

Planting FREE Trees – Making Positive Impact

By Cynthia Henshaw

At a recent tree planting event in Ware's Grenville Park we discovered that planting a tree is not just digging a hole and plunking in the tree. Most importantly, the tree shouldn't be planted too deeply or too shallow. While your partner is digging the hole, you start looking for the "root collar", the area where the tree trunk widens out into the root system. At the base of the tree you'll need to gently pull away the soil and fine roots to find where the root collar actually is. Ideally, the root collar lands at ground level once planted.

The width of the hole is more flexible. For the trees we planted, which came in pots as big as your arms can wrap around, the hole had to be three feet wide or so. Wider is fine. Removing the sod is important to decrease the chance that grass will grow close to the tree, making it necessary to mow closely. Using machinery near trees can scratch and damage the young bark.

We are learning about tree planting because the East Quabbin Land Trust and our partners received funding to plant 1,000 trees in urban neighborhoods in Ware over the next three years. The Opacum Land Trust is focused on planting another 1,000 in Southbridge. The main goal is to increase tree cover to improve public health and mitigate climate change.



Town of Ware's Tree Warden, Josh Kusnierz is working with EQLT Board member Ann Hicks and former AmeriCorps member Haley Hewitt to plant a red maple sapling in Grenville Park, Ware.

The U.S. Forest Service gave the MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership (of which the East Quabbin Land Trust is a member) a Landscape Scale Restoration grant to fund the tree planting. The Commonwealth Department of Conservation and Recreation is matching this effort by purchasing the trees. We've just begun by planting 22 trees in Grenville Park.

You can help too! First, by helping to get the word out to the residents and homeowners in the target planting zone which runs from Church Street to Greenwich Road, and Highland/North Street to Laurel Drive. The trees are free to homeowners, who are asked to give the trees 15 gallons of water each week for the first two years. We are starting to take requests for free trees now, in anticipation of a busy spring planting season. Homeowners can meet with an arborist this fall by calling the EQLT office at (413) 477-8229.

Second, with grant funds we will hire a seasonal tree planting crew. Ware residents are encouraged to apply to earn some money and make a positive impact in your neighborhood. Crew members will be trained, so no direct experience is necessary.

Plus, we'll be hosting more public planting events in the spring. Arbor Day, Friday, April 24th, will be here soon, please let us know if you'd like to be involved in planting trees! ■

SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF TREES

COOL THE PLANET

Trees counter climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide from the air.

CLEAN THE AIR

Trees filter the air by removing dust and absorbing air pollutants.

SAVE MONEY

Shade trees in your neighborhood can cut summer cooling costs by 30-40%.

PROVIDE OXYGEN

Trees release oxygen for us to breathe.

IMPROVE HEALTH

Kids in tree-lined neighborhoods have lower rates of asthma.

IMPROVE LIFE

Trees beautify neighborhoods and reduce crime, improving the quality of life.

MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



Despite the picture here, this year hasn't been full of pulling llamas. We've celebrated 25 years of land conservation, stewardship and educational programming in many ways. The Forever Farm Tour in July gave people an opportunity to visit farms that are permanently protected from development and are growing food in our region. Despite the intense heat, visitors enjoyed meeting the cows, touring the crops and walking the trails. We expect to host another tour in the near future.

Our 25th anniversary celebration brought 80 people together on Magi's Lawn with a farm-to-table dinner. This event encapsulated so many of our joint values that are epitomized by the legacy of Magi Durham Ziff – the breaking of bread together to build deeper connections and commitment to the land that sustains us, and having fun! In fact, Magi's Lawn hosted lawn games during our October potluck.

Efforts to expand our conserved land base continue, and two initiatives will close before the end of 2019. The first expands the Prince River Preserve in Barre by 94 acres of woods and fields. The land sits between the preserve, the Commonwealth's Prince River Wildlife Management Area and a piece owned by the Town of Barre bridging the gap of conservation lands which are heavily used by wildlife. The second is a generous conservation restriction donation on 85 acres of woods and fields and a headwater stream in West Brookfield. The private landowners will continue to raise their animals and be assured the land remains available for use by future generations.

This summer the Accessible Trail at the Frohloff Farm was built and formally opened on October 17th. Heavy use of this recreational trail began before the parking lot was completed, demonstrating pent up demand for safe, alternative walking trails. One half mile of the Mass Central Rail Trail is incorporated, and the permitting and permission request to expand the Mass Central Rail Trail beyond in both directions is underway. Our hope is to get clearance to move forward in 2020. If you'd like to support this effort, please contact me at chenshaw@EQLT.org.

These and other programs of the East Quabbin Land Trust are only possible because of your participation and support. Thank you for being involved in conserving the land and preserving our heritage. ■

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 farms, woods 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 and adaptable local economy, ensuring a high quality of life for generations to come.

We welcome your thoughts, articles, and photographs. 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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 Hardwick, MA 01037-0005
 413-477-8229
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**Visit our website at www.EQLT.org
 or "Like" us on Facebook!**

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KEN AND PAULA AB AIR: FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD VOLUNTEERS

By Jess Cusworth

It's true to say that Ken and Paula Abair are near and dear to the East Quabbin Land Trust—both in that they are excellent volunteers, and that they live right next door to our organization headquarters on Ridge Road. When I walked over to interview them I was greeted by Paula and a big black lab named Lucy. Ken, Paula, and Lucy welcomed me into their beautiful home, which was built in 1898. Ken and Paula are still relatively new in town, having moved to Hardwick in November of 2018. They couldn't say enough kind things about their new community. They feel right at home in Hardwick.

Ken and Paula met in Worcester in 1969 where they lived in the same building after Ken returned from the PeaceCorps in Venezuela. Ken came back to start a Master's program at Assumption College, and Paula was at Worcester State University earning her degree in mathematics. They'll be celebrating 49 years of marriage this December, during which time they've raised four children and have six grandchildren.

Ken and Paula moved to Hardwick from Sagamore Beach on Cape Cod after living there for thirteen years. They moved out to the Cape to be closer to their daughter and grandchildren. They were drawn to Hardwick last November to be closer to their son Nick, his wife Nicole, and their two children. Nick met Tom Clough, an EQLT Stewardship Committee member, who introduced the family to the land trust.

Ken has retired twice in his life. He was a Spanish teacher for thirty-four years, but upon his retirement from teaching Ken decided that he wanted to continue challenging himself. He then took a job as a Maintenance Director at a camp in southern Plymouth. Ken is now retired for real this time, and he loves spending his days working outside and fixing up their home. Paula works remotely for an accounting firm that she's been with for years. She loves her work and the flexibility that it gives her to enjoy her new surroundings, especially during the summer when work is slower.



Ken and Paula in front of their garden.

The two of them also spend plenty of time volunteering for the land trust. Paula recalls the first time they met everyone at EQLT's annual Holiday Party. "I asked Cynthia to please keep Ken busy. Cynthia laughed and said, 'that won't be hard to do at all!'" Ken certainly is kept busy by the Land Trust. He happily assists with all sorts of projects, ranging

from installing kiosks at trails, painting, weed whacking, and delivering water to our llamas at Mandell Hill. Paula has worked at the newest addition to the Mass Central Rail Trail, on Church Street in Ware, by clearing brush along the trail.

Paula and Ken are both thrilled to call Hardwick their new home. They agree that the sunrises and sunsets here in Hardwick are top-notch. Paula especially loves the trees in the area, and they

both value the peace and quiet of rural life. They've both greatly enjoyed discovering all the flowers that were planted by the previous owners in the wildflower meadow in their backyard. They also discovered a hummingbird nest in one of their bushes, which Paula can watch from the kitchen window. "Between all the perennials and the birds, it's just been amazing," Paula added.

They are extremely appreciative of the wonderful community they've found in Hardwick. Ken and Paula recall one example for why they value this community so much. A few months back at the end of the summer, a tree near their driveway came down during an intense thunderstorm with high winds. "The rain was coming down sideways, and the tree started tipping over. The weight of the tree top just uprooted it," Ken recalls. A massive hickory tree came down on one of their cars, and Nick and Paula were in the driveway when it happened. Cynthia came over that night with her chainsaw and their neighbor, Mark Korzec, offered the use of any of his equipment to clear the tree remnants. They couldn't express their gratitude for this community enough.

A big thank you to Ken and Paula for all that they do! We are grateful to have such generous neighbors and supporters of the East Quabbin Land Trust. ■

EIGHTH ANNUAL STATION LOOP RAMBLE

Sunday, October 14th was an excellent day for a run or walk, with bright blue skies and mild temperatures. All the participants used a portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail in New Braintree and Hardwick as they started and finished at the site of the former New Braintree Rail Station. A hearty THANK YOU to all the volunteers that made this race possible, the sponsoring businesses and others that donated prizes, and to all who participated! We are already looking forward to next year's race. Stay tuned for details! ■



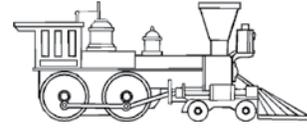
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Ice House Pub, BARRE
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 The Country Store, PETERSHAM

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

EXPLORING YOUTH EDUCATION AT EQLT: STARTING MY SERVICE YEAR

By Sophie Andrews

This month I began my TerraCorps year of service as the Youth Education Coordinator at the East Quabbin Land Trust. I grew up in the Hudson River Valley in New York, in a small rural town. I was introduced to gardening, hiking, circus, and art at a young age, and my interests in the environment, nature writing, and leadership skyrocketed from there. I was enthralled by my AP Environmental Science teacher at New Paltz High School, where I found the class created a multidisciplinary and connective space to engage with the work of the environment with song, art, and collaborative effort. I am mesmerized by the organizational and social pull that organizations such as the EQLT have, and am enriched by their way of bringing people together and keeping them engaged.

My work this year will involve three big Capacity Building Projects. The first, which I am really looking forward to, is the Tree Planting Project (highlighted on the cover of this newsletter). This US Forest Service funded grant is to plant 1,000 trees in urban neighborhoods in Ware. This fall and winter, I will be canvassing and tabling at town events, spreading the word about these FREE trees. I will ask individuals, families and homeowners in the target neighborhoods if they'd like to have one or more trees in their yards. The only commitment is to water and take care of the young trees. I already felt great engaging Ware residents with tree planting education at the Pumpkins and Ponies Festival in Grenville Park earlier this month. That day 22 trees were planted in the park. I am really excited to get my hands dirty and dig some more holes for this project!

My second Capacity Building Project is focused on creating nature-based videos with the region's students. Having gone to Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, I made an ethnographic documentary film about dance, and I am excited to put my filmmaking skills to the test! By teaching kids how to create their own stories through videos, I will get students involved in capturing the world and people around us in video. Narratives will be centered on the natu-

ral world, the way we engage outdoors, and thought provoking ideas. Some students will use these videos as their capstone projects, others as internships or for community service hours. I will also be working with Elicia Andrews, the environmental science teacher at the Quabbin High School, to kick-start the high-school "Envirothon" team. I will teach lessons, be there to support and learn from the students, drive them to events, and generally learn a lot in the process!

I worked with kids at a YMCA summer camp in Claryville, NY, as well as in Amherst, MA, at Multi-Arts. My time at Hampshire College afforded me ample time to work with children too, when I took two courses: Youth/Poets, where I was engaged in literature

on forming and holding space for children's voices to be heard and documented, as well getting involved with kids from City on a Hill, having pen-pals and creating a workshop for reading their poetry. Another class titled "Teaching Art in the Elementary" gave me the opportunity to lead kids in personalized art making. I hope to take this with me when working with the kids at Quabbin, Ware, with the Eagle Hill School, and throughout all of the youth related events I'm running!

Finally, I'm really excited to work with land and art, and to learn new skills. Some of my goals for this year include learning more about trees, how to be a leader, and

successful ways to organize and manage people and events. I will also write a small grant to request funds for an art installation piece at the Mass Central Trail of Hardwick and New Braintree. I will gather young people from throughout the region to create this engaging installation at our most visited property. You'll be hearing more from me as my service year progresses! ■



Sophie putting the finishing touches to a tree planted in Grenville Park, Ware, by creating a berm that helps hold in water and mulch.

LET'S CELEBRATE...

By Rich Cavanaugh

25 years of caring for the East Quabbin Region

On November 22, 1994, a group of Hardwick residents established the organization now known as the East Quabbin Land Trust. 25 years later, over 5,000 acres of fields, woods, and waters are permanently protected because of you and other EQLT supporters and partners.



As East Quabbin Land Trust marks its 25th year, the theme for this year's fall appeal is "Let's Celebrate." Looking back over the last quarter century, there is much to celebrate – thousands of acres of fields, woods, and waters permanently protected; countless opportunities for outdoor recreation; strong community partnerships for small-town vitality; and environmental educational programming for the young and young-at-heart.

The fall season is the most important fund-raising time of the year for the East Quabbin Land

Trust. Typically, well over 50% of the organization's revenue comes in during last quarter. With each new fall also comes the continued challenge to raise the funds necessary to continue the good work that you and others do through the East Quabbin Land Trust. This year is no exception.

Please contribute to the East Quabbin Land Trust. Your gift now will make sure there'll be much more to celebrate in the next 25 years and beyond. ■

NEW DONOR CAMPAIGN

With the next 25 years in mind, EQLT set a goal of attracting 100 new donors to the organization this year. With less than three months left in the year, we still have a ways to go to reach that goal.

If you have never given or haven't made a donation in the last few years, please become a New Donor today. If you know someone who might want to become a new donor, please encourage them to do so and let them know how easy it is. Simply use the enclosed reply envelope or donate online at www.EQLT.org. EQLT's Sustainer program is an especially easy method for someone to become a new donor or perhaps even increase their current support. Sustainers use their credit cards or automatic bank payments to set up a schedule of convenient and easily budgeted contributions. With your help, EQLT will reach its goals of attracting 100 new donors this year and continue its growth for the future. ■

#GIVINGTUESDAY

SAVE THE DATE - DECEMBER 3, 2019

EQLT supporters joining in the fun and excitement of #GivingTuesday have become an important part of the fall and year-end fundraising season for the land trust. #GivingTuesday has become a day when millions of people in all 50 states and in over 98 countries throughout the world come together to support and champion the causes they believe in and the communities in which they live.

Please consider participating in #GivingTuesday on EQLT's behalf this year by connecting with your friends and associates to join the effort. To get involved, simply give us a call at (413) 477-8229, and we'll be in touch to help provide some ideas, photos, and graphics you can use with messages to your friends on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, etc. or in blog posts, emails, or even old-fashioned phone calls or letters. ■



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INSIDE: 8TH ANNUAL STATION LOOP RAMBLE



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UPCOMING EVENTS...

MONTHLY POTLUCKS...

Sunday, November 10th, 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM, meet at 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick: Bring your favorite sweet or savory dish to share. Come meet other members of all ages as we share good food and learn about the night sky through telescopes.

NOVEMBER...

Friday, November 1st, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Photo Contest Gallery Event, at West Brookfield Art and Frame, 10 East Main Street, West Brookfield: West Brookfield Art and Frame is hosting a gallery event showing the first place and honorable mention images from our Summer Photo Contest. Additionally, West Brookfield Art and Frame is donating 20% of all framing proceeds in November to the East Quabbin Land Trust. Be sure to bring your framed gifts in for the holiday season during November!

DECEMBER...

Friday, December 6th, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Holiday Open House Party, at 120 Ridge Road, Hardwick: Start the holiday season by spending an evening with friends and neighbors at the East Quabbin Land Trust. Join us for a night of good cheer and delicious food and drink. Bring a sweet or savory dish to share. Don't miss the fun!

JANUARY...

Wednesday, January 1st, Noon

New Year's Day Ski or Hike, at Mass Central Rail Trail at West Road, New Braintree: Start off the New Year by enjoying the outdoors. Bring your family and friends along on our annual walk or ski exploring our local rail trail.

APRIL...

Saturday, April 25th, 5:30 PM

Nineteenth Annual Silent Dinner and Auction, at Eagle Hill, 242 Old Petersham Road, Hardwick: This exciting event is held each year at the Cultural Center at Eagle Hill and is the land trust's biggest fundraiser. The evening includes a festive dinner featuring local cuisine, eclectic auction items, and lots of fun!