

Waltham Land Trust

is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources for the future through education, open space acquisition and protection.

JOURNAL FALL 2025



Expanding WLT's Lakeview Preserve

Diana Young, WLT Board Member

The desire to acquire waterfront parcels between Lakeview Avenue and Hardy Pond for open space dates back to at least 2011. In that year, Councillors George A. Darcy III and Edmund Tarallo proposed a multi-part plan to create the Hardy Pond Conservation Area to the City Council. Phase one of the plan was to acquire six small lots on Lakeview using Community Preservation Act funds. The proposal languished for several years, but in 2017, Waltham's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) had the six properties appraised and then approved funds to acquire each parcel in 2018. The City Council ratified the plan. Unfortunately, the city never approached the property owners.

In 2023, the Land Trust learned that the Giardina family was selling the family home and their three Hardy Pond lots. The family had always encouraged public access on their lots and knew the Land Trust volunteers. After some negotiation, the Land Trust acquired their pond-side properties in May 2023.



Soon after the Giardina acquisition, a Lakeview neighbor told Land Trust volunteers that the Lenh family might be interested in selling their two parcels. WLT Founder Marc Rudnick approached the family and over time, a deal was negotiated and struck, and the Land Trust now owns their two lots. The Land



Trust currently owns five of the six lots that were originally proposed as open space in the City Council in 2011. It only took fourteen years.

The acquisition was made possible through a grant from State Senator Barrett and a very generous gift from an anonymous donor designated specifically for land acquisition that was made during WLT's year-end appeal in 2024. These amounts more than paid for the Lenh property and will be used to improve the health of Hardy Pond, and to develop and improve trails as the Land Trust continues to realize the plan for the Hardy Pond Conservation Area.

A celebration at the property recognizing the new acquisition was held on September 27, National Public Lands Day. Close to 50 people attended, including Senator Barrett.



History of WLT's New Land

Marie Daly, WLT Board Member

This past June, the Waltham Land Trust purchased a tract of land along the shore of Hardy Pond from Jason and Vanessa Lenh. The land abuts other property that the Land Trust had purchased in 2023. Together with a small City of Waltham parcel, the public can now access over 400 feet of Hardy Pond shoreline, that we have named Lakeview Preserve.

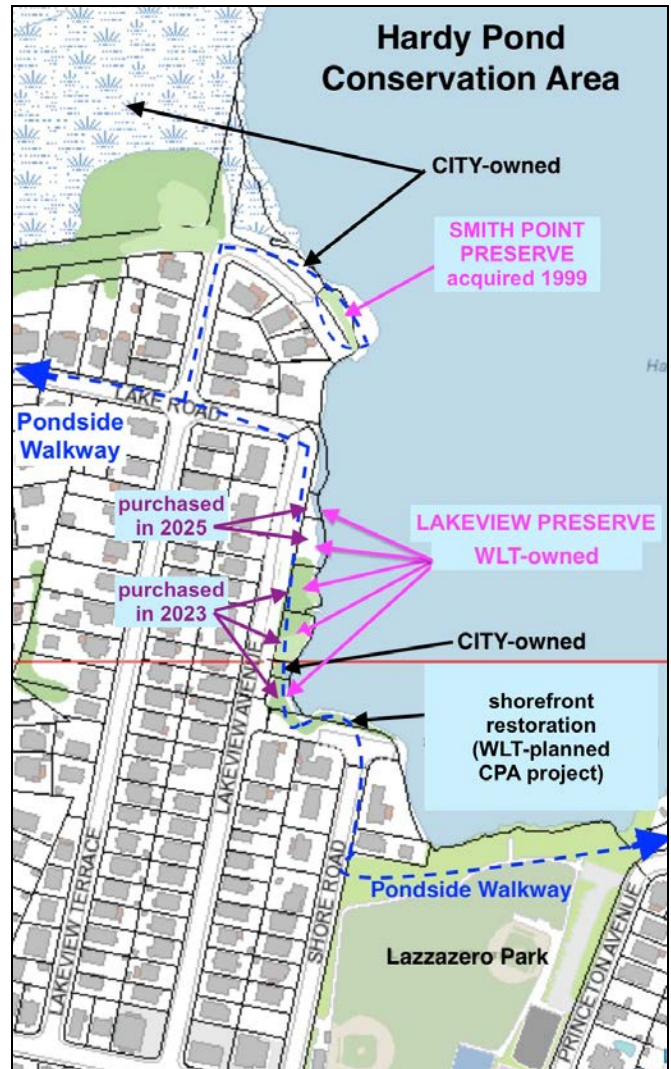
The history of the southwest corner of Hardy Pond dates back to the pre-European contact era, when indigenous people likely lived there for thousands of years. Their wigwams were seen as late as 1676. They probably grew crops of maize and squash, and caught fish that teemed in the crystal-clear waters of the pond.

European settlers first arrived in Watertown in 1630, and the town boundaries included what is now Waltham. Starting in 1636, Watertown divided up among the settlers all the land within the town boundaries. The Europeans lived in eastern Watertown, but individuals owned scattered tracts of land that they used for gathering hay from marshes, collecting wood for building and fuel, and pasturing their livestock.

The Fiske family eventually owned the remote, numbered parcel, lot 21, along the southwestern corner of the water body called the Great Pond in the Woods, now named Hardy Pond. The first Fiske to reside on this land was John Fiske, who purchased the western half of Lot 21 in 1703/4. In 1802, descendant Elijah Fiske built a brick mansion that still stands today at 457 Lincoln Street. His land extended from Lincoln Street to the shores of Hardy Pond. His son, Luke Fiske, was a prominent civic and business leader in Waltham.

In the twentieth century, the Fiske descendants sold most of their lands to the Moody Land Trust and the Bay State Realty Exchange, which subdivided the old farm into the small lots that now comprise Lakeview

neighborhood. The developments encompassed much of the shoreline of the pond, thereby cutting off public contact. With the purchase of the Lenh parcel, the Waltham Land Trust has restored significant access for the enjoyment of all people.



Member Spotlight

In each *Fall Journal*, we highlight a member of the Waltham Land Trust who helps us achieve our mission of creating a legacy of land conservation in Waltham. This time we are shining the light on Emilie Josephs, a WLT member since 2023 who lives with her husband James in the Highlands neighborhood near Prospect Hill Park. Emilie has been a very active WLT volunteer trail steward since 2021, and in February 2024, created "Friends of Prospect Hill Park" with father/daughter duo Craig and Ella, which focuses on restoring the City of Waltham's oldest open space. Emilie also often assists at Wellington Fields, along the Charles, and anywhere else the need arises.





WLT: *What is your first memory of enjoying open space and nature?*

EJ: My parents started taking me along on hikes well before I could walk on my own, so I've been getting out into nature and loving it for as far back as I can remember.

WLT: *What is the oddest and/or most beautiful thing you've encountered during your time as a WLT steward?*

EJ: We find all sorts of unexpected things when we do trash pickup days at Prospect Hill Park! We found a full set of baseball bases once. They were made of solid concrete, and each one must have weighed upwards of 30 pounds. Another time, we found a mysterious, curlicued piece of cast iron. We were mystified for a while, until a volunteer identified it as part of a park bench, with all the wood rotted away.

WLT: *Why should someone consider becoming involved with the WLT?*

EJ: So many reasons! For me, it's about the cool opportunities to work outside. The volunteer work is so satisfying, and I've learned a lot about native plants, just by hanging out and asking questions. I've met great people through the stewardship program, and I love the sense of community. But there's plenty else to do with the WLT, even for folks who are less interested in the stewardship work – there are all sorts of nature-based social events, as well as opportunities for organizing and advocating for conservation.

WLT: *Do you have a favorite natural place in Waltham that you can share with our readers?*

EJ: I really love Prospect Hill Park. I love that I can take a long walk in the woods right in the middle of the city.

WLT: *Why do you support the Waltham Land Trust?*

EJ: I believe that Waltham has something truly, deeply special in the amount and variety of green spaces we have. We have the wooded hills of Prospect Hill Park, the wetland at the Mokema Marsh, the open meadows of Wellington Fields, the riverside at Woerd Woods, and an extensive preserve area opening up at 200 Trapelo. These green spaces feel very precious to me, not only because I enjoy them personally, but also because they are environmentally important. This is a time of climate anxiety and rapid loss of biodiversity,



so the Waltham Land Trust's mission of conservation resonates very strongly with me.

HELP WLT GO PAPERLESS!

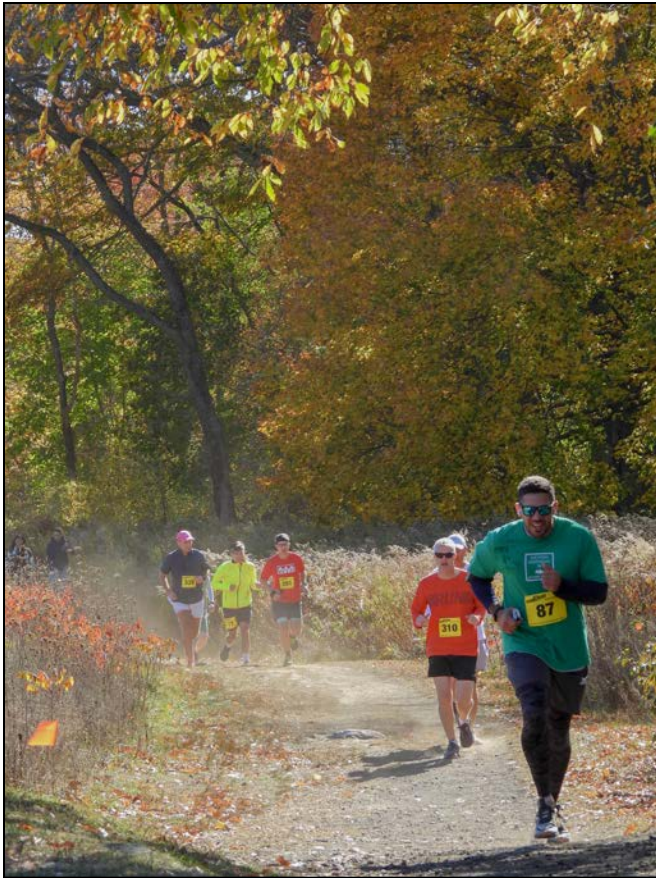
Join the 125 Land Trust members who have selected to have their *Journals* sent to them electronically. By opting out of the mailed hard copy, these supporters are helping WLT reduce our carbon footprint and save on costs associated with printing, postage, and transportation. Furthermore, the electronic version of the *Journal* will be available to you before the mail arrives, and the underlined hyperlinks are clickable.

Please send an email with your name to swadman@walthamlandtrust.org, with the subject header "Electronic *Journal*" if you'd like the next *Journal* emailed to you. Please remember that receiving *The Journal* is a privilege of membership. Be sure you are up to date with your dues so you don't miss the Spring 2026 *Journal*!

It's Western Greenway 5K Time!

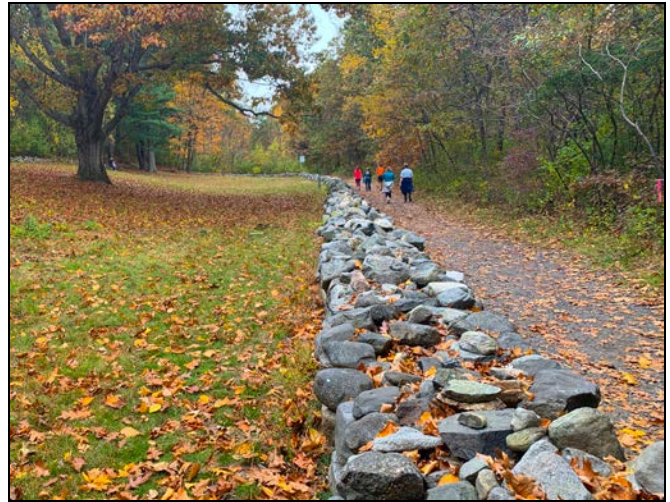
Nadene Stein, WLT Board President, Special Events Committee Chair

We cannot let the autumn go by without our annual Western Greenway 5K! This year we are hosting this community favorite on Sunday, October 26th at noon. This event promises to be great fun -- not just for the fall foliage you will see as you make your way through and around a variety of habitats in Beaver Brook North Reservation and Rock Meadow, including cattail marshes, forests, vernal pools and open meadows BUT because we are expanding the fun to include a 50-yard Monster Dash at 11:30 a.m. for children under the age of 10. The Monster Dash is free for children who attend with an adult running the 5K, \$5 suggested donation otherwise.



While some participants may be racing, the course is also open for those of you who prefer a leisurely walk to enjoy the sights and sounds of a lovely Sunday afternoon. Most importantly, all funds raised from this event will directly support the Waltham Land Trust's mission to create a legacy of land conservation in Waltham by promoting, protecting, restoring, and acquiring open space.

Information and registration for this event can be found at [Waltham Land Trust's Western Greenway 5K](#). If you are unable to attend, we would love for you to support our race as a sponsor. With four levels of [Sponsorship](#), there are multiple ways for you to show your appreciation of open space while getting some recognition for you as an individual or for your company/organization. Pledge \$250 by October 10 to get your name on the very popular race t-shirt that's worn by participants well after the event ends.



A few important details:

- Advanced bib pickup details will follow shortly. T-shirts for the first 100 runners to register!
- You can also pick up your bib on race day at the registration tent near the McLaughlin Building on Metropolitan Parkway North. Please arrive early if you intend to pick up your bib the day of the race.
- Online registration will close at midnight on the Thursday before the race (10/23/25). Additional registrations are always welcome - PLEASE NOTE that there will be additional \$5 fee to register at bib pickup, or the morning of the race.
- Because WLT relies on the proceeds from the race to fund its work and we expend certain costs, race registrations are not refundable.
- To get your Land Trust member discount, your membership must be up to date and you must login to your account when you go to register for the event. If you forgot your login name or your password, go to iforgot.walthamlandtrust.org.
- Every year we need volunteers to help with tasks like checking the race route and handing out water and snacks. Interested in volunteering? Email Anna at arichardson@walthamlandtrust.org.



One last thing...it would be very cool to see you in your Halloween costume! This is the perfect time to show it off, just make sure it is safe for running in the woods...it would not be good to leave part of your costume on a tree branch along the route!



Please Join the Development Committee!

Debbie von Rechenberg, Development Committee Chair

Looking to volunteer with the Waltham Land Trust? Our trail stewards are our most visible volunteers, but we have other needs as well! Our Development Committee explores ways to fund our operations and programs, through grant seeking, membership development, and other means. We meet roughly every two months over Zoom for about an hour. Of course, you would need to commit additional time for any assignments you take on. If any of this sounds like it's your superpower (or a superpower you would like to acquire!), we would love to have you! Contact me at dvonrechenberg@walthamlandtrust.org, and thank you!

Seeking New Board Members

John Dieckmann, WLT Board Member

The Waltham Land Trust Board of Directors has a few open positions, and we encourage current members and supporters to consider joining our board. The basic qualifications are:

- Being a member of the Waltham Land Trust (if not already a member, it is easy to join as a member, with the basic individual membership costing \$25 per year)
- Being willing to commit to attending 11 board meetings per year (monthly, except for one month in the summer). Meetings are held in the evening, sometimes in person, sometimes remotely via Zoom.
- Being involved in various WLT activities and committees
- Having a commitment to open space conservation in Waltham and beyond

I have been a member of the Board for approximately twelve years. I have found the experience to be both rewarding and enjoyable. I like having played a part in conserving and improving the city's natural open spaces and the Western Greenway Trail. I am excited that this year we have completed the purchase of several lots on the shore of Hardy Pond and we have completed easement agreements that will allow the Western Greenway Trail to be extended from Beaver Street to the Mass Central Rail Trail. And my association with the great people on the board and our volunteers is a real pleasure. Most of the members of our Board are Waltham residents, but this is not a requirement. For example, I am a Belmont resident, but my long-time involvement in developing the Western Greenway Trail makes me a good fit for the Board.

If you are interested in exploring Board membership, please contact our Executive Director, Sonja Wadman, at swadman@walthamlandtrust.org.



Save Waltham Wildlife Update

Alan Richardson, SWW Steering Committee Member

Save Waltham Wildlife, an initiative of the Waltham Land Trust, continues to work toward a city free of SGARs (second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides) and less hospitable to rats: two goals that go hand in hand.

Save our raptors: In July, one of our SWW steering committee members, Linda Graetz, published a helpful overview of the related issues of rodent control, the harmful effects of SGARs on our local wildlife, trash disposal issues, and “integrated pest management” in the Waltham Times. You can read Linda’s article here—[“To Control Rats, Save the Raptors”](#)—which could serve as a great introduction to these issues to pass on to other concerned Waltham residents.

SGAR-free campus: We have encouraged all SWW members to consider contacting neighborhood businesses and landowners about the dangers to wildlife of SGARs and alternatives to using them. We’re happy to report that Waltham’s two universities, Bentley and Brandeis, which between them cover a good deal of green space and border on much more, have both stopped using SGAR poisons on their campuses. Bentley University informed us last spring that they do not use SGARs in their bait boxes.

More recently, Brandeis University agreed to stop using SGARs on their campus, after lobbying from SWW and Brandeis Students for Environmental Action. This is an especially welcome development given that several dead hawks, as well as a dying coyote pup, all found on the Brandeis campus, had tested positive for SGAR poisoning. (See the [relevant article in the Waltham Times](#).)

SWW has since developed a “pledge” that Brandeis students can take regarding the importance of proper trash disposal and management for keeping rats at bay by depriving them of ready food sources, which we’re



CAMPUS CHAMPION PLEDGE

Rat Prevention & Waste Management Commitment

Join your fellow students in keeping our campus **clean, healthy, & rat-free!**

By taking this pledge, you commit to being part of the solution and protecting our shared living environment.

I PLEDGE TO:

- NEVER leave trash on the ground** near dumpsters, even when they appear full. I will always place my garbage bags inside dumpsters or find an alternative location.
- Secure all garbage bags** by tying them tightly and double-bagging messy items to prevent spills and odors that attract rats.
- Properly dispose of ALL food waste** including pizza boxes, takeout containers, and food scraps in designated dumpsters only.
- Keep my living space clean** by storing food in sealed containers, cleaning up spills promptly, and maintaining a tidy environment.
- Encourage others** to follow these same practices and speak up when I see improper waste disposal that could harm our community.
- Report Full Dumpsters & Pest Entry Points** by submitting a Facilities Service Request when I see a full dumpster or find cracks, holes, or gaps in my dorm or other campus building.

Signature

Date

Your commitment to proper waste management protects public health and our environment. Thank you for keeping our campus beautiful being a responsible community member!

Service Request Form Here → 

thrilled to report has been signed by dozens!

No feeding the rats: With that in mind, we’re also happy to note that the [City’s new dumpster ordinance](#), which passed last spring with modifications suggested by SWW members and others, has come into effect as of this June. If you notice a problem dumpster in your neighborhood (overflowing, uncovered, rusted out, etc.), you might consider reporting it to the Health Department (781-314-3305). We have also been pleased to see some new Big Belly trash/recycling receptacles appearing around Waltham, for example at the newly renovated Logan Park, in addition to those installed earlier on the Waltham Common and on Main and Moody Streets. If there’s a park or playground near you that could use Big Belly receptacles, you might try reaching out to your Ward Councillor: www.city.waltham.ma.us/mayors-office/faq/how-do-i-contact-my-city-councillor.

Local support for state-level action: We are grateful to those of you who reached out to our State legislators to encourage them to support *An Act Restricting the Use of Rodenticides in the Environment* ([H965/S644](#)). Several SWW members, along with other

Upcoming Events with the Waltham Land Trust

Waltham Farm Day

Saturday, October 18, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Waltham Fields Community Farm, 240 Beaver Street

Learn about and celebrate Waltham's only community supported agriculture (CSA) and our last operating produce farm! Enjoy agricultural demonstrations, fun activities, and games for all ages. Groove to live music while strolling through the farm fields, picking carrots of all colors/sizes, and visiting outreach tables from non-profit groups like the WLT.

Western Greenway 5K Trail Run/Walk and Kids' Monster Dash

Sunday, October 26,

Monster Dash at 11:30 am, 5K at 12 pm

Start/end at McLaughlin Building, Metropolitan Parkway, off Trapelo Road opposite Forest Street

Be part of our 12th annual fall Race for Open Space fundraiser as a walker, runner, or sponsor! Following more-or-less the same course since 2013 with the start/finish line and staging area at the atmospheric McLaughlin Building in the Met State property, the route travels through various habitats in Beaver Brook North Reservation and Rock Meadow along the Western Greenway and other trails. Registration fees (\$25 for WLT members before October 24) and race sponsorships help raise money to keep building this community path and outfit our volunteer stewards. Children 10 years old and younger are urged to wear costumes and take part in our inaugural 50-yard Monster Dash. For the 5K, walkers will begin shortly after the runners depart.

Chester Brook Corridor South Hike

November 8, 1 – 2:30 pm

Park/meet at Kennedy Middle School, 655 Lexington Street

Learn about the history and nature of the southern part of the Chesterbrook Corridor on a walk through the woods on the Western Greenway Trail past the YMCA and Bishops Forest to Shady's Pond and back.

Waltham Land Trust 26th Annual Meeting

Tuesday, November 18, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

First Parish Church of Waltham, 50 Church Street

Help celebrate our successes from the past year by attending our annual meeting. Our guest speakers will be professors from Brandeis University who will talk about their project collecting oral histories about flooding in Waltham. We'll also provide updates on the projects we're tackling, celebrate our *Inge Uhlir Environmentalist of the Year*, and vote on new/returning WLT Directors.

#GIVING TUESDAY

Tuesday, December 2, all day

Online at www.walthamlandtrust.org

Reclaim the true meaning of "the giving season" by joining people worldwide donating online the local charities like the WLT on the Tuesday after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Give through our website: walthamlandtrust.org.



Waltham residents, attended the Protect Animals from Rodenticide Lobby Day at the State House in July. Thanks to these efforts, State Representative John Lawn has now joined State Senator Michael Barrett and State Representative Thomas Stanley as co-sponsors of this important bill. Great that we have a united Waltham state delegation when it comes to protecting our raptors, foxes, coyotes, and outdoor pets!

We'll end with a volunteer opportunity: we would really like a few more people to join our steering committee and help plan our next outreach efforts. Please email savewalthamwildlife@gmail.com if you'd be willing to share some of the work of leadership with us.

WALTHAM



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*Protecting Waltham's land...
forever.*

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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An electronic file (pdf) of this newsletter is available on our web site, <www.walthamlandtrust.org>.

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Executive Director: Sonja Wadman

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Waltham Land Trust's Mission

To create a legacy of land conservation in Waltham by promoting, protecting, restoring, and acquiring open space.

We envision growth in public appreciation of natural resources, preservation and restoration of native habitat, and increased biodiversity to foster a healthier environment.

• SPECIAL GIFT MEMBERSHIP •

Have a friend, neighbor, or relative you think would enjoy being part of the Waltham Land Trust? Why not give them a gift membership? **We are offering a special promotion for a limited time: 6 months for only \$10!** (The normal price of an individual membership is 12 months for \$25). **Support open space for a birthday or special occasion!**

To renew or join, visit our web site:
walthamlandtrust.org
or call 781-893-3355

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If you're not already a WLT member and have received this complimentary copy, please consider [joining today!](#)

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