



Highland Woods: Beech Knoll Loop Trail Opening Soon

On a recent bright and sunny afternoon, the Tiverton Land Trust Board joined the Tiverton Open Space Commission, for a “pre-opening” tour of Highland Woods. The newly cleared Beech Knoll Loop trail will be open to the public as soon as the new distinctive Land Trust trail markers arrive from the manufacturer and can be installed on the trail. The new markers feature the TLT logo and will eventually mark the trails of all Land Trust properties.

The tour group was given a preview of features described in the Highland Woods Master Plan, such as interpretive history panels that will provide visitors with historic context of the site and its important role in the Battle of Rhode Island in the Revolutionary War. The master plan was recently completed by Bradford Associates, a landscape architect firm in Providence, and was funded by a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation.



TLT President Connie Lima and TOSC Co-chair Garry Plunkett flank new sign at Beech Knoll Loop trail in Highland Woods

Implementation of the Plan will be a multiyear process, but public enjoyment of the new trails will begin as soon as the first stage of a phased access plan is completed. This initial step is a new trail emerging from Fort Barton Woods and leading into Highland

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A Consummate Volunteer

Sue Thayer-Kramers joined the TLT’s Board of Directors in 2006. Although an active family oriented person and Physician Assistant, avid traveler, and outdoor sports enthusiast, Sue makes time to volunteer for the TLT. A resident of Tiverton since 1986, she credits the TLT with helping to save her water supply. She figures that if the TLT hadn’t acquired Pardon Gray Preserve, a housing development would have been built there putting increasing demands on water supplies, including her own well. Additionally, her love of nature made the TLT a perfect fit.

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Nature is always hinting at us. It hints over and over again.

And suddenly we take the hint.

~ Robert Frost

Dear Friends of the Land Trust,

As I look back on 2014, in an effort to report the trust's work and accomplishments, I am struck by the level of engagement the Board and volunteers have shown throughout the year:

- In February, TLT was awarded accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is the mark of distinction for land trusts which meet national standards for excellence, public trust, and permanence in land protection.
- In July, TLT held the *2014 Land & Sea Gala*, netting \$20,000.
- In September, TLT welcomed 1,500 families to *A Country Day at Pardon Gray*.
- In September, many of TLT Board members attended the three day national Land Trust Rally held in Providence. Eighteen hundred participants from the US signed up for talks, workshops, and field trips around RI. Mike Shand, a member of our Board of Directors, was a panelist on one of the sessions about accreditation.
- In October, Bradford Associates/Landscape Architecture completed the master plan for TLT's 16-acre parcel, Highland Woods.

The success of these five major accomplishments was achieved because of TLT's Board of Directors' commitment to the land trust mission AND the dozens of volunteers and TLT members who worked with us and for us to advance the progress of TLT throughout the town. Committees chaired by Board members enlisted the help and expertise of volunteers who generously gave of their time. As examples: for *A Country Day at Pardon Gray*, 30 adults and 50 high school students volunteered to make that day the most successful and enjoyable to date; and the silent and live auction donations from the *2014 Land & Sea Gala* not only got the crowd of 200 people enthused but got them bidding generously as well.

Your support and participation are critical for our success. We are grateful for all you do to help make TLT's land preservation work rewarding. I hope you are able to renew your TLT membership. Thank you for your continued support.

Constance Lima, President
Tiverton Land Trust



Jim Forrest— New Board Member

Jim and his wife Joanna moved from Needham, MA to Tiverton last year after spending 10 summers in Bristol. They enjoy the beauty of the area and believe in land conservation for future generations. Jim is a consulting CFO providing strategic and operational services for startup, small and mid-size companies. He is a CPA with an MBA from Babson College along with a Masters in Taxes from Bentley University. He's served in volunteer treasurer positions for the Unitarian Universalist Church and the local Habitat for Humanity Organization in Needham.



Rotational Grazing Update

This year we expanded the grazing program to include an additional 10 acres. We've started to see the benefits from last year's efforts with a decrease in knapweed and goldenrod, as well as significantly smaller individuals of multiflora rose, bittersweet and swallow-wort. Healthy naturalized grasses have started to regain their strength with tall fescue, orchard grass, red clover and white clover coming through most strongly. We're looking forward to another year of improvement as we continue to create a natural collection of pressures that favor a stable prairie ecosystem.

~ Geoff Beresford

Highland Woods

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Woods. At the entry point a new sign will identify the Land Trust as a stewardship partner with the Open Space Commission. A box containing revised trail guides will be available.

The trail will continue across the open area that is behind the street frontage and then into the

woods as the Beech Knoll Loop trail. This loop is a one-mile round trip path through massive black oaks, a quiet fern glade and, of course, a knoll covered with beech trees.

On the eastern end the trail crosses into Fort Barton Woods to join one of its trails for about 350 feet, before doubling back into Highland Woods to complete the loop. Walkers may enjoy a leisurely half-hour outing on this loop, or continue farther into Fort Barton Woods for a longer hike.

While the Beech Knoll loop will be open soon, the next phase will include the main trailhead from Highland Road, planned for an opening in 2015. That entry will permit foot access to all the trails without the arduous climb from Highland Road up to the redoubt and subsequent roller-coaster path via the old connector trail to Fort Barton Woods. *~ Garry Plunkett*



A Country Day at
Pardon Gray – 2014
Saturday, September 13th



TLT Land and Sea Gala – 2014



A Consummate Volunteer [continued from page 1]

When she joined the TLT, the Board needed a Secretary so Sue took on that responsibility. As Secretary, Sue writes and distributes the minutes of the TLT's monthly board meetings. She is literally the voice of the TLT. When someone calls the TLT, the call is routed through her computer. If the caller leaves a message, Sue gets back to him or her. With the help of other volunteers, she makes sure TLT mail is collected from the Post Office, sorted and distributed, and the office kept in supplies.

These tasks actually make up only a part of what Sue does for the TLT. She plays key roles in TLT events. To start with, she helps publicize them. You may well have seen her dashing about town putting up posters and fliers. She helps organize the vendors and volunteers at Pardon Gray Day, and she wholeheartedly pitches in to do whatever is needed at TLT fundraisers. When volunteers are needed for anything—from parking at an event to clearing trails and maintaining land—Sue sends out email requests to about 50 friends and acquaintances. Sue points out

that the TLT's work, including her own as Secretary, requires a team effort. She is very happy to be part of that team.

Sue's work with the TLT resonates with her love of the outdoors and in particular the Tiverton outdoors. She enjoys being outside "doing anything." Hiking in Weetamoo Woods (a town-owned property) and PGP, cycling, cross-country skiing at PGP and boating are high on her list of delights but she also enjoys simply walking about and "smelling the flowers." Sue cherishes Tiverton... and she's not alone. "Everyone who visits me mentions how unique this community is and how they love it." Sue would like to see enough Tiverton land preserved so that there could be a continuous corridor from one end of town to the other along which one could walk.

Sue points out that the TLT needs more volunteer help for single projects, one-time events, or ongoing tasks. If you'd like to help the Land Trust, just give her a call (625.1300). *~ Walter Brown*



Thank you for your past donations... please renew your memberships and give generously so we may continue our work in preserving beautiful Tiverton.



Dedicated to preserving the rural character and scenic beauty of Tiverton for generations to come.

OUR MISSION

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