



# Friends of Webster Trails

FWT Newsletter - Fall 2022



**New end of Hojack Trail at Lake Road (see last story in this issue) (jb photo)**

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Work Day SA 10/15**

Planting of trees at WRNP and MAJNP – lots of work, many hands needed. Meet at WRNP parking lot 9:00 am

### **Car Hike SA 10/29**

Location FMCP. 10 am - noon

### **Hot Cocoa Hike SA 11/5**

Location FMCP. 7:00 pm

## **Annual Meeting TH 11/17**

Review of 2022 activities and plans for future. Gay Mills of The Genesee Trust will speak. Liberty Lodge at Finn Park 6:30 pm

## **President's Column**

"I love your trails, thank you for all you do". I hear that statement or some version of it, almost every time I am out in the community representing FWT. I have to say, it is music to my ears. My usual response is, I love our trails too. While I am running at Whiting Road Nature Preserve, hiking Four Mile Creek, Gosnell Big Woods, walking with

## FWT Newsletter - Fall 2022

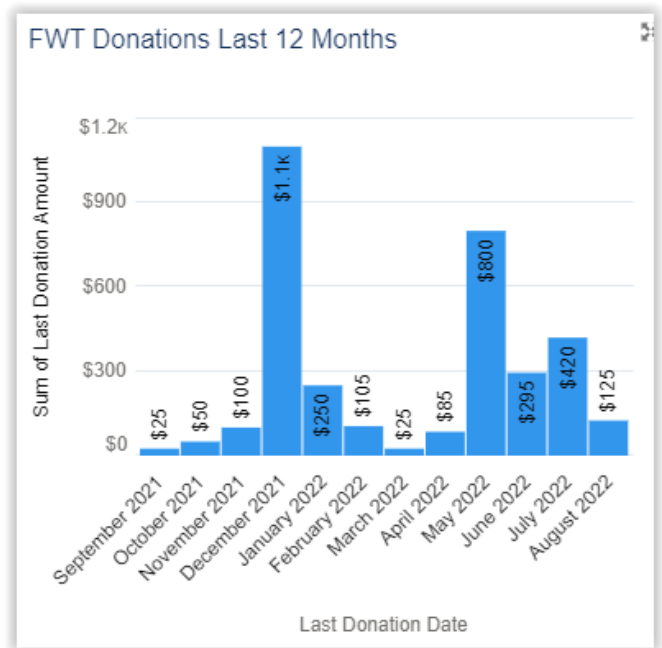
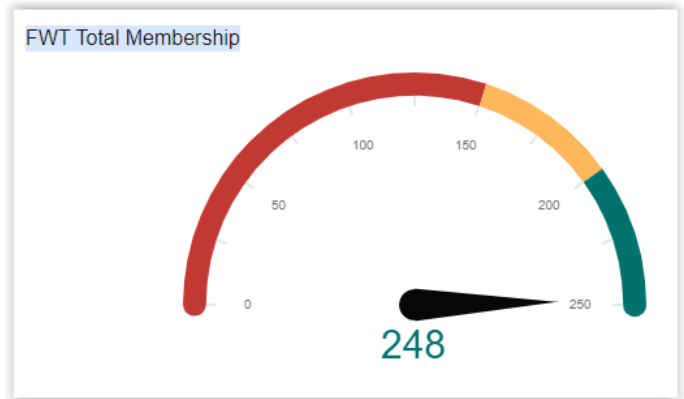
my dogs, or riding my bike along the Hojack trail I think of our FWT Trail Stewards. Make no mistake, we have amazing trails because of them. Along with our Trail Stewards, our Habitat Committee is out clearing away bags of invasives throughout the year, allowing for our native plants and trees to flourish. Our Trails Chair gathers and coordinates volunteers for Trail Workdays, tackling our bigger projects, making them successful endeavors. With the help of our Youth Project coordinator, our Boy Scout volunteers, build bridges, and boardwalks with their families and friends. They show up with so much energy and enthusiasm on their build days. Our Webster high schools' sports teams volunteer their time and their muscle. Our neighbors, our FWT Members, and donors support us. I love OUR trails; thank you for all you do.

2022 has been an exciting year for FWT. We successfully applied for and received grants this year that will positively impact and improve our trails. Thank you to the Webster Rotary Club, and the Town of Webster grant through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Relief Funding. In the next year, you will be seeing these grant monies being applied directly to improvements on the Hojack Trail, the planting of new native trees through our Re-Tree Project and new benches being built and installed along our trails. We will share details with our FWT Members and the community as each of these projects is completed.

New trails, new trails, this year we got to build new trails! In 2022 FWT planned and built two new trails in our network. Both Trails are COMING SOON. Look to the "Big Things" column in this newsletter for more details on these trails from our very own Hal Harris.

### Membership News - Denise Bilback

Active members and Comp members total 248. We also have had 18 donations in the last 6 months. Volunteer hours 876 for the year 2022. Volunteer hours are actual physical trail work hours. This does not include the many hours that the board and other members volunteer to help to plan and manage the Friends of Webster Trails.



### Treasurer's Report – Bill Polito

We thank Bill for his 5 years of service managing our finances. Chris Peterson and wife Lynn have volunteered to be our new treasurer. Thanks Chris and Lynn.

	YTD	YTD Prior Yr
<b>Friends of Webster Trails</b>		
For: Sep 2022		
<b>Donations</b>		
Memberships - PayPal	\$2,406	\$1,640
Memberships - Checks	\$1,421	\$1,495
Amazon Smile	\$74	\$72
Scavenger Hunt	\$604	\$557
Roc Trails		
Trails Roc	\$2,000	
Memorial Michael Johnson		\$300
Memorial Norm Seitz	\$520	
Town of Webster Grant	\$12,138	
Rotary Grant	\$2,400	
Interest Earned on Saving		
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>\$21,563</b>	<b>\$4,064</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Community Arts Day	(\$43)	
IRS Filing Fee		(\$100)
Retree Project	(\$1,151)	
Mower/Trailer Town of Webster Gra	(\$5,000)	
Supplies	(\$3,340)	(\$2,936)
McAllister sign		
PayPal & Bank Fees	(\$151)	(\$75)
Other, Wegman's, Chipotle, Guidas	(\$40)	(\$9)
Weekend Printer		(\$300)
Site 5		(\$258)
Papa Reggios		(\$32)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(\$9,725)</b>	<b>(\$3,710)</b>
<b>Net Cash Movement</b>	<b>\$11,838</b>	<b>\$354</b>

**Trail Chairman Report – Craig Hurlbut**

On April 16 we had a large group of volunteers assemble to clean up the Hojack Trail. We do this every year in the Spring as part of recovering from the Winter. Most of the trash and other stuff ends up in the section of the Hojack between Rt. 250 and Holt Road. We are grateful for the efforts of everyone, and I hope everyone enjoys having a nicer looking trail.

The month of May saw two workdays on the new orange trail at 4 Mile Creek (see Hal’s article). It took longer than I expected because there were sections having very dense thicket. This was my first experience cutting a new trail and I’ll have to revise my expectations going forward! One Saturday morning was really hot, and we didn’t last very long trying to clear a path. Once again, we had a few great volunteers working hard.

In June our work was focused on the new Michael Johnson

trail that turns off the Hojack (see Hal’s article). If you’re on the Hojack at Van Alstyne and you walk towards Drumm Road about ¼ mile, you’ll see the right hand turn for this new trail. The loop is about 1/3 mile long but it’s nice in the trees and you can connect to the John Ungar trail. Unfortunately I was sick with COVID and missed this day.

July brought the annual convention of Thomas cross-country runners to 4 Mile Creek to spread a lot of gravel on the blue trail. It’s pretty amazing how much work 15 motivated teenagers can do especially when powered by a couple dozen doughnuts! We are always thankful to the team and Coach Brunswick for their participation. I think that Saturday morning was a pretty good workout so they didn’t have to run their normal mileage later in the day.

In August we were spreading more gravel with volunteers, this time at Whiting Road NP. The group split into two with one group clearing some of the green trail. I don’t think the green trail is used as much as the other trails in WRNP. If you’re looking for something different, take a walk on the green trail heading toward the lake. You’ll be rewarded by a nice view at the end.

Once the signs of Fall appeared we directed our work to the Gosnell Big Woods Preserve. There is a short section at the SW corner of the field that goes down a small hill and connects to Vosburg NP. This part deserved clearing as did the Meadow trail. Walkers could probably tell we hadn’t been there in a while so I hope you notice the improvement.

One more workday coming up in October where we will be planting trees at WRNP and the new Michael A. Johnson Nature Preserve.

**Steward Reports from the Trails**

Hojack Trail North – Bud Gearhart - The big news on the north end of the Hojack Trail this summer is the new access from Lake Road. With the road construction project came the removal of the old railroad bridge over Lake Road. The new access is a steep, paved ramp from Lake Road to the trail. The access is still officially closed but should be officially opened when the construction finishes for the season. Otherwise, mowing the Hojack continues to be an issue but one we hope to resolve with our new mower, purchased this summer.

## FWT Newsletter – Fall 2022

### Hickory Bark Trail – Sharon Galbraith

All is well. The hickory nuts have mostly been devoured. The wild asters and goldenrod are in full bloom. A few of the maples are beginning to show color. A lovely place to stroll and sit!

### Whiting Road Nature Preserve – Ron Happ

The trails are in excellent shape at Whiting Road Nature Preserve. With autumn now here, it is the best time for hiking, biking, or trail running. Come out and enjoy the fresh air without the humidity and biting insects.

### Finn Park Nature Trail – Rebecca and Bernie Bonn

This summer, a few young trees and bushes were planted along the perimeter of the retention ponds in the big field. On September 14<sup>th</sup> the big field section of Finn Park Nature Trail was mowed for the season. Multiflora rose persists and requires cutting back off the trails. The beech tree section of the trail is a lovely place to stroll as always.

### **FWT Habitat Preservation Committee - Norma Platt** **Two Reports for the Price of One - The Habitat Preservation Committee and the John Ungar Nature Trail**

I'm very fond of the John Ungar Nature Trail (JUNT), a secluded location with lovely woods bordering Shipbuilders Creek. Nature is lush and beautiful: birds and wildflowers of the thicket and woods, sedges and mushrooms. Please visit in person or enjoy the on-line video prepared by Webster Library <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DISPyvCtJQ8>

The Habitat Preservation Committee has focused our 2022 work on JUNT.

We censused the tree overstory finding a mix of Basswood, Red Oak, Tulip, Red Maple and Ironwood trees. The understory is mainly clear but contains Spicebush, Multiflora Rose, Privet and Autumn Olive.

Since JUNT is relatively free of invasive plants, the Habitat Preservation Committee devoted multiple Friday sessions to removing the Multiflora Rose and Privet that had started to take hold the drainage area inside the trail loop. We were delighted to find that Black Birch and Tulip tree saplings, to which we added 1-2 ft Spice Bush plants.

JUNT has a new neighbor, the Michael A. Johnson Nature Preserve, where we'll be working next year to remove

Garlic Mustard and Oriental Bittersweet.

I wish to thank the Habitat workers of 2022. It's been a pleasure to be outside with this hard-working bunch: Carolyn Brown, Eric Brown, John Boettcher, Barb Dupra, Dave Dupra, Mary Dangler, Paul Dangler, Nancy Poeth, John Griffiths, and Isobel Kaplan.

We've been working other places, too: maintaining and mapping the rehab area in the Gosnell Big Woods, pulling Garlic Mustard at Bird Sanctuary, and clearing woody growth in the Gosnell Big Field missed by the mower

### **Social Media – Anna Taylor**

Staying connected with the community and communicating our mission, that is the goal of our engagement on social media. In 2022 we increased our number of followers on Facebook from 892 to 933 to date. We re-booted our Instagram page and saw our Meet Up Group grow to 365 members. We would like to thank, Social Media Coordinator, volunteer and Nazareth College Student Intern, Erin Hurlbut for her help this year. Erin shared her talents with us, with her lovely photos of the trails and with her graphic design skills. We wish Erin all the best as she moves forward with graduation and her career. We are certain she will do great things!

I would also like to thank all who have reached out to us on these platforms. Keep your comments and messages coming, and please follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Meet Up, like our pages, and tell your friends to do the same. Lastly, if you enjoy the trails and enjoy posting on social media consider volunteering as our next FWT Social Media Coordinator. It is a great opportunity to support FWT and be creative.

### **Big Things Are Happening - Major Projects Update Hal Harris**

As previously noted, the Town's purchase of 19 acres adjacent to Four Mile Creek Preserve was completed last year. Located along Four Mile Creek in the NE corner of the preserve, this property had been in the Ron Eckler family for many years. This summer we spent three workdays clearing a loop trail that connects to the Red and Yellow trails. Of course, this will be the "Orange trail". In early September, Eagle Scout candidate Erik Stephany of Troop 110 completed a 24-foot bridge to make this new

## FWT Newsletter – Fall 2022

loop accessible. I have to say that this project, which Erik designated as “IN AETERNUM PONTEM” (Forever Bridge), was quite complex and very well implemented. Thankyou Erik and your helpers. I am sure that the Trail Steward, Dennis Kuhn, will soon have the new trail well blazed. In the meantime, check it out. It should be easy to follow.



“Forever Bridge on Orange Trail FMCP (es photo)

The other major project this summer has been the addition of a lovely 5 acre woods off the Hojack adjacent to the John Unger Trail. This property was acquired by the Town through a generous gift from the Donbovy family in memory of Michael A. Johnson. This summer, we cleared a ¼ mile loop trail with a connection to the John Unger trail. The Trail Steward, Norma Platt, is planning a dedication for the Michael A. Johnson Nature Preserve for later this fall.

We are very hopeful that a grant proposal under the DEC Community Forests program will be successful. Through the tireless effort of local attorney Benjamin Wisniewski, who has a strong interest in the preservation of open space for public access, an excellent grant proposal has

been submitted by the Town. This grant proposes to fund the purchase of a very desirable 29 acre forest adjacent to WRNP. This is an outstanding opportunity. Stay tuned.

After a good start last year the trail system in State Road Nature Preserve has been on hold. It was determined that the proposed bridge across Four Mile creek would be in a flood plain and therefore require Town and DEC permits. Additionally, a resident of Arbor Creek had raised concerns about the bridge. The residents association has now assured us that the bridge is desired and we will be working with the Town and DEC to obtain the required permits. Hopefully, this trail system can be completed next year.

As mentioned in the spring newsletter, FWT has been working with the Supervisor and the Open Space Committee to identify properties for potential preservation as open space. Although a number of properties were identified as potential for acquisition, the Town has decided that a bond referendum would not be appropriate this year. We and the Open Space Committee will continue to work to identify priority properties and seek a strategy for their preservation.

### **ReTree Webster – Norma Platt, Sarah White**

What a difference a year makes! One year ago, we introduced ReTree Webster in the autumn issue of this newsletter. We had just started on our mission to improve the resiliency of the forested areas of Webster and to improve knowledge around the threats to our forests and how to mitigate them.

One year on, much has happened. We’ve developed concrete plans and started putting those plans into action. The first native trees are planted at Whiting Road Nature Preserve, and we have funding to continue this important work.

Securing funding was a crucial first step. Money doesn’t grow on trees!

- FWT provided ‘seed’ money to support our first-year efforts.
- Webster Rotary provided a grant for infrastructure on the Hojack trail and trees at the new Michael A. Johnson Nature Preserve.

## FWT Newsletter – Fall 2022

- Jim Engel of White Oak Nursery donated time and materials to clear alien invasive brush from our demonstration area at WRNP.
- Nancy Nevinskas donated directly to the ReTree effort.

In the spring, we constructed a plant nursery on the Parks & Recreation property on Route 250, following the design suggested by our partner Jim Engle of White Oak Nursery. Webster Parks & Recreation provided a water tank so we can keep the nursery residents hydrated, even during the dry spell this summer. More than 100 seedlings now call the nursery home, sourced from NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Monroe County Soil and Water, and ReTree members' seed-starting efforts.

The nursery is just the beginning, of course. Those seedlings will be planted along Webster Trails starting this fall and continuing into next year, as they grow to transplant size. Along a high-traffic area of WRNP on the Blue Trail, we have already begun planting resilient trees and shrubs, including:

- Seed planting of shagbark hickory, red oak and American hazelnut along the trail.
- Planting and providing protection for a few sycamore tree saplings and ninebark bushes.

Those new plants will soon be joined by larger saplings of other native trees at a planting event on Oct. 15. ReTree purchased saplings up to six feet tall to be planted at WRNP and the new Michael A. Johnson Trail, and Chris Brick drove the trees to Webster from White Oak Nursery in Canandaigua. Those saplings will be transported from the tree nursery to the planting sites by Glenn Morrell's crew at Webster Parks & Rec, just in time for planting and constructing tree-protection fencing at the October Work Day.

How can you help? Our immediate need is to get participants, either planning or feet-on-the-ground. Please let us know if you'd like to participate!

More planting events will be scheduled in the future, but many hands will make light work of the planting project this month. We will also have an event to transplant small seedlings at the nursery to larger pots. Watch for details.

### **Hojack Trail and Lake Road – John Boettcher**

The photo on the cover of this newsletter shows the almost completed terminus of the Hojack Trail at Lake Road. The photo below shows what it looked like until a few months ago.



This project was part of a plan by Monroe County to improve Lake Road from Rt. 250 to Bay Road. The objective was to widen the road, widen shoulders for pedestrian and cycling access and improve sightlines. This year was the third and final year of the project which did the area from Forest Lawn to Bay. A big part of this was to remove the old (1910) railroad bridge over Lake Road. This part of the project was a big deal with a firm from the coast contracted to dismantle and remove the bridge. The bed of the road was then raised over 6 feet. The road was closed for 3 months. Prior to this improvement, the Hojack trail would end at the North end of the bridge and one would have to descend a gravel trail down to Lake road on the North side. Now, the trail will transition to a paved walkway ending on the south side of Lake Road with wide shoulders to accommodate walkers. Big Improvement!

### **Pat Fulkerson – New Scout Coordinator**

Pat has been helping and directing Eagle scout projects for the scouts for years. He now joins FWT to coordinate their activities for us. He brings with him years of scouting experience, tools and how to use them in construction and repair. Welcome aboard Pat.

### **Membership Participation**

This is an appeal to you members to become more involved in FWT. There are some big jobs like assuming a position on the Board as an officer or director. We are

## FWT Newsletter - Fall 2022

also looking for people to become trail stewards. Then there are lots of little jobs. First of these is showing up at our workdays on the third Saturday of each month in the warmer season (one coming up on 10/15). The work on our trails continues year-round with mowing (see article), clearing, maintenance. You could volunteer to help by contacting the steward of the trail you are fond of and asking how you can help. If you can't find the time to do this, maybe you could help one of the officers or committee chairs with inside jobs like newsletter, website, event planning, grant writing, etc. Use the contact tab on the website to get more information.

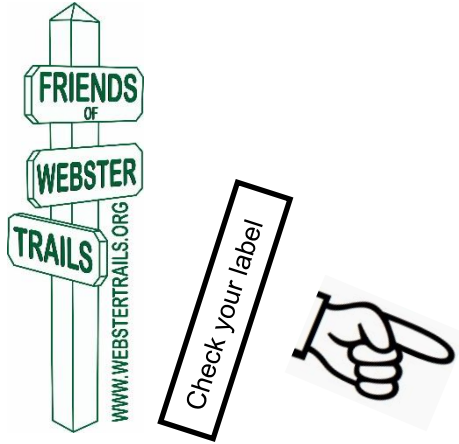
### Mowers Needed

FWT has purchased a mower for our trails, and we need folks to run them. This would be a great way to help with the maintenance of our trails. This would take about 3-4 hours each month, and the work would take place during the work week. Contact Craig Hurlbut (see board contact info later in this newsletter).

## FWT Leadership 2022

President	Anna Taylor	429-0853	annaberestaylor@gmail.com
Vice President	open		
Secretary	Sarah White	205-1464	smcnearywhite@gmail.com
Treasurer	Chris Peterson		peterson2418@yahoo.com
Past President	Shari Gnolek	217-2045	gnolek@rochester.rr.com
Member at Large	Dennis Kuhn	872-2452	Dukuhn@aol.com
Member at Large	Rich Morrill	872-5346	RMorrill2@cs.com
Member at Large	Larry Yost	671-6710	lw490@rochester.rr.com
Member at Large	Ron Happ	671-1961	ronaldhapp@gmail.com
Member at Large	Pat Fulkerson	787-2574	pfulker1@rochester.rr.com
Member at Large	Hal Harris	329 9063	halmharris@gmail.com
Trails Chair	Craig Hurlbut	203-2623	c.hurlbut@rochester.rr.com
Habitat Chair	Norma Platt	671-9639	normap1@rochester.rr.com
Membership Chair	Denise Bilsback	747-0738	bilsbackfamily@gmail.com
Social Media Coordinator	Erin Rene (607)	427-7528	erin.hurlbut13@gmail.com
Communication Chair	John Boettcher	671-9639	johnwb2@rochester.rr.com
Website support	Steve Snyder	330-1656	<a href="mailto:arrowkit_steve@yahoo.com">arrowkit_steve@yahoo.com</a>
ReTree Chairs	Norma Platt	see above	
	Sarah White	see above	

Friends of Webster Trails  
Webster Community Center  
1350 Chiyoda Drive  
Webster NY 14580



**Friends of Webster Trails** advocates for the preservation of the natural character of Webster's open space lands. We promote through sensible management, education, and low-impact access. We advise the Parks and Recreation Department and assist by planning, maintaining and promoting recreation trails in the Town of Webster.

**The Friends of Webster Trails newsletter is published each Spring and Fall**

Editor: John Boettcher

Send any submissions, questions or corrections to:

[johnwb2@rochester.rr.com](mailto:johnwb2@rochester.rr.com)

585-671-9639

510 Lake Road Webster NY 14580