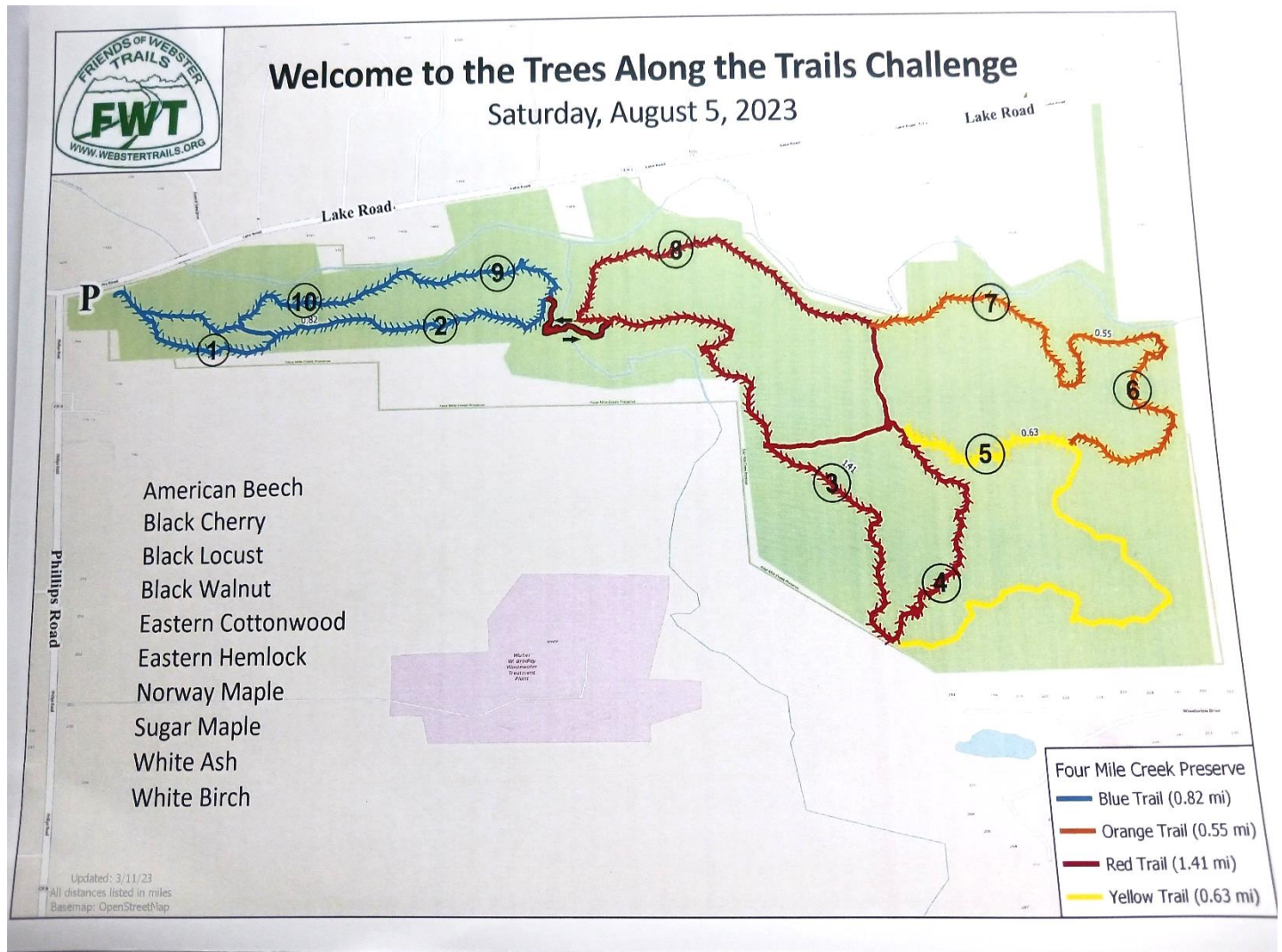




Friends of Webster Trails

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Map of Tree Challenge at Four Mile Creek (article inside)

UPCOMING EVENTS

SA 10/21 – FWT Workday

Planting of many trees and shrubs in the WRNP and GBWNP. Meet at WRNP parking lot on Whiting Road at 9:00. Get your hands dirty.

SA 11/4 – Hot Cocoa Hike

Gosnell Big Woods Preserve at 7:00. Meet in the parking lot at Drumm and Vosburg. Hike in the dark with a treat at the end. More info on our website.

SA 11/18 – FWT Annual Meeting

Outdoor meeting at Hickory Bark Trail platform at 1:00. Come and meet the Board and hear what is going on.

President's Column – Anna Taylor

Hello to our dear sustaining Friends of Webster Trails Members and welcome New Friends of Webster Trails Members!

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I am grateful for this opportunity to reflect on our year, and to quietly enjoy the contentment that comes with recognizing all the good work accomplished by Friends of Webster Trails in 2023.

In short: Completion of seven successful Trail Workdays coordinated by our Trails Chair and Trail Stewards. Five fun family trail activities hosted. Participation in four community outreach events to raise awareness of our mission. Engaging with our consultant to create new and improved trail maps, and obtaining training documents so we can maintain them in the future. A re-boot of the Wegmans Passport Trail Booklets ready for release in early 2024. Native trees planted, and hundreds of trail work hours logged! Yes, you can read that list again. You, my friends, are amazing!

I am also excited to report that in 2023 we celebrated the new Michael A. John Trail and that we made real progress on the the new State Rd Nature Preserve Trail. Keep an eye out for a ribbon cutting hike on the latter next year. Finally, there is the new Herman Road Forever Wild Forest. Our new Trail Steward Ben Wisniewski and seasoned Trail Steward Ron Happ have jumped into planning mode and will have projects lined up for us to get those trails ready to enjoy soon.

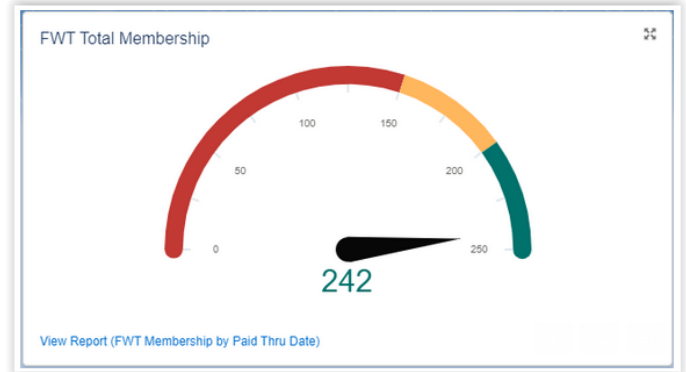
My hope is when reading this Newsletter everyone who volunteers with FWT feels a sense of pride and joy that their work makes a difference. Thank you to our Board, our Trail Stewards, our Trails Chair, all our volunteers, and our Membership. I would also like to thank Webster Parks and Rec and the Town of Webster for their support.

In closing, please consider joining us for our November Annual Meeting, and keep an eye out in January and February for our upcoming events in 2024. We look forward to seeing you there!

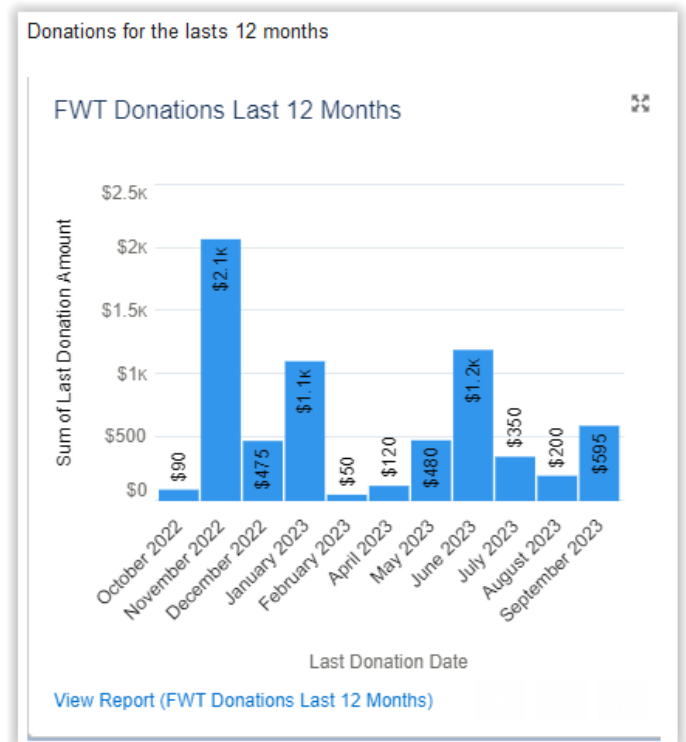
Wishing you all a happy & healthy holiday season.
Take care,
Anna Taylor, Friends of Webster Trails- President

Membership News - Denise Bilsback

Our total membership continues to grow. Total membership is now 242.




We have received some large donations in the last 2 years that I want to make special attention to:
2022 Donation in Memory of Norm Seitz
2023 Donations in Memory of Donald Miller



Some of you may have noticed that we are using a new email server, Mailchimp. The last hosting service had made some significant changes this summer and it was freezing my ability to get notifications out to total membership in a timely manner. There were several emails that went out looking like spam asking you to rejoin. It was my attempt to reload membership emails. Technically support was non-existent. Sorry for all the confusion. So far Mailchimp is much more user friendly.

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Treasurer’s Report – Chris and Lynn Peterson

Friends of Webster Trails			
For: Sep 2023			
	Mth	YTD	YTD Prior Yr
Donations			
Memberships - PayPal		\$3,149	\$2,408
Memberships - Checks	\$1,300	\$4,455	\$1,421
Amazon Smile		\$58	\$74
Scavenger Hunt		\$0	\$804
Roc Trails		\$0	
Trails Roc		\$0	\$2,000
Memorial Michael Johnson		\$0	
Memorial Norm Seitz		\$0	\$520
Town of Webster Grant		\$0	\$12,138
Interest Earned on Saving		\$56	
Total Donations	\$1,300	\$7,718	\$21,563
Expenses:			
Community Arts Day		\$0	(\$43)
IRS Filing Fee		\$0	
Retree Project		(\$1,494)	(\$1,151)
Mower/Trailer Town of Webster Grant		(\$5,231)	(\$5,000)
Supplies	(\$48)	(\$1,882)	(\$3,340)
McAllister sign		(\$458)	
PayPal & Bank Fees		(\$155)	(\$151)
Other, Wegman's, Chipotle, Guidas		\$0	(\$40)
Weekend Printer		(\$400)	
Site 5		(\$1,632)	
Total Expenses	(\$48)	(\$11,252)	(\$9,725)
Net Cash Movement	\$1,252	(\$3,534)	\$11,838
Cash flow			
Cash Balances:			
Beginning Checking	\$11,278	\$18,089	\$13,346
Beginning Savings	\$24,419	\$24,414	\$11,412
Opening Balance Total	\$35,696	\$40,483	\$24,758
Closing Checking	\$12,530	\$12,530	\$12,181
Closing Savings	\$24,419	\$24,419	\$24,414
Closing Balance Total	\$36,948	\$36,948	\$36,595
Cash Movement	\$1,252	(\$3,534)	\$11,838

Trail Chairman Report – Craig Hurlbut

In April we had what has become an annual workday on the Hojack Trail. Many volunteers arrived to help clean trash and other stuff off the trail. Also in April, on the 22nd, our ReTree team with 45 volunteers were potting bare-root seedlings to ready them for planting this year and next. This is a huge step toward improving our future forests.

We worked on the new trail off State Rd in May and in September. If you haven’t had a chance to walk the trail, please take some time. If you’re at the intersection of State and Salt Rd. go west on State Rd a couple hundred yards and look for the trailhead.

The new Michael Johnson Trail was opened in June. This trail turns N/NE off the Hojack between Van Alstyne and Drumm Rd. about ¼ mile from Van Alstyne. The land for

this trail was purchased with funds donated by Mary Dombovy and we are very grateful for her donation.

Once again the Webster Thomas cross-country team helped to spread gravel at 4 Mile Creek. Fueled by a few dozen doughnuts the runners always work hard on the trails. In July, Brody from Troop 113 planned out boardwalks and installed several sections at 4 Mile Creek on the orange trail. We hope more hikers will try this trail now that the wet muddy areas have boardwalks.

On the first Saturday in August the first Trees Along the Trail Challenge was held at 4 Mile Creek. This is an interesting event that gets participants to walk the trail and identify different types of trees...with prizes at the end! The John Ungar trail received our attention in August. Everyone worked hard to trim around the creek and clear the trees and branches. This is a rather short trail off the Hojack, but it deserves a visit next time you are there.

Finally, in August the Town closed on the purchase of a 28-acre lot that will be named the Herman Road Forever Wild Forest (HRFWF). The trailhead is at 760 Herman Road. Next year we expect to have a parking lot for 6-8 cars there. The great news is that it will connect with the pink trail on the west side of the Whiting Road Nature Preserve. Our gratitude goes out to Mary Dombovy for her financial contribution, and to Gary Wood and Judy Wood for offering to sell the land to the Town.

Steward Reports from the Trails

Hojack Trail North – Bud Gearhart

As summer winds down, we will soon wrap up our mowing and trail trimming for the year. You may have seen our volunteers out with the FWT’s new mower. This is the first year that we took on the job of mowing the Hojack with our own mower. Right now, I am hurrying to finish trimming the sections of the Hojack that I haven’t reached yet. Every year, the sides of the Hojack Trail need to be cut back to keep the trail from getting overgrown, and to allow the mowers to access the full width of the trail. Soon, I will be out there blowing leaves off the trail. With so much bike traffic on the trail, it is a safety issue so that the riders can see to avoid any hazards on the trail. Fall and Winter are also times to make

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improvements and do repairs, as well as continuing to clear fallen trees from the trail. As you can see, trail work is never done. We hope you enjoy the results of our efforts.

Hojack Trail South – John Boettcher

My portion of the Hojack is from Holt Road to the end of the trail at Philips. Aside from bordering Sexton Park (formerly North Ponds Park), the trail is mostly surrounded by commercial development. There is a small section south of the trail near Philips Rd. which has some woodlands. Alas, this area is being cleared for business use and the associated driveways will cross the Hojack trail to connect to Donovan St.

Hickory Bark Trail – Sharon Galbraith

The woods remain a natural oasis in an urban area. Flowering goldenrod borders the boardwalk and the swamp maples are showing their flaming reds. The squirrels and chipmunks are busy gobbling the hickory nuts and the shells crunch underfoot as you walk the boardwalk. Come and enjoy.

Finn Park Nature Trail – Rebecca and Bernie Bonn

The majority of the large field was mowed in September for the season. Trail maintenance continues to consist of garbage clean up and cutting back of the multi-flora rose and oriental bittersweet vines which are girdling trees along the trails. Bow hunting season has begun at Finn Park and will end Tuesday, December 18th. A recent morning stroll through the trails revealed the following observations: a squirrel foraging for beechnuts high in the canopies, glittery dew clinging to a finely spun spiderweb, the calls of red-bellied woodpeckers, scat possibly left behind from a red fox and clumps of white asters scattered along the field trail.

Whiting Road Nature Preserve (WRNP) – Ron Happ

The trails at the Whiting Road Nature Preserver are in good shape. I still have about 2 ½ weeks left clearing the encroaching brush on the sides of the trails. When that is complete, it will be time to blow the leaves off of the trails.

We didn't get to the replacing of any of the boardwalks this year but the two small ones on the Orange trail should be replaced early next year. We also hope to build two new boardwalks that will connect the Pink trail to the new Herman Road Forever Wild Forest. I look forward to seeing all of you on the trails.

State Road Nature Preserve – Hal Harris

We made major progress in developing this 98-acre preserve this year. Thanks to two FWT workdays and the new Trail Steward, Paul De LaPietra, we completed an

initial one-mile loop trail. We are working on a trail map which should be up on our website soon. Next year we expect the Town to put in a small trailhead parking lot. Also, we hope to find a Boy Scout to build a bridge across Four Mile Creek to provide access for Arbor Creek residents. For the curious, you can find the trailhead on the north side of State Road across from No 1549. This short trail leads into the pond where it ends at the loop trail. Right on the loop. Through the woods you emerge, turn left and follow Four Mile Creek southwest and reenter the woods. Follow this trail back to the pond. Happy exploring!

Fourmile Creek Preserve - By Dennis Kuhn

If you haven't been to the Fourmile Creek Preserve this summer, you might be in for a bit of a surprise. The red trail near the Salt Creek overlook has been rerouted to follow the natural terrain of the hillside formed by Salt Creek. About 150 feet of trail was cleared by ten enthusiastic and energetic volunteers and now offers a nice view of the valley below and the creek itself. Ron Happ cranked up his Stihl chainsaw and removed several large trees that blocked the trail and made it easier for the other volunteers to clear the trail.

In July the RL Thomas Cross Country Team hauled stones to both the north and south sides of the blue trail. Two teams of workers managed to move about six cubic yards of stones in just a few hours. Craig Hurlbut organized the teams and ensured that there were plenty of donuts to fuel the workers. While the stones were being hauled and raked John Boettcher and Tom Traub devoted their energy to clearing the red trail shortcut. This short, but important trail was overgrown and badly in need of widening and clearing. Thanks to John and Tom the mission was accomplished! Later in July Brody Hoffman from Scout Troop 113 under the skillful guidance of Pat Fulkerson completed five sections of puncheon boardwalk on some extremely wet sections of the newly established orange trail.

This was done in anticipation of a self-guided "Trees Along the Trail Challenge" hike scheduled for early August. The "Challenge" involved a 2.5 mile hike throughout the preserve in an effort to identify ten trees along the trails. Participants were given a seedling balsam fir for their efforts as well as an opportunity to win one of three potted native trees. It was a great day to learn about a large variety of trees that can be observed throughout the preserve.

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John Ungar Nature Trail – Norma Platt

The benches at John Ungar have been revitalized. The lower bench, thanks to the work of 12 volunteers, has an expansive view of Shipbuilder's Creek. We worked on a cool, sunny day to remove the brush that blocked the creek-view.... And celebrated with lemonade and looking for crawdads in the creek ('treasure everywhere'). Here are pix of the improved view of the Shipbuilder's Creek.



Before



After

John Boettcher and I repaired the upper bench. We replaced the rotted 4x4 uprights using pressure treated wood reclaimed from Webster Parks/Rec.



JUNT Bench repair in progress

FWT Habitat Preservation Committee: Norma Platt

The dedicated members of the Habitat Preservation group have been busy this season...removing invasive plants and installing many native trees and shrubs!

As of the end of September, volunteers have logged 250 hours of work! We are: Alicia Alverado, John Boettcher, Carolyn Brown, Eric Brown, Rick Brunette, Mary Dangler, Paul Dangler, Sharon Galbraith, John Griffiths, Isobel Kaplan, Nancy Poeth, Barb Rehberg, Judy Slein, Tom Traub and Sarah White.

Here are some of our projects:

- 1) Pulling Garlic Mustard on the trails at Bird Sanctuary, John Ungar and the Lake Road side of the Big Woods. We've been returning for many years and the plants are becoming harder to find, now that the seed load is nearly depleted.
- 2) Maintaining the new mini-meadow at John Ungar
- 3) Clearing vines from desirable trees along the Hojack Trail
- 4) Policing the understory of alien invasive plants at

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the south portion of Four Mile Creek, the big gully in the Big Woods, and a portion of the hemlock forest in Whiting Road.

- 5) Removing larger invasive Norway Maple.
- 6) to help with the ReTree effort, we've been planting native trees at John Ungar, Whiting Road and Gosnell Big Woods.
- 7) Spreading seed and installing plugs of wildflowers.

We plan to keep working on Friday mornings as long as the weather permits. It'd be great to have you join us!



Happy Habitat Workers – Carolyn Brown and Judy Slein

Tree ID Event at Four Mile Creek Preserve

FMCP steward Dennis Kuhn comes up with another event for his trail system. The last few years he has been featuring a popular tour of the car wrecks along the trail. He has managed to find an old car enthusiast who can identify the make and year of the autos even in their decrepit state.

Over the past few years Dennis has come up with attractive labels for the most common trees along the FMCP trails. This year he came up with a quiz with prizes. People travel the trails and note certain trees and are asked to identify them using clues he provides. All participants receive a small seedling tree, and the winners of a lottery will get a larger specimen. The following comes from Dennis' handout for the event.



Steve Snyder, Craig Hurlbut and Dennis Kuhn at Challenge Sign-In Kiosk

Welcome to the Trees Among the Trails Challenge! This is an opportunity to identify some of the trees along the trails at FMCP. As you follow the FMCP trails on the map provided (see cover of this newsletter), you will discover that some of the trees have a numbered sign with some clues like: Heights to 100-120 feet, Autumn colors are considered spectacular, Think Toronto hockey, Native to eastern North America, It's a friend of pancakes and waffles. The trees to choose from include American Beech, Black Cherry, Black Locust, Black Walnut, Eastern Cottonwood, Eastern Hemlock, Norway Maple, Sugar Maple, White Ash and White Birch.

The challenge requires participants to walk about two and a half miles of the FMCP trails and features the orange trail which is the newest addition to the preserve. There is a rest stop at the Salt Creek overlook where folks can get water and a snack. The trail ends at the kiosk where you sign in and at this point your score will be determined.

Look for a repeat of this event in 2024.



Challenge rest stop

The ReTree Fall 2023 Report - Sarah M. White

We knew it was coming and that our forests were threatened. The emerald ash borer arrived in New York State in 2009, and Friends of Webster Trails was on the case. A 2014 study by the FWT Habitat Preservation Committee (see FWT website/About US/Reports etc.) in Whiting Road Nature Preserve highlighted the local effects. Today, it's not just ash trees that are of concern: insects, wilts and other problems plague many local tree species.

But FWT has a not-so-secret weapon: ReTree. Since the start in 2021, ReTree has made the revitalization of Webster's forested lands a priority. In its first season, ReTree, together with the FWT Habitat Committee and community volunteers, added diversity to Webster's open spaces by planting more than 40 native trees and shrubs. And we were just getting started.

Earlier this year, those same groups filled the new Tree Nursery on Rte. 250 with seedlings, growing them to field-ready size. Seeds started in 2022 were added as they grew, creating a pipeline of trees for planting.

This year more than 200 native trees and shrubs have already been moved from the nursery to Webster's open spaces, largely by the FWT Habitat Committee, including those planted with the Genesee Land Trust.. In an upcoming workday (Oct. 21) we'll plant even more native trees and shrubs in Whiting Road Nature Preserve and Gosnell Big Woods Nature Preserve.

A walk through any of the open spaces to see our plantings will reveal hope for Webster's Future Forests in the face of this daunting challenge.

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 also looking for people to become trail stewards. Then there are lots of little jobs. The first of these is showing up at our workdays on the third Saturday of each month in the warmer season. 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 2023

President	Anna Taylor	429-0853	annaberestaylor@gmail.com
Vice President	open		
Secretary	Sarah White	205-1464	smcnearywhite@gmail.com
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	Lynn Peterson	490-1991	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	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	Anna Taylor	see above	
Communication Chair	John Boettcher	671-9639	john2w3b@gmail.com
Website support	Steve Snyder	330-1656	arrowkit_steve@yahoo.com
Scout coordinator	Pat Fulkerson	787-2574	pfulker1@rochester.rr.com
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:

john2w3b@gmail.com

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