



Electronic Newsletter, Vol. 5e, No. 7: July - August, 2012

www.marbleheadconservancy.org

Dear Members and Friends,

June was a busy month as the articles below attest. In parallel with the happenings reported here, our Trail Crew continued their work clearing overgrowth and pushing poison ivy away from the trails. Access to Marblehead's public lands and trails remains an important part of the updated Open Space and Recreation Plan, and with good reason. In spite of a run of hot weather in early July, many people were out enjoying these walking trails. Combined with the former Railroad Right of Way, which author and photographer Dennis Curtin includes in his description of an "Emerald Necklace", Marblehead has nearly ten miles of paths suitable for walking and for gaining a different perspective of our seaside town.

Bob French, President

Continuing Planning. . .

At the end of June, the Ad Hoc Committee to Update Marblehead's Open Space and Recreation Plan formally submitted the plan to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. That office has requested a few additions, and these are being worked. In the meantime, Tom Devine, Conservation Agent for the City of Salem, completed a joint Salem-Marblehead proposal for a PARC (PARC stands for **P**arkland **A**cquisitions and **R**enovations for **C**ommunities) grant and submitted it to the same state office. This proposal seeks reimbursement for some of the acquisition cost of the Lead Mills property after a purchase is completed. By submitting a joint proposal, the maximum amount of funds for which a proposal might be eligible goes up by a factor of eight over what Marblehead could do alone. Marblehead voters took the big step of agreeing to buy the Marblehead portion of the property through an override decision in June. However, the total cost purchasing the full property, dividing it into separate municipal components, and re-assigning ownership has not been reached. By agreement with the seller, purchase must be completed by March 31, 2013. Fundraising is underway to meet that deadline.

Authors Grove. . .



Some fifteen years ago a group of citizens met to consider writing a book about Marblehead's natural and historical resources accessible by the public. The six principle authors were Denny Curtin, Dotty Stephens, Laurie Levine, Leigh Webster, Jay Johnson and Beth Houghton. As their project progressed, many residents joined the effort; eventually adding over two dozen more volunteers. The result was the book "Discovering Marblehead, a Guide to Open Spaces and Historic Places". Upon its completion in 2001 a collaboration of the book's authors and the Marblehead Conservancy raised the money to publish the first 3,000 copies of the book, selling them out in about two years.

Everyone was saddened by the untimely death of Beth Houghton a few years ago. Beth's estate made a gift to the Marblehead Conservancy which the trustees devoted to a living memorial for the wonderful gift the authors

have bestowed upon the Town. With the permission of the Conservation Commission and based on a design by local garden designer Larry Simpson, the Conservancy constructed the "Authors' Grove." It features six native tupelo trees, a stone bench, a meandering trail, and a plaque. The community is invited to visit and enjoy this special place on Lafayette Street across from Carna Road.

Is There more Poison Ivy Now?

From time to time people we meet on the trails tell us that the amount of poison ivy they run across seems to be greater than they remember. Some research by Lewis Ziska, plant physiologist for the Department of Agriculture sheds a little light on the issue. By comparing the growth of poison ivy in an atmosphere containing a carbon dioxide level equivalent to that of 1950 (300 parts per million) with that from the current atmosphere (400 parts per million), Ziska found that this increase in carbon dioxide resulted in a doubling of plant size. Now there are other contributors to spreading, such as the bird population and their dietary habits, but Ziska's finding is certainly significant. Poison ivy, by the way, is considered by some to be invasive, but it is certainly not alien to the area. The first history record of an unpleasant encounter with this plant was by John Smith in 1602!



Remembering Carol Geis. . .



In late June, friends of Carol Geis gathered at the butterfly garden below the Hamond Nature Center to dedicate a centerpiece memorial in her honor. Carol was a remarkable and very active person. She was web master for the Marblehead Conservancy as well as other organizations, overseeing the construction of web sites and all changes over time. In the summer months, Carol could be found staffing the Environmental or the Coffee Booth at the Farmers' Market. She grew her own vegetables and flowers and was an avid walker and jogger, occasionally joining trail work crews. Pat Beckett, a co-founder of the Living Lawn project, led a campaign to purchase a custom birdbath for the butterfly garden, carved by a stonecutter in nearby Quincy. His work was dedicated by Carol's husband,

George, and Pat.

The eBook on Marblehead's Emerald Necklace is Now Available. . .

As part of the well-attended Annual Meeting of the Conservancy in April, we heard a talk by Dennis Curtin titled "Marblehead's Emerald Necklace - Origins of the Path". Dennis told all who attended that he would be releasing a book on the subject in both ebook and printed form. That book is now available, and we are pleased to pass along the internet address for accessing it: www.shortcourses.com/rr/rr.pdf.

If you would like a printed copy of this eBook you can have one made. Just email dspaulding@raprepro.com or call Dave at 617-334-4538. He already has the PDF file so you just need to give him billing and shipping information. Books are printed on premium paper with a spiral binding and clear front and black vinyl back cover. Prices are \$14 for black and white copies and \$25 for color copies plus Tax and Shipping. Turnaround time is 3 to 5 business days + shipping time.

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to rdexfr@msn.com by rdexfr@msn.com | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Marblehead Conservancy, Inc. | 20 Churchill Road | Marblehead | MA | 01945