



Trail Markers

Weston Forest and Trail Association

Dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of open space in Weston

WestonForestTrail.org

Annual Meeting Postponed

For the first time since 1955, WFTA has postponed its in-person Annual Meeting because of COVID-19. However, we will have an online meeting (with a phone option) on May 17th at 4 PM. To sign up for this meeting, please go to WestonForestTrail.org. We would love to have you! And as always, send your comments and questions to WestonForestTrail@gmail.com.

Have You Been Exploring Weston's Trails Lately?

We are truly grateful right now for our restorative open spaces. The woods are helping a record number of people to maintain their health and spirits in these difficult times. (As with any public place, everyone should remember to maintain a safe physical distance of at least six feet when encountering others.)

Recommended Outdoor Activities

For those of you with cabin fever and in need of a healthy dose of Vitamin Nature, here are a few recommended activities for you and your family. For additional recommendations, go to WestonForestTrail.org.



- Walk the Bay Circuit Trail from Wayland to Lincoln. It will take about 60 minutes. If you are feeling very energetic, keep going through Lincoln to Concord, or if you want to head south, continue through Wayland to Sudbury and beyond. Maps are available at baycircuit.org.
- Get out that old bike, oil it up and ride the Rail Trail to Wayland and back.
- Find a tree identification book. See if you can ID a dozen different species. (Repeat with mushrooms, birds, and insects.) There are a number of apps that will help you — for example, PlantNET for plants and BirdNET for bird songs. Merlin is another great app for birding.
- Buy a sketchbook, a set of colored pencils, and a lightweight folding chair. Find a quiet spot in the woods, and draw a moss covered rock or interesting vine.
- Take a photo of your favorite spot in the woods, send it to WestonForestTrail@gmail.com, and we will post it, or take a video and send it to info@WestonMedia.org. They may post it online or on our local TV channels.
- Take a run (or walk) in the woods with a plastic bag. With a glove, pick up litter along your route.

2019 Treasurer's Report

CASH (and EQUIVALENTS) INCOME		EXPENSES		MEMBERS	
Dues	\$23,491	Land Stewardship	\$63,095	Naturalist (\$35)	114
Gifts	\$8,050	Office	\$19,944	Explorer (\$70)	37
Sales, Misc	\$1,386	Insurance	\$3,142	Guardian (\$100)	128
Investment Income	\$1,688	Accounting	\$1,525	Steward (\$250)	17
Weston Reservoir Fund	\$5,297	Weston Reservoir Fund	\$5,495	Trailblazer (\$500)	10
Transfer from Endowment	\$72,704			George Bates Endowment	47
TOTAL INCOME	\$112,616	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$93,201	TOTAL MEMBERS	353

As you can see above, dues cover a fraction of our expenses. We are very fortunate to have an Endowment Fund, the investment income from which can fund our main expense — Land Stewardship. This includes a paid forester who keeps trails clear of fallen trees and makes other trail improvements, as well as special projects like boardwalks, railings on bridges, waterbars to prevent erosion, and periodic review of easements.

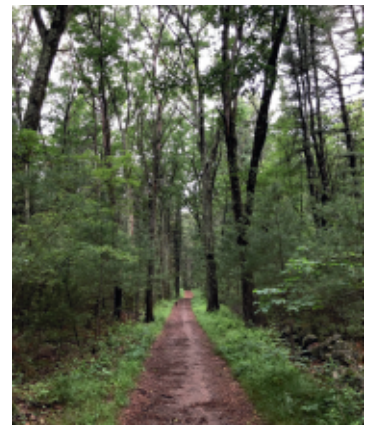
In 2019 many generous members donated over \$125,000 to the George P. Bates Endowment Fund in memory of George, who passed away suddenly in March of 2018. In addition to these donations, the value of the Fund increased by \$474,806 because our (conservative) investments did well, bringing the current value of the Fund to \$2,501,392. The full Treasurer's Report is available on WestonForestTrail.org.



Lynn Atkins keeping the trails open



New railings on Hobbs Brook Bridge



A cleared trail after a storm



Volunteers building a boardwalk in Jericho Forest



Volunteers building a stone walkway in Highland Forest

We Need You!

WFTA depends upon you to meet our annual expenses. Today we have 353 members, or only about 10% of all Weston households. Our goal is to double membership to 20%. The trails and woods are for everyone. They are the soul and lungs of Weston. Help us to preserve and maintain our open spaces for all to enjoy by going to WestonForestTrail.org and joining or returning the enclosed envelope.

Weston Forest and Trail is a volunteer led and run organization. Although we have professionals keeping our trails open, volunteers help with publicity, programs, property management and trail maintenance. If you would like to get more involved, please send an email to WestonForestTrail@gmail.com. Both short and longer term commitments are welcomed.

Where Would WFTA Be Without Tom Selldorff?



Tom & Carolyn Selldorff

Tom Selldorff has been an active member of the Trustees since 1984, serving as president for 15 of those 36 years. This is a WFTA record unlikely to be surpassed! WFTA dealt with a number of significant issues during his tenure, including the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) negotiations to build the Norumbega Reservoir on WFTA and Town land; the purchase of Sunday Woods (24 acres); and the controversial case of a barn built on a WFTA conservation easement, a case that went all the way to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. In those years WFTA acquired almost 125 acres of land (some of it transferred to the Town) and dozens of trail easements. (If you ask Tom, he will emphasize that there were many dedicated Trustees working together on all these projects during his tenure, naming more people than can be listed here.)

During Tom's presidency, WFTA mapped our trails into the Town's GIS system. Because of this work, orchestrated by George Bates, you can now access our trail system online. New trails were also laid out, and WFTA hired Lynn Atkins to keep our trails open and ready for use.

Tom was also instrumental in bringing WFTA into the 21st century. During his presidency, WFTA set up an endowment fund. He personally set up WestonForestTrail.org and served as its webmaster. He set up our [Facebook page](#) and our Amazon Smile and PayPal [donation programs](#). And he even designed the "W" trail sign logo! Any photos you see in annual reports and brochures during this period were probably taken by Tom. This "social

media" work was in keeping with Tom's focus on membership. He understood that members are the soil, sun and water that keep WFTA healthy.

Tom's final accomplishment as President was to steward the legal merger of WFTA with the Weston Land Trust, a marriage celebrated in December 2011, with Tom stepping down and Meg Kelly taking over the reins of the combined organization.

Recently Tom and his wife Carolyn moved from Weston to Needham. We are deeply grateful to them, especially during the past few weeks when so much is closed, but our trails and woods are open. His deep conviction that the "Woods are the Soul of Weston" became a tangible, life-long commitment that continues to benefit us all.

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