



*Working to preserve open space in Newton for 44 years!*

*the Newton Conservators*

# NEWSLETTER

Summer Issue

[www.newtonconservators.org](http://www.newtonconservators.org)

June / July / August 2005

## ANGINO FARM PURCHASE IS COMPLETE!

On Tuesday, May 24, lawyers for the Angino family and the City of Newton passed papers, formally transferring ownership of the Angino Farm property to the city. Over the previous weekend, the Conservators acquired ownership of the tools and other property located in the barn and the house, including old farm implements that will have value for educational purposes.

This transaction follows several months of intense effort to conclude a variety of steps leading up to the purchase. These included obtaining state approval of a conservation restriction (CR) on the property that will be held by the Newton Conservators. Required by the Community Preservation Act, the CR adds a layer of protection, binding the city to maintain the land as open space for use as a community farm or related purpose.

In addition, an ordinance was drafted and passed by the Board of Aldermen to create a Farm Commission, which will have the responsibility of overseeing the farm on behalf of the city. The Commission will be made up of nine members. Of this number, five will be appointed by the Mayor, three will come from other commissions and one will be appointed by the Board of Aldermen.

The mayoral appointees must include four individuals who have expertise in one of the following areas: farming or agriculture, finance or accounting, retail or wholesale business operations, and sustainable environmental practices. Mayoral appointees must be approved by the Board of Aldermen. The commissions that will be represented

on this board include the Conservation Commission, the Historic Commission and the Park & Recreation Commission. Appointed members will serve three-year terms, though some will be shorter initially in order to arrange staggered terms for the future.

The Commission will have responsibility for developing a business plan, policies and procedures for operation of the farm, selecting and negotiating a contract with a farm operator, developing a financial and operational reporting process, and monitoring performance of the farm. This Commission is expected to be appointed and begin its work this summer. This is essential to provide sufficient time to complete the initial plans, policies and procedures as well as contract with a farm operator in time for planting season next year.

Meanwhile, many tasks remain to be completed. The land must be rezoned from its current residential zoning to public use zoning. This step is up to the Board of Aldermen. Initial work on the house and barn will be done to bring it up to code and to make it suitable for its new purpose. The Community Preservation Committee set aside \$40,000 for this initial renovation. Additional improvements will be made with money raised by the Angino Farm Group, the Conservators and others.

The farm will be officially named the Angino Community Farm, in recognition of Jerry Angino, a widely respected and fondly remembered member of the community, and the Angino family, who worked hard to accomplish this sale in Jerry's memory.

*Doug Dickson*

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# *Report at June 2005 Annual Meeting*

It has been another good year for the Conservators.

Last year, we sat in this place and wished for a couple of things. One of them was the Angino Farm. We wanted it saved, for a lot of good reasons – so that the kids of Newton could know where vegetables come from, so that we could build a new community around farming and so that we could save it as open space. That was one wish. And the other was that we could make some videos to put the city's open spaces on NewTV.



They say, "Be careful of what you wish for. You may get it." We did. We got them both. And we're okay. Apparently, we wished carefully. Last week, the city had the closing for the purchase we arranged at Angino Farm. And on TV, our TV team has put together several wonderful videos, to help bring our open spaces to people who otherwise couldn't go there.

The Angino Farm and NewTV are only a part of what we did this year. Here are some other things:

- As we do every year, we put together our series of walks, hikes, canoe trips, and bike rides—seven this spring, with more to come later this year.

- We brought in naturalists as guest lecturers at the library and as we have tonight, with Roger Swain.
- We again increased our membership.
- We kept ourselves in good financial health, as we've heard from Katherine Howard.
- We spent money effectively—among other things, on the Environmental Sciences Program for teenagers in junior high and high school, where this year we doubled our assistance. The program is under the leadership of David Backer, who has brought a great deal of energy to the program and who is with us tonight.
- We partnered with various organizations with missions of their own, including Habitat for Humanity, historic organizations, and Green Decade.
- Different ones of us have served on various committees all over the city.
- We have joined in the planning for Albemarle Field, which you see in the display at the front of the room, for the aqueducts, and for Newton North. There, we have advocated that the new school be a green building and that the brook that flows through the site might come out of the pipe that it's in.
- We have inventoried and begun monitoring conservation restrictions around the city, to see that conservation land is not misused.
- We have learned to hold a camera steady. The team that has worked at NewTV—Cris, Duane, Frank, and Ted—has put out several excellent shows. One of those became part of the marketing package for our effort at Angino Farm.
- We showed up in force in the Aldermanic chambers and stayed late into the night, to make the point of how important the Angino Farm was to us.
- We upgraded Ordway Park with beautiful and native plantings, under the leadership of Jim Broderick and Beth Schroeder.
- We got the word out about our work in various ways. Our Web site is on display at the corner of the room. It has been upgraded extensively by our Webmaster, Dan Brody, and has some beautiful photography to go with information about our activities.
- We have gotten the word out by email, through Ted Kuklinski's Nature Notes.

*(Continued on page 3)*

*President's Message, continued from page 2*

- We have published five issues of our newsletter, which is edited by Doug Dickson, our Environmentalist of the Year. Among the dozen other things Doug does for the Conservators is the newsletter, which has become an excellent forum for the open space community.
- We have showed up in articles on the environmental page of The Tab. We have been on the editorial page and in the letters to the editor, advocating for our causes.
- We have set up guidelines to evaluate whether a gift of land fits our mission and whether we can be good stewards for it.
- And we have said thank you to some very generous people, who have donated land to the Conservators for safekeeping in perpetuity.

We did all these things and in the process I think enjoyed ourselves. We had some fun. Not in the sense of fun like "fun" as we usually think of fun, but in the sense of having a mission and seeing it fulfilled.

This year, we did many good things. It's not really for me to say where we are going. That would be for Bill Hagar, who will run the Conservators next year. But I can't help but to again wish for a couple of things.

One is that the process of getting funding from the city through the Community Preservation Act could be shortened. The purchases we arrange are time-sensitive. They involve land owners who could just as easily sell to a buyer in the private sector in a short time frame. Admittedly, the purchase of the Angino Farm was complicated. But it took more than a year to complete. The committees of the city and the Board of Aldermen worked hard and helped make this proposal better every step of the way. The City Solicitor's office took great care and needed extra time for the closing, which is what we will not always have: extra time. The wish here is that all that could happen in less time so that, at some future time, with some future acquisition, we aren't left wondering why we lost the land owner and lost the land.

Another wish is that a community group is chosen to run the Angino Farm and not just a commercial operator. It would be good to see a community grow up around the Angino Farm.

That's all I have to say. I want to thank everyone who has had a hand in the work of the Conservators this year. It has been a good year to be a Conservator. It has been a pleasure. We have done well.

*Eric Reenstierna*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2004**

The Conservators began 2004 with \$130,000 of unrestricted net assets, and ended it almost at the same amount, with an increase in unrestricted net assets of \$102.

Net income from operations before special projects was \$5,787. This was comprised of member dues and gifts of \$18,000 and map guide sales of almost \$1500, both about equal to the prior year. Expenses were similar to the prior year. Grants of \$1250 were made (\$1000 to Newton's Environmental Science Program, and \$250 towards a Boston College study of Newton's vernal pools). Ordway Park expenses were higher than usual with the decision to install granite curbs along Grant Avenue, the \$2700 cost of which came from general operating funds.

Special projects cost almost \$12,000 in 2004, almost entirely related to Angino Farm. Although we expect these costs to be reimbursed by CPA funds, our accounting policy is to not count the reimbursement until it is received. In addition to costs for the Farm, the Conservators contributed \$150 toward a planning project for Albemarle Park.

Investment income, including the gain in value of our index fund investment, was \$6200. In total, the sum of operating income, special projects, and investment income was \$102.

In addition to the unrestricted funds, Newton Conservators holds donor-restricted funds, which grew by \$15,000 to \$28,000 at year end. The increases were from contributions to the Ordway Endowment Fund and the Ordway Improvement Fund, also from funds being held for Weeks Field and Powder House Hill purposes, and from a maintenance fund given as part of a gift of a parcel of land located at 60 Prospect Park. Contributions to Angino Farm started in 2005, so are not shown on this statement.

The Conservators' balance sheet now shows

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Treasurer's Report, continued from page 3*

additional property at 60 Prospect Street, recorded on the books at \$1 due to its conservation restriction, and the Forte property at 76 Webster Park, recorded at \$1.1 million. There is an offsetting \$1.1 million mortgage to the city. The property is about to be transferred to the Newton Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity, at which time the mortgage note will be cancelled, but until then it is technically on the books of Newton Conservators.

In total, unrestricted and restricted net assets ended the year at \$158,551, a \$15,000 increase in 2004.

*Katherine Howard*

## ***Roger Swain Advocates New Food Pyramid, Speaking at Annual Meeting***

Dressed, as always, in his red suspenders, Roger Swain, this year's speaker at the Annual Meeting, provided a very entertaining and thought-provoking foray into the world of food production and preparation. Armed with a wide array of unlikely props, he demonstrated just how far removed we have become from the places where and methods by which

our food is grown (and sometimes manufactured).

In a reference to the government's new food pyramid, Roger brought his own version, holding high a cardboard pyramid with the letters K, M, F and S printed, one on each face of the tetrahedron.

The letters, he explained, referred to kitchen, market,



farm and soil, each an essential ingredient in growing and preparing food for consumption. He bemoaned the lack of time allotted to the enjoyment of food in

our society and the fact that we have lost touch with the interconnection between the four faces of his pyramid.

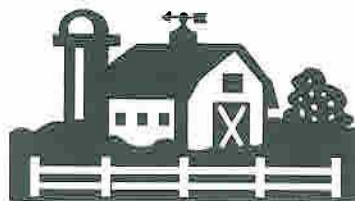
He noted that much of our food comes from great distances, that it comes out of season and that it comes in forms unlike anything that a farmer would recognize. As an example, he held up a bag of baby carrots, noting that they are milled from larger carrots into small carrot-like shapes. He also brought along a bag of prepared salad, asking us to consider how hard it really is to shred or chop lettuce and what we are losing by sidestepping this part of the process.

To make a related point, Roger pulled out a couple of stalks of rhubarb, challenging us to think about where strawberry-rhubarb pie might have come from, given that the two don't ripen in the same season.



Roger touted community farms as one way to bridge some of these divides. He talked about Newton's excellent farmer's market as an important community resource. In both cases, the food is grown close by, we see the food in its natural form and in season, we can talk to the farmer and, perhaps, even see how it's grown. This kind of involvement brings us closer to the value of food not just for sustenance, but for pleasure and meaning in our lives as well.

*Doug Dickson*



## 2005 Award Winners



*Eric Reenstierna (right) presents Environmentalist of the Year Award to Doug Dickson for his work on a number of environmental and open space initiatives.*



*Bill Shaevel (left) accepts the Directors Award from Ted Kuklinski for his pro bono legal support of the Conservators' recent acquisition of properties and CRs.*



*Cris Criscitiello(left) receives the Charles Johnson Maynard Award from Duane Hillis for his work in biodiversity and wildlife protection.*

**The Newton Conservators Newsletter©** is published five times each year by the Newton Conservators, Inc. Issues usually appear in February, April, June, September and November. Deadlines for these issues are the fifth of each month in which an issue is scheduled to be published.

We welcome material related to our mission from any source. Send proposed articles by email in MS Word or rich text format to [dgdictson@rcn.com](mailto:dgdictson@rcn.com). Digitized photographs, maps and diagrams are also welcome.

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Thanks to the following contributors to this edition of the Newsletter: Jim Broderick, Doug Dickson, Katherine Howard, Eric Reenstierna and Jon Regosin. Thanks also to Douglas Leith for his excellent proofreading.



# DIRECTORS AWARD AT ORDWAY PARK

Some two dozen enthusiastic neighbors and friends gathered in Ordway Park in Newton Centre on June 12 to inaugurate the renewal of Ordway Park and to applaud as Beth Schroeder, Vice President of the Newton Conservators, presented a Directors Award for 2005 to Joan and David Rosenberg.



*Joan Rosenberg, center, receives Directors Award for the singular contribution she and her husband have made to the renewal of Ordway Park.*

Two years ago while walking her baby along Grant Avenue, Joan Rosenberg was struck by the park's decline and its natural promise. She solicited help from the then President Lucy Stair and Jim Broderick, chair of the Ordway Park Committee, and then organized neighborhood meetings that led to the development of plans by two landscape architects, Susan Sangiolo and Beth Schroeder, modifying the park's layout and renewing its plantings.

At the same time, the Rosenbergs helped launch a drive to establish an endowed Ordway Park Fund for the continued maintenance and improvement of the park. The Rosenbergs generously kicked off the fund drive by donating a large matching grant. To date, more than \$20,000 toward the goal of a \$50,000 Endowment Fund has been raised. The citation on the Award reads: "Joan and David Rosenberg: For their community spirit in seeing the potential for and initiating a renewal of Ordway Park, and for their

generosity in supporting the effort with contributions of time, skill and money."

As part of the master plan for the park, the Grant Avenue section of the park (which Priscilla Ordway's original plan hopefully called an "Open Oak Woodland") has been thinned and pruned and a new Grant Avenue entrance path created. Spurred by a timely donation from the Newton Centre Garden Club, neighbors and Conservators individually donated the costs of twenty-five native plants, which were installed at the end of May. These are being carefully watered in their first growing season from the water spigot installed by the city last year. So even on a sultry June morning, under the oak trees, on paths edged by Carolina allspice, hummingbird summersweet, mapleleaf viburnum, arrowwood viburnum and low-bush sumac, neighbors and friends could enjoy the wildflowers in bloom: Lilies of the Valley, three kinds of Solomon's Seal (smooth, hairy, and false), wild geranium as well as two arching shrubs of American Cranberry.

Like every garden, the woodland garden at Ordway Park is a work in progress—witness the small area around the water spigot. But all visitors have agreed that a welcome start has been made in renewing the park. Its maintenance and further improvement will depend in good part on the success of the continuing effort by neighbors and Conservators to raise the full \$50,000 endowment of the Ordway Park Fund. Contributions to the Fund should be made out to the Newton Conservators Ordway Park Fund and sent to the Newton Conservators, PO Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459. We are very grateful for the support of both neighbors and Conservators over the last few years.

*Jim Broderick*



## ***Bill Hagar Elected Conservators President***

**Beth Schroeder is Vice President;  
Jason Glasgow Leaves Board**

At the Annual Meeting, Bill Hagar was elected the new president of the Newton Conservators for the year beginning June 1, 2005. He will be joined by new vice president Beth Schroeder and will serve with previous officers Katherine Howard, treasurer, and AnnaMaria Abernathy, secretary. Eric Reenstierna will move into the position of past president after serving an exceptional two-year term as president. (For a complete list of officers, directors and advisors for the coming year, please see page 9.)

Bill Hagar is a professor of biology at UMass Boston. He served as vice president of the Newton Conservators several years ago. Beth Schroeder operates a landscape design business in Newton and has also been a member of the Green Decade Coalition Board of Directors.

After several years as a director, key member of our audit committee, membership committee and manager of our membership database, Jason Glasgow is stepping down from the Board of Directors while he and his family move to Israel for two years. He

### **MISSION**

#### **Newton Conservators, Inc.**

The Newton Conservators promotes the protection and preservation of natural areas, including parks, playgrounds, forests and streams, which are open or may be converted to open space for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of Newton. It further aims to disseminate information about these and other environmental matters.

A primary goal is to foster the acquisition of land, buildings and other facilities to be used for the encouragement of scientific, educational, recreational, literary and other public pursuits that will promote good citizenship and the general welfare of the people of our community.

*The Newton Conservators was formed as a not-for-profit organization 44 years ago in June 1961.*

will be taking a teaching position therethis fall. We will miss Jason and his service to the organization while he is away. He has done an outstanding job of keeping our records in good condition, adding a new level of sophistication to essential tasks that include newsletter mailings, membership renewals and new member solicitations. We greatly appreciate his quiet efficiency and dependability in this critical role.

## **ANGINO FARM GROUP GETS ORGANIZED**

The Angino Farm Group continues to meet regularly to build an organization that can advocate for and potentially operate the Angino Community Farm. At its most recent meeting, the group tackled a variety of issues, including completion of their application to the IRS for tax-exempt status as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

There was agreement that the city's Farm Commission needs to get up and running as soon as possible so that decisions can be made that are critical to work required this year so we can be ready for next year's planting season.

Fundraising ideas were discussed that have the potential to raise money needed to cover start-up costs as well as phase II capital improvements to the house and barn.

The need for a farm plan and timeline was also on the agenda. This would identify critical next steps along with priorities and interdependencies over the next couple of years. The goal for the timetable will be getting everything in place to assure a timely planting next spring and the following seasons.

Several subcommittees were formalized:

1. Farm operations – Ted Chapman, chair
2. Buildings – Peter Barrer, chair
3. Fundraising and Board Development – Ross London, chair
4. Legal and Accounting – Larry Burdick and Jenny Outman, chair
5. Communications – Becka Smillie, chair
6. Education – Elyse Rosenblum, chair

If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, contact Jon Regosin at 617-244-0736.

*Doug Dickson from notes provided by Jon Regosin*

## Farmers Market Opens in July Adds new site and day!



**FRIDAYS** 10 am – 2 pm at  
AMERICAN LEGION POST 440  
*Nonantum*

**TUESDAYS** 1:30 – 6 pm at  
COLD SPRING PARK  
*Newton Highlands*

*Always held, rain or shine*

## Calendar of Events

*(Note that meetings are often not held in August)*

**Newton Conservators Board** meets the third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm, usually in a City Hall meeting room or the City Hall cafeteria.

**Conservation Commission** meets the fourth Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm in City Hall Room 209.

**Parks and Recreation Commission** meets the third Monday of every month at 7:30 pm in City Hall Room 209.

**Community Preservation Committee** meets the last Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm in City Hall Room 209.

**Aldermanic Committee on Community Preservation** meets the last Tuesday of every month at 7:45 pm in City Hall Room 222.

**If you haven't paid your membership dues for 2005, now is the time. Please renew today!  
And consider an additional tax-deductible gift to support our work!**



*Celebrating 44 years  
of open space advocacy  
in Newton*

### Newton Conservators Membership Form

PO Box 590011, Newton Centre, MA 02459 • [www.newtonconservators.org](http://www.newtonconservators.org)

- ☐ YES, I'd like to start/renew my one-year membership with the Newton Conservators to help preserve open space in Newton. I'll receive informative newsletters and emails and be invited to participate in guided tours of local conservation areas, lectures, and other programs and activities.
- ☐ I'd like to make an additional tax-deductible contribution to support the work of the Newton Conservators: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual member | \$25  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family member     | \$35  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining member | \$50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor             | \$75  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron            | \$100 |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_ VILLAGE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ Make checks payable to Newton Conservators, Inc.

June/July/August 2005 Newsletter



**Newton Conservators Inc.**  
**OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, ADVISORS**  
**2005-2006**

The following slate was elected at the Annual Meeting on June 1, 2005:

**OFFICERS**

President, Bill Hagar	Secretary, AnnaMaria Abernathy
Vice President, Beth Shroeder	Treasurer, Katherine Howard
Past President, Eric Reenstierna	

**DIRECTORS**

Margaret Albright	Margaret Doris
James Broderick	Henry Finch
Dan Brody	Dan Green
Larry Burdick	Duane Hillis
Lucy Caldwell-Stair	Frank Howard
Bonnie Carter	Peter Kastner
Michael Clarke	Ted Kuklinski
Carol Lee Corbett	Anne Pearson
Modestino (Cris) Criscitiello	Jon Regosin
Doug Dickson	William Stone

**ADVISORS**

Nancy Avery	Deborah Howard
Lisle Baker	Jean Husher
Rodney Barker	Lawrence Kaplan
John Bliss	William Leitch
Lee Breckenridge	George Mansfield
Michael Collora	Richard Primack
Sheila Decter	Frances Seasholes
Burton Elliott	William Shaevel
Thelma Fleishman	William Stevenson
Bart Hague	Roger Swain
Helen Heyn	Verne Vance
Judith Hepburn	Brian Yates



# *the Newton Conservators* **NEWSLETTER**

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