

FALL 2022



NEWSLETTER

What Rail Trail Visitors Are Saying

Lots of people are excited about the new EQLT section of the Central Mass Rail Trail going North from Upper Church Street in Ware, MA. This is what they're saying:

"The trail gives everyone the opportunity to explore all the beauty that is New England. It's close to home, and it's just the right length to recharge and reconnect with nature." **Paula O., Ware**

"I am thrilled to have another new, safe, well groomed trail available to the public. My walks on both sides of the new rail trail in Ware off Church Street have been just delightful. Many thanks to the East Quabbin Land Trust and all the volunteers." **Barbara P., Hardwick**

"It's a beautiful out and back 5K run. The tiny bit of hill and the mill and river views make it just lovely. I can't wait for it to be extended so I can really get some miles in." **April C., Barre**

"I love that the river flows right along side as you are amongst the trees." **Pattie R., Ware**

"It's beautiful! And it seems lots of community members are enjoying it." **Karen G., Ware**

"Gives you an open space to enjoy and relax." **Gene R., Ware**

"I like the frogs in the muddy puddles along the trail!" **Calia R., Ware**

"Moose tracks on the new trail on Church Street. It's rutting season, so be careful!" **Shelly G., Ware**

"My wife and I were visiting from Florida and were taken for a walk on your newly converted Rail Trail. It was such a delightful walk through the New England woods with the

pleasant sound of water nearby. Just the right length for a nice long walk, and a peaceful retreat to nature. Loved it!" **Richard S., Jacksonville**

"I like the river." **Quinn O., Ware**



"When you can feel the earth softening under your feet at your own pace, a lacy tree's canopy shielding the autumn sun, hear water running in a nearby stream and the sound of children laughing, life is VERY good!" **Pattie H., Jacksonville**



MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



One of the things I love about working at the EQLT is the incredible diversity of things that happen – mostly behind the scenes – which make a huge difference. Here's a small smattering of what's been happening lately.

We have an incredible team of volunteers that pull together the Station Loop Ramble, including Dave and Claudia, Ginny and Ginnie, Pattie and Paula, Chris and David. After ten years, they make the organizing look easy, but they still have the hard jobs of choosing shirt designs, creating prizes and recruiting runners. The Ramble wouldn't happen without them and all the folks who volunteer on the day-of to make the race run smoothly. Please join the team for Ramble 2023!

As we create trails it's true that trees often need to be cut to open up the corridor. Tom, Merlon, Mark K., Mark M., Gary, Kenny, Phil, Denis, Jim, Jeff, Rick and Bill often hop right in with their chainsaws in hand to clear the way. Several of their saws were instrumental as the recent clearing in Gilbertville began to widen the path of the Mass Central

Rail Trail as it overlooks the Ware River on the Town of Hardwick's property. Plenty more needs to be done to prepare the area for official construction next spring and we encourage you to be part of the work crew. Keep an eye out for messages about scheduled clearing sessions that you can join.

As the third quarter closes, our finance team members – Jerry, Rick, Julie, Dave, Pattie, Harry and Stan – review the balance sheet, P&L and investment report. Their insights and guidance keep our financial footings in strong territory, allowing us to stay focused on our mission despite the topsy-turvy stock market and economic outlook.

Mowing trails and fields is a critical piece of caring for the land. Mark, Kirk and Harrison are most often behind the mower or on the tractor, but even I get the occasional chance to run the lawn mower as you can see from the photo above. It's a great chance to see the preserves, greet trail users and get away from the computer. I'd like to give a big shout-out to Tim for making repairs to our well-used lawn mower making it possible to do that mowing! ■

THE EAST QUABBIN LAND TRUST

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

For more information about the land trust, to become a member, or request a change of address, please contact us at:

East Quabbin Land Trust
P.O. Box 5, 120 Ridge Road
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**Visit our website at www.EQLT.org
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Weston Cooley: *A master excavator operator*

By Cynthia Henshaw

The person mostly responsible for the actual construction of the new section of Mass Central Rail Trail in Ware and Gilbertville is Weston Cooley. He's the one who prepared and smoothed the trail bed, installed the various culverts and managed the day-to-day construction. If you walked the rail trail at all over the summer, it was Weston out there on the machine. Hope you waved good morning to him! He said "everyone was excited to see the progress and commented on how nice of a job we did."

Weston has always liked to work outdoors. As a teenager, he had one winter doing inside work. After that he's never looked back, working at Brown's Trucking and Excavation for 35 years. Weston started as a truck driver. Over the years he learned how to operate the equipment. Practice, practice and more practice. Now, he's got a real mastery of the excavator, leaving a smooth trail bed as he worked along the 2.3-mile distance. "The most difficult part to create was the section that

hops off the former railroad bed. It gets quite narrow, but I'm really proud of how that section came out," Weston offered.

Working at Brown's, Weston travels all over the state as they do construction for traditional subdivisions, commercial solar developments, and septic systems. Right now, Brown's has six construction jobs going at once. Brown's is a family business based in Barre. Weston's brother-in-law started the business, and now his nephews Jason and Todd are managing the operation. Other members of the Brown's team that created the rail trail include Jason, Todd, Joe, Colin, Ray, Jared and Ronny.

Weston lives in the East Quabbin region in Petersham, so the commute to Ware was a treat compared to many job-site locations. He particularly likes the rural small-town life. "Growing up you knew everyone in town. And even though Petersham has grown, it's still a quiet small town. Two of my three boys still live here

too." Plus, Weston's favorite hunting spot is close to home, a great place in all the seasons especially for deer and turkey.

Though Weston has been in Petersham his whole life, he grew up with stories of what it was like to live in Dana before the Quabbin Reservoir took the land from so many families, including his father's parents. A visit to the Dana Common is an emotional experience. In fact, Weston's family was the last family to leave Dana in 1938. They had to cut their way out to the main road because of all the trees damaged during the Hurricane of 1938. More recently, the family celebrated Weston's father's 90th birthday on the Dana Common.

Weston shared that "Building the rail trail was a satisfying project. I see all the people using the trail and know that this is important to the community. I'm glad to have been a part of the effort." ■



Weston in the cab of the excavator during construction of the new section of Mass Central Rail Trail in Ware



Weston inspecting the 48" culvert as he installs it.

11th Annual Station Loop Ramble

Sunday, October 10th was an excellent day for a run or walk. 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. **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers that made this race possible, the sponsoring businesses, those who donated prizes, and to all who participated! We are already looking forward to next year's race. Stay tuned for details! ■



We appreciate donations from the following businesses for runner awards:

Ashland Farm, New Braintree | Stefan's Apiary, North Brookfield | Runner's World | Greg's Workshop, New Braintree

Thank You to Our Station Loop Ramble Sponsors!



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Will... he be a good intern?

By Will Hood

Hi! My name's Will, and I'm interning with EQLT for my fall trimester as part of Quabbin Regional High School's internship program. I love basketball and track, spending time with my friends, and participating in school and community events. Right now I'm a partner for unified basketball, a new program at Quabbin that allows students with intellectual disabilities to learn and play basketball. I'm also currently playing in the fall league for my varsity team. I've just recently been re-elected as class president, and I'm looking forward to planning more events and raising money for my class in my last year of high school.

I'm interested in politics and law, but I also love nature, and I think taking care of our land and environment is extremely important for our future. This led me to reach out to EQLT for an internship, where I hoped to learn more about the inner workings of nonprofit organizations, and the details of conserving land.

I'm especially interested in the legal aspect that goes on behind

the scenes. I've recently been reviewing the land trust's bylaws with Rich Cavanaugh, and I've already learned lots. Rich is a great teacher and takes time out of his day to help me understand how things work, and why they work. The hope is to work together to make some updates to the bylaws, which will be a great experience for me to see how something like that would work.

I've also been doing some land deed research, which, I have to say, I find much less interesting. But it's something that's important to know how to do, and now I have it as a skill for the future. In the time I haven't spent reviewing the bylaws or land deeds, I've been helping with the maintenance of properties, and most recently, mapping trails in the Dougal range in Gilbertville using the app "Landscape." That has been a great experience, essentially allowing me to run around exploring woods for a couple of hours a day. I'm looking forward to finishing my internship at EQLT and learning more about law, property management, and the inner workings of the organization. ■



Will with his dog Biggie, a beagle-hound mix

Editor's Note: Yes, he Will!

Eagle Scout Candidate Succeeds

Congratulations to Caleb Brown for successfully completing his Eagle Scout project! Caleb's project focused on physical improvements to Little Marshy Meadow, the new pocket park in West Brookfield.

Caleb first volunteered with EQLT during trail clearing at the Mass Central Rail Trail last winter. During that session we discussed a variety of project options.

We are grateful that Caleb chose to build a kiosk and several Leopold-style benches for Little Marshy Meadow. The West Brookfield Scout Troop #118 members showed up in-force to assist Caleb and under his guidance the kiosk footings were set, several benches were assembled, the young persons play space with climbing logs was created, and the beds prepared for fall planting.

We look forward to attending Caleb's court of honor as he formally accepts his Eagle Scout award. ■



Caleb and his grandfather with the installed kiosk

Dedicating Pat's Sanctuary

By Martha Klassanos

"Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places where other people see nothing."

— Camille Pissarro

This quote describes Patrick Jonathan Brown, boiled down to his essence. I am Patrick's aunt by marriage. I first laid eyes on Patrick when he was five; he was hard to forget. He had mischievous dark eyes, the blondest hair, and lots of creative energy. He had the eyes of a crow, always collecting beautiful things. I first saw this in him when he brought his mom treasures from the Ludlow dump: small Styrofoam balls with blue and pink toothpicks stuck into them like a Sputnik. They were a bit squashed, but that was OK. For the rest of his life, he found treasures everywhere, from outdoor streams to bookstores. It was at that time when his mom unintentionally gave him the nickname that would stay with him for the rest of his life. When she told him "Keep that up, Mister, and your name will be Mud," he was just thrilled.

Patrick loved music. While the Grateful Dead was his favorite band,

he also liked things as diverse as Gregorian Chant; one never knew what he'd be playing when he was around. Patrick was handsome and athletic; he played soccer in school and for a time, he did break dancing. He had an eclectic assortment of vehicles throughout his life; Harley-Davidson motorcycles, a vintage Camaro (with no power steering), assorted Volkswagens, and the most uncomfortable pickup trucks you could ever imagine. That was fine with him.

Patrick was an outdoorsman and an ethical hunter. The land we are dedicating today was profoundly important to him. He was also a loyal friend, without thinking twice, took in people and unwanted animals when they needed a place to live.

He worked for us in our business off and on for a good deal of his life and at various other places where he picked up an assortment of unexpected skills. This knowledge included wiring, maintaining fuel tanks, installing car radios, removing asbestos, and moving large pieces of furniture in and out of houses. He had a discerning eye. Whether he was pruning an ancient blueberry plant into visual art, finding just the perfect stone for a walkway, or creating a beautiful, flowing line that carefully avoided that pesky boulder just below the grass, we could trust him to do things beautifully. I often unnerved him by asking him to do things he was unsure of, then walking away, but he always came through with creative solutions when left alone.

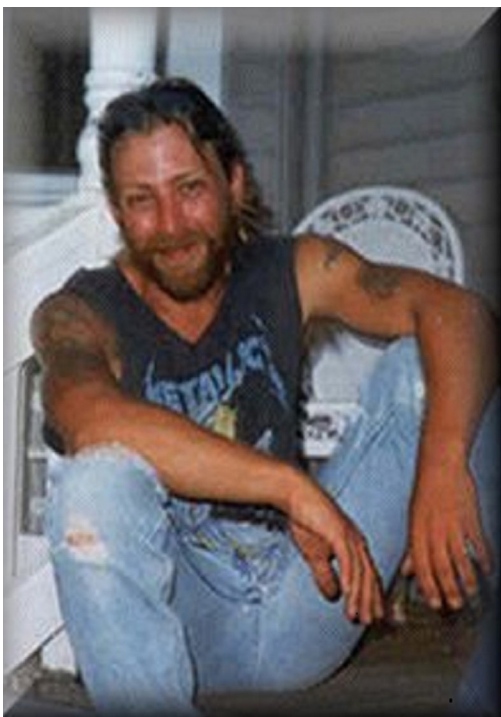
Patrick was modest and a little shy. He was a good listener with a quiet wisdom and was one of the most open-minded souls I have ever met. He was just short of his



Martha and Brian Klassanos with Don and Anne Brown at Pat's Sanctuary dedication.

fifty-first birthday when he died without warning; none of us ever thought he would leave us so early. Two years later, I still want to tell or show him something. Our world is less colorful and fun without him.

Along with Pat's entire family, Brian and I are so grateful to our Executive Director Cynthia, who arranged the conservation of his beautiful piece of land, our friend and neighbor Bill Zinni who agreed to hold the property in trust until the legal work is finished, and the amazing board and volunteers of the EQLT who gave their wholehearted support for conserving the land he loved and worked so hard for. This land, a place of sanctuary, will now be enjoyed by others, ensuring that his name and his legacy will be remembered through the years. ■





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Continue Making a Difference with a Little Planning

By Rich Cavanaugh

Many people miss Don Rich very much, but because of planning that Don did before his death earlier this year after a long illness, the East Quabbin Land Trust continues to feel his presence every day in very real ways. Among other things, Don wanted his beloved tractor to go to the land trust. He also asked that upon his passing, in lieu of flowers, donations be made in his memory to the land trust. Don was a proud Marine, and his planned gifts to EQLT exemplify the Marine Corps' motto, *Semper Fidelis* - "Always Faithful."

Planned giving can take many forms. It can involve listing the East Quabbin Land Trust as a beneficiary in a will or in a life insurance policy. It can also involve making planned gifts during your lifetime such as making distributions from an IRA directly to the East Quabbin Land Trust to help ease your tax burden or making gifts of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds that you have owned for a year or more which might also provide some tax benefits.

The East Quabbin Land Trust established the

Wunohke Guild for those who want to support the land trust through some form of planned giving. Wunohke (wuhn-ō-kē) means "beautiful land" in the language of the Nipmuc. A deeper understanding of the language reveals that Wunohke also means "that which produces or brings forth" underscoring the strong connection between the land and life-sustaining resources.

"Both Don and I have loved God's beautiful land and worked over the years on many different ways to enjoy and protect it," explains his wife Ginny. "Supporting the East Quabbin Land Trust by giving through the Wunohke Guild seemed like an appropriate way to continue that love of nature and leave a 'beautiful land' for our children and grandchildren to enjoy."

For more information about planned giving opportunities and the Wunohke Guild, feel free to contact Rich Cavanaugh

at rcavanaugh@eqlt.org or Cynthia Henshaw at chenshaw@eqlt.org. ■

