



Pascommuck post

Summer 2013

The Save Open Space in Our Neighborhood Campaign



Last year PCT embarked on a campaign to help fund the purchase and construction of trails at our two new properties at Pomeroy Meadows and Brickyard Brook. To date we have raised nearly half of our \$57,000 goal from a large number of generous donations. We are continuing to look for additional funding at the same time we are moving forward with constructing trails at both properties.

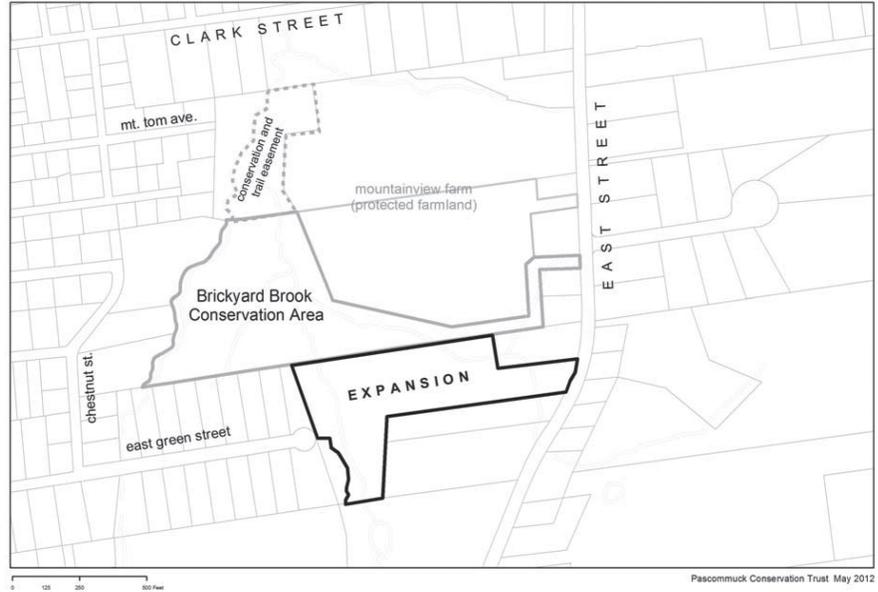
The theme of our campaign – Save Open Space in Our Neighborhood – was inspired by the realization that these two new property additions will be providing public open space to neighborhoods that currently have few options. As a conservation organization, one of PCT's main missions is to provide opportunities for the public to get out in nature. Our property additions do just that – preserving land and providing trail access within walking distance of hundreds of new families in Easthampton.

In addition to providing outdoor public access to new families, the Save Open Space in Our Neighborhood campaign has drawn new PCT supporters from these neighborhoods. In the Pomeroy Meadows neighborhood we have more than 30 new families supporting our efforts. Part of this success is due to the house fundraising parties that were held over the past year. At a recent meeting with neighbors at Popcorn Noir, we were encouraged to embark on three new fundraising efforts: 1. allowing people to make monthly contributions, 2. providing opportunities for people to “buy” portions of the construction materials for the projects, and 3. have neighborhood block parties. We do have the ability to do monthly contributions on our website – www.pctland.org. News about the other efforts will be coming soon.

Meanwhile, plans are progressing for both Pomeroy Meadows and Brickyard brook. The trail plan for Pomeroy Meadows includes a series of steps, bridges, bench cuts, and a viewing platform of the Manhan River. It will be a unique trail system for PCT and all of Easthampton. The topography of the land dictated the building of these structures and PCT hired a company

public access

Brickyard Brook Conservation Area Expansion



named Conservation Works to spearhead the trail construction which is beyond our ability to construct. As of this writing, we are currently seeking permits and hope to begin construction this summer. We will be looking for local neighbors to help maintain the property and post boundary signs.

At Brickyard Brook, PCT has developed a plan in conjunction with landscape architect Bill Canon to provide a universal access trail on the newly acquired property that joins with the existing trail system. This is a very ambitious effort that includes a new parking lot on East Street. PCT has applied for grant funding for the project and will provide updates in the upcoming future.

Doug Wheat



***If you would like to help with this campaign,
please contact Doug Wheat at 413 .433 .3332 or
doug_wheat@yahoo.com.***

Tall Tales *From the Trails*

Lest everyone forgets that the Trust has properties to maintain, I'd better give an update on what we've been doing out there in some of our parcels. No doubt about it, 2012 was no picnic regarding working out in the forests and fields – drought, extreme heat and humidity... and buggy! Nevertheless, with several work sessions, our crew of dedicated volunteers managed to accomplish an amazing amount of tasks.

Mutter Field, a recent addition to our Brickyard Brook Conservation Area, posed a particularly mind-blowing challenge. A myriad of branches, large and small, blown down by the freakish snowstorm of Halloween 2011, cluttered its borders and the floor of a nearby grove where we plan on installing benches. Adding insult upon injury, copious amounts of invasive vines and shrubs had grown over the debris, and the perimeter of the meadow was being encroached upon by an army of vegetation. No choice but to hack through this mess using a chain saw with raw abandon. Pole saws, pole pruners, loppers, and an orchard ladder also were needed. Other lovely chores involved weed whacking a path around the edge of the field as part of a new trail system in this section, and cutting up and clearing away a few large trees that had fallen over neighboring properties.

Our Old Trolley Line Conservation Area near Clapp and Lovefield Streets posed another daunting challenge. The entrance trail from Lovefield Street was badly overgrown, and the old farm road connecting our meadows to the field owned and farmed by the Pomeroy family of Westfield was just plain impassable. Tall weeds, bittersweet and grape vines, honeysuckle and autumn olive shrubs – they all seemed to be snickering at us. These were the bullies of the woods, and we knew we were in for a big fight here. By the time we cleared through half of this jungle, winter was approaching, so we gathered our wounded and dead, vowing to return in the spring. On a hot, humid day this June, we did return to the battleground, miraculously opening up the last segment within two hours. Hah! Goodbye to bad rubbish.

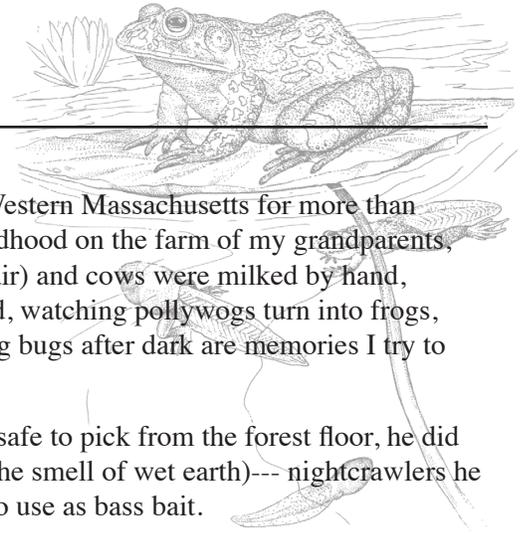
I'd better stop with the horror stories for now, and won't even mention some of the other tasks we had to deal with, such as survey work, installing boundary pins, hiring Richard Jaescke to brush hog our two new fields, contending with a brush fire and illegal campsites, and installing new birdhouses. I will mention, however, that we are pushing to start building trails at our two new purchases, Mutter Field and Pomeroy Meadows, as soon as permitting is complete and funding is secured.

Stay tuned for more tall tales. As the old cowpoke song goes, "*Happy trails to you, until we meet again.*"

John Bator



Connections



For me, it's all about connections. I have lived away from my roots in Western Massachusetts for more than 50 years. Yet deeply embedded in my psyche are the memories of a childhood on the farm of my grandparents, where horses pulled the hay wagons (the smell of freshly cut hay in the air) and cows were milked by hand, and backs bent over to harvest the garden. Digging clams out of the mud, watching pollywogs turn into frogs, splashing and bathing in the rivers in the summer time, catching lightning bugs after dark are memories I try to recapture for my grandkids today.

While I wish my father had taught me his knowing of those mushrooms safe to pick from the forest floor, he did teach me to pick nightcrawlers with a flashlight after an evening's rain (the smell of wet earth)--- nightcrawlers he would then sell in his bait shop. There I learned that crawfish are great to use as bass bait.

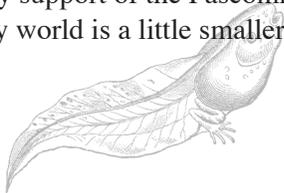
My mother's garden could have been on the town's garden tour, if there had been one. Everything she planted could rival pictures in garden catalogs. During one of her visits to my home in West Virginia she noticed the cow piles in the field next door and by the dark of night she scooped them over the fence and into my son's little red wagon and into my garden. "Fertilizer," she announced. Mother taught us there is value in almost everything. She would save fat by-products from cooking and when she'd gathered enough, turned them into soap for laundering our clothes. She became a legend at the town dump where she would usually take away more than she brought, knowing someone could use her salvage.

I remember sunsets peaking from behind Maple Street School, swimming at the Boat House, and the hot summer nights with a pillow over my head to ward off the mosquitoes buzzing near my ear. I remember many scenes of winter: skating on Williston Pond or Daley Field, walking to EHS in the cold with boots chafing the back of my legs, hoping for that 6:00 a.m. double blast from the fire station signaling no school, and looking into the branches for the first signs of spring.

My childhood was a total sensory experience with minimal invasion from TV and telephones. Today technology is everywhere making it difficult to tune into our sensory information. Yet technology gives us the opportunity to be more connected with one another and that takes me back to my opening statement. It is all about our connections. As my mother shared with me her experiences with the Pascommuck Land Trust...the project on East Street, the plant sale fundraisings, the beautification of the garden at the ponds, the trail at the brickyard, the dredging of the Nashawanuck Pond, for example...I wanted to be a part of it too. Helping in my small way to support the Pascommuck Trust helps me to feel connected to my past, to my family in Western Massachusetts, and to preserve the beauty and memories of my childhood home.

Kariny in 1929 came up with the notion of six degrees of separation. Kariny believed that the modern world was 'shrinking' due to this ever-increasing connectedness of human beings. He suggested that despite great physical distances between the globe's individuals, the growing density of human networks made the actual social distance far smaller. On January 18, 2007, Kevin Bacon launched SixDegrees.org, a web site that builds on the popularity of the "small world phenomenon" to create a charitable social network and inspire giving to charities online. It was his hope that this web site would be a force for good by bringing a social conscience to social networking.*

My support of the Pascommuck Trust is about maintaining my connections. Those connections help me feel that my world is a little smaller---maybe just a couple of degrees of separation from my home at the foot of Mt. Tom.



*Kathryn Wiernasz Burgess
Charleston, West Virginia*

**From Wikipedia.*

“Get Outside”

On June 8th at 5pm, a new exhibit opened at Nash Gallery on Cottage Street in Easthampton. The exhibit is called “Get Outside: Artists and Open Space” It is a benefit exhibit and silent auction to improve trails and access to Pascommuck Conservation Trust properties. Marlies Stoddard, the owner of Nash Gallery, had the idea of showing the relationship between open space and the arts. She said “both have a great impact on quality of life and make our community more attractive; as our ‘home town’, an investment location or a destination”. As a business owner and resident, Marlies is one of Easthampton arts and community’s biggest fans.

Marlies was living abroad for several years and was introduced to the Pascommuck Conservation Trust at our twice yearly plant sales. Her mother, Mai Stoddard has long been a supporter of the Trust and a loyal plant sale customer. Marlies has been an invaluable supporter of the Trust in a variety of capacities; she has hosted celebrations, helped publicize events and sells calendars from a local photographer for a PCT fundraiser. As a resident of Easthampton, she frequently enjoys walking the Trust properties and spreads word about them to others who are new in town or just visiting.

The dozen artists that submitted work for the exhibit were encouraged to incorporate the nature/outside theme. A variety of art was chosen; collage, watercolors, oil paintings, photography, and sculpture. The bidding on silent auction items ends on July 6th while the benefit exhibit stays on display through August. The exhibit also serves as an educational platform for the Pascommuck Conservation Trust. Maps of the properties are on display, promotional material is available and proceeds from sales benefit the PCT. Please stop in to Nash Gallery and see the “Get Outside” exhibit which showcases some of the Valley’s greatest artistic talents and benefits PCT!

Dawn Ackley



recognition

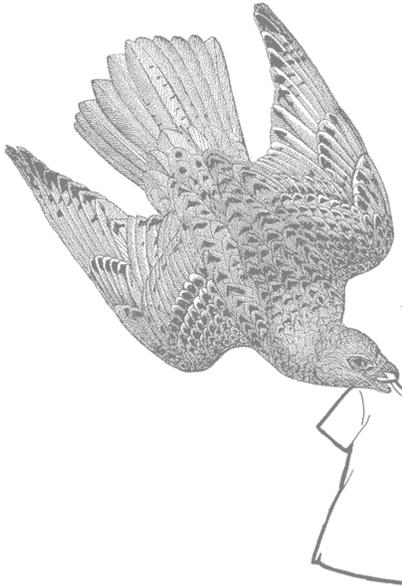
Congratulations to Rebecca Aubrey Recipient of the Ed Dwyer Scholarship Award

“If there’s one thing that I’ve always had a passion for, it would be the environment. Whether it’s the ocean or the woods, there is nothing on this Earth that I care more about. This fall I will be attending the University of New Haven and studying my favorite subject, Marine Biology. I plan on working towards my Master’s Degree and possibly pursuing a Ph.D. By studying Marine Biology I will be able to do my part in protecting our environment. This scholarship will help me fulfill my dreams. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.”

A “T” for PCT

Recently, I became aware of an interesting and innovative fundraising opportunity. One of those - *nothing ventured, nothing gained* things that seems like a good fit for my skills and the Trust’s needs.

A Rhode Island based company, Teespring, has created a no risk, no upfront cost way for organizations to raise money by selling t-shirts online. It’s appealing because they handle all the payment processing, printing, sizing, shipping, etc. that would normally be our responsibility if we did it on our own. Oh, and instead of the \$300/year cost Teespring charges for nonprofits, thanks to our affiliation with TechSoup, a company that gets tech deals for nonprofits, we paid only \$10!



Here’s how it works:

Step one – Design and Consensus

Using my artwork/photos, and in concert with Teespring’s design team, I will/soon be creating a half dozen mock-up shirt designs. I will present those to the Board and they will vote for their favorite, choose preferred styles/materials, set a goal and decide on a price.

Step Two – Launch Campaign

I will work with a Teespring staff person and we will create a campaign web page where the shirts will be marketed and can be ordered.

Step Three - Get the Word Out

Once the first two steps are completed, PCT will spread the word on how/where people can buy our shirts. We will do this via email, on our web site and Facebook page (Twitter anyone?), by word of mouth to friends and friends of friends, press releases, airplanes with banners and a flock of carrier pigeons. Well, most of those.

On our campaign web page, supporters can pre-order shirts towards our goal. Pre-ordering is free. Buyers will only be charged if the goal is reached. Of course, we expect the goal will be exceeded by quite a bit, owing to the anticipated beauty and desirability of these shirts. For those of you who remember the logo t-shirts we sold in the past, you’ll be in for a pleasant surprise, I believe. Perhaps the most effective advertising will happen once people start wearing them in public. When the campaign concludes, Teespring will send PCT a check for the profit.

This fundraising technique is known as “crowdfunding” and has been used online for the past few years as a way to raise money for a wide variety of projects and causes. It taps into the enormous popularity of online social media. I’m looking forward to creating the shirts, the campaign and to seeing lots of you sporting these limited edition fashion statements.

Thanks, as always for your support!

Marty Klein

Volunteers and New Members Needed

The Trust is looking for new members. If you are interested in joining the PCT and/or simply volunteering your time for various work parties doing cleanup and trail maintenance, please contact Dawn Ackley at dawnackley@charter.net.

A Friend to Pascommuck and all of Easthampton!

If you looked up Community Spirit in Wikipedia, I'm pretty sure you'd find the name Jean-Pierre Pasche. From donating framing for fund raising auctions to sponsoring art contests for the community, Jean-Pierre's efforts have touched many people and organizations in Easthampton. Jean-Pierre has been a wonderful friend of PCT. We were the beneficiaries of his first Eastmont Art Fund Show which involved local artists celebrating nature through their art. Jean-Pierre has very successfully achieved his vision of involving the local community in fundraising for local non profit organizations. He has since had three more Art Fund Shows involving other local non profit organizations, all of which have benefited the community, the local organizations, the artists, and art in Easthampton.

Another example of this is the Art in the Orchard program in collaboration with Park Hill Orchard. Thousands of people walked through the orchards viewing sculptures created by local and regional artists. This achievement was recognized by the Massachusetts Cultural Council who awarded Art in the Orchard one of its three annual Gold Star Awards, out of more than 5000 projects funded annually by local cultural councils statewide. This past year, Jean-Pierre created a calendar with images of Easthampton submitted from local photographers with the proceeds once again benefiting PCT. He is a true friend of Pascommuck Conservation Trust, as well as many other organizations, local artists and Easthampton. Switzerland's loss is Easthampton's gain! Thank you, Jean-Pierre!

Molly Goodwin

The Trust is still looking for a **volunteer treasurer**. If anyone is interested, please contact Shirley Smith at 527-3126

The Trust also needs a **riding lawnmower**. If anyone has one they might want to donate- even if it needs work,- please contact John Bator at 527-3584. It would be greatly appreciated.

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