



The Newsletter of the Mattapoissett Land Trust, Inc. • www.mattlandtrust.org • E-mail: info@mattlandtrust.org

Transforming Santos Farm



Transforming Santos Farm

By Don Cuddy



View to Grace Pond through restored forest grove

According to local lore, 100 years ago the area of East Mattapoisett at the south end of Bowman Road was used by immigrants from Cape Verde for farming and animal husbandry. To help make ends meet the farmers started collecting refuse from households in Mattapoisett. Food and other edible scraps were fed to pigs while combustible materials were burned and remaining cans and bottles were buried in shallow piles. Refuse collection ended sometime in the 1960's or 1970's but pig husbandry continued until recent years, with the last pigs departing in December 2020 with MLT's purchase of the 8.5 acre Santos Farm.

Both MLT's Grace Preserve and the adjacent Santos Farm property once were used for refuse disposal as well as raising pigs. Land areas used by pigs often are left in rough shape since pigs root extensively, eat anything remotely edible and actually ingest top soil. This leaves a rocky and barren surface. When the pigs are gone, invasive species of grasses and brush take over and create a landscape that is not beneficial for wildlife. And under the thick brush and rocks are the remains of refuse piles — cans, bottles, old tires and other debris.

MLT purchased the 9.3 acre Grace Preserve in 2006, and began to remove trash and mow trails for public enjoyment. Our restoration efforts accelerated in 2016 when, with advice from wildlife biologists from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), we began to transform Grace's dense invasive brush into a wildflower meadow. DCR and other experts believe more grassland habitat is needed throughout the state to support pollinators, birds and

small mammals. Grace Preserve in summer now reveals a vista of beautiful wildflowers in bloom with bees buzzing and birds singing.

Similar restoration work is now underway at Santos Farm. It is entirely fitting that much of the work is being performed by Steve Bowman, whose family has deep roots in the area. Steve works for Duponte Landscaping and spent many days in January and February, working with heavy equipment and alongside Ozzie Osenkowski, other MLT volunteers and students from ORRHS. Steve and Ozzie are the chief architects of the ongoing transformation, with advice from Charlie Duponte. Charlie is a former president of MLT and continues his strong support of our efforts.

Steve already was familiar with the terrain having worked a few years ago on restoring the adjacent Grace property. When Steve started work piles of trash, metal debris, old truck bodies and garbage dotted the landscape; invasive species, downed trees and vines were abundant and there were stones of all sizes lying atop the subsoil. Steve set to work. Most of the brush was cut and went up in smoke in a large bonfire. Stones were gathered in piles and will be used to construct perimeter walls. The larger dead trees were piled in one place and left to dry so they can be burned at a later date. The ashes from the fire were spread over the cleared land, along with the remaining pig manure and loads of wood chips donated by local tree surgeons. In early March, as Steve took his leave, a large open space as shown on the cover had emerged in place of the tangled mass of vegetation and debris.

We expect it will take several growing seasons to fully eradicate invasive plants and create a functioning wildflower meadow like the one next door at Grace Preserve. But thanks to Steve, Ozzie and Charlie we are well on our way. And special thanks to Santos neighbors Dave Park as well as Karen and Matt Borges for their efforts removing stumps, grading, mowing trails and spreading wood chips. And to the ORRHS Community Service and Environment Clubs for their help on several winter Saturdays. As the weather turns warmer visit Santos Farm, and watch the steady transformation from former refuse site to wildflower meadow!



Steve Bowman tends the fire



Santos Farm in 2020 before work began

Lowe's donation enables dry feet!

A generous gift from Lowe's Home Improvement in Wareham Crossing allowed stewardship volunteers to build 120 running feet of "bog board" bridging at MLT's Old Aucoot District. The new boards allow dry transit over muddy trail sections east and west of the Buckley Bridge on the Blue Trail. "This trail section usually is underwater during the spring and often features mud in other months. Lowe's generous gift of a 70 percent discount on nearly \$1,000 of building materials enabled MLT to remedy this problem once and for all" said Mike Huguenin, MLT's President. We send sincere thanks to Chris Mullins, Store Manager at Lowe's Wareham, and



Volunteers Dave Park and Ozzie Osenkowski unload materials

to MLT Board members Peter Davies and Arthur Damaskos who designed and built the new bog boards.

The past six months were productive for other MLT stewardship activities as well. With COVID restrictions in place, many volunteers had ample time for safe outdoor activities. Along with the Santos Farm transformation, MLT benefited from other stewardship efforts including (1) designing and cutting a new section of the Blue trail at Old Aucoot, (2) installing new trail signage throughout



Peter Davies (left) and Arthur Damaskos hard at work



The finished bog boards!

MLT properties, (3) routine maintenance on all of our hiking trails, (4) tree and blueberry bush pruning at Betsey's Meadow, and (5) completion of stone work and installation of a small parking lot at the Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. historic site on Angelica Avenue. A special Thank You to Peter Davies for the beautiful stone masonry completed at Holmes and other MLT properties. Check MLT's website and kiosks at each property for updated trail maps; then get out and enjoy spring on your MLT lands!

Jerry Johnson

New Board member

By Don Cuddy

Jerry Johnson, recently retired from a career spanning forty-two years in private law practice, is the newest addition to our MLT board of directors. Welcome aboard Jerry! Raised in nearby Swansea, Jerry spent four years in Washington D.C. after graduating from Brown University. There he worked for the National Security Agency before returning to Massachusetts



in 1973 to study law at Western New England University in Springfield. Degree in hand, he went home to Swansea where he opened his own practice "because I already knew three thousand people there." Initially representing clients before the various town boards, he later became town counsel, a position he held for twenty years. Jerry's knowledge and experience of zoning, planning and real estate issues have already proven to be a valuable asset to the MLT's mission, in particular with regard to efforts associated with improvements to the Oliver Wendell Holmes site. "I did the initial research on the property and was able to chase the title back," he said.

Jerry was already a Land Trust member prior to joining the board and was initially 'recruited' by Mike Huguenin. Both men are members of the 'Rant Group,' a loose assembly of local gentlemen. For the past fifteen years, they have been gathering weekly for coffee at the Shipyard Galley to solve the world's problems and now get together on Zoom during Covid. "When you have coffee with Mike pretty soon, you're going to say 'yes' to something," Jerry noted. Next thing he knew he found himself outdoors, cutting brush and hacking out trails during the winter on some of our MLT properties.

Now fully and happily retired from his professional life, Jerry also resigned his position on the school committee in February after serving on that body for fifteen years. Freed of obligations he is now ready to engage more fully with the Land Trust as a member of the board.

Jerry and his wife Cindy have been married for thirty years. The couple have two daughters. One just recently became an assistant attorney-general here in Massachusetts and the other, a Brooklyn resident, is an assistant professor at the City College of New York.

"Belonging to the MLT has been a very valuable experience for me," Jerry said. "Unfortunately, Covid has been in effect since I joined the board so I'm really looking forward to actually meeting with the other members in person."

MLT Scholarship winner, Mackenzie Riley

Sets her sights on Institute of Green Science at Carnegie Mellon



By Ellen P. Flynn

We caught up with Mackenzie Riley, the June 2020 MLT Blanche B. Perry Scholarship award winner, about her first year at Carnegie Mellon University, impact of Covid-19, making the Dean's List, and career prospects in Environmental Chemistry.

"While campus activities are limited, I am still incredibly grateful for the opportunity I've had to attend both semesters on campus," said Mackenzie of her freshman year during the pandemic.

In the fall, most of Mackenzie's time was concentrated on classwork; but the spring semester brought two labs - one in chemistry, one in biology. "Having these two wet labs has really given me the opportunity to build the hands-on experience necessary for my degree."

When asked about an important issue brought to her attention while at CMU, Mackenzie cited that in 2017, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave the USA a "grade D" on our infrastructure.

"Unfortunately, Massachusetts as a state fares only average," Mackenzie said. "Considering the Tri-town community's strong connection to our oceans, beaches, and other water-

ways, the near-failing state of wastewater treatment across the nation is very concerning."

"In the lab," Mackenzie explained, "we must be aware of how to properly dispose of the chemicals BEFORE we use them." She suggests that we practice this in our personal lives, disposing of household hazardous waste, medications, etc. in a specific way. "Be sure to check and follow federal guidance on how to dispose of household products since just dumping them down the drain eventually impacts our aquatic ecosystems."

Mackenzie also recommends that we push MA leadership to update our infrastructure to keep the waste that we produce as humans out of our natural environments.

Next year, Mackenzie plans to be working at one of the environmental labs on campus. She hopes to join Terry Collins' group at The Institute of Green Science, because they "work to create catalysts to break down harmful chemicals into more benign components before they can enter the environment."

Outside of her class and lab work, Mackenzie has been a part of the Women in Science Club and the Running Club. She is hopeful that when restrictions relax she will get more involved in the Music Department.

To know Mackenzie Riley is to know you have a young leader in your midst. The Mattapoisett Land Trust and Education Committee congratulates Mackenzie on her success and looks forward to keeping up with her future endeavors.

2021 MLT Annual Meeting and MLT Volunteer Appreciation Via Zoom

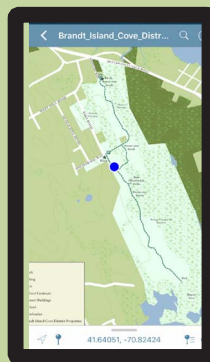
Sunday, April 25
4:00

Write to info@mattlandtrust.org for login information

As we continue to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, remember that exercise outdoors with fresh air and sunshine are healthy ways to maintain both your physical and mental health. Get out and take a walk or ride on your MLT Preserves. Check out the Family Activities page at mattlandtrust.org for story walks, scavenger hunts and more.

**The Mattapoisett Land Trust
Blanche B. Perry Scholarship**
for a Mattapoisett resident graduating from
secondary school pursuing an education in
environmental studies or a related field
Scholarship application details and forms
mattlandtrust.org/education/grants-and-scholarships/

Trail Maps ... paper or on your Phone



Printable trail maps are available for download as PDF files on MLT's website. For trail maps on your digital device, download a FREE app for smartphones and tablets called Avenza Maps. All MLT trail maps are available for free download in the Avenza store. Trail maps will display on your device with your location updated continuously as the blue dot. The app also allows users to record a GPS track, navigate to a destination, and measure distances. If you have problems, email us at info@mattlandtrust.org.

MLT Education Committee Staycation Activities

This spring is a great time to explore nature right in Mattapoissett! The Mattapoissett Land Trust Education Committee has created scavenger hunts and podcasts, as well as installed story walks at MLT's Munn, Dexter/Tub Mill, and Dunseith Gardens properties for your spring exploration and enjoyment. These family activities will introduce you to a few of the many Mattapoissett Land Trust properties and teach you some



the intergenerational teamwork, observing students working like anthropologists, as they dug up bones, kitchen utensils, metal, plastic and hauled away vines and wood. "We had fun as we learned about the local history — prohibition, a small runway for planes, and the pig farm. We are preparing the land for folks to enjoy for many years in the future!"



unique things about each site.

To find these Staycation Activities, visit the Mattapoissett Land Trust website mattlandtrust.org and explore the Family Activities link on the left side of the page. To find hikes, look for the Visit link on the homepage and click on a property. Make sure you click on "read more" to find descriptions of the properties, directions, and downloadable trail maps.

From Fall of 2020 until Spring 2021 we were busy, in partnership with students from the ORRHS Community Service Learning Club (co-advisor, math teacher and Education Committee member Karen Browning) and the Environmental Club (advisor, Marine Biology and Environmental Science teacher Lynn Connor). At Santos Farm, Karen appreciated



Bones found at Santos Farm

Lynn said of the Story Walk installation, "It is an appreciation for the natural world around us, and crucial to building relationships with community members and our students."

In the coming months, watch for more podcasts hosted by Liam Waldron on the MLT website, additional Fairy Houses at the Munn Preserve, new artwork from Kate Butler's ORRHS Visual Design class at the new Grace Pond story walk, and MLT's August Kayak Camp co-sponsored with Matt REC.



ORRHS students install a story walk

Join us for Garden Grooming!

Do you enjoy fresh coffee, salt air and harbor views in the early morning sunshine? If so, please join us for an hour or so on **Wednesday** morning each week beginning May 19th at the Munro Preserve just west of the Mattapoissett Town wharves. MLT's Garden Groomers meet at 8 a.m. when the weather cooperates to prune, pull weeds and do light garden maintenance while enjoying a fresh cup of coffee and good company. Please join us for a COVID-19 safe activity! For more information email us at info@mattlandtrust.org.

New ways to donate

We recently made a change in the Donations page of our website. You can now arrange for recurring payments monthly, quarterly or annually from either a credit card or from a bank account. Of course, you can still make a one-time donation if you choose. In addition to membership, the site can accept honor / memorial donations as well as donations for a special purpose.

Why not eliminate any concerns about whether your membership is up-to-date?

Set up a recurring annual contribution today!

Honor Your Loved Ones

The following individuals or groups have chosen in the last six months to honor their loved ones through donations to the Mattapoissett Land Trust.

In honor of Charlie Duponte's birthday:

Kate Poitras
Hopedale, MA

In honor of Brad Hathaway's Walk (not including GoFundMe site):

Anonymous (3)

Ronald Axelrod
Boston, MA

Richard Bates
Mattapoissett, MA

Robert & Linda Belenger
Mattapoissett, MA

Mr & Mrs R. William Blasdale
Mattapoissett, MA

William Cantor & Kristen Eastman
Mattapoissett, MA

Candace & Charles Cederberg
Mattapoissett, MA

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Cederberg
Mattapoissett, MA

Stephen Clapp
Mattapoissett, MA

Lauren Conti
Stoughton, MA

Don Cuddy
Mattapoissett, MA

Sharon & Jack Dean
Mattapoissett, MA

Johanna Duponte-Williams
Mattapoissett, MA

John Eklund
Mattapoissett, MA

David & Catherine Fuerman
Mattapoissett, MA

Cynthia Haskell
Falmouth, MA

Mary Beth & Walter Hempel
Duxbury, MA

Elizabeth Hill
Mattapoissett, MA

John Hoagland & Ann Elizabeth McElroy
Nashville, TN

Beth & Rob Inglis
Mattapoissett, MA

Jerry & Cindy Johnson
Fairhaven, MA

David Kibbe
Albany, NY

Stephen & Jocelyn Lombard
Mattapoissett, MA

Arlene Mackie
Springfield, MA

Robert Maguire
Mattapoissett, MA

Mattapoissett Friends Meeting
Mattapoissett, MA

Joanne McKinney
New Bedford, MA

Norma McKinney
South Dartmouth, MA

James & Annette Moran
Mattapoissett, MA

Betty O'Connor
Mattapoissett, MA

Betty Parker
Mattapoissett, MA

Rosamond J. Pierce
Mattapoissett, MA

Gene & Susan Pizzolato
Wareham, MA

Elaine Rocha
Fairhaven, MA

Van Gordon Sauter
Los Angeles, CA

Mary Schubert
Mattapoissett, MA

Candee Seeley
Mattapoissett, MA

Molly Butler Whitney
Mattapoissett, MA

Malcolm & Patricia Hathaway
Reidsville, NC

In honor of Gary P. Johnson's half-birthday:

Elizabeth Hill
Mattapoissett, MA

In memory of Isaac Mehrez:

Anne Coggins
Mattapoissett, MA

Lynn Meier
Mattapoissett, MA

Rosamond J. Pierce
Mattapoissett, MA

In memory of Charles Stetson Mendell, III:

Cheryl Johannessen
New Bedford, MA

David Kirchthurn
Franklin, MA

In memory of Victor Pierce:

Anne Coggins
Mattapoissett, MA

Sara Gowing
Blue Bell, PA

Brad & Priscilla Hathaway
Mattapoissett, MA

Mary P. Mehrez
Belmont, MA

Jodi Risse
via website

In memory of Edward Scholter:

Ray & Mary Ann Cebula
Mattapoissett, MA

Thank you for your generous contributions which will be used to further our mission of protecting the land and the environment of Mattapoissett for generations to come.

The Heron is published bi-annually by the Mattapoissett Land Trust.

The MLT, formed in 1974, is a non-profit, tax- exempt charitable organization incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Its purpose is to preserve open space for the enjoyment of current and future residents of Mattapoissett, as well as to educate the public about the sound use of natural resources, and to work with other organizations having the same goals.

Our membership consists of annual contributors — our primary source of revenue — and a volunteer Board of Directors: Marc Anderson, Charles A. Bedser, Mary Cabral, Malcom Campbell, Wendy Copps, Don Cuddy, Arthur Damaskos, Peter Davies, Joanna Dresser, Ellen Flynn, Jerry Johnson, Sandra Hering, Gary P. Johnson, Paul Osenkowski, Charles Radville, Thomas Galavotti, ORR student representative and Mike Huguenin, President.

The MLT is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

Mattapoissett Land Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 31, Mattapoissett, MA 02739

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Kids' Corner

A natural miracle

Many of our summer residents are able to migrate to warmer places as the weather turns cold in the fall. Ospreys, for example, fish all summer along our shores but fly south for the winter. Even Monarch butterflies are able to find warmer winter homes. But what about those small wood frogs (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) — they can't sprout wings for a fall migration.

All frogs are cold-blooded, their body temperatures are the same as the surrounding environment. Most frogs burrow into the mud in lakes and ponds where they are able to keep their temperatures above freezing. But wood frogs have a different way of coping. They nestle into the leaf litter on the forest floor and allow their bodies to freeze solid.

All animals have water in their cells and in their blood; if that water freezes it can damage the cell and if enough cells are damaged, the animal can die. But wood frogs are able to freeze solid and recover. While the water around their internal organs freezes, their livers produce large quantities of glucose (blood sugar) that they absorb into their cells. This glucose prevents the cells from freezing and from dehydrating.

In the spring the wood frog returns to life from the inside out. First its heart begins pumping, then its brain becomes active and, finally, it is able to move its legs. Then it's off to the vernal pool to find a mate.

We are so fortunate at the MLT to have hundreds of acres of forest land with pools that are perfect year-round habitat for these miracles of nature.



Photos: frozen frog from www.vernalpools.me; active frog from Sudbury Valley Trustees



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The Heron

Calendar — 2021 Spring and Summer Activities

**Check MLT's website and social media for updates on all activities. We look forward to returning to normal activities when COVID-19 is behind us and we can safely do so.
In the meantime, Stay Safe!**

date	time	event	description	place
April 17	1:00 P.M. and 2:30 P.M.	Vernal Pool Exploration	Explore life in a vernal pool and help us officially certify it. Space limited to 10 participants with masks for each walk. Make reservation at info@mattlandtrust.org	Holmes Preserve on Angelica Ave. Check mattlandtrust.org or Facebook/ mattlandtrust.org for more info.
April 25	4:00 P.M.	MLT Annual Meeting	Review of year and election of board. Includes MLT Volunteer Appreciation	Via Zoom. Contact info@mattlandtrust.org for link.
July 17 - 18	9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.	Harbor Days	Stop by our booth in the shade of the big tree. Learn about our properties and activities. Check out MLT gear!	Shipyard Park
August 5	5:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.	The Great Community Picnic	Music, oysters and more. Reserved tables. Watch our website and email info@mattlandtrust.org for more information.	Munro Waterfront Preserve
August 10-11	Mornings	MLT Education/MATT REC Kayak Camp	For the fifth year MLT Education Program is in partnership with MATT/REC to offer a two day Kayak Program with emphasis on skills, sportsmanship and safety. Registration is through MATT/REC	Munro Waterfront Preserve