

Creating a Coalition for a Better Blue Hills

Historic buildings crumbling, no lease security, inadequate funding--these are the issues that the Friends of the Blue Hills will take on with other Blue Hills organizations through the newly formed Coalition for a Better Blue Hills.

The Friends of the Blue Hills has brought together Blue Hills organizations to work collaboratively to secure financial, political and public support for the Blue Hills Reservation.

Together with the Trailside Museum, Blue Hill Ski Area, Brookwood Farm, Blue Hill Observatory and the Friends of the Mounted Unit, we will advocate for:

- Releasing bond funding designated for Blue Hills landmark buildings
- Providing adequate funding for

the Department of Conservation and Recreation (as outlined in the Environmental League of Massachusetts' Green Budget) and

- Securing long-term leases for the Ski Area, Observatory, Trailside Museum and Brookwood Farm.

For more information about our work with the Coalition for a Better Blue Hills, please visit FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/Coalition.



Photo by Frieda Cooper of Canton

Blue Hill Observatory is one of the buildings that as part of the Coalition for a Better Blue Hills, the Friends of the Blue Hills is working to protect by advocating for the release of funds earmarked in the environmental bond bill.

Peek-a-Blue Hikes Are Back for Parents and Tots!

On April 14, the Friends of the Blue Hills will resume Peek-a-Blue

Hikes, the free guided weekday hikes for parents and small children. FBH

launched Peek-a-Blue Hikes last year as part of its 35th year celebration thanks to a startup grant from the Milton Junior Woman's Club. The MJWC has once again generously funded the 2015 Peek-a-Blue Hikes, which encourage families with young chil-

dren to get out and explore the Blue Hills.

The hikes are offered every other Tuesday morning from 11-12 p.m. The FBH provides free water, juice and healthy snacks, and while the meeting point is always in the Houghton's Pond main parking lot, the hike route varies.

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



Lauren and Steve Greeley of Milton with daughter Amy at a Peek-a-Blue Hike last year.

Hotel on Parkland?

Friends of the Blue Hills is working to shine a light on a plan to build a hotel on Little Blue Hill conservation land.

You probably don't think of a hotel when you think of parkland, but that hasn't stopped an individual from proposing to build a hotel on Department of Conservation and Recreation conservation land near Little Blue Hill.

Sign up for Monthly Giving and You May Win a \$250 Shopping Spree at L.L. 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.

As an added incentive, when you enroll in our monthly giving program, you will be entered into a raffle for a \$250 gift certificate for L.L. Bean!

Thank you for your generous support!

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

A developer has proposed building on seven acres that are part of a designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern behind the Dunkin' Donuts and Blue Hills Grille in Canton... but he has a clear title for only .78 acre. That's right--- under 8 tenths of an acre!

At a Canton Planning Board meeting in February, Attorney Dick Staiti, the lawyer for the developer, presented the hotel proposal as if his client owned the entire seven acres.

Luckily, Denny Swenson, President of the Friends of the Blue Hills, attended the meeting with documents indicating that DCR owns more than five acres of the seven-acre parcel. DCR also owns a conservation restriction on more than an acre of the remaining land. So Attorney Staiti's

client can build on only three quarters of an acre of the property, but he needs at least two acres to build a hotel in Canton.

The Canton Planning Board, chaired by Jeremy Comeau, wisely understood the issue and voted against the change in zoning that the developer requested for his hotel.

The developer, however, has not given up. He has placed an article on the Canton Town Meeting agenda in May to change the zoning on DCR conservation land to allow a hotel development.

We are working to make sure that Canton voters understand the issue and the importance of protecting parkland. For more information, visit FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/Hotel.

YES! I want to protect the Blue Hills Reservation!

- Basic Membership – \$30
- Hancock Hill Hero – \$100
- Chickatawbut Champion – \$500
- Other _____
- Ponkapoag Protector – \$50
- Skyline Steward – \$250
- Great Blue Guardian - \$1,000

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!

Team Up with Friends of the Blue Hills to Green Up the Blue Hills!

Join us on Sunday, May 31,
1:00-3:30 p.m. at Ponkapoag
AMC Cabins.

Tired of winter and looking forward to spring? Well, after all that snow melts away, the Blue Hills Reservation will again provide beauty and greenery to the area. But it may need some help.

The Friends of the Blue Hills will hold its annual Green Up on Sunday, May 31, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. While Green Up's main mission is helping to pull up invasive weeds around Ponkapoag Pond, volunteers can enjoy music, face painting, crafts, and a scavenger hunt.

"I particularly like Green Up because it isn't about picking up garbage. It's learning about invasive plants. There is an educational component, learning about the plants," explained Jeff Stoodt, a science teacher at the Pierce Middle School in Milton. Several years ago, Jeff asked some of his sixth grade students to help clean up the grounds around the school and then joined the larger effort at the Blue Hills, offering students extra credit for their participation. He enjoys the event along with his



Milton middle school science teacher Jeff Stoodt offers extra credit to students for helping with Green Up. Pictured above with Stoodt is former student Sayra Chireno-Fernandez and her mother Mannie and little sister Gema.

students and their families. More than 100 people attended last year.

If you're interested in volunteering, please RSVP to Greenup@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org or call 617-696-8248. Parking is available at Temple Beth David, 1060 Randolph Street, Canton.

It is a short, scenic walk from the parking lot to the Ponkapoag AMC Cabins. The event will take place rain or shine – so come on out, bring the family and your gardening gloves!

Article written by Maxine McPherson of Canton.

Your Chance to Sponsor a Trail for that Special Someone!

Looking for the perfect gift for someone who loves the Blue Hills? Whether it's for a birthday, a graduation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Father's Day or any occasion at all, the Friends of the Blue Hills is offering an opportunity to Sponsor a Trail! For \$35, you will receive a certificate with the recipient's name, the 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.

Protect the Beauty: Photo Contest

The Friends of the Blue Hills is dedicated to encouraging people to protect, preserve and enjoy the Blue Hills... Show us who and what in the Blue Hills you care about that makes the Blue Hills worth protecting! Dedham Savings is the sponsor of the photo contest. Prizes will include two \$250 gift certificates donated by L.L. Bean; one prize awarded by judges and another prize awarded to the photo with the most popular votes. For details, visit <http://friendsofthebluehills.org/photo-contest>.

Skyline Society Member: Erica Quigley

Erica joined the Skyline Society by including the Friends of the Blue Hills in her Will.

Erica Quigley is passionate about connecting people to the outdoors. After working as a teacher naturalist, she is currently a graduate student at the Boston Architectural College. She plans to devote her career to designing spaces that help people connect with one another and the world around them.

Her enthusiasm for the natural world extends to the Blue Hills. She says she appreciates the Friends of the Blue Hills' advocacy and volunteer service activities, which "are filling gaps in the enormous job of keeping the reservation healthy and accessible."

Erica feels so strongly about pro-

tecting the Blue Hills, she has joined the Skyline Society, the Friends of the Blue Hills' program for honoring and thanking people who have included the Friends of the Blue Hills in their Will.

As a young adult with a busy life ahead of her, Erica wants to make sure that she doesn't lose sight of how important the Blue Hills are for her. "I know I can't afford to give as much as I'd like now, but by putting the Friends of the Blue Hills in my Will, I know that my wishes to protect the Blue Hills will be fulfilled."

For a free copy of our new Frequently Asked Questions brochure, contact Judy Lehrer Jacobs at Judy@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org or (781) 828-1805.



Strive for 35 Grand Prize Winner Announced at First Day Hike

Friends of the Blue Hills celebrated its 35th year in 2014, and one of the special initiatives was the Strive for 35 Challenge. All those who completed the Challenge were entered into a drawing for a \$250 gift card from L.L. Bean and a weekend stay at the AMC cabins at Ponkapoag Pond. The drawing was held at the First Day Hike at Houghton's Pond on New Year's Day, and David Gouthro of Braintree was the winner. Gouthro is shown above receiving his prize from FBH Executive Director Judy Lehrer Jacobs.

Cold Weather and Hot Times at Winter Fest!

Over 200 people joined Friends of the Blue Hills for an evening of lively Irish music, chili tasting, crafts, and winter fun! Record snowfall created the perfect conditions for skiing, though bone-chilling temperatures made for a very chilly night hike!

We are grateful to our sponsors, our Chili Competitors, and those businesses that helped make Winter Fest a big success: Food Should Taste Good, Fruit Center Marketplace in Milton, and Blue Hills Brewery in Canton.



Congratulations and THANK YOU to our wonderful Chili Cook Off Competitors (l to r): Rick Sampson of Queen Anne's Restaurant in Canton, Bill Charrier of Chili's in Braintree, Suzanne Lombardi of The Plate in Milton, and Tim Colton of The Fours in Quincy.



Thank you to our Chili Cook Off Judges (l to r): State Sen. Brian A. Joyce, Paul Meoni, Lt. Helena Findlay, Jim Cotter, Amy Nachbar, Jolene Rambone, Jeremy Comeau, Liz Ryan, State Rep. Walter Timilty.



Elie Boylan of Milton dancing with sister Madeleine to the spirited tunes of the Irish band Songs for Ceilidh.

Special thanks!

Special thanks to **Blue Hills Ski Area** for hosting the event and to our generous sponsors, **Doctors Express** of Braintree and Dedham and **William Raveis Real Estate** in Milton.



Isabella Carey, age 8, with brother Holden, age 5, from Quincy and friend Samantha Soto, age 8, are all smiles at Winter Fest.



Eva Jansiewicz of Canton helps daughters Alexis, age 8, and Emma Farrow, age 3, create a winter collage.

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Laura Beebe, Milton;
Hilary Blocker, Canton;
David Dobrindt, Milton;
Jim Green, Canton

Join us at a special Members Only Event!
Joe Bagley, noted archaeologist and popular keynote speaker at last year's Annual Celebration, will be leading a hike in the Blue Hills, pointing out areas of archaeological interest.
Sunday, May 3, 12:00-1:30 p.m.
St. Moritz Trail Head
Please park at Shea Rink, 651 Willard Street, Quincy. All members of Friends of the Blue Hills are welcome! For more information or to join FBH, visit www.FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org.



Friends of the Blue Hills
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