

Spring / Summer 2016



Voice of the Wapack

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Issue #97

President's Letter

This is a year of opportunity for the Wapack Trail. Thanks to the Northeast Wilderness Trust's Binney Hill project, we have the opportunity to protect about 1 mile of the Wapack Trail and 485 acres along the trail as forever wild. (Please see the Binney Hill project insert in this newsletter for details.) The Friends of the Wapack have pledged \$25,000 from our funds to this effort for trail protection.

This is a year of opportunity for the Wapack Trail

We have been working with Daryl Burtnett, the Executive Director of Northeast Wilderness Trust, toward the

success of this effort. Now is the time to contribute to this important step in protecting the Wapack Trail. Please see the box at right for how to donate. Thank you!

Besides the Binney Hill project, we've been busy in a number of areas. We are in the process of finalizing the details of a Volunteer Service Agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to formalize our cooperation and roles in maintaining the trails on state lands around Mt. Watatic. This agreement will provide some liability protection for our volunteers while establishing communication channels and engagement procedures. In an effort to reduce the number of lost hikers around Mt. Watatic, as part of this agreement we will be helping DCR to develop trail maps to be posted at the main parking lot kiosk and at trail intersections. We have also met with the Ashburnham Fire Department to provide ideas on signage and additional measures to make search and rescue easier and hopefully much less frequent.

Northeast Wilderness Trust Binney Hill Project



The Northeast Wilderness Trust Binney Hill project, if successful, will protect approximately 1 mile of the Wapack Trail and 485 acres along the trail, connecting conservation lands around Mount Watatic to Binney Pond Natural area and the Wapack Wilderness conservation easement on Pratt Mt. These opportunities do not come often. So please consider contributing and be as generous as you can. Present and future generations of Wapack Trail hikers will thank you!

You can donate on line at newildernesstrust.org. Click on the "Donate" button, and type "Binney Hill" in the designation box for your donation. Thank You!!!

For more information please contact the Northeast Wilderness Trust at 802-224-1000 or www.newildernesstrust.org.

Since last Fall we have some new volunteers! Welcome to our new Webmaster, Jonathan McNerney. Jon is completely revamping our website using WordPress. The new site will be easier

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Friends of the Wapack



The *Voice of the Wapack* is published twice a year by the Friends of the Wapack, Inc. 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. 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.

The Friends of the Wapack, Inc. is recognized as a charitable corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the US IRS code.

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Once it's gone, It's gone forever

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Trail Work Days 2016

The Friends of the Wapack will be having three scheduled workdays this year. Overall the trail is in good condition so no major projects are planned at this time. These workdays will concentrate on regular trail maintenance focusing on drainage issues and brush clearing. All workdays are on Saturdays and start at 8:30 AM. Tools are provided. You should wear appropriate clothing and have work gloves and sturdy shoes. Be sure to pack a lunch and bring plenty of water.

Saturday May 7, 2016 – Pratt Mountain

The first workday will be on Saturday May 7th. We will be working on the section between Binney Hill Road and Pratt Mountain. We'll be installing water bars at a number of locations, clearing brush, and general trail work. Special attention will be focused on the climb from Binney Pond to the overlook on Pratt Mountain. We will meet at the Newest Mall on Routes 124/123 in New Ipswich as there is limited parking on Binney Hill Road.

Saturday September 24, 2016 – Sharon Ledges

The second scheduled workday will be on Saturday September 24th. We will be clearing views along the Sharon Ledges section which have grown in as well as refurbishing water bars. Meet at the Belletete parking lot on Temple Road in Sharon.

Saturday October 15, 2016 – TBD

The final workday will be on Saturday October 15th and at this time the location has not been determined. Details when available, will be posted on wapack.org and in our fall newsletter.

These workdays are a good opportunity to contribute in direct way to the maintenance of the trail, learn some trail maintenance techniques, and have a good time. Hope to see you there!

- Mike Przybyla, Trail Master



Friends of the Wapack Upcoming Events

All are welcome to attend the following meetings & events
Check our website for updates and additions www.wapack.org

Board Meetings

First Thursday of alternate months unless otherwise noted. (May 5, September 8, November 3). All are welcome. Shieling Forest Barn in Peterborough, NH, or Ashby Public Library, Ashby MA.. 7:00 PM. Check with a board member to confirm date and location.

Trail Work Days

See the “Trail Work Days 2016” article in this newsletter for details. Contact Mike Przybyla for more information or questions 603-878-3350. Please check our website for updates www.wapack.org.

Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 22 - 1:00 PM - Town Meeting House, Sharon, NH

The program for our annual meeting is being planned. Watch for a special mailing in the fall, or check our website for updates and details. www.wapack.org

Hikes

Saturday, August 27 - Annual Wapack Trail End to End Hike!

Hike the entire trail in one day! Group will meet at 6:00 AM at the trail head on Mountain Road in Greenfield. Please call leader Tom Brumaghim to register and for details (603) 878-6167.

Notices

Hiking the Wapack Trail through Windblown Cross-Country Ski Area

Hiking through Windblown Cross Country ski area is only allowed on the marked route of the Wapack Trail, and no mountain bikes please. Parking is still along the shoulder of Route 123/124 Turnpike Road, between Wapack Road and the Windblown entrance, not on Windblown property.

The trail is closed through Windblown during Mud Season—roughly now through early May. Thank you!

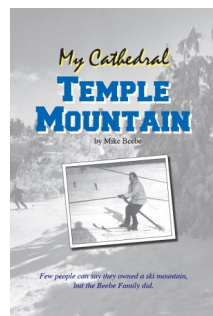
Hiking the Wapack Trail during Mud Season

With mud on the surface and frost still rising below, April/May mud season is the time when the Wapack Trail is most susceptible to damage from hikers boots. Please consider staying off the wettest areas until the ground thaws.

New Book Tells the story of Temple Mt. Ski Area

At our annual meeting last year, our featured speaker, Mike Beebe, entertained us with stories of the early days of skiing and of the historic ski area founded by his parents—Temple Mountain. The book he previewed for us at the meeting is now available.

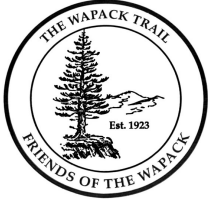
In *My Cathedral, Temple Mountain*, Mike shares his heart-felt and humorous stories, including details of the ski area operation and the people involved in its early years. From pioneer days to the present, Mike Beebe describes 70 years of skiing adventure, heartbreak, and success. His ability to combine the technical and spiritual aspects of life on the mountain is inspiring. Mike’s book is available on line at templamountainskiing.com and at the Toadstool bookshops.




Voice of the Wapack newsletter on line

If you would rather read this newsletter on line, please sign up for our email Newsletter at Wapack.org. Rather than receiving the paper newsletter you will receive our e-Newsletter via email with a link to the full version.

If your email address has changed please send us a note from your new address to info@wapack.org

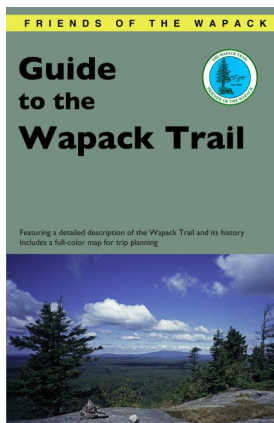


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President's Letter (cont.)

to navigate and will be optimized for viewing on mobile devices. For many years Jon has been helping his Dad, Sean, as adopters of the Berry Pasture Trail. Several years ago we sponsored Jon's Eagle Scout project which included the kiosk and other enhancements to the Homer J. Belletete trail head parking area in Sharon, and the installation of blue bird boxes in NEFF's Lincoln Davis Forest. I am very happy to turn our website over to Jon after maintaining the site since the 1990's! Expected to be ready in late spring, the new website will be at the same location, Wapack.org.

I'd also like to welcome two new Section Captains, Paul Batts and Casey Burrage. Paul has adopted the trail section between Pack and North Pack Monadnock. Casey has adopted the Marion Davis Trail. They attended workdays last year and decided to adopt a trail section. They both bring valuable skills and enthusiasm for volunteering on the trails.

Thanks you all for your help and contributions over the years. Your support makes our trail maintenance and trail protection efforts possible. We hope to see you at a trail work day or out on the trail!

- Rick Blanchette, President

