



French River Log

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September 1, 2008

Welcome to the September 1, 2008 edition of the French River Log, the newsletter of the French River Connection. You are receiving this newsletter because at some point you gave us your email address and we have been sending you meeting announcements, minutes, and other information. At the bottom of this newsletter there is information about how to unsubscribe if you wish.

Dam Trail Race a Dam Fine Event

Over 100 runners took to the trails at Hodges Village on August 9, competing in the Dam Trail Race to support the French River Connection. This was approximately 30 more than in 2007. It was a beautiful morning for the event, and runners of all ages enjoyed a nice run in the woods. The race was directed by Board Member John Grenier with an assist from family and friends and members of the Central Mass Striders. FRC volunteers at the event included Mike Branniff, Barbara Day, Diane Earl, John Mrazik, Carol Sacks, and Ken Parker. The following businesses supported the race with donations of food and prizes: Shaw's Supermarket, Park n' Shop, Price Chopper, Delray Doc's, Big Y Supermarket, Eighty-Ates Restaurant, Point Breeze Restaurant, Eastern Mountain Sports, Pine Ridge Golf Course, Shop & Taste Pizza, and North End Pub. As always, home made breads provided by the Grenier family were popular with the winners. The event netted \$1465 for the French River Connection. A big thank-you to all the participants, donors, and volunteers!!

The overall winner was Ben Nephew of Mansfield in a course record time of 1:13:40. Class winners in order of finish:

Male 20-39	Ben Nephew	Mansfield
Male 40-49	Rob Smith	Charleston
Male 19 under	Ross Mungream	Douglas
Male 50-59	Paul Funch	Groton
Female 20-39	Shelia Lapointe	Lunenburg
Male 60-69	Howard Bottomley	Sutton
Female 40-49	Karen Ringheiser	Carlisle
Female 19 under	Michelle Sirois	Norton
Female 50-59	Sherisa Sterling	Ashburnham
Female 60-69	Robyn Metcalf	Boston
Male 70+	Richard Busa	Marlboro



News From the Greenway



The Perryville Trace, the inaugural section of the French River Greenway, was formally opened July 12. The Trace is marked with the new Greenway logo designed by Karen Durlach of KD Designs. A trailhead sign constructed by Charles Perzanoski has been installed by Charles, Ken Butkiewicz, and Ken Parker. John Monroe and National Park Service staff are creating a sign face to replace the temporary one displayed now. The one-mile roundtrip Trace is being used and enjoyed by many, thanks to the Craver family and the work of many volunteers. For a pleasant walk, start with a short ride to the Perryville Railroad crossing in Webster. If you can't go in person, try this [slideshow](#).

Next up is clearing a parcel of land on the river in downtown Webster, under a license agreement similar to the one applicable to the Perryville Trace. If all goes well, this will become a green space and boat launch which will be a step toward a Riverwalk loop in downtown Webster. This should serve to make the downtown more inviting. A workday is being planned for October 11.

Funding for planning and construction of the French River Greenway is included in the Environmental Bond Bill signed in August by the governor, thanks to Senator Richard T. Moore. Watch for progress reports and volunteer opportunities to continue to develop the Greenway.

Let's Go Paddling

On July 19, eighteen paddlers led by Alan Dabrowski headed downriver from Agutteback Pond below Hodges Village dam to North Village in Webster, enjoying the beauty of the French River in mid-summer. The event will be repeated October 4 at 9 am (rain date Oct 5) as part of the Quinebaug-Shetucket National Heritage Corridor's Walktober celebration. This is a 6-mile, 4-5 hr. leisurely flat-water paddle. We will start at the base of Hodges Dam in Oxford and twist and turn through a very scenic section of river ending at North Village in Webster. Participants will paddle through areas of lush vegetation with many varieties of wildlife. Youngsters are welcome if they are able to paddle their own boat for the duration or ride with an adult. Limit 30 boats. Reservations required – call Alan Dabrowski 508-943-4097, or email Dabrowski@charter.net. Equipment needed: Canoe or kayak, PFD, optional camera, binoculars for nature viewing.



Want to improve paddling access to the river?

Join other volunteers on Public Lands Day, September 27 from 8am until noon to clear brush and put down stone dust at the Greenbrier Recreation Area in Oxford. This will open up a scenic 3-mile paddle down to Hodges Village. The Army Corps will provide a pizza lunch. Contact Alan Dabrowski to sign up.

Dark of the Moon Celebration



The French River Connection and US Army Corps of Engineers will host an evening of family fun for the public on October 18 (rain date October 25) at Buffumville Lake from 6-9pm. Enjoy fires on the beach, ghost stories, stargazing (sky permitting), nature program featuring nocturnal creatures and other fun topics. Bring carved pumpkins for a display and contest. Other children's activities, contests and prizes. Take I-395, exit 4 west, 2 miles on Charlton Street to Oxford Road.

Volunteers are needed to help set up Saturday afternoon, run the event, and clean up the next morning. If you can help, and haven't signed up already, please contact Elaine.

Any Questions?

How high has the river been? High. On August 16, which was to be our cleanup day, the discharge measured at the Webster gage was 247 cubic feet per second; the previous record for the day was 178. The median over many years is around 35. The mean for August 2008 was 121 cfs. Last year it was 15 cfs, and it got into single digits. This shows how dramatically flows can change from year to year. It will be interesting to see how this affects our water quality monitoring results. Today, September 1, it's 30 cfs, back to normal.

Are the beavers discouraged yet? Probably not, but we have wired around 100 trees at three locations so far this year. Home Depot has been very generous with supplies. We have the wire to go out one more time. A couple of hours on a nice day would do it for this year.

Where can I get that slick French River Connection Logo gear? You can place an [order here](#), and pay for it when it comes in. It takes a couple of weeks, except we have caps in stock. Watch for some cold weather gear before Christmas.

When is French River Day? [French River Day](#), our annual get-together/picnic/pond paddle, will be held at Hodges Village at 3-6pm on September 13. If you haven't done so already, please visit the link and RSVP to Elaine.

Are we ever going to have another general meeting? Yes, as a matter of fact. Wednesday, September 10, at 7pm in the Dudley Town Hall Senior Center on the first floor. Enter through the police station, go through the doors on your right, and all the way back. At the

end of the year we'll need to evaluate whether the membership liked the reduced meeting schedule.

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