

## Advocating for Better Electric Bike Policy

**A big thank you to our members... and to Representative Bruce Ayers and Senator Walter Timilty**

Despite strong objections from park visitors from around the commonwealth, Friends groups, and legislators, the Department of Conservation and Recreation says it will publish regulations to open up all trails that allow bikes on all DCR properties to electric bikes (e-bikes), despite the lack of research to demonstrate that visitors will be safe and the habitat protected.

While electric bikes are a climate-friendly transportation option for people to commute, recreate, and promote physical and mental health, especially for people who are physically challenged, there is a “dearth of data or research to support science-based management of e-bikes on trail and transportation infrastructure on public lands,” as reported by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Volpe National Transportation Systems Center.

Thanks to our members and partners, state officials received hundreds of emails urging them to make sure the commonwealth’s electric bike policy adequately addresses safety issues and environmental impacts and ensures that the DCR can effectively enforce its impending regulation. The regulation that the DCR says it will publish is a one-size-fits-all policy that allows Class 1 electric bicycles access to all DCR trails currently open to traditional mountain bikes, including those in the Blue Hills.

In addition to the DCR receiving



Photo credit: Paolo Polynice, Quincy

hundreds of emails from members, the Friends joined nearly 20 DCR friends and statewide conservation organizations to send a strong message with compelling arguments for not allowing e-bikes on DCR trails without first evaluating safety risks and environmental impact.

Representative Bruce Ayers joined several other legislators urging DCR to adopt an e-bike policy that is based on studies to determine the effect on our parks. Senator Walter Timilty also weighed in by asking DCR for clarification of their e-bike policies and procedures.

Friends of the Blue Hills also joined Friends of the Fells to meet with DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery in May. Unfortunately, at the conclusion of our virtual meeting, DCR maintained their assertion that e-bikes can and should be regulated the same as traditional bikes.

*continued on page 3*

## Celebrating Our Members

**Spotlight: Melissa Nelson**

This July, we are celebrating YOU, our members, for all YOU do for the Blue Hills Reservation! As a membership organization, we rely on your support to protect and preserve the Blue Hills, not just today but for generations to come.

Friends of the Blue Hills member, Melissa Nelson, shares her passion for the Blue Hills and what she enjoys about being a Friend.

**Q: You are a longtime member of the Friends of the Blue Hills. What inspired you to become a member?**

**Melissa:** I’ve been taking my kids to Big Blue every fall for years. They love to hike up the Red Dot trail and then run down the ski slope! Then, when I was between jobs in 2017, I took to the Blue Hills and did just about every trail with my dog, Bella.

*continued on page 3*



*Friend's member, Melissa Nelson, enjoying the Blue Hills on a beautiful day!*



# Sunrise Erectors of Canton Honors the Memory of Beloved Co-worker, George Thomas IV

Each year, staff from Sunrise Erectors of Canton, MA, hold their semi-annual Sunrise Sunset Hike, walking up Great Blue Hill to enjoy the view from Eliot Tower. This year's hike had special significance because the Sunrise staff lost their beloved George Thomas IV suddenly in February, just months before the hike. George was an avid Blue Hills hiker. George's wife, Marissa, and his sons, George V and James, continued the tradition by hiking again this year. The Friends of the Blue Hills is honored and grateful to Sunrise Erectors for generously donating to the Friends in loving memory of George Thomas IV.



*Sunrise Erectors' staff enjoying the view from Eliot Tower.*

## What Can You Do for Future Generations?

When you remember the Friends of the Blue Hills in your Will, you are making sure the park will be there for visitors and wildlife for years to come. With the addition of a few sentences to your Will, you can make a meaningful impact to the park you love.

When you let us know your plans to include the Friends of the Blue Hills in your Will, we will gratefully add you to the growing number of people who have joined the Skyline Society. For more information, visit [FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/donate-in-your-will](http://FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/donate-in-your-will).



*Photo credit: Jean Lewis, Canton*

## 2021 Picnic for Six Raffle

When you enter our Picnic for Six Raffle, you have a chance to enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime experience: a mouth-watering gourmet picnic provided by Cooking in With Stephanie, the multiple award-winning Milton caterer who recently won Milton's Best Specialty Shop!

Imagine you and five guests hiking to your favorite vista in the Blue Hills. Is it the view from Buck Hill? Or the serene flowering lily pads on St. Moritz Pond? Or perhaps Fisherman's Beach at Ponkapoag? Now imagine

sharing a succulent meal with dessert as you and your family or friends take in the beauty of the Blue Hills.

The winning ticket will be drawn at our Annual Celebration on Thursday, October 7th. You need not be present to win... but you have to enter to win, so buy your raffle ticket today!

Tickets are \$15 each or 3/\$35 and can be purchased online on our secure website: [FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/Raffle2021](http://FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/Raffle2021). Some restrictions apply, so please visit our website for more details.



*Past winners of the picnic raffle enjoyed a delicious meal... and their favorite view of Ponkapoag Pond.*



continued from page 1

## Celebrating Our Members

### Spotlight Melissa Nelson

Seeing so much natural beauty so close to Boston made me realize that this kind of access to nature doesn't happen by accident. And, I wanted to help, so I reached out to the Friends to see how I could put my marketing skills to work to increase awareness of the organization. I worked with Judy for several months on Facebook live videos and some strategic planning right up until I started a new job in June 2018. I may not have as much time to help out at scale, but I want to do what I can and plan on being a Friend for many years to come!

**Q: You are also a volunteer and have come to several trail maintenance work events. Thank you! Why is that work important to you?**

**Melissa:** If you've ever been walking the trails after a big wind or ice

storm, you see first-hand what kind of damage Mother Nature can do. Someone needs to help clean it up! And with the invasive plants that have made their way into the Blue Hills, there's always something that needs doing. Making the Blue Hills accessible and well-cared for -- while still being a little wild -- is why I volunteer when I can. I actually just adopted several trails in the Ponkapoag section of the hills!

**Q: Are there programs offered by the Friends of the Blue Hills that you most enjoy? And why?**

**Melissa:** The Boots and Brews hike was really fun -- I'd love to do that again! It was a wonderful way to meet like-minded lovers of the outdoors, get the old heart rate up a bit, and enjoy the hills.

## 125-Mile Club... Captures the Enthusiasm of Hundreds



*Jennifer Sammons of Quincy, is a Friends member - and one of over 625 participants of the 125-Mile Club challenge, a quest to explore every trail in the Blue Hills.*

Jennifer Sammons is one of over 625 people who have signed up for the 125-Mile Club, a way for you to challenge yourself to explore all the trails in the park.

Jen says that participating in the 125-Mile Club is helping her explore parts of the park that she would never have enjoyed without the challenge. For example, Jen said she was following a trail near the Norman Smith Environmental Education Center and found a trail that was wonderfully wide and flat. "It was so beautiful! I am looking forward to many more of these amazing discoveries!"

To learn more about the 125-Mile Club, visit [FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/125MileClub](http://FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/125MileClub).

continued from page 1

## Advocating for Better Electric Bike Policy

We will continue to work with state decision-makers on this and other issues that affect the Blue Hills. We are incredibly grateful to our members and the community for caring about the parks and working to make sure that DCR develops a sound policy that protects visitors, the trails, and wildlife.

For more information, visit [FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/ebikes](http://FriendsoftheBlueHills.org/ebikes).

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

**Editors: Maile Panerio-Langer, Judy Jacobs, Barbara Kirby**

**Layout: Donald Souliere**

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



Friends of the Blue Hills  
P.O. Box 416, Milton, MA 02186  
Address Service Requested

Non-Profit O. g.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Boston, MA  
Permit No. 56571

**Win a picnic of a lifetime!**  
A mouth-watering Picnic for Six with your favorite view of the Blue Hills  
catered by award-winning chef, Stephanie McFadden  
of Cooking in With Stephanie.  
[FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/Raffle2021](http://FriendsOfTheBlueHills.org/Raffle2021)

**Staff:**

Executive Director: Judy Lehrer Jacobs  
Associate Director: Maile Panerio-Langer  
Membership Coordinator: Ann Miranda

**Officers of the Friends of the Blue Hills:**

President: Matt Panucci, Milton  
Treasurer: Bob Murray, Milton  
Secretary: Laura Beebe, Milton

**Trustees at Large:**

Ken Cohen, Brockton  
David Dobrindt, Milton

Emily Grilli-Scott, Roslindale  
Barbara Huggins, Newton  
Janille Hylton, Brockton  
Rick Kessel, Milton  
Mike Paglia, Dedham

**Adopt-a-Trail Chair: Chris Mullin**

**Partners:**

Bank of Canton  
Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital - Milton  
Colonial Road Runners  
Dedham Savings  
Falconi Companies  
Fruit Center Marketplace  
Liberty Mutual Group  
Milton Junior Woman's Club  
Patagonia  
Poirier Sales & Service Corp  
Quirk Auto Dealers  
REI Co-op  
Success! Real Estate  
Sunrise Erectors