



Andover Village  
Improvement Society  
Andover's Land Trust  
Founded 1894

Spring 2014  
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# avis update

## Landowner Improvement Program

By Amy Janovsky

Hikers along the recently completed Shawsheen River Greenway trail through the Shawsheen and Vale reservations will enjoy improved vistas and a new assortment of wildflowers now that the overgrowth of invasive plants has been beaten back with the help of a grant from the state. The other key component was more than 89 hours of volunteer labor - largely to improve access to the work sites in difficult areas. Moving forward, volunteers will help to monitor re-growth of invasive plants. The Landowner Improvement Program grant work was completed in November when the field was mowed after allowing an herbicide treatment to be fully absorbed by the invasive plants.

The removal and treatment of extensive thickets of oriental bittersweet, Japanese honeysuckle, Japanese Knotweed and two varieties of buckthorn will not only improve vistas of the river along the trail, it will allow native plants to flourish. This will improve wildlife habitat, as we saw after the initial brush clearing that enabled successful nesting of American woodcock along the trail. Watch for their mating flights this Spring!



Jeff Taylor of Vegetation Control working on Shawsheen Greenway. Photo by Amy Janovsky

## Thank You to All Our Supporters

We never can thank our supporters, volunteers, and donors enough. At this time we particularly wish to recognize The Boston Foundation for annual grants of \$5,000 from the Bessie P. Goldsmith Fund that are used for improvements and maintenance on the Goldsmith Reservation, as well as necessary tools and equipment.

## Eagle Scout Project Completed

By John Hess

Scout Paul Fleury did a great job pulling together the resources and people to make a definite improvement to the trail on the Spalding Reservation. In the accompanying photo Paul's co-workers show that the bridges they built are sturdy and have virtually no bounce. Paul reported that this project took 172 person-hours and 38 people helped him on it. Doyle Lumber gave a significant discount on the lumber and supplies price. Thanks to all our volunteers who help maintain our properties.



Scout Paul Fleury and Friends. Photo by Fred Snell

## Annual Dinner

March 11, 2014 – Beavers are Clever Beasts

Please join us for our Annual Dinner at 6 PM on 3/11/14. Due to popular demand we will return to the Philips Academy Log Cabin on Highland Road. Dinner is buffet at \$28 per person. We are pleased to have Dr. Jonathan Lyon from the Merrimack College Biology Department as our guest speaker this year. Dr. Lyon has broad research interests in applying ecological approaches to help understand, predict and ultimately solve real-world problems. He has active research interests in plant community ecology, the character of ecotones between communities and across landscapes, the impacts of human disturbance on plant community structure and dynamics, conservation biology and environmental management. He also has an interest in freshwater, aquatic plant communities. Please join us for another memorable evening. Contact Libby Poland for tickets 978 475-6159

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## AVIS Exchanges Land with the Town of Andover

By Susan Stott

A long time in coming, AVIS and the Town of Andover completed an exchange of land this past year. This exchange was approved at Andover Town Meeting in 2010, after several years of discussion. The Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives approved a bill allowing the exchange in July 2011 and Governor Patrick signed the legislation a week later. The Town and AVIS agreed on language for the conservation restrictions on these parcels in April 2013. Deeds were conveyed and recorded in October 2013.

The Town received what was formerly known as the 16 acre Pettingel Reservation, as well as 5 acres of the Rafton Reservation, both of which were affected by the Town Landfill. With the transfer in ownership of these AVIS properties, the work the Town will do related to the landfill is simplified.

AVIS received four parcels in the exchange: two abutting one acre lots on Monahan Dr., which provide potential access to about 20 acres of undeveloped open space between Cross St. and Grey-birch Rd.; another parcel is 10 acres, the site of the former Abbot Well between the Shawsheen River and the railroad tracks along Andover Street, which connects the AVIS Shawsheen Reservation and the AVIS Vale Reservation—The portion of the Shawsheen River Greenway which runs between Ballardvale and the Horn Bridge, and was dedicated last Spring, runs over these three parcels; and the final parcel is a 1/3 acre parcel at 15 Heather Drive that abuts the new ten acre Reservation off Highland Road acquired by AVIS in 2009 from the Sellers Estate.

The lots on Monahan Lane and Heather Drive were acquired by the Town for non-payment of taxes, while the former well property had been under the control of the Water Department. Both AVIS and the Town benefit from this exchange of conservation property.

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## Watch Out for the Emerald Ash Borer!

By Amy Janovsky

On December 9, state conservation agents confirmed that the emerald ash borer (EAB) is present in North Andover. Attacking only ash trees, this insect will kill a tree within a few years. Since the insect does not travel far on its own, moving firewood or ash trees across the state is likely the cause of the new infestation. Learn the signs of EAB damage to ash trees and be sure to report any sightings:

- In the winter, look for woodpecker activity on ash trees. Fresh, light-colored wood pecks stand out against the darker bark of the tree.
- Report severe woodpecker activity at the base of the canopy or on the main stems.
- Look for tiny, D-shaped exit holes in the bark of ash trees, die-back in the upper third of the tree canopy, and sprouting of branches just below this dead area.

The Emerald Ash Borer is an emerald-green metallic beetle, so small that seven of them could fit on the head of a penny. Don't worry about look-alikes - if you think you see signs of EAB, report it to the toll free EAB hotline at 1-866-322-4512. Note the location of the tree and take a photo if you can.

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## Meet Pauline & Bob Hamilton

**LONGTIME WARDENS OF ANN RAWLINS GREENE**

**RESERVATION** By Alix Driscoll

Combine eight decades of service to AVIS, add the lovely 32-acre Ann Rawlins Greene Reservation, an esker ridge line, generous wetlands and lots of happy neighbors, and you will want to meet Pauline and Bob Hamilton, caretakers extraordinaire. They are just now giving over the co-warden positions to Paul Dick for this parcel of land between Dascomb Road and Bannister Road, after a combined service of four-score years. Bob shares “I like all the neighbors being there and their dogs.” This gives him great joy. Pauline nods in agreement and adds “I can see the houses on both sides of the figure eight trail, but it just seems like you are all by yourself ... We are in Andover; but it feels like being in New Hampshire or Vermont. “



*Greene Reservation in Winter. Photo by Floyd Greenwood*

### THE LEGACY OF AVIS

“It is amazing what AVIS does with volunteer workers,” says Bob Hamilton, speaking of the many long-serving and caring wardens who serve AVIS as wardens of its 32 reservations. There are currently 45 wardens. They believe that Alice Buck had it right when she looked way ahead into two centuries when she conserved Indian Ridge in 1897 for all of us.

This reservation was given to AVIS in 1969 by John Gardner Greene, Unitarian minister, Quaker, professor and world traveler; he named the land for his wife, Ann Rawlins Greene. Marshes, woods, and a glacial esker, a continuation of the Indian Ridge landform, sit well on the land. Harold Rafton had introduced Greene to AVIS and to its mission.

For the Hamiltons it all started when Claus Dengler, president of AVIS 1965-1970, and chairman of the Land Management Committee, asked them in the early 1970s to serve as wardens of the reservation.

### CREATION OF A NEIGHBORHOOD

“It has been a pleasure to see the enjoyment of the people,” says Bob. With focus on the lovely wooded pathways of the Ann Rawlins Greene Reservation, the Hamiltons have created a neighborhood. A neighbor snow blows trails for cross-country skiers; many stroll its well-maintained trails; they walk their dogs and get to know each other; and, of course, look out for each other. Pauline agrees that the fact the land is being used is the best part of her wardenship. Over the years little children have planted princess pines and some folks have harvested fiddlehead ferns for their Asian cuisine. Al Retelle has inventoried the trees and an Eagle Scout has built a bridge. For Pauline and Bob it has been a routine for them to walk the trails twice each day. They live right across the street on Bannister Road.

Speaking of “their” Ann Rawlins Greene Reservation, Bob shares with pride, “it has touched a lot of people,” and indeed, so have the Hamiltons.

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## 45th Annual Rafton Trek By John Hess

Fifteen intrepid hikers braved the frigid cold and blowing winds to participate in the 45th Annual Rafton Reservation Trek on Sunday, 1/26/14. The trek, sponsored by AVIS, was organized and led by David Dargie who was ably assisted by Ken Doran. In years past this event has included skiing or snowshoeing but this year hiking was the chosen method to view the 226 acres of this lovely forest preserved in memory of former AVIS leader Harold Rafton.



David Dargie leads Rafton Reservation Hikers. Photo by John Hess

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## Membership Campaign Update By Rob Ciampa

2013 was a banner year for AVIS membership. Outdoor enthusiasm, along with wonderful reservations and trails, have elevated interest both within Andover and beyond. At AVIS, we want to amplify awareness to those who may not know us, further enabling the important work we've done for over 100 years. In March 2014, we'll begin the largest membership drive in our organization's history. Using print, video, social media, and community outreach, the campaign, called "I am AVIS," will highlight the greatest part of AVIS: our members. Please check our Facebook page or our website for updates on this exciting initiative. Need more information or want to help? Please contact Rob Ciampa, AVIS Trustee, at [r.ciampa@avisandover.org](mailto:r.ciampa@avisandover.org).

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## New AVIS Members 2014 By Rob Ciampa

Daniel Hall  
Mr. Trevor Barcelo &  
Ms. Tracey Spruce  
Lyn Allaby  
Charles & Patricia  
Kidik  
Fred & Roseanne  
Kolack  
Bonnie Hansberry  
Mark Elledge  
Gary Portnay  
Strong Family  
Keith Rogers  
Annette Grams

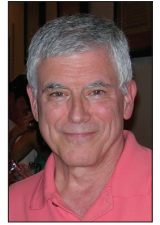
Ellen Wiklanski  
Linda Bolliger  
Peggy Rambach  
Jane Gifun  
Melissa Danisch  
Thomas Pustell  
Charles & Olin  
Burkhart  
Donald Michaud  
Alison Barnes  
Brian Kernan  
Merrimack Valley  
Bird Club  
Stephen McLaughlin

Phyllis Herskovits  
Ken Leonard  
David Rollfs  
David Wilde  
Melissa Thatcher  
Maureen Johnson  
David & Judith  
Norton  
Jeffrey Gealow  
Richard Lyman  
Francis Kimball  
Edward McEnroe  
Katherine O'Neil

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## Letter from the President

By Mike Timko



At the deadline for this edition of the Update, we learned that Al Retelle, former AVIS President and long time co-warden of Baker's Meadow Reservation passed away. Please watch for news of a ceremony to be held this Spring to honor Al. A proper story of Al's contributions to AVIS will have to wait, but I wanted to say that his wisdom and knowledge as well as his friendship and enthusiasm for the efforts to preserve open space in Andover will be sorely missed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our members, for your interest and support during our 2013 membership and fundraising efforts. Membership dues collected were at an all time high, mainly from continuing members. We deeply appreciate your support.

At this point, we are rebuilding our land acquisition fund in anticipation of at least one major up-coming opportunity. In order to attract new members, we are planning an awareness expanding campaign over the next few months called "I Am AVIS". We are looking for families or individuals who can attest to why they support AVIS (and why everyone else should). If you would like to participate in this effort, contact Rob Ciampa at [r.ciampa@avisandover.org](mailto:r.ciampa@avisandover.org).

The day after the New Year 2014 snow storm, after snow-blowing snow off my driveway and shoveling the front steps, I took the opportunity to go for a walk in the AVIS Nat Smith Reservation at the end of my street. The eight or so inches of accumulated snow was so light and fluffy that it was easy going and I made the full circuit in my snow boots. There was not much sign of wildlife but I did hear a birdcall I did not recognize. It turned out to be a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers deep in conversation, probably about the upcoming nesting season. Of course, I couldn't help thinking that the "woods are lovely, dark and deep" as I crossed the stream at the halfway point. That phrase keeps coming to mind. It was all so beautiful and quiet that I couldn't help think that this is what all the work we put in to AVIS is all about. If places like this were not preserved, the world, or at least our little corner of it, would be a worse place. I hope all of our members, as well as all of our potential members, after fulfilling their "promises to keep" do what Robert Frost didn't have time for when he wrote "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and just go for a walk in the woods.



Nat Smith Reservation photo by Mike Timko

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[facebook.com/avisandover](https://www.facebook.com/avisandover)

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Avis Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues:           \$25 Individual      \$100 Sustaining  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ \$40 Family      \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 Student & Senior

You can join or renew online at [www.avisandover.org/join.html](http://www.avisandover.org/join.html) or make check payable to "AVIS" and mail to :

AVIS  
PO Box 5097  
Andover, MA 01810.

For information about planned giving or stock donations contact [info@avisandover.org](mailto:info@avisandover.org). Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the extent permitted by federal regulations. Thank you!

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## Fall 2013 Calendar

**Sunday, Feb. 9th**  
Family Moonlight Snowshoe & Cross-country Ski Trek  
5:45 PM  
Goldsmith Woodlands

Family Moonlight Snowshoe and Cross-country ski trek for all ages and abilities. Bring a headlamp or flashlight and enjoy cookies and hot chocolate around a campfire in the woods. Park in front of #491 S. Main St. at the Goldsmith Woodlands entrance. No registration. No pets. Hike if no snow, rain cancels. Leaders; David Dargie 978-996-4475 [david@dargie.com](mailto:david@dargie.com) and Vale Reservation Warden Ken Doran.

**Tuesday, Mar. 11, 2013**  
AVIS Annual Dinner & Meeting  
6:00 PM Social Hour  
7:00 PM Dinner  
Philips Academy Log Cabin in the Wildlife Sanctuary, 212 Highland Road, Andover.

The meeting and speakers will start at 7:45 PM and is open to the public at no cost. There is a charge of \$28 for the meal. Dr. Jonathan Lyons from Merrimack College will speak about the Impacts of Beavers on Local Ecosystems.

**Sunday, Feb 15th**  
Winter camping  
Serio's Grove along the Shawsheen River with Andover Trails Committee

Calling all hearty souls to join us for the annual winter campout at Serio's Grove. Gates will open at Noon. Roaring fire provided. If interested, please email Bob Decelle at [rhdecelle@comcast.net](mailto:rhdecelle@comcast.net)

For additional AVIS events, see [avisandover.org](http://avisandover.org).  
For AMC walks, see [amcboston.org/andover](http://amcboston.org/andover).  
To check for other hikes, visit [andovertrails.org](http://andovertrails.org).

Mike Timko      President  
Rob Ciampa     Membership  
John Hess       Editor  
Lindsey Timko   Designer

The AVIS Update is a biannual publication of the Andover Village Improvement Society. The mission of AVIS is to acquire and preserve Andover land in its natural state. More than 1,000 acres of land are managed by AVIS and are open to all for passive recreation.

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