

Spring / Summer 2017



# Voice of the Wapack

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Issue #99

## President's Letter



The Wapack Trail through the Binney Hill Preserve. Photo by Shelby Perry, NWT

At our Annual Meeting on October 22 we celebrated Northeast Wilderness Trusts successful campaign to protect

488 acres in New Ipswich as

the Binney Hill Preserve. The announcement was made by Daryl Burtnett, the Executive Director of Northeast Wilderness Trust. This effort was also supported by the Friends of the Wapack to protect the mile of the Wapack Trail that is on the Preserve. Permanent legal trail protection is being

worked and we hope to have this finalized later this year.

We recently lost two exemplary friends of the Wapack Trail. Our first Historian, Connie Hall, who's support was key in the early years of this organization, passed away recently, as did my Dad, Ed Blanchette, who was a dedicated trail worker and my constant companion on trail work days for many years. Every part of the trail holds a memory of my Dad. He will always be with me on the trail. This year's trail maintenance is dedicated to him.

Thank you all for your continued support. May we all find health, happiness and peace on the trail.

- Rick Blanchette, President

## In Memoriam Ed Blanchette

Ed Blanchette, member and long time trail maintainer, passed away at his home in Greenville on March 30, 2017, at the age of 89. When his son Rick became Trails Committee Chairman in 1990, he joined the trail crew. Ed was a constant presence on work days for nearly two decades. On work days he would instruct new volunteers on trail maintenance best practices, including building and cleaning waterbars, clearing brush and blazing, working as hard as many half his age. He loved to work on his adopted trail section and helping many others with their sections, often doing the annual maintenance on his son's section on Pratt Mountain before his son could get to it. His trail section was the New Ipswich

Mt. ridge which he maintained from his camp at Pratt Pond. He was very proud of the great condition of the trail. His favorite spot was the Binney Pond Outlook,

which he kept clear as you see it today. He also worked on trails with the Trailwrights, and was an active member of the Harris Center, attending many hikes and other events. (Continued on page 3)



Ed Blanchette (left), and his son Rick on the trail in the 1990's.

## 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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Friends of the Wapack

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*Once it's gone, It's gone forever*

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## Trail Work Days 2017



The Friends of the Wapack will be having three workdays this year. In large part due to the hard work of our Trail Adopters, the trail is in good condition so no major projects are planned.

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. Wear appropriate clothing and have work gloves and study shoes. Pack a lunch and bring plenty of water.

### Saturday April 29 - Binney Hill Preserve

We will be working on the section of trail through the Binney Hill Preserve which was recently protected by the Northeast Wilderness Trust. We will be installing water bars, repairing vehicle caused trail damage, and improving drainage on the trail. In addition, we hope to assist staff from NWT with installation of property line markers around the perimeter of the property. 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 23 - Cliff Trail

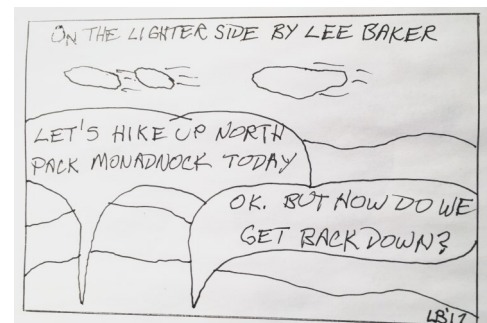
We will be doing general maintenance and a small re-route on the Cliff Trail located in the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge. Meet at the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge trailhead parking lot on Mountain Road in Greenfield, NH

### Saturday October 28th - Barrett Mountain

This day will focus on clean up and drainage work along the Wapack Trail on Barrett Mountain where a timber harvest has damaged the trail. We will also do some drainage work along the section between Barrett and New Ipswich Mountains. We will meet at the Windblown Cross-Country Ski area lower parking lot on Routes 124/123 in New Ipswich, NH.

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

-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](http://www.wapack.org)

## Board Meetings

First Thursday of alternate months unless otherwise noted. (May 4, September 7, November 2). 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 2017" 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](http://www.wapack.org).

## Annual Meeting

**Saturday, October 21 - 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](http://www.wapack.org).

## Hikes

**Saturday, August 26 - 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. *Please note: This is a strenuous hike with over 3800 feet of vertical gain and covers 21.5 miles. It is recommended that participants be in good physical condition and have conditioned themselves by doing frequent hikes leading up to the End to End hike.*

## 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.

### 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](http://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](mailto:info@wapack.org)*

## In Memoriam Ed Blanchette (continued)

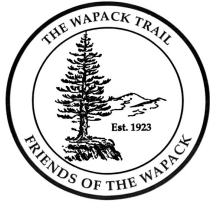
His legacy on the trail lives on through his son Rick and all who work on the Wapack Trail. Here are some tributes to Ed from the trail crew: "Ed's love of the trail and zest for life was an inspiration."

*"The Waterbars are clean,  
the Outlook is clear,  
We'll take it from here."*

*- Wapack Trail Crew*







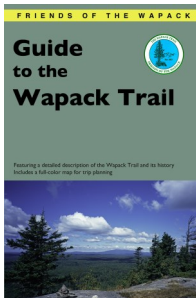
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## In Memoriam Connie Hall

When Connie (Buck) Hall was a girl, she would visit her aunt Marion Davis at the Wapack Lodge and work with her, Frank Robbins, and other volunteers on the Wapack Trail. Marion and Frank were the founders of the trail. Connie passed away March 6, 2017.

Connie was our official Historian from our early years until 1996. During those years she wrote many articles for this newsletter featuring stories about the early days of the trail, and of her aunt Marion and Frank Robbins. These articles can still be viewed in our archive at the Peterborough Library.

Connie was the link between this organization in it's early years and the history of the trail. The founding of the FoW would not have been so successful without her support, work and dedication. The Friends of the Wapack send our condolences to Connie's family in appreciation for her invaluable contributions to this organization, and to the future of the Wapack Trail.



Connie Hall speaking at the Wapack Trail 70th Anniversary Celebration, 1993