



Fall / Winter 2006

# Voice of the Wapack

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Issue #78

## From the President

The summer of 2006 has identified the emergence of two important regional projects that can have very significant effects on the Wapack Trail – the Temple Mountain Project and the Wapack Wilderness Project. Both of these projects involve the protection of significant portions of the Trail, but even more importantly, will place considerable acreage into permanent conservation control. This issue has both of these projects highlighted in separate articles and the Friends website

([www.wapack.org](http://www.wapack.org)) will keep you advised of any future events. The successful implementation of these projects will require considerable support from all of us.

Remember to note your calendar with the date and time of the annual meeting – October 21, at the Shieling Forest Barn in Peterborough. See the Calendar in this issue for details. We hope to see you there.

- Mitch Call, President

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### Courtesy on the trail

- *Foot travel welcome.*
- *Leave NO trace.*
- *Be quiet near houses.*
- *Stay on blazed trails.*
- *Respect trailside property.*
- *Park cars so others can pass.*



View of Mt. Monadnock from Pratt Mountain. Photo courtesy of Mena Schmid.

# Temple Mountain Project

Temple Mountain is one of the most visible landmarks in southern New Hampshire. One of America's earliest ski areas, Temple Mountain serves as a prominent gateway to the Monadnock Region. The 352 acre ownership is currently the major gap in a contiguous stretch of more than 3,000 acres of publicly accessible conservation land. The property includes a prominent alpine section of the Wapack Trail and a network of other hiking and skiing trails, nine distinct natural communities, extensive wildlife habitat, and breathtaking views. It abuts Miller State Park across Route 101. In addition to being a priority for conservation by itself, Temple Mountain is the southern "anchor" of a possible conservation corridor running north to Crotched Mountain.

Portions of the property operated as Temple Mountain Ski Area commencing in 1937, but closed in 2001, and the property was put up for sale. A serious potential ski area buyer studied

the property, but determined that it was not viable as a ski area. Local residents and town officials formed Friends of Temple Mountain (FOTM) to discuss conservation options with the owners, holding public meetings with local selectmen, conservation commissions and local residents in the three towns (Temple, Peterborough and Sharon) and found strong support for conserving the mountain for public recreation, scenery, wildlife and water resources.

The ownership of the property changed in 2003 and the property was marketed aggressively for development. One potential buyer proposed dozens of housing units, golf course, etal. With the encouragement of conservation groups and FOTM, Temple Highlands LLC purchased the property expressly to allow time for the development of a conservation plan. In 2005, Monadnock Conservancy and Temple Highlands LLC opened

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## Friends of the Wapack

The *Voice of the Wapack* is published twice a year by the Friends of the Wapack. The Friends are nonprofit volunteers dedicated to the maintenance and preservation of the Wapack Trail System. Financial support is provided by member donations which are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Affiliated Club Member of the American Hiking Society and the

New England Trail Conference. The Wapack Trail is a 21-mile skyline footpath from Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham, MA to North Pack in Greenfield, NH. Completed in 1923, it is the oldest interstate hiking trail in the Northeast.

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Friends of the Wapack

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## Temple Mountain Project (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

discussions with the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation about possible acquisition as an addition to Miller State Park. Since that time numerous meetings informed interested parties about the project and an acquisition appropriation was submitted through Congressional delegation to (the federal)



Pack Monadnock / Miller State Park from the former Temple Mountain Ski Area. Photo courtesy of Mena Schmid.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and in June 2006 CLHIP approved a acquisition grant of \$135,000.

After public hearings in Concord on June

division.

Further information and future activities relating to this project can be found at [www.nhstateparks.org](http://www.nhstateparks.org).

21st and in Peterborough on July 12th, the NH Division of Parks and Recreation solicited public comment on the proposed acquisition, future public use and resource management, and the allocation of the state's fiscal year 2007 appropriation for the LWCF to the project. This comment period closed on September 15, and now being reviewed by the

## Ashburnham Conservation Trust auction supports protection of Mt. Watatic



### ***SILENT & LIVE AUCTION***

***Enjoy a great Sunday afternoon with friends and begin your holiday shopping!***

DATE: November 19, 2006

LOCATION:

Cushing Academy Dining Hall-School St., Ashburnham, MA

TIME: 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

TICKETS: \$20.00-includes hors d'oeuvres, wine, beverages, & auction paddle!

The auction features art, goods & services covering a wide array of interests and offers phenomenal deals benefiting the Ashburnham Conservation Trust.

### ***LIVE MUSIC HORS D'OEUVRES WINE & BEVERAGES***

Information and tickets contact:

Lois Somers-978-827-4301 [lsomers@net1plus.com](mailto:lsomers@net1plus.com)

Tickets are limited – reserve today

# Northeast Wilderness Trust to Preserve Wapack Wilderness

Walking along the Wapack Trail from Stony Top Mountain to Pratt Mountain one can not miss noticing the intact swath of forest that stretches down from the trail towards a series of waterways and wetlands. This is the Wapack Wilderness—1,400 acres owned by the Hampshire Country School and the focus of a conservation campaign led by the Northeast Wilderness Trust (NWT).

The Wapack Wilderness is ecologically significant as well as home to approximately one mile of the Wapack Trail. The property hosts a broad diversity of wildlife, such as moose, bobcat, fisher, mink and beaver and contains the headwaters of the Millers River.



*Hampshire Country School property, looking toward the Wapack Range, Rindge, NH*

Protection of the Wapack Wilderness will ensure protection of this awesome natural area, access to the Wapack Trail and preserve the exceptional views along the trail, and it will help connect and expand existing natural areas, such as the adjacent Binney Pond State Forest and Mountain Pond Preserve.

The property is a target area in a greater landscape initiative stretching from the Quabbin Reservoir to Cardigan Mountain. When asked about the significance of the Wapack Wilderness, Meade Cadot, Director of the Harris Center in Hancock, New Hampshire, said it is "...good to

put together big chunks of protected land rather than protecting isolated bits here and there...we are all in favor of promoting the conservation of the [Wapack Wilderness.]”

The Hampshire Country School has long maintained the property as wild; however, the cost has become prohibitive. Rather than seeking maximum profit by developing the land, the school found a solution that honors its values and history—the school agreed to sell a conservation easement on the Wapack Wilderness to NWT.

To preserve this natural gem in perpetuity, NWT must raise \$1,400,000. While early in the campaign, NWT has raised approximately \$330,000. The project has been endorsed by the

Rindge and New Ipswich Conservation Commissions as well as over ten local and regional conservation organizations. Rick Van de Poll, ecologist and President of NWT said, “We need everyone’s support to preserve this exceptional property for just \$1,000 an acre. It is a win-win situation for nature, wildlife, trail users and the school.” To learn more about the exciting effort to protect the Wapack Wilderness, go to [www.newwildernesstrust.org](http://www.newwildernesstrust.org).

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## E-Mail Addresses

As you can see in the articles about Temple Mountain and the Wapack Wilderness, important progress is being made towards the Friends goal of protecting the entire length of the Trail. Sometimes progress is slow, but occasionally short deadlines are imposed, and your support needs to be solicited. We needed to increase the quantity of public comments on the Temple Mountain

project, and made a plea by e-mail. But less than a third of our members have e-mail addresses on file. So, for potential future needs, please provide a current e-mail address, which you may do by sending it to [info@wapack.org](mailto:info@wapack.org).

We promise to use it only when we feel it very important and time critical.

## In Memoriam—Jane Mutch

Jane Mutch passed away September 3, at the age of 73, after an heroic struggle with cancer. She was surrounded by her family at the time of her death. Jane was an inspiration to all who knew her - end to ending the Appalachian trail in her late 60's, leading numerous hikes for the Harris Center for Conservation Education, and continuing to do trail maintenance on the Wapack Trail even while she was losing her fight with cancer. No trail adopter or trail crew member contributed more time, or worked harder to maintain the Wapack trail than Jane. She was a one woman work crew.



*Jane Mutch at the 2001 FOW Annual Meeting, speaking of her experiences end-to-ending the Appalachian Trail*

Jane gave us all a great example of how to live a purposeful life. She was a person of unhesitating generosity to individuals and volunteer organizations. When I tried to return a favor or thank Jane for her help, she would say "Pass it on." Her generosity and kindness is still at work, and will continue, being passed on by the many people she has helped.

I remember once we were discussing the great experiences she and Ollie were sharing in their retirement, and I remarked how I could not wait to retire. Jane turned to me and said – "Rick, you can't wish your life away." It was the exact advice I needed to hear.

Jane certainly did not wish her life away. Whether she was end-to-ending the Appalachian Trail, helping a friend, working in her garden or wood lot, leading a hike for the Harris Center, working with the Trailwrights or working on the Wapack Trail, her days were busy and full of activity and service. When I get tired or lazy, I need only turn to Jane's amazing example to get me going again. Thank you Jane.— *Rick B.*



## In Remembrance of Jane

God looked around His heavenly mountains  
and on the trails found an empty place,  
He then looked down upon the earth  
and saw your tired face,  
He put His arms around you  
and lifted you to rest  
God's mountains must be beautiful  
He only takes the best,  
He knew that you were suffering  
and that you were in pain  
He knew that you would never  
get well on earth again,  
He saw that the trails were rough  
and the hills were hard to climb  
so He closed your weary eyelids  
and whispered "Peace Be Thine".  
It broke our hearts to lose you,  
but you didn't go alone,  
Part of us went with you  
The day God called you home.

*- Bill Currier*

## Trail Workdays

### Spring 2006 Workday April 29th

The first workday of 2006 turned out to be one of our better workdays. The weather was just about perfect, we had a good turnout of volunteers, and we got a lot accomplished.

We had nine workers show up at the trailhead of the Raymond Trail and we quickly got started setting some water bars and cleaning out existing ones. The first major job was removing a decaying bog bridge and replacing it with stones and a defined channel. Despite a lack of flat stones we were able to find enough to harden the area and hopefully last longer than the bog bridge. The biggest job of the day was the replacement of a bridge over a stream around halfway up the trail. We had previously identified some oak trees for the bridge we were able to fell them, drag them to the stream, debark them and cut one side flat. We were able to do all this by lunchtime. After lunch, we set about removing the old bridge, setting new sills, drilling the stringers, and spiking them in. Many thanks go to Tom Brumaghim and Neil Faiman who carried in the sills. Once this was completed we took advantage of having a chainsaw to cut down some spruce trees that had fallen and were caught up in trees over the trail.

Thanks go out to Ollie and Jane Mutch, Ed Blanchette, Rick Blanchette, Glenn Lloyd, Tom Brumaghim, Lynne Pentler, and Neil Faiman.

### Upcoming Workdays

All workdays are on Saturday and start at 8:30 AM and typically wind down around 3:00 or 4:00

in the afternoon. Bring lunch, water, work clothes, and enthusiasm. We supply the tools and encouragement.

Saturday September 23: Mount Watatic, Route 119, Ashburnham, MA. We'll be having a joint workday with the Mid-State Trail group covering the section of the Wapack that the Mid-State Trail is coincident with as well as the various side-trails. This will include basic trail maintenance with emphasis on better defining the trail on Watatic. Meet at the parking lot on Route 119 in Ashburnham.

Saturday October 28: Pratt Mountain. This workday will concentrate on the section of trail from the spring at the north end of Binney Pond and the summit of Pratt Mountain. This is one of the steepest sections of the trail and as the forest under story has thinned, the trail has become more difficult to follow. We will be attempting to better delineate the trail and do general trail maintenance.

- Mike Przybyla, Trail Master



# Friends of the Wapack Fall 2006 Calendar

All are welcome to attend the following meetings & events

Check our website for updates or additions [www.wapack.org](http://www.wapack.org)

**Board Meetings**— First Thursday of alternate months, 7PM. (Nov. 2, Jan. 4, March 1, May 3, no meeting in July). All are welcome. Shieling Forest Barn, Peterborough, NH.

**Saturday, September 23 – TRAIL WORK DAY, Mt. Watatic.**—With the Midstate Trail Crew. See “Trail Workdays” article in this issue for details. We’ll meet at 8:30 at the trail parking lot on Rte. 119 in Ashburnham, Mass. Contact Mike Przybyla (603) 878-3350.

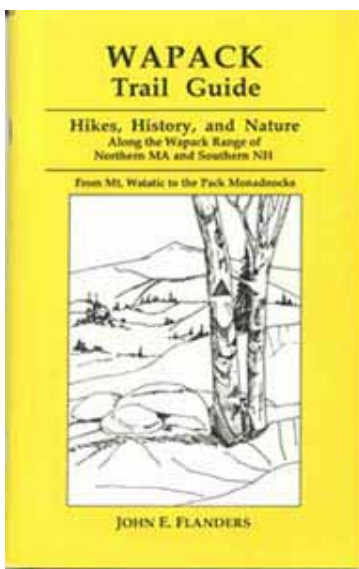
**Saturday, October 21— FRIENDS OF THE WAPACK ANNUAL MEETING**

Shieling Forest Conference Center ("The Barn"), Old Street Road, Peterborough, NH. Get together with other “Friends” for a morning hike. At 1PM, guest speaker Bill Currier will share his memories of the history of skiing along the Wapack Range, the Wapack Lodge, and more. Since 1945 Bill has been a ski instructor, lift inspector, ski patrolman, and was involved in the creation of Temple Mt. Ski Area. NE Wilderness Trust will present an update on the Wapack Wilderness project. Our annual business meeting will follow the talks. **Watch for a special mailing, call an FOW officer, or check our website for details.**

**Saturday, October 28—TRAIL WORK DAY, Pratt Mountain.** See “Trail Workdays” article for details. Meet at 8:30 at the Newest Mall, Rt. 123/124 in New Ipswich and then head over to the trailhead on Binney Hill Road. Contact Mike Przybyla. (603) 878-3350.

**March 1**—EDITORIAL DEADLINE for Voice of the Wapack Issue #79. Send your letter, article, photo or artwork to Renee Blanchette, P.O. Box 90, New Ipswich, NH 03071, or email to [weaver1@adelphia.net](mailto:weaver1@adelphia.net). We reserve the right to edit for content and length.

## FOW General Store



Send me \_\_\_ Trail Guide & map pkg.(s) @ \$11.00 ea.

Send me \_\_\_ Friends patch(es) @ \$4.00 ea.

Send me \_\_\_ Friends sticker(s) @ \$1.00 ea.

*Prices include postage and handling.*

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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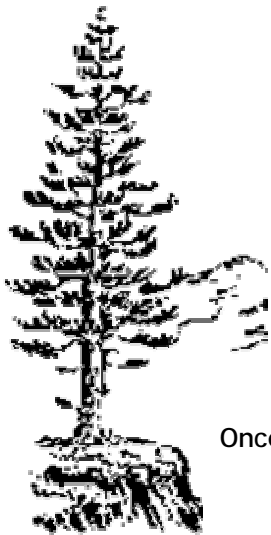
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Patch / Sticker

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Once It's Gone,  
It's Gone  
Forever

## Welcome New Friends

James D. Eng, Waltham MA  
Marc Patterson, Peterborough NH  
Johanna Lyons, Concord NH  
Allison McLean, Concord NH  
Chris Gamache, Concord NH  
Jennifer Codispoti, Concord NH  
Noel Harraff, Milford, NH  
Maggie Holtzberg, Newton MA  
Karen Faucher, Sharon NH  
Barbara Brooks, Fitzwilliam NH  
Glenda Bishop, Winchendon MA  
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M. Byron, Townsend MA  
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Jack Thornton, Gardner MA  
Mr. Ron Como, Sharon NH

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