

A FARM TRANSITION: The Gaudreau Farm on West Street passing to a younger generation

For many of us, our home and land is our single largest asset; financially, and in grounding who we are as a person. When the time is right we want to be sure that the next steward of the land will love it as much as we do. At the same time we often need fair financial compensation.

Achieving all these goals is in the works at the Gaudreau Farm on West Street in New Braintree. The land is beautiful – rich soils run beside the road and over the ridge that overlooks the Winimasset valley. The buildings need repair and updating which will come from the energy and enthusiasm of a young family.

This summer, the East Quabbin Land Trust bought the Gaudreau Farm, paying fair market value for the land, house and outbuildings. We are working with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources to sell an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on about 100 acres of the best soils, all east of the road. Once recorded at the registry, the APR will keep the land in farming, forever.

Through a Request for Proposal process, Ray Waugh was chosen as the next farm steward. Ray grew up in New Braintree, runs his own trucking business, and with his wife and son is looking forward to starting a grass-fed beef operation and cutting hay from the farm.

Right now we are putting the pieces together to sell Ray the farm. The intention is to sell him the house and acreage west of the road this fall and

the land east of the road next year once the APR is approved. Working with the APR program reduces the cost for Ray to purchase the land, making it possible to keep the land as a farm, rather than selling parcels for future houses. It's a real win-win for Ray, the community and the East Quabbin Land Trust to see a young family continue the agricultural heritage of New Braintree and our region.

In his letter of interest to purchase the farm, here is how Ray spoke about himself: "Growing up as I did between two family farms, I have always known farming and been interested in farming. I'm not sure at which farm I learned to drive tractors, but it was at a very young age. I very much enjoy trucking, machines, and equipment. My circle of friends involves many farmers. My exposure to all these people during my youth to this present day has shaped who I am."

Ray's parents run the Christmas tree farm in the center of New Braintree that his grandfather started decades ago. "For years, I said I would cut down every Christmas tree and turn the family farm into a hay farm again, as a joke of course, just to rattle my old man. With such a farming background and experience from my youth and upbringing; farming is in my blood."

Having a sense of humor and sense of community is critical to being successful in business, and farming is no different. It's been a pleasure working with Ray and Cassie and we look forward to a successful transition!

I wonder what Ray and Cassie will call the farm!! ■



Ray and Cassie Waugh with Henry in front of the barn that they are about to purchase on West Street in New Braintree.

MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



Pigs! Reading about raising livestock, everyone says that pigs are smart and social creatures. That’s been true based on my experience. My husband and I raised pigs for the past couple of summers. There was always at least one great escape where they figured out that the fencing wasn’t secured or the electricity didn’t bite that much. They were fun to watch scampering around and did a great job clearing the undergrowth wherever we put them.

Last year, the land trust began the process of reclaiming the Coxhall Kitchen Garden. Most of the trees were recently cut and we knew the other plants – mostly invasive plants like multiflora rose and Japanese barberry – would take off reaching for the sky. Why not harness some animal energy to control the regrowth and enjoy pork chops and bacon in the fall? I wondered out loud if anyone wanted to raise pigs inside the Kitchen Garden. After all, it was a pretty perfect set up with high stone walls all around and only one opening.

There were six other takers, making it possible to be responsible just one a day a week to check their feed and water. The fact that there was no water source nearby was overcome by trucking it in and pumping the water onto a trough set on top of the wall that gravity fed into a trough on the ground. We bought grain from the Coop to supplement all the greenery.

We started with four piglets and watched them grow. Unfortunately, four piglets weren’t enough to control the vegetation we had, so we moved onto the next idea. How about breeding two of our females? Then we might have as many as twenty pigs for the second season. That should be enough pig pressure to control the growth, right? At the end of winter I borrowed a big boar in the hopes the two sows would get pregnant. I know he tried, but ultimately we waited, and waited, and waited. No piglets. Meanwhile, the wild lettuce and rose bushes grew over 5 feet tall. The meat was great but our vegetation control goals weren’t met.

Onto the next plan. Weed whackers work, too, and we got everything cut during our September workday, though it’s much more fun to watch pigs in action. Lesson learned as well, that raising animals brings many benefits but the outcomes aren’t always predictable. I’m grateful that my land trust colleagues are willing to try different strategies for stewarding the land, and learn as we go. ■

THE EAST QUABBIN LAND TRUST

works to foster the sustainable use of our natural and historic resources for the benefit of all generations through the conservation and stewardship of the farmlands, woodlands and waters in our region of Massachusetts.

As a non-profit organization the East Quabbin Land Trust envisions a regional community that continues to care for its natural environment and supports a sustainable local economy, ensuring a high quality of life for generations to come.

We welcome your thoughts, articles, and photographs on events in our area. For more information about the land trust, to become a member, or request a change of address, please contact us at:

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Visit our website at www.EQLT.org
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GINNIE REED:

Combining a passion for running and the outdoors

By Cynthia Henshaw

Often we feel that our childhood influences the rest of our lives; our likes and dislikes, passions and pursuits, and general outlook on life. This connection is definitely true for Ginnie Reed.

"My grandfather instilled in me at an early age that we need to be good stewards of the land. He'd take me and my friends on many hikes or waterfall hunts, thus spreading his love of nature across the generations. He was very civic minded, serving for many years on the Conservation Commission and Board of Health of his town in the Berkshires." Spending time with her grandfather and hiking the Berkshires wooded slopes during her youth led Ginnie to seek ways combine her growing passion for exercise and the outdoors.

Ginnie sets lofty goals for herself. "I started running in high school and have enjoyed running ever since. It's a great way to relax after a rough day, to find a constructive outlet for whatever is happening."

"In high school I decided to run the Boston Marathon, and have run the marathon at least ten times." Ginnie took her passion and running ability to the next level by raising money for charity through these runs. "It started by raising money for a person who needed the financial help, and then expanded to other causes."

Ginnie was in on the planning of the Station Loop Ramble since the very beginning, four years ago. Her experience running races – big and small – helped shape EQLT's Station Loop Ramble from its name to the prizes on the table! Ginnie thoughtfully approaches many local businesses knowing that runners in the Ramble also want to support local businesses.

When she's not running, Ginnie can be found at the Hardwick Elementary School. "I am a Special Education teacher. I love reading and sharing that with students. Reading unlocks things for kids, but you need to be flexible about how to get kids to read. I work to instill in them that they need to persevere through challenges. Just because something is hard don't give up. I want to be a good role model for my students, so I talk about my challenges with running and how important it is to get out there and run!"

"Another project at school looked at wind, water and bridges. It was all hands-on learning where the students were given the materials and given the time to figure out what worked and what didn't. The upper grades made wind turbines that could generate enough electricity to turn on a light bulb. They took their supplies and redesigned the turbine to make it work better. It was great because we learned right along with the kids."

"A good teacher guides the students, and I know that our students are the best teachers. These kids hold the future and we want them to explore each problem until they find the solution."

Another lofty goal Ginnie set for herself is to join the 46er club; that is to hike all 46 mountains over 4,000 feet in the Adirondacks. "So far I've hiked 10 of them. I've been going to the Adirondacks for 16 years and enjoy waterfall hikes too." There are lots of great places for Ginnie to discover, so you can bet that she will continue making trips to the Adirondacks.

Exploring the outdoors locally is also important to her. Ginnie was a scout leader for about twelve years, first in the Tiger Scouts and then as an assistant Cub Scout leader. Her son became

an Eagle Scout after making a handicapped-accessible ramp. Instilling a love of the outdoors in her daughter and son was important. Now they all take trips to the mountains and the ocean, getting outdoors and hiking.

Says Ginnie "Helping with the Station Loop Ramble is one tiny way of giving back. Raising money through the prizes and running the race is one step towards encouraging good stewardship of the land that I can do locally. I enjoy taking care of the land, preserving it and making sure that places outdoors are reserved for our enjoyment into the future. If we teach those around us to take care of the land and all that is in it, then it stands a chance to be around for many more generations to enjoy as well!"

The Station Loop Ramble is one event that does all that. Thank you Ginnie for being part of a tremendous race event that combines your passions for running, the outdoors and giving to others! ■



*Ginnie Reed at the home stretch of the Station Loop Ramble
5 mile road and trail race that incorporates the
Mass Central Rail Trail in New Braintree and Hardwick*

FOURTH ANNUAL STATION LOOP RAMBLE - October 11, 2015

On a spectacular fall day, we hosted the fourth annual Station Loop Ramble race. The morning kicked off with a Kid's One Mile run, followed by the 5-Mile Classic and 5K Run/Walk. Each race incorporated a section of the Mass Central Rail Trail in New Braintree and Hardwick. The races started and finished at the former New Braintree train station site at the intersection of Hardwick and West Roads.

Please join us at the race next year on October 9, 2016!



We appreciate donations from the following businesses for runner awards:

- Clover Hill Country Store
- Hardwick Farmer's Coop Exchange
- Hardwick Vineyard & Winery
- Janine's Frostee
- Mexicali Restaurant
- Ruggles Hill Creamery
- Salem Cross Inn
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- The Centered Place
- Workshop 13



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Please support these businesses and thank them for underwriting the Station Loop Ramble!

INTRODUCING RESHMA PATEL

This month we welcome a new MassLIFT AmeriCorps member, Reshma Patel, as the new Service Learning Coordinator for the East Quabbin Land Trust. Reshma is originally from North Carolina where she recently graduated with a degree in Zoology from North Carolina State University. She is passionate about wildlife conservation and hopes to incorporate her background in service with her interests to inspire kids about land conservation and engaging with the environment.

Reshma has been an active community service member since her early childhood when she got involved with service through community and highway clean-up crews. She is excited about the opportunity to motivate a diverse group of volunteers and community members to learn about stewardship and conservation. As a strong believer in getting people outside to appreciate the environment and become involved with their local community efforts, she encourages everyone to take advantage of the upcoming year's events.

Reshma's undergraduate career has raised her awareness of environmental issues and further fueled her passion for wanting to make a significant contribution to the conservation effort by motivating people to take responsibility for the earth's future. She has conducted observational studies on indigenous wildlife and domestic animals, designed a theoretical zoo that functions as a conservation facility and incorporated the mandated ethical regulations for wildlife captivity including husbandry and enrichment techniques as well as educational opportunities for the general public. Through her senior year Capstone of Zoology: AnthroZoology course, she designed and conducted a study in collaboration with a small group of her peers to determine motivational experiences in the lives of a variety of professionals in the conservation field in order to apply these findings to inspire future generations to engage with nature and propel the conservation field forward. The courses she took prepared her for the conceptual aspects associated with the field and set her on her path in the exciting field of conservation.

She found her specific passion for wildlife conservation during a study abroad trip to India for Wildlife Management and Conservation. Spending time in the national parks and conservation centers for tigers, antelopes, elephants, sloth bears, and other wildlife species inspired her to pursue opportunities that incorporated

sustainable land use in order to accommodate the needs of people and nature alike.

Through her time here as Service Learning Coordinator Reshma hopes to accomplish many projects. She will engage with the Hardwick Youth Center every week to complete projects and inspire the kids to look at nature, conservation, and community in new ways. She hopes to continue her predecessors' work on the Gilbertville Fitness Trail by attracting more attention through informational brochures, instituting a Fitness Challenge, and involving the surrounding community.



Reshma Patel with an elephant during her coursework in India.

Reshma will be collaborating with the North Brookfield Youth Center to host parts of the Youth's Sumer Camp at Wendemuth Meadow Preserve. She hopes to continue and expand the reach of East Quabbin Land Trust's High School Internship and Volunteer Program by reaching out to North Brookfield Jr./Sr. High School, Ware High School, and continuing the program with Quabbin Regional High School. She will head EQLT's involvement in the development of a trail between the North Brookfield Town Forest and Wendemuth Meadow and the interpretive brochure and signage along the trail. She will be involved in the work at Frohloff Farm and other events by the EQLT. She hopes to draw more attention to the events along the Mass Central Rail Trail such as Family Fun Day, the annual Station Loop Ramble, and others. She is excited to begin her service here at EQLT

and believes that this position is an incredible immersion into the field and a significant stepping-stone in her career pathway.

In her free time Reshma enjoys dancing, reading, and wildlife viewing. She is also an active member of a not-for-profit group that benefits the Muscular Dystrophy Association by hosting annual talent shows, dance competitions, and small scale events to raise money.

Her future plans include continuing her education by obtaining her Master's degree and pursuing a career in wildlife care and research concentrating in conservation. She wants her career to impact how other people view and interact with nature. "I want to make a significant contribution in the conservation effort by voicing the concerns of all those that have not had a say in where the world is headed. I feel a responsibility towards ensuring equality for wildlife and would like to inspire others about the care that nature deserves." ■

FARM CONSERVATION BUYER SOUGHT

This beautiful 235-acre farm is available for purchase from the East Quabbin Land Trust to a farmer or farm family interested in exploring their agricultural dreams in Petersham, Massachusetts. The ideal farmer will manage a diversified farm, including use of the wooded acres, to serve the local and regional needs. The desired farm enterprise will maintain the traditional view from East Street across fields onto the wooded slopes of Chimney Hill.

The farm will be protected with a conservation restriction, held by the Town of Petersham Conservation Commission, that promotes active agricultural use of the farm, forest management, protection of water quality and wildlife habitat. No walking trails currently exist on the property, but the conservation restriction allows public access for passive recreation. A single-family home site is available either near the barn on East Street or along Quaker Drive. The successful buyer can choose either location.

This farmstead represents an effort by the East Quabbin Land Trust to keep farms affordable and accessible for farmers to grow food and other agricultural



products. The East Quabbin Land Trust has assisted numerous families in transitioning their farms and land to the next generation or farm family since 1994.

The East Quabbin Land Trust seeks an individual or family wanting to purchase this historic farm. Proposals can be submitted before 5 pm on November 9, 2015. For more information, contact Cynthia at chenshaw@EQLT.org. ■

SARAH BRODEUR: Regional Conservation Coordinator, MassConn Partnership

My name is Sarah Brodeur, and as a member of the MassLIFT-AmeriCorps 2015-2016 service program, I am proud and eager to work in land protection and to serve communities of the south-central region of Massachusetts. My desk is next to Reshma's at the East Quabbin Land Trust's office on Ridge Road. I am a recent graduate of the Environmental Conservation department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, in which I received a Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Biology and Conservation Ecology and a minor in Biology. This formal education provided me with a general knowledge base of conservation ecology and animal identification, and even the opportunity to teach the plant identification course, but I still felt as though I was missing something vital. After ruminating over these thoughts I realized that I needed to engage myself in the conservation community, and began interning for the Palmer Conservation Commission three years ago. This wonderful internship opportunity eventually progressed into a full membership position, and since being appointed to the Commission I work with landowners and various professionals to implement the Wetlands Protection Act.

As a life-long Massachusetts resident, I truthfully attest my love and respect for the natural environment to my experiences of growing up and pursuing an

education in the Pioneer Valley.

Serving at the MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership as Regional Conservation Coordinator is the ideal opportunity to contribute to the conservation effort within the south-central region of Massachusetts, a region that has retained a great deal of wilderness yet remains threatened by development interests. Over the course of the 2015-2016 service year, I will implement six capacity building projects to facilitate the land protection efforts in this area. I will make myself available to municipal boards and volunteer organizations, such as Conservation Commissions and Open Space Committees, to enhance the ability of these groups to function efficiently and do conservation work. I also plan to lead trail construction efforts, land stewardship groups, and forest walks throughout the course of this year. My overall goal while serving for the MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership is to get individuals interested in and conversing about land protection and conservation. ■



East Quabbin LAND TRUST



Conserving the land, Preserving our heritage

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UPCOMING EVENTS...

OCTOBER...

Saturday, October 31st, 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Trail of Treats, Gilbertville Fitness Trail, Gilbertville: Halloween in Hardwick includes a Trail of Treats this year, where youngsters starting at the Town Office building can walk the sidewalk to the Gilbertville Fitness Trail gathering treats along the way. The East Quabbin Land Trust is sponsoring the stop at the Fitness Trail. From there a shuttle will take participants up to Eagle Hill School for a movie. If you'd like to volunteer to pass out candy or donate a bag of candy for this stop please contact Reshma at ServiceLearning@EQLT.org.

NOVEMBER...

Saturday, November 7th, starting at 9:00 AM

Fall Work Day at Mandell Hill Barre Road, Hardwick - We will focus efforts cleaning up the knoll by removing the year's worth of brush in the area. Bring brush cutters, safety gear and gloves.

DECEMBER...

Friday, December 4th, 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Holiday Open House, EQLT Offices, 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick: Visit with family, friends and neighbors at the land trust office as the days get shorter. Hors d'oeuvres or drinks to share are welcomed, but not required. Please join the fun!

JANUARY...

Friday, January 1st, 10:00 AM

New Year's Day Ski (or Hike), Mass Central Rail Trail, Depot Road, New Braintree: Start the year off with an outdoor adventure on the rail trail. Bring your family and friends too! Dress for the weather and bring boots, skis or snowshoes.