

Your Blue Hills

The Newsletter for Supporters of Friends of the Blue Hills

FRIENDS OF THE
BLUE HILLS
PROTECT • PRESERVE • PARTICIPATE

WINTER 2024



Green Heron Fishing



Autumn Leaf Peeping



Peeking into the Pond



Winter Coats

2023 Photo Contest: Everyone's a Winner

The beauty of the Blue Hills was on display in the latest Friends of the Blue Hills Annual Photo Contest. Photographers of all ages and skill levels submitted 119 entries in four categories. The contest was free to enter and was sponsored by Dedham Savings Bank and Page Waterman Gallery & Framing located in Wellesley. A \$250 gift certificate to Page Waterman was awarded for the

winning photo from each category.

Anyone who saw the online gallery of striking photos was treated to something special. You can still enjoy these beauties by visiting friendsofthebluehills.org/photo-contest-voting.

Start putting together your portfolio for the 2024 contest, which will open for submissions later this spring. We can't wait for you to show us your favorite shots of the park!

Who Lives in the Blue Hills? Green Heron Fishing by Benjamin Lambrecht, Mansfield

Judges' Choice Peeking into the Pond by Colette Fleury, Stoneham

Who Visits the Blue Hills? Autumn Leaf Peeping by Annie Gee, Quincy

Popular Vote Winter Coats by Mary Ciccariello, Quincy

Encouraging Kindness in Your Park

Common sense and decency find a home in the Blue Hills with the Be Kind! campaign

As a Friend of the Blue Hills, you're already living the vision at the heart of this public awareness campaign. Now it's time to share that spirit of kindness with all who enjoy our state parklands, the plants and animals that call these spaces home — and the people who work and visit here. Developed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and adopted by the Friends of the Blue Hills (FOBH), the Friends of the Fells and the New England Mountain Bike Association, it has four basic tenets reflecting kindness and courtesy:

- 1 Leaving no trace of litter or dog waste
- 2 Keeping dogs leashed outside of designated off-leash areas
- 3 Staying on the trails — on foot, paw or bike
- 4 Listening for other people on trails and making space for them to pass

The concept came about in 2021 when Clean Parks volunteers collected data on the volume and scope of dog waste in your park. This data informed an educational campaign to address some of the careless behaviors that were seen. Along with survey responses from park visitors in the Blue Hills and Middlesex Fells, this information helped us understand where and how to address the problem. DCR, Earthwise Aware and consultants from Denterlein created the Be Kind! campaign.

You will see the Be Kind! message in many ways. These include website postings; emails to members; social media messaging; information sessions; and new events and games. Watch for signs in critical areas of the park that encourage kind behavior. And this spring, volunteers will collect fresh data on these efforts.

Our call to action is simple: Be Kind. Let's safeguard our parks for ourselves and generations to come. By nurturing a collective sense of care for one another and our precious wild outdoor spaces, we can forge a future where the joys of these natural wonders are shared and cherished by all."

—FOBH Board member Carina Bandle, a driving force for Be Kind!

Be Kind!

Winter Fest RETURNS

Whatever the weather on February 27, come spend some time with old friends and make new ones during this annual crowd-pleaser. You'll find the fun right at the foot of Great Blue Hill at the Blue Hills Ski Area lodge. Do some downhill skiing (discounted tickets!) or if skiing isn't your thing, enjoy the great indoors and lively music from band Songs for Ceilidh, a New England favorite. Bring the kids for some arts and crafts and help crown the next chili-cookoff winner after tasting recipes from local restaurants. Many thanks to sponsor Orchard Cove who makes this event possible!



Join us!

Tuesday, February 27
5 to 8pm
Blue Hills Ski Area Lodge
4001 Washington Street, Canton

HOSTED BY
The Friends of the Blue Hills and
the Blue Hills Ski Area.

For more information, email
info@FriendsoftheBlueHills.org
or pre-register on our website.

A Time for Celebration and Transition

The annual celebration on October 19 at the Canton Town Club was a special one. It was a time to recognize the many people who support the Blue Hills. It was also a chance to say goodbye to beloved Executive Director Judy Lehrer Jacobs and say hello to six new members of the Board of Trustees.

The evening keynote was delivered by DCR Commissioner Brian Arrigo, who took office in April 2023. His inspiring message emphasized promoting public health and equity through Massachusetts public lands, including the Blue Hills. Two special people also were honored:

Rosa Zhang, leader of Rosa's Early Risers, who can be found hiking in the Hills on any given day at 6:30am! Rosa's hikes introduce novice and experienced hikers alike to the Blue Hills.

Bob Vogel, hiker of all 125 miles in the park multiple times (making him a member of the 125-mile club), who also donates countless hours to trail maintenance in the park.

Senator Walter Timilty presented Bob and Rosa with special certificates to thank them for preserving and protecting the reservation and sharing their love of the park with others.

The evening also included dinner, drinks, and the big reveal of the winner of this year's dinner raffle, as well as the winning bids for the popular online auction. Many thanks to the local businesses and people who donated to the event and to those who organized the auction to help raise funds for taking care of the park you so love.



President of the Board of Trustees Matt Panucci congratulates Rosa Zhang for her service to the Blue Hills in the past year.

Annual Celebration Sponsors

Blue Hills Champion: Sunrise Erectors

Skyline Trail Supporter: Quincy Auto Auction

Great Blue Guardian: Dedham Savings

Buck Hill Benefactors: Barbara Alavi, Beth Israel Deaconess Milton, Dempsey Insurance, The Dobrindt Family, Farley Sullivan, Gray, Gray & Gray, LLP, Trillium

Hancock Hill Heroes: Adele Rothman, Civic Financial Group, Fruit Center Marketplace, Poirier Sales & Service Corp.

Fowl Meadow Fan: Advisors Living



Senator Timilty, outgoing Executive Director Judy Lehrer Jacobs and keynote speaker and DCR commissioner Brian Arrigo.



Members mingle in front of the online auction display

Elevating Legacies

The Skyline Society's Newest Member

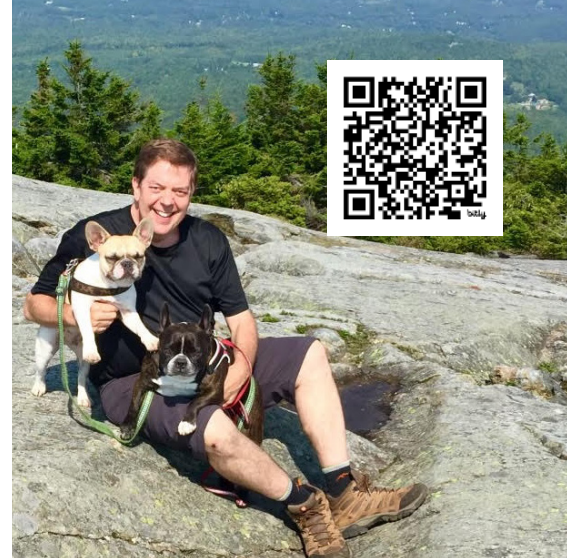
Bruce Dezube has been enjoying our local treasure for over 40 years. "The Blue Hills are one of the greatest gifts to the city of Boston," he says, "It's amazing to me that within 20 minutes of where I live, I have 125 miles of trails." His favorite ways to experience the park are Skyline hikes with his dogs, finding new trails with hiking groups, and long family walks with his wife, three sons (who all learned to ski in the Blue Hills), and four young grandchildren.

This year, Bruce joined the Skyline Society by including the Friends of the Blue Hills in his will. He hopes that his decision will motivate others to do the same. His generosity helps ensure that the Blue Hills are always protected. He says "I feel an obligation to give back, a duty to

society. I especially like to give back to organizations where I have a personal stake. The Friends of the Blue Hills is not just an organization that's worthy; it's one that speaks to me." Bruce has been a cancer doctor (oncologist) for more than 30 years and sees people during the toughest and most vulnerable times in their lives. Hikes in the Blue Hills and a connection to the outdoors often help balance that work environment.

For Bruce's recent birthday, his kids asked him what he wanted, and his answer was simple: a family hike.

Let your final story be the one you choose, starting with this simple guide to joining the Skyline Society. Scan the QR code or go to friendsofthebluehills.org/donate-in-your-will.



Bruce in the Blue Hills with his hiking companions: French Bulldogs Brandeis (left) and Bessie (right).

Sunset Hike Brings Out Hundreds

On a summerlike day more suited to green grass than fall foliage, the 2023 Sunset Hike was a major success. More than 400 Friends and other fans of the Blue Hills leisurely climbed the Red Dot Trail up one side



of Great Blue Hill, guided by Friends staff and volunteers. They were rewarded by not only spectacular views but also a brilliant display of colors from a late leaf-peeping season. And who can forget the gorgeous sunset.

The event was extra festive thanks to the treats and cider provided by Orchard Cove

and music from Milton-based band Owl Haus, courtesy of the Canton Cultural Council. Fortified by what they saw, heard, and tasted, friends, families, and friendly dogs made their way down the ski slope side of Great Blue just past sunset, guided by the lights lining the ski area. According to Julia Milot, Volunteer Coordinator, "The Sunset Hike is always one of the Friends' signature events, and this year's was one of the best yet."

Thank You to Our Partners

We value your kindness and contributions and look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Canton Cultural Council
Colonial Road Runners
Dedham Savings
FM Generator
Liberty Mutual Group Inc.
Milton Garden Club
Morgan Stanley – The McGowan Group
Orchard Cove
Public Lands
REI Co-Op
UL Solutions

YES! I want to keep the Blue Hills trails and forests healthy for hiking and other recreational activities.

Please use my gift to maintain the trails, improve the habitat, and preserve native species against invasives to keep the wildlife and the woods safe for all visitors.

Enclosed is my gift of \$_____

Return this coupon with your check to: Friends of the Blue Hills
PO Box 416
Milton, MA 02186

Or give securely online at:
friendsofthebluehills.org/support