



Newton Conservators E-Bulletin

Wednesday, July 13, 2011

... working to preserve open space in Newton since 1961



Newton in July . . .

How fast the summer seems to be going by! July is still a great time to get to know the open spaces of Newton. While many are away to the mountains and shore, we still have some activities in Newton. DCR planner Dan Driscoll has become a local hero of sorts for his work on the Charles River Pathway. Nature author, David Gessner has written a book calling for a new environmentalism with Dan as an example - we can all be advocates for our local open spaces! Spend a cool evening at the Newton Library Thursday at the last in our series of summer lectures. Maybe you'll be inspired to help out with water chestnut removal in the Charles. The Newton Conservators summer newsletter is out and now online (in color) at <http://www.newtonconservators.org/newsletters/jun11.pdf>. This e-Bulletin reviews some of the happenings at our grand 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting. Check out a few other upcoming events and don't forget the annual Newton Community Farm dinner next Tuesday. Keep cool!

Events Calendar

Thursday, July 14, 7:30 pm

Riding the Wild Charles:

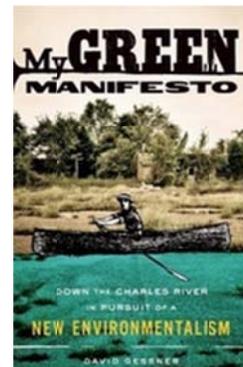
A Journey Toward a New, Wilder (and Funnier) Environmentalism."

Lecture by David Gessner based on his new book "My Green Manifesto"

Newton Conservators Lecture Series

Newton Free Library, 330 Homer Street, Newton Centre

On July 4th, four years ago, David Gessner took a wild canoe trip down the Charles River with Dan Driscoll, a senior environmental planner for the state and a man who has made it his mission to green the banks of the Charles over the course of the last two decades. Gessner's new book, *My Green Manifesto*, tells the story of that exhilarating journey, but it's also a lot more: a bracing call for a new environmentalism, an environmentalism that leaves behind its old stuffy, superior ways and embraces the virtues of humor, common sense, and anew, living language.



My Green Manifesto suggests that rather than bemoan the fact that the world is doomed, we would do better to fight like hell for our neighborhoods. In his talk Gessner will celebrate the raw pleasure that people can take from wildness, even from a limited wild like the once famously-dirty Charles. His talk, and the book, are a cry for renewed contact and a love song to what is left. And, finally, they are an attempt to break nature writing out of its eco-ghetto, and into the larger world. "I wrote My Green Manifesto in part because I was sick of the same old enviro books with the same sort of language," Gessner said. "I was sick of it in my own writing too. I wanted to be more honest, raw and funny."

David Gessner is the author of eight books, including Sick of Nature, The Prophet of Dry Hill, and Return of the Osprey, which was chosen by the Boston Globe as one of the top ten nonfiction books of the year and the Book-of-the-Month club as one of its top books of the year. The Globe called it a "classic of American Nature Writing." In 2006 he won a Pushcart Prize; in 2007 he won the John Burroughs Award for Best Natural History Essay; and in 2008 his essay, "The Dreamer Does Not exist," was chosen for The Best American Non required Reading. His work has appeared in many magazines and journals including The New York Times Magazine, The Boston Globe, Outside, The Georgia Review, The Harvard Review, and Orion. He has taught environmental writing at Harvard, and is currently an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, where he founded the national literary journal, Ecotone.



This summer he has two books coming out: My Green Manifesto in July and The Tarball Chronicles in September, both from Milkweed Press. Together they both describe and embody a new way of writing about nature and place, full of humor and strangeness, stripped of the old pastoral cliches, and focused on a more "limited" nature, the only nature left to most of us. This nature may involve kayaking up to have dinner and drinks at the Irish Ale House in Boston or may involve watching birds near Haliburton Road in southern Louisiana during the height of the BP oil spill. But while the nature may be less pure, it is still full of wildness and joy. For more information on the author please go to: <http://www.davidgessner.com/>.

This is a free lecture sponsored by then Newton Conservators and the Newton Free Library. For more information on theNewton Conservator lectures please visit



<http://www.newtonconservators.org/lectures.htm>. Copies of My Green Manifestowill be available for purchase at the lecture.

Saturday, July 16, 9 am - 1 pm
Invasive Water Chestnut Removal
Charles River Canoe and Kayal

Join the Charles River Watershed Association to remove the invasive water chestnut plant from the Newton and Waltham area of the Charles before they drop seeds. This event will be

held at Charles River Canoe & Kayak in Newton. Additional removal events will also be held Wednesday July 27th and Saturday, July 30th. For more information or to RSVP, contact Alison at 781-788-0007 x243.

Tuesday, July 19, 6:30 -9:00 pm
An Evening on the Farm
Newton Community Farm

Newton Community Farm invites you to spend an Evening on the Farm on Tuesday, July 19, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. Come anytime during that period, stay as long as you wish, and share a light supper of wine, cheese, crudités, salad, country bread, pita, beer, and more. If the scenery alone doesn't cool you, perhaps music by the Dixie Butterhounds will. This is a fundraiser to help the farm expand its educational programming. Reservations are \$30 per person (Friends of the Farm \$21). If you have thought about becoming a Friend but just haven't done it yet, you can sign up for membership and/or the dinner on the website (www.newtoncommunityfarm.org) and take advantage of this benefit almost immediately. Capacity is limited, so make your reservations soon. In case of rain, the event will be in the barn. For info contact jregosin@aol.com or call 740-503-2669.



Wednesday, July 20, 7 pm
Design Public Hearing - Mass Dept of Transportation
Rehabilitation of the Riverside Pedestrian Park Bridge
Newton Lower Falls Community Center, 545 Grove Street

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Riverside Park Pedestrian Bridge rehabilitation project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible. The proposed project consists of the rehabilitation of the existing bridge. Included in the rehabilitation is the reconstruction of the west abutment and wing walls, new steel bearings and timber deck and mesh panel railings on the superstructure and cleaning and painting of the superstructure. The project also includes landscape and storm water improvements. Shared accommodations for all users have been provided in accordance with applicable guidelines. A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.



Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below. In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>. Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Thomas F. Broderick, P.E., Acting Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, ATTN: (Tracy Osimboni, Project File No. 605513). Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this

Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

Sunday, July 24, 2 pm
Newton Centre: From the Meetinghouse to the Revolution
Historic Newton Walks
Parks and Recreation Hut on Tyler Terrace, Newton Centre

Imagine a time when everyone in Newton went to the same church. There was once only one school and the only traffic on Centre Street was foot, hoof, and carriage. Take a stroll through Newton Centre with Allison Carter on a visit to the extant sites from the colonial period. Learn about Newton's contributions to the Revolutionary War, changes in civic and religious life, and the earliest settlers of the Garden City. This free walk is sponsored by Historic Newton. Visit <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/jackson/calendar/index.asp> for more info.



Wednesday, July 27, 5-8 pm
Invasive Water Chestnut Removal Public Event
Charles River Canoe and Kayak

Join the Charles River Watershed Association to remove the invasive water chestnut plant from the Newton and Waltham area of the Charles. This event will be held at Charles River Canoe & Kayak in Newton. For more information or to RSVP, contact Alison at 781-788-0007 x243.

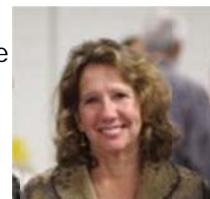


Saturday, July 30, 9 am - 1 pm
Invasive Water Chestnut Removal Public Event
Charles River Canoe and Kayak

Join the Charles River Watershed Association to remove the invasive water chestnut plant from the Newton and Waltham area of the Charles. This event will be held at Charles River Canoe & Kayak in Newton. For more information or to RSVP, contact Alison at 781-788-0007 x243.

President's Message - Summer 2011

Thank you all very much for your enthusiastic participation as sponsors, silent auction donors and bidders, and guests at our Annual Dinner last month. We made quite a bit of money - more than we expected - but most of all we had fun, we spread our good word a little further out into the Newton community, and we let many new people know who we are and the good and important things we do. Congratulations to all who worked very hard to make this a success!



There are two significant projects to watch over the next few months. The Riverside Development is continuing to evolve, and, while the project raises many issues, a couple are uniquely important to us. The Riverside site borders the Charles River, and if it goes forward there should be appropriate pedestrian and visual access for people working, living and shopping at the site. In addition, cyclists and walkers should be able to get to and use the site as much as possible. One of the main selling points of the development is the energy saving which comes from

building around existing public transportation. Making it possible to use all other means of getting to and around the site is key to making this project make sense.

Second, the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center owners are seeking special permits to make changes at the site. It would be wonderful to take this opportunity to create better access to Hammond Pond from the parking lot, as well as to create a buffer for parking lot and Route 9 storm water runoff in the process. The first public hearing before the Board of Aldermen's Land Use Committee was June 21. Check the BOA calendar for further hearings. Let the Aldermen know how you feel.

I wish you all a fun and relaxing summer!

- Jane Sender, President, Newton Conservators

Here is a recent informative article from the Newton Patch on the Riverside Development issue mentioned above: <http://newton.patch.com/articles/comments-sought-for-riverside-development-project>. Comments on the project's Draft Environmental Impact Report are due to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act by August 19. See <http://www.newtonma.gov/Planning/Riverside/environmental-impact.htm> to view the report.

Another Newton Patch article reports on a recent meeting at City Hall on the Hammond Pond issue: <http://newton.patch.com/articles/project-sparks-questions-about-improvements-to-hammond-ponds-health>

Newton Conservators Annual Meeting - May 25

Guest Speaker

Mass Audubon's Bob Wilber: "The Best Tactic is Hope" —

Bob Wilber, Director of Land Protection for the [Massachusetts Audubon Society](#), brought a positive message to the Newton Conservators' annual dinner on May 25, 2011. Mr. Wilber served as the keynote speaker as the Conservators celebrated our 50th Anniversary. He told the audience of 130 that there is much to be hopeful about, from a conservation perspective, and that open space advocates gain more community support with a message of hope than with warnings of doom.

Mr. Wilber congratulated the Conservators on 50 years of achievement, much of which was on display at exhibits in the room. He noted that Massachusetts was the birthplace of the land trust movement in the 1890s and that the state has more land trusts per square mile than any other state. Contrary to many people's impression, he said, today there is more conserved land than developed land in the state. The economic downturn has created large opportunities for land conservation, with land prices in decline and money for acquisitions able to buy more. In spite of the difficult times, the Commonwealth has responded by making \$50 million per year available for open space acquisitions for five years.



With news of wars, terrorism, and a recession creating a mood of gloom, he said, people need a message of hope, and when they hear one they respond. Only about 5% of the U.S. population are active conservationists, but conservation does have broad popular support. Conservationists can reach out to the other 95% by stressing broad themes: the benefits of clean water, the benefits of clean air, and the importance of open space for spiritual renewal and as a place to "tune out" the

high-stress man-made world.

Mr. Wilber suggested that open space advocates form alliances with various groups: schools, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and youth groups farmers and community gardeners, Community Preservation Committees, which are the source of most funding in participating Massachusetts communities for land acquisitions. Mr. Wilber suggested a tree-planting initiative as one way to connect with local volunteers. (In fact, the Conservators have implemented some of the same approaches, accessing CPA funds for acquisitions and working with Newton's newest conservation organization, the [Newton Tree Conservancy](#), which plants trees.)

Mr. Wilber noted that, more than anything else, a lack of access for land owners to information is a hindrance to conservation. An important function of a land trust like the Conservators is to serve as an information clearinghouse. He encouraged us to give others in the community the opportunity to work with us.

"Here's to the next 50 years," he said, "for the Newton Conservators to make an impact for conservation."

Environmentalists of the Year Award: Newton Conservators Trail Guide Committee

The Newton Conservators' Environmentalist of the Year Award for 2011 was given to the Trail Guide Committee, made up of Pat Robinson, Dan Brody, Lucy Caldwell-Stair and Judy Hepburn. The Trail Guide, [Walking Trails in Newton's Park & Conservation Lands](#), is the Conservators' "signature item." It was first published in 2003 and was updated in 2010. The Trail Guide maps the locations of trails for walking, hiking, and cross-country skiing at all of Newton's major open spaces. For many Newton residents, it is the introduction to how to access the open spaces that are available to us all.



Pat Robinson (middle) provided design work. This year Pat also designed banners, business cards, and our new brochure, created our new 50th anniversary logo and stationery, designed our beautiful invitation and program for the annual dinner, and, with Lucy Caldwell-Stair, designed our historical display.



Lucy Caldwell-Stair (left) served as the keeper of years of corrections to the old guide. Beyond that, she was "on the lookout" for hidden areas to be included in the new one. With Pat, Lucy produced the historical display on exhibit at the annual dinner. The Conservators intend that the display will move to the Newton History Museum for people to enjoy.

Judy Hepburn (right) is a long-time member of the Newton Conservators and also serves the City as a member of the Conservation Commission. Judy is a geologist. As President Sender said, Judy "knows how to draw maps, and she made all of them for this guide." The maps provide the important references for anyone using the Trail Guide to reach and navigate the parks.



Dan Brody worked on the new maps and background information for the guide. Dan works at keeping the Conservators' website updated. Dan also monitors Cold Spring Park. This year, with the help of Newton's Parks and Recreation Department and NewtonSERVES, Dan led an effort to get the mounds of trash out of the pond at Cold Spring Park.

President Jane Sender presented the award to the four recipients at the Annual Dinner. She thanked them for their talent, hard work, and dedication to the Conservators. In her words, "It is truly amazing how much talent this group has and that we could create something this good from

an all-volunteer effort."

This was the 30th [Environmentalist of the Year Award](#) presented by the Newton Conservators to an individual or group who has made a distinguished environmental contribution to our community.

Charles Johnson Maynard Award: Suziette Barbier and Duane Hillis

The Charles Johnson Maynard Award is given each year to recognize efforts "to improve biodiversity, habitat reclamation, and natural resource protection." In 2011, the award went to Duane Hillis and Suzette Barbier for their work with the Friends of Nahanton Park.



The [Friends of Nahanton Park](#) was re-energized in the past year. The first issue that arose was with unruly dogs and the possibility of an off leash dog park. Then came expansion plans for Angino Farm into Nahanton Park. In the winter came mounds of filthy snow, excessive City of Newton vehicular presence, discarded Christmas trees, discarded tree limbs, and dumped mattresses.

Duane "led the charge" to pull the Friends of Nahanton Park together, to create a more powerful voice. He sets the bar high for what it means to care about the city we live in and for how, as private citizens coming together with City officials, we can make sure a park as special as Nahanton Park is protected.



Suzette Barbier is frequently found birding in the early morning at Nahanton Park. She is often the first to see problems. She is passionate about that beautiful park. Suzette is also a talented artist and graphic designer. She designed the Friends of Nahanton Park brochure and its website, and she maintains a wonderful nature blog on the website.

Directors' Award: Deborah and Frank Howard

The Conservators gave Frank and Deborah Howard a Directors' Award for their lifetime of service to the Conservators, to conservation, and to Newton.

Deborah Howard served effectively on the Conservators' board for many years. In addition, she was Assistant Secretary of Environmental Affairs for Massachusetts and a member of the Newton Conservation Commission, the Urban Tree Commission, and the Board of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Deborah also earned the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's Gold Medal "for eminent horticultural accomplishments."



Frank Howard has been the "heart and soul" of the Newton Conservators board. Since Frank's retirement from the Board, meetings are not the same without him. Always the first to offer praise for others' accomplishments, Frank was tireless on our Board, representing us on the High Performance Building Coalition and on bicycling, transportation and safety committees. He produced environmental programs for New TV and articles and photographs for the newsletter. Frank has also been central to the Board of the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation's restoration of the native chestnut.

Newton Community Preservation Committee News: New 2011-12 Funding Deadline, Process & Community Outreach

Newton's Community Preservation Committee began requiring pre-proposals for funding requests in fall 2010. At its June 2011 meeting, the Committee decided that the last possible date to submit a pre-proposal for the next funding round will be July 1, 2012 - a year from now. The Committee will resume its traditional annual funding rounds in the future, but chose an unusually long, one-time-only deadline for 2011-12 for several reasons:



First and foremost, the CPC wants to make sure project sponsors are aware of the new pre-proposal requirement and understand its advantages for them. The Committee accepts pre-proposals on a rolling basis and discusses them at any of its regular, monthly public meetings. Early pre-proposals allow sponsors to get constructive feedback from the CPC before investing the significant time required to prepare a full proposal. Also, sponsors of strongly time-sensitive projects may use their pre-proposal discussion with the Committee to ask if they may submit a full proposal "off-cycle," before (or after) the next regular funding round.

The July 2012 deadline also allows for the expected completion between fall 2011 and spring 2012 of several City-wide studies and plans, including the City Archives Survey, City Historic Buildings Survey, and the next Open Space Plan. In combination with pre-proposals, these plans will help the CPC weigh the importance of current proposals against priorities for future funding. Clear future priorities are becoming more important than ever, given the steady if slow decline in the state matching funds Newton receives through the CPA, due to a greater number of participating cities and towns and the downturn in the real estate market.

Finally, 2011-2012 is the 10th anniversary of the Community Preservation Act in Newton. Newton voters adopted the Act in November 2001. Newton's first CPC held a series of hearings in neighborhoods around the City before forwarding its first funding recommendation to the Board of Aldermen, which appropriated funds for Newton's first CPA project in December 2002. The CPC is planning a new series of neighborhood events in 2011-12 to recognize what the CPA has helped Newton accomplish over the past ten years, and to hear directly from residents their thoughts about future priorities and projects.

For more information or to submit a pre-proposal, please contact program manager Alice Ingerson, phone: 617.796.1144 or email: aingerson@newtonma.gov.

Newton Conservators Sponsors

The Newton Conservators appreciate the generous contributions of "Gold" and "Silver" Sponsors on the occasion of our Annual Dinner. We are indebted for their contributions, which will help to defray land acquisition and other costs.



Gold Sponsors

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Newton Conservators e-Bulletin

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Did you know that you can Join the Newton Conservators online. And consider a gift membership for a conservation-minded friend (new members get a trail guide as well)! Visit <http://www.newtonconservators.org/membership.htm> for details on membership options. Did you know that you can register and pay for membership, events, buy a copy of our Almanac or newly revised Trail Guide, or make a donation to the Newton Conservators online?

Mission: *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 organization was formed as a not-for-profit 50 years ago in June 1961.

- E-Bulletin Editor Ted Kuklinski, Newton Conservators (dolanpond@aol.com)



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