

Friends' Co-founder John Cronin Remembered for his Dedication to the Blue Hills

People who love the Blue Hills and other local conservation land are deeply indebted to John A. Cronin, who passed away on January 27.

In the 1970s, John was serving as Associate Commissioner of the Metropolitan District Commission when he partnered with David Hodgdon to form an organization to advocate for the Blue Hills Reservation. Together they created the Friends of the Blue Hills to make sure the park would be protected and well cared for. Today over 1,000 members and hundreds of volunteers continue the legacy established by John by devoting time and support to making sure the trails are clear and the forests are healthy.

John's love of the Blue Hills began in his childhood, and he had fond memories of the rowboat concession stand at Houghton's Pond. After their marriage in 1965, he and his wife Maritta spent years exploring the 125 miles of trails in the Blue Hills.

John's passion for protecting open space extended beyond the Blue Hills. For decades he served on Boards devoted to protecting conservation land and the environment, including the Milton Conservation Commission and the Environmental League of Massachusetts, and he was elected a Milton Park Commissioner. As Scoutmaster for Milton Troops 3 and 4, he introduced many young people to the outdoors and instilled in them

the importance of conservation land.

We remember John fondly and with deep gratitude for his commitment to the Blue Hills and all our parkland.



You Too Can Green Up the Blue Hills Sunday, May 1, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

*Ponkapoag Pond AMC cabins
Park: Temple Beth David of the South
Shore, 1060 Randolph Street, Canton, MA*

Do you want to help care for the Blue Hills and have a great time? Then join us for Green Up the Blue Hills, our annual stewardship event! People of all ages will help to protect the forests from the invasive plant, garlic mustard. This plant is easy to pull out... but very damaging to other plants in the forest. It releases a poison in the soil so native plants do not survive. By removing garlic mustard, volunteers will help keep the forest healthy for the endangered

species that live at Ponkapoag Pond.

It won't be all work and no play, though! You'll also enjoy complimentary refreshments, crafts, music, face-painting and a scavenger hunt.

We'll provide all the tools and training you'll need but bring your gardening gloves if you have them. We recommend you also wear close-toed shoes. We'll be working (and playing!) at the AMC



Cabins, which is about a ¾-mile walk from the parking site.

For more information or to sign up, visit: friendsofthebluehills.org/green-up.

Get Dirty (or not)... the Trails Need You!



Whether or not you want to get your hands dirty, you have many opportunities to help out in the Blue Hills. Each year, volunteers of all ages join us to clear the trails, pick up trash and remove invasive plants that are threatening endangered species in the park. This year, you also have a number of opportunities to learn trail maintenance skills and get involved in surveying trails (without even getting dirty!). To learn more and sign up, visit friendsofthebluehills.org/trails-maintenance.

Come Hike with Your FRIENDS

Would you like to hike in the Blue Hills with Friends? Over the winter, participants joined us for a Beginner Winter Hike series, led by volunteers, including Rosa Zhang, Marco Curnen, Jean Beebe and Brad Huizinga. If you're interested in hiking with Friends... sign up to learn about upcoming hikes: friendsofthebluehills.org/hike-with-friends.



Blue Hills Photo Contest: Enter Your Pics (and Win Prizes!)



This year, there will be one prize for the photo winning the 'Popular Vote' by receiving the most electronic votes and three prizes awarded by a panel of judges--one for any subject, one for the photo that best depicts 'what lives in the Blue Hills,' including plants, animals and insects, and one for the photo that best capture 'who visits the Blue Hills,' showcasing park visitors and the activities that they enjoy.

You know that the Blue Hills Reservation is a natural gem in our backyard... providing habitat for animals, birds and insects... and an amazing natural haven for tens of thousands of people to enjoy. By entering this year's Blue Hills' Photo Contest, you'll help showcase why so many people love the Blue Hills... and why all of us need to help care for it. You can enter up to five photos at no cost and have the opportunity to win great prizes.

Prizes include two Patagonia sweaters worth store credit of \$139 and two \$250 gift certificates to Page + Waterman, Gallery & Framing in Wellesley.

A big thank you to this year's sponsors: Dedham Savings, Page + Waterman Gallery & Framing, and Patagonia.

To enter the contest or to vote for your favorite, visit friendsofthebluehills.org/photo-contest.

Quarterly Newsletter

**Editors: Judy Lehrer Jacobs,
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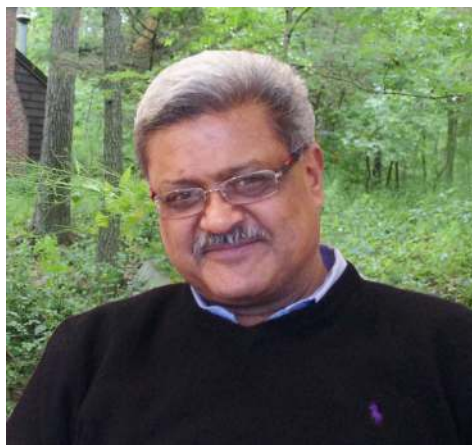
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Spotlight: Sunil Gupta on Why He's a Blue Hills Monthly Champion

Sunil Gupta's three sons are all grown up now, but when Sunil moved to Lexington with three active boys, they would regularly go hiking in the Blue Hills. They always felt like they would "see something new every time... a new view to enjoy, trail to explore, or boulder to climb." As the boys grew up, they would take on more challenging terrain and longer hikes.

Although his youngest is now in college, and he hasn't been to the Blue Hills in over a year, he still feels committed to making sure the Blue Hills is protected 'for people today and in the long term.' It was such a wonderful resource for him and his family, he wants to make sure that it is available to everyone. "This is such a great place where people can escape to from their busy lives... to



get refreshing air... and enjoy. I think that is what it is all about."

When you become a Champion (formerly called a Sustainer), your donation renews automatically on your bank account or credit card. To sign up to become a Blue Hills Champion, visit friendsofthebluehills.org/champion.

How You Are Making Progress in the Fight to Protect Endangered Species

In addition to physically removing invasive species in the Blue Hills that threaten endangered species, as a member of the Friends of the Blue Hills, you also advocate for policies to improve habitat for native species.

Our members and partners successfully advocated for the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture to report out favorably An Act responding to the Threat of Invasive Species. If the Committee did not pass the bill this February, it would have had no chance of passing this session. Because it was voted out of Committee, it will continue through the legislative process.

An Act responding to the Threat of Invasive Species (H.999 sponsored by Representative Rogers and S.563 sponsored by Senator Jehlen) would coordinate resources, guidance, and funding for invasive species. The bill would help protect endangered and other native species in the Blue Hills and statewide.

For more information, visit: friendsofthebluehills.org/invasive-species-bill.

Challenge Yourself: Find Your Path in the 125-Mile Club

Patrick Browne of Kingston, MA was the first person to finish the 125-Mile Club Challenge by hiking every trail in the Blue Hills. Patrick says that the "best thing about the journey was finding beautiful spots I never otherwise would have found. My new favorite is the path over the northeast slope of Hancock.

Some of the best views in the whole Reservation."

Patrick may have been the first person to earn a 125-Mile Club patch... but



he will not be the last! To learn more about the challenge and sign up, visit friendsofthebluehills.org/125mileclub.



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BLUE HILLS**
PROTECT • PRESERVE • PARTICIPATE

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Green Up the Blue Hills
Sunday, May 1, 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Enjoy live music, crafts, refreshments...
and protect the forest by removing invasive plants
friendsofthebluehills.org/green-up

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