

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2002

Volume 11 Number 2

OUR GOALS

To create a 30-mile network of multi-use trails within Greater Portland.

To serve as a public advocate for the protection of and access to natural places within the region.

To encourage the participation of neighborhoods, schools and the business community in trail use and stewardship.

State and local officials applaud news of Capital Campaign

THE MOOD ON APRIL 22, 2002 was celebratory as Portland Trails launched its Capital Campaign to preserve the Presumpscot River 'From Forest to Falls.' Despite a few Earth Day surprise snow flurries, over 70 cheering people attended the press conference at Presumpscot Falls Park that announced the campaign to raise funds for the acquisition and protection of 60 exceptionally beautiful and untouched acres along the Presumpscot River in Portland and Falmouth.

As television channels 6, 8 and 13 filmed, Capital Campaign Chair Roger Berle stood on a promontory overlooking the river to welcome the group. He eloquently thanked the many people and organizations who have helped the



The press conference drew large numbers despite the snow.

Presumpscot River project and invited the audience on a river walk after the press conference. The speakers who followed Berle (*see sidebar on next page*) talked movingly of the progress that has been made since the days when no fish swam in the Presumpscot and pollution peeled paint from houses along the river. After much conservation work, striped bass and alewives are swimming again in the water, and soon, removal of the Smelt Hill Dam will enable canoers and kayakers to paddle over the rapids of Presumpscot Falls. As the speakers reminded listeners, Portland Trails' Capital Campaign will ensure that these hard won gains will not be lost. Once restored, the pristine beauty of the Lower Presumpscot will be maintained in perpetuity.

Saving the Presumpscot will cost money. The Land for Maine's Future program has already awarded a matching grant of \$483,333.34 in support of the effort. The announced goal of Portland Trails' Capital Campaign is \$487,000. This is the amount we need to raise in order to [*continued on next page*]

Portland Trails Capital Campaign Launch

WELCOME

✂ **Roger Berle**, Chair, Portland Trails Capital Campaign and Portland Landbank Commission

REMARKS *(in order of appearance)*

✂ **David Littell**, President, Portland Trails

✂ **Karen Geraghty**, Mayor of Portland

✂ **Cheryl Leeman**, Portland City Councilor, also representing Senator Olympia Snow

✂ **James Cohen**, Portland Trails' Board Member, Presumpscot River Trail Project Manager

✂ **Doug Harris**, Town Manager, Town of Falmouth

✂ **Sean Mahoney**, President, Falmouth Conservation Trust

✂ **Pat Keliher**, Executive Director, Coastal Conservation Association

✂ **Bill Norbert**, State Representative, District 34, Assistant House Majority Leader

✂ **George Lapointe**, Marine Resources Commissioner, Land for Maine's Future Board Member

✂ **Tom Allen**, Representative to Congress, first District of Maine

✂ **John Baldacci**, Representative to Congress, second District of Maine

MONDAY
APRIL 22
2002

The campaign to raise funds for the acquisition and protection of 60 exceptionally beautiful and untouched acres along the Presumpscot River in Portland and Falmouth.

[continued from front page]

reimburse the City of Portland \$287,000 for land already purchased, to fulfill option agreements being negotiated with the owners of three more small parcels along the river, to create a stewardship endowment, and to begin constructing trails on the new property. This amount must be raised by the end of the current year.

To complete the task of actually creating the accessible waterway described in the opening paragraph will require at least another quarter of a million dollars. Portland Trails considers the funds required for immediate use as the first step in this campaign; when we reach that goal we will continue until we have sufficient funds to complete the task and to guarantee future stewardship of the land.

This is an opportunity that will not occur again. The 48-acre parcel is the last sizable block of riverfront property within the city limits of Portland. We know that when you see the land, you will want to help preserve it as a significant addition to the parks and open spaces that make Portland one of the most livable cities in the nation. 🐾



Clockwise from bottom left: John Baldacci commends Portland Trails and the City of Portland Landbank Commission on their efforts to preserve the land for future generations. Campaign Chair Roger Berle explains the campaign to Steve Minich of Channel 8 news. Tom Allen reflects on the pollution that plagued the river for decades. Portland Trails' trustee Jim Cohen speaks on behalf of the North Deering Neighborhood Association.

Volunteers young and old make a difference

IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE A MORE rewarding task than working with a group of 30 volunteers, many of them children with their parents, on a sun-filled spring morning on a trail designed to open up one of Portland's few remaining natural areas. All the more so because this particular trail was designed by some of the children working that morning— students at Lyseth Elementary School and Lyman Moore Middle School.

This spring, Portland Trails has already held four very productive work days:

✦ The trailbuilding season began at the Stroudwater Trail on April 13 with maintenance work upgrading the trail for the spring and summer seasons.

✦ A community workday on the Lyseth/Moore School Trail took place on May 11. The trail extends from Lyseth Elementary School into Pine Grove Park, a little known and stunning small park in North Deering. Classes at the two schools then took turns working on the trail all of the following week.

✦ Work on the new Hall Elementary School Trail along Capisic Brook has just begun. The Hall School Trail is a new collaboration with students and teachers at Hall School which enjoyed tremendous neighborhood support at a trailbuilding day on May 19, followed by student trailbuilding the next week.

✦ Work to improve connections and upgrade the trails from Oat Nuts Park in North Deering to the new Presumpscot River Preserve property along the Presumpscot River has been ongoing throughout the Spring and will continue at our next workday on June 8.



David Littell



Sixth graders from Lyman Moore work through the rain to build a bridge extending the Lyseth/Moore School Trail to Pine Grove Park.

When these projects are completed, walkers, runners and bikers of all ages will have new ways to enjoy a piece of nature in our backyard and a place to exercise at no charge! The dual benefits of an accessible nature *[continued on page 4]*

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President's Letter

[continued from page 3]

experience combined with exercise opportunities cannot be overstated for the greater Portland community.

Residents in Southern Maine are experiencing huge development pressure as we continue to expand outward from our urban and downtown centers. Suburban sprawl is not a new topic in Maine or nationwide. What is new is the unhappy recognition that Southern Maine is leading the Northeastern United States in the amount of sprawl we are experiencing. Against this backdrop, Portland Trails' efforts become even more important. As development moves outward from traditional urban and downtown areas, our efforts to preserve greenspace and build trails provide an antidote for some of the worse aspects of sprawl: decreased open space, decreased public access to natural areas near people's homes, increased air and water pollution and increased traffic as people commute farther and longer to get to their jobs.

As people are spending more time in their cars, health statistics for Maine are not encouraging. Obesity, asthma, and other negative health indicators are rising at an alarming rate. Healthcare providers and officials recommend regular exercise as part of the antidote. Our work to provide safe and convenient routes for biking, walking, running, commuting and just plain enjoying nature—often without even noticing that you are exercising—is a crucial piece of the solution.

So, for all these reasons, three cheers for Portland Trails volunteers and members who have supported work on the Stroudwater Trail, Lyseth/Moore School Trail, and Hall School Trail (to name a few of our projects). Your work is crucial to efforts to make Portland, Falmouth, Westbrook, South Portland and surrounding towns even better places to live and work! 🍷



DAVID LITTELL
President, Board of Trustees

GIFTS of Stock

A GIFT OF STOCK TO PORTLAND TRAILS COULD BENEFIT BOTH YOU AND PORTLAND TRAILS.

By donating long-term appreciated securities, you may receive an income tax deduction for the full fair-market value, and avoid capital gains taxes on the appreciation. Portland Trails, in turn, receives the full value of the stock. Since every individual situation differs, please consult your financial advisor or call Portland Trails prior to making a security transfer. All inquiries will be kept strictly confidential.

*Donations to Portland Trails
are tax-deductible
to the extent allowed by law.*



**Portland Trails' trail
steward Bud Quinn takes
Angus King on a walk
along the Fore River
Trail—part of the
Governor's tour of
environmental protection
efforts around the state
on April 26.**

Beth Lowry

BY CHERI MUSGRAVE

RECENTLY I HAD THE pleasure of watching Beth Lowry, trail steward for the Fore River trail, hard at work. We walked the trail together one beautiful May morning and Beth shared with me what drew her to this duty. This ambitious young woman is a Waynflete seventh grader who was looking for a community service project in preparation for her bat mitzvah. An avid soccer player, horseback rider and lover of the outdoors who regularly uses the playing fields adjacent to the trail, it seemed natural to Beth to work on the Fore River Trail.

On the day of our walk, Beth arrived, trash bag in hand, for what was to her a very routine turn around the trail. It's easy to see that Beth takes her duty seriously. Her mom tells me that she leaves their dog, Chloe, home while working on the trail so that she can focus on the task at hand. She deftly scurried under tree limbs and down the banks after trash that the untrained eye would easily have missed. As part of her stewardship duty, Beth also brings clippers along to trim back brush or branches that may be encroaching on the trail. In her regular reports, Beth has notified Portland Trails staffers of things she sees that shouldn't be on the trail, like an old discarded lawn mower. Her reports also update us on the condition of the trail and any damage she may see.

Portland Trails' veteran trail steward, Bud Quinn, says the most striking thing about Beth is her enthusiasm. In fact, says Bud, "She proved it by her monthly reports through the winter. She's still hanging in there!" Beth intends to continue hanging in there, carrying on with her stewardship even after her bat mitzvah. It's very inspiring to find dedication such as this in a person so young. Portland Trails salutes Beth Lowry for her devotion to our trail and sends her our collective thanks and appreciation for all her hard work. 🌸



First Senior Stroll Offered

Portland Trails will be hosting a series of "Senior Strolls" this year to encourage senior citizens to use the Portland Trails' network—and perhaps even offer some volunteer time to Portland Trails. Local historians, environmental educators, and other experts will lead the walks. For our first stroll, historian Herb Adams will offer a historical look at Portland Harbor as he leads an easy walk along the Eastern Prom Trail.

The one-hour walk will take place on Friday, June 21 at 2:00 p.m. Meet the group at the corner of Commercial and India Streets. Please RSVP to Sarah at 775-2411 or sarah@trails.org.

Presumpscot Walks Scheduled

Wildlife Biologist Lois Winter has offered to lead more walks along the Presumpscot River for interested Portland Trails' members (and their guests!). Lois is a knowledgeable and interesting speaker who drew great reviews from her Presumpscot walk in May. Don't miss this opportunity to tour the area with the expert!

The 1-1/2 hour walks will take place on Tuesday, July 9 at 4:00 p.m. and on Wednesday, August 28 at 4:00 p.m. Meet the group at the end of Overset Drive, off Curtis Road. Please RSVP to Sarah at 775-2411 or sarah@trails.org.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

- ❖ To **David Buchanan** for designing a viewing and picnic area for the Fore River Trail and his great work on the new Hall School Trail project.
- ❖ To the **Serve/ME Vista** crew who came out and worked on bridges that form the connection between Oat Nuts Park to the Presumpscot River.
- ❖ To **Swardlick Marketing Group** and their great art director **Kate Butler** for generously donating the design work for our inspiring Capital Campaign brochure, "Preserving the Presumpscot from Forest to Falls."
- ❖ To **Crossweb Printing Inc.** for contributing the printing and paper for our beautiful Capital Campaign brochure.

NEWS FROM MILE 0.0

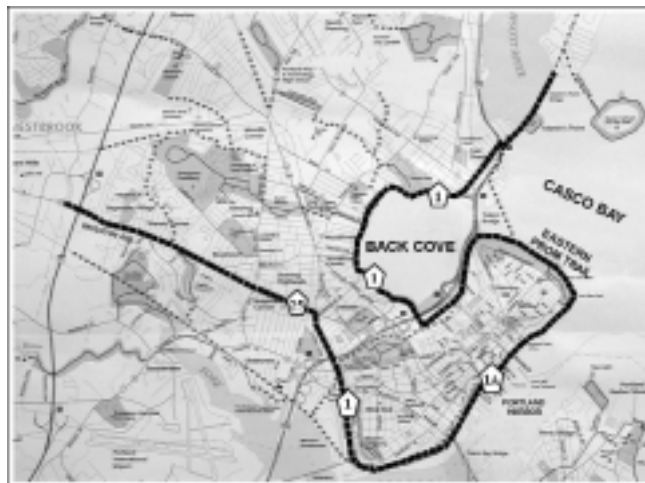
◆ The long-awaited “**Portland Trails Map and Trail Guide**” will be available soon! Creating a new map turned out to be far more complex than we had originally envisioned and was more than a year in development. Plus—things kept changing! Portland Trails has built more trails in the past year and the City of Portland has committed to create a network of bike lanes—information that we thought was important to include in the map. Now at the printer, the maps will soon be mailed to all Portland Trails’ members at the \$35 level and up. It will also be available for purchase through Portland Trails and in local shops. Watch our website, www.trails.org or our next newsletter for order information.

◆ Congratulations to Education and Community Outreach Coordinator **Laura Newman** and her husband Jeff Norris. On January 26, 2002 Laura gave birth to Jondall Taylor Norris, an 8 pound boy. Jondall has already visited many of the trails with his parents and has even attended trail building days at Lyseth/Moore and Hall Schools.



Laura and Jondall

◆ Thanks to ongoing support from members of Portland Trails, Alliance for Transportation Choice (ATC), and the Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM), **Portland’s bike lanes** sailed through the City Council in early April with a 9-0 vote of approval for the project! Thanks to Mayor Karen Geraghty and several City Councilors—Jack Dawson, Jim Cloutier, Peter O’Donnell, Nathan Smith, and Jill Duson—who spoke in support of the bike lanes. City Traffic Engineer Larry Ash understands bicycle facility design and has become a real ally in the project. Ash has also been supportive of the next phase of the project, which will seek funding from the Maine Department of Transportation through the Enhancements portion of TEA-21 for more on-road bicycle routes and funding to improve the on-road connections to the Back Cove and Eastern Prom Trails across Tukey’s Bridge.



Proposed Bike Lanes

New bike lanes will help cyclists get in and out to town safely.

◆ Portland’s first bicycle lanes will be striped, signed, and stenciled this summer, thanks to a strong turn-out of Portland Trails members and others at a public meeting last November. The first of the bike lanes may be striped in time for a commuter breakfast on **Commute Another Way Day**, Wednesday, June 12. If you’re walking, bicycling, or carpooling to work, please join us along the Back Cove opposite Hannaford for a free morning snack and coffee on your way into work — stop by the Commute Another Way Day tent anytime from 7:00 and 9:00 a.m.

The first bike lanes will go in along Veranda Street, Preble Street, Baxter Boulevard and Marginal Way, along with improvements to Commercial Street, St. John Street and Brighton Avenue.

Look for an announcement later in the summer for a bike lane opening ceremony. There will be a big parade, party, and public thank-you to the project supporters, including the Portland Department of Public Works and the Maine Department of Transportation.

◆ The first meeting of a revitalized **Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee** was held May 14 at Portland City Hall. The purpose of this committee is to assist and support city projects including the bike lane project, promotion of bicycle parking, and monitoring of all other transportation projects. The group will ask Mayor Geraghty to formally appoint a committee of city residents, joined by ad-hoc members from neighboring communities.

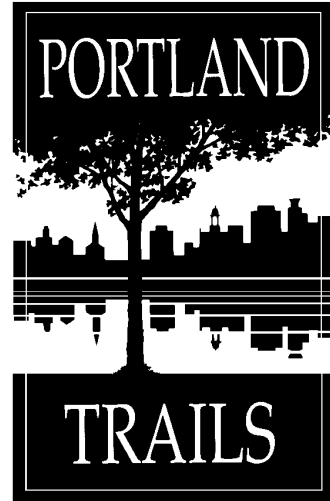
PRESUMPSCOT RIVER BASH & SILENT AUCTION

SAVE
THE
DATE

to benefit our campaign

Preserving the Presumpscot from Forest to Falls

Friday, October 25th



JOIN US AT THE PAVILION ON MIDDLE STREET for an evening of fun and fundraising as we throw another Silent Auction, this time to support our "Preserving the Presumpscot" Capital Campaign.

You could win a fabulous vacation package to London in our raffle and bid on another great selection of auction items — an L.L. Bean Catalina Kayak, a Victorian Cottage getaway on Islesboro, whitewater rafting trips, gift certificates to the best restaurants in town — and more. Delicious food will be catered by Black Tie Co., and great local musicians will provide music to bid by!

WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS

Robert and Linda Adams
Deborah Alford and Ruby Parker
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John Anton
Adrian and Ellie Asherman
Tony Barrett
Carolyn and Arthur Bennett
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Mary Beyer
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