive weekly reminders, background on the speakers and - if you are not on Facebook- links to the videos on our blog, visit [FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/video](http://FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/video).



*Molly Ross, the new manager of Blue Hills Ski Area, will be an upcoming guest on Blue Hills A-Live.*

## Is the Friends of the Blue Hills in Your Will?



Photo by David Gouthro

A gift to the Friends of the Blue Hills in your Will is one of the most meaningful ways you can help protect the Blue Hills for generations to come. Learn more at [FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/skyline-society](http://FriendsOftheBlueHills.org/skyline-society).

# Memorable Celebration Entertains Members and Friends

Over 150 people attended last fall's Friends of the Blue Hills Annual Celebration at the Milton Hoosic Club. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with other Blue Hills enthusiasts, learn about what we have achieved together over the past year, and raise funds to protect and preserve the Blue Hills Reservation.

A big thank you to our excellent keynote speaker, Peter Gittleman of Historic New England, whose entertaining and informative presentation on the Eustis Estate was enjoyed by all.

We would also like to thank everyone who came and made the event such a success and the many individuals and businesses who sponsored the event and donated to the silent auction!

## Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors:

### Blue Hills Champion

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### Special Thanks to

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The Townshend



*Dr. Allen Waltman and Dr. Ann Marie Madigan*



*Current Friends board member Laura Beebe and past board member Deb DaSilva*



*Incoming Friends board president David Dobrindt and his wife Patti*



*2017 Community Partners Award Honorees John Goldrosen, Tucker Smith, Carol Gregory, John Woodman, and outgoing Friends board president Denny Swenson*

All photos by Brian MacLean of Milton

**Staff:** Executive Director: Judy Lehrer Jacobs  
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**Winter Fest**  
 Tuesday, February 27, from 5-8 p.m.  
 Blue Hills Ski Area  
 Night hike, Irish music, chili tasting and more!  
[FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/winterfest](http://FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/winterfest)

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