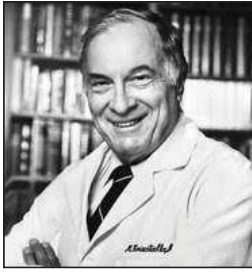


Remembering “Cris” Criscitiello



It is with sadness we report the passing on June 24, 2022, of Modestino “Cris” Criscitiello at age 96. Cris is fondly remembered for his service to our organization. He was on our Board of Directors, Board of Advisors, and Land Management Committee.

Cris was a well-respected cardiologist. He was a native of Pittsfield, MA, a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Medical School, and served in the Navy in Korea. He spent 30 years of his career at NE Medical Center and Tufts Medical School, where he practiced and taught. In 2001, he received the prestigious Paul Dudley White Award from the American Heart Association.

In his retirement years, Cris became a sparkplug for the Newton Conservators. In 2010, he was honored with our Environmentalist of the Year Award along with other members of the Almanac Committee for their hard work creating and publishing the beautiful *Newton Conservators’ Almanac*, which lists by month what plants and living creatures you might expect throughout the year. During that time, Cris was one of the prime movers for the maintenance and preservation of our Dexter Woods parcel near Newton North High School. He was also part of the Kessler Woods Committee that successfully urged the City to use Community Preservation Act funds to purchase that large, wooded parcel in South Newton.

Cris will be especially remembered for his work hosting the Environmental Show on NewTV, a powerful force in advocating for the acquisition of Angino Farm and Kessler Woods. The show also helped highlight existing open spaces such as Cold Spring Park, Newton’s Aqueducts, the Charles River, and many more. Cris loved going into the field for the show; a favorite memory for me was filming Cris doing a closing segment about the Charles River while he paddled a canoe under the Blue Heron Bridge. These shows are still available on our Newton Conservators’ YouTube channel.

Cris was an experienced birder and wrote newsletter articles on birds including owls, nighthawks, and even the thought-to-be-extinct ivory-billed woodpecker. The birding community is grateful for the many years Cris and his wife, Nancy, hosted the Newton section of the annual Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count. Cris appropriately received the Charles Johnson Maynard Award (named after a famous early Newton birder) for his actions to promote awareness of biodiversity, reclamation of wildlife habitat, and protection of our natural resources.

Cris has been described as a retired cardiologist with an awful lot of heart. He certainly led a full life with so many accomplishments, and he will be sorely missed as a true Newton Conservator and a friend. Cris’ obituary and memorial page can be found at <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/bostonglobe/name/modestino-criscitiello-obituary?id=35644230>

— Ted Kuklinski

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