



## He Saw the Trees, Forests and Then the Mighty Potential of AVIS: An interview with Mike Timko of AVIS By Alix Driscoll

So why did Mike Timko work as an AVIS Trustee for 15 years and then lead this dynamic organization for six years?

Timko shared, almost as a secret, that his dad had been a forester with the National Forest Service, a position that brought him great joy. The family moved often due to his father's job; once as a young lad he lived on a 40-acre site in Hector, AR, which became his own private playground. Similar postings to a dozen tiny towns and extensive national forests shaped his love for the land and an abiding sense of protection of the environment. Impressive is his knowledge of birds and their habitats.

"Fred Snell and Dave Doub decided that I could do the job but I did not do management my entire career; I was a working engineer and aimed to accomplish something. I had not thought of myself as a president, but I read some books and decided I could do it."

His style was to champion good ideas and then find someone who would take those on. And thus it was; AVIS grew in accolades, land and influence in Andover under Mike Timko's aegis.

Although Timko admits he is not a trained public speaker, he shares with a grin that talking to members of AVIS is like "talking to friends". The best part of leading AVIS was to bring technology to the land trust that already was a modern organization. He helped to grow the webpage and made a sizable commitment to Donor Tools, the software that AVIS uses for analysis and management of information about donors.

For improvement going forward, Timko suggests "Event spaces, what we do on the land needs improvement."

For his day job, Timko studied electrical engineering, earning himself an undergraduate and Masters at MIT followed by three years in the Air Force. Next came 38 years at Analog Devices creating new product design, loving the evolution of cutting edge products.

"I think I left AVIS as well as Fred Snell left it to me."

Look for Mike Timko on "Mike's Peak" in the Nat Smith Reservation.



*Mike Timko relaxes on his bench at "Mike's Peak" in the Nat Smith Reservation. Photo by John Hess*

# An interview with Nick Orrick, Longtime Warden of Deer Jump Reservation.

By Alix Driscoll

Nick Orrick shares he has seen lots of changes in his three decades as a warden of his part of the historic Deer Jump Reservation where Native Americans walked three to four hundred years ago. The trail was cleared by parties of unemployed workers during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Orrick's roots go deeply into the AVIS soil. For one year he was acting president followed by more than 30 years as warden.

An aerospace engineer for AVCO for 14 years, Orrick also worked as a subcontractor for similar companies at Lincoln Labs.

## **What's Been Happening to Deer Jump in Three Decades?**

Orrick shares that the invasive plants have increasingly overtaken the trails, likely getting worse due to global warming. Invasives start blooming earlier and live longer into the fall. They flourish with the increased carbon dioxide. Now there are lots of downed wood from mature forests. Because the power company raised the level of the river, erosion has increased especially from motorboats. Orrick states that "There are lots fewer songbirds who like open spaces" as the forests close in. In the 1970s in a cold spell Orrick and neighbors skied across the mighty frozen river.

Back in the day of his early wardenship his now adult children cherished the independence roaming freely along the river trail along with neighborhood friends. They too learned the ways of the Merrimack.

## **Orrick's Hemlock Forest**

"My favorite part is the hemlock forest, a widened part where I can't see the houses. I used to work as a teenager in a summer camp in Maine, where I loved the smell of the forest. AVIS lands are not isolated enough, but at that hemlock forest by the little dam, (by the intake to Fish Brook) it is quiet with a sense of peace. I can sit and take it all in."

## **Call for Memorabilia AVIS 125th Anniversary**

AVIS will be celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2019. Plans are underway. If you would like to help or if you have any historical memorabilia (T-shirts, literature, photos, stories, memories, etc.) please contact John Hess at (978) 470-0806 or hess.john@att.net. We would love to hear from you.

## **Heads Up for AVIS's 125th Anniversary in 2019**

Founded in 1894, AVIS has existed for 125 years and its main work has been the shaping of both the character and appearance of Andover today. AVIS has been and continues to be dependent on volunteers.

- With the assistance of an enthusiastic anniversary committee, the Trustees are planning for a splendid anniversary year celebrating six score and five years of AVIS. There will be programs, walks and events for all folks with several each month of 2019.
- Starting with the New Year's Day Hike at the Skug River Reservation, 10 a.m. to noon, AVIS is offering several walks each month. These include the 50th Anniversary Harold Rafton Snowshoe/Hike and special hikes geared to particular interests plus walks for children.
- There will be an Exhibit at the Andover Center for History and Culture in the Spring of 2019 - *Breathing Places: Generations Caring for the Land*, recognizing the singular people and the history of AVIS.
- Calling all artists and photographers: The Andover Center for History and Culture will be hosting a juried art exhibit in the Fall of 2019. Look for details early in 2019.
- We are planning other activities for the year. Be sure to check our website for details. We look forward to seeing you during the celebrations.



*Look for this venerable tree as you trek around the more than two dozen AVIS reservations. Photo by Floyd Greenwood.*

[www.avisandover.org](http://www.avisandover.org)

978 - 494 - 6089

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

# Deer Jump Forest Stewardship Plan Completed

By Amy Janovsky

AVIS's first professional Forest Stewardship Plan was submitted to AVIS and to the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) at the end of June. This comprehensive study was prepared by professional forester, John Robbins, and was funded through a grant from DCR. The study was done in two sections: Part 1 covered the Behrakis, Spalding and Franciscan properties; Part 2 focused on the Deer Jump Reservation. This preserved land provides a vital, unbroken wildlife corridor along the Merrimack River for more than 2.5 miles, and is designated as priority habitat by the state.



Forester John Robbins has written an analysis of the health of the forest on the Deer Jump Reservation for AVIS. Photo by John Hess

The new Forest Stewardship Plan maps the entire property by forest stands, with details about soil type, erosion potential, tree varieties and characteristics, bird habitat and, perhaps most importantly, details about whether forest regeneration is strong or threatened by insects, deer, or invasive plants. This level of detail will enable AVIS to monitor threats to a particular species, like hemlock, which is present in several stands; and to hire professionals to treat limited sections of the forest heavily affected by invasive plants, so that adjacent healthy forest ecosystems remain intact.

Residential developments pose particular challenges to a narrow property like Deer Jump, intruding like fingers into the natural forest. Non-native plants like vinca (periwinkle) and lily-of-the-valley spread from homes and establish uniform blankets of growth, displacing native plants. Seeds from bittersweet, Japanese knotweed and garlic mustard are introduced on construction equipment and, aided by birds, can quickly out-compete native vegetation. AVIS has worked hard to create a contiguous set of properties, and we hope to keep invasive plants from subdividing the ecosystem on site.

As stewards of this land, AVIS can use the new report to help us set priorities for future work that might include deer exclosures, goatscaping and other treatment for invasive plants, as well as erosion control. Meanwhile, we have an excellent opportunity to share our new knowledge of the forest diversity in this fabulous reservation. See you on the trails!

## Congratulations to the Herring Count Volunteers

By Jon Honea

Fine job, herring count volunteers. John Sheppard at the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries has finished crunching our numbers and estimates that 1787 (+/- 413) river herring spawned in the Shawsheen River upstream of our count location next to Atria Senior Living this spring. For reference, last year's estimate was 1523 (+/- 574). These are fantastic numbers for strays from the Merrimack River system entering the newly opened stretch of river following dam removal. Considering that Mike Bailey of the US Fish and Wildlife Service also transported approximately 650 river herring from the Merrimack River to the Shawsheen upstream of the Ballardvale Dam, I believe we will have a strong river herring run of our own in a few short years as many of the offspring of the spawners from this year and last return to spawn in the Shawsheen.

Our average number of watches per day also increased from 5.2 to 6 per day. And our number of volunteers increased to at least 339, including 91 different individual signups (not counting your friends and family who tagged along), 212 students from Andover High, and 36 students from Greater Lawrence Technical School.

Thank you very much for your support of the river herring count on the Shawsheen River! Please put us on your calendar for next

April and May. I'll send out a reminder towards the end of winter. And tell your friends! They can find more information at the Shawsheen Greenway website: [Shawsheen.org](http://Shawsheen.org)



These students from Andover High School were among the 339 volunteers who counted river herring swimming upstream to spawn this spring  
Photo by Jon Honea

## AVIS Participates in Andover Day



*Outgoing President, Mike Timko, is shown talking to a visitor at a previous Andover Day. Please join us for this celebration again this year on September 8, 2018, in downtown Andover, 10:00 am start. Photo by John Hess*



The Town of Andover Open Space and Recreation Plan 2018 has been written, published and put online on Town's Conservation Commission webpage. It allows the Town to apply for grants from the Commonwealth for the purchase of open space and for the creation of parks. AVIS plays a prominent role in this Plan. It is current for seven years.

## Where Is It?



Answer on page 5

## President's Letter

Dear AVIS Members,

I was elected president by the other Trustees at a brief meeting following the Annual Dinner in April 2018. It is an honor to be selected to lead an organization that has had so much success and so many great leaders in the past. Please, do contact me if you have any questions or ideas that you want AVIS to consider.



We have had great success obtaining and protecting properties throughout Andover. For instance, Susan Stott announced at the Annual Dinner that we had acquired 20 acres in West Andover through a donation from Richard Bonier and his family. Our volunteers really stepped up to the plate this past spring after the destruction from the March storm. The Rangers, Wardens and others deserve a round of applause for how well they did in getting trees removed and trails opened for the enjoyment of all.

Additional applause goes out to Bob Friedenson who recently retired as Webmaster for AVIS. The Trustees have recognized Bob for his more than 10 years of volunteer service by naming him Webmaster Emeritus. Bob will be missed but a new volunteer, Muthu Arumugan, is the new Webmaster.

Going forward, we recognize that we own and manage our properties in trust for the people of Andover. Yet, the coming months will present many challenges for AVIS. While we will continue to seek new properties and to open them to the public, we will also find ways to be better stewards of the land. To that end, we have started a new committee, the Land Stewardship Committee. Amy Janovsky has agreed to chair this committee. With her very capable leadership we will be able to improve bird and animal habitats, strengthen our forests and meadows, remove invasive species, and more. Amy has already led a number of invasive removal projects and just recently received a report from a professional forester detailing ways to improve the reservations along the Merrimack River. Anyone with an interest in this stewardship mission should let us know.

Next year is the 125th anniversary of the founding of The Andover Village Improvement Society. We plan many events to celebrate our past and to look forward to the future. Please stay tuned to our website and our spring 2019 newsletter for information about hikes, speakers, an exhibit at the Andover Center for History and Culture, and other activities. We look forward to celebrating with you.

John Hess

# Welcome to the New Members of AVIS Proudly Joining More Than 600 Members since September 1, 2017, through July 11, 2018

David Barcelo  
Celina Griffin  
John and Maria Bartlett  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Beatrice A. Pfister  
Mark Dawson  
Lois F. Harris  
Julianne B. Cammarano  
John A. Pasquale  
Sarah Koob  
Jennifer Anderson  
Weichun Chang and Iris Chen  
Christopher J. Fournier  
James D. Klauer  
Kevin Porter and Jane Anthony  
Frank Osborn and Suzanne Korschun  
Al Coons  
Kenneth V. Dupuis  
Robert and Patricia Tully  
Mark O'Donnell  
David Belson  
Hannah Hanson

Mr. Christopher Weigand  
Michael A. Dempsey and Lynda Urgotis  
Samuel and Brianna Rowley  
Gregory M. Sebasky  
Nicholas E. and Caitlin L. Brown  
Nora Kay and Andrew Pelt  
Greg Pilla  
Derek Wachtel  
Robert A. Miller and Brittany Tattro  
Mark and Laura Veligor  
Thomas and Susan Spang  
Peggy Keck Estate  
Huahui Zeng  
Eleanor A. Storch  
Susanne M. Poschmann and Joseph Schneider  
Rose M. Mula  
Claudia A. Arrigg, M.D. and Howard K. Koh, M.D.  
Joan and James Krasnoo  
Mary Lara Hoke

Sean Norris  
Adirondack Foundation - Rocky Bog Fund  
Anthony Vale  
Ted Pappas  
David M. Fielding  
Patricia A. Keck  
Jeffrey Cary  
Will Harvey  
Gina Bertelli  
Kevin Roselle  
Ramona Hatch  
Bob Rauseo  
Susan Hunt  
Henry Yoshimura and Emily Kerns  
Peter Garone  
Robert Jones  
Rob Butler  
Alan Hanley  
Ardito, Toscano & McCollum, PC  
Marie F. Hickey  
Yu S. and Edward Tucker

Deborah B. Tucker  
Allan MacGregor  
Lawrence Whelan and Regina Foder  
Caffrey & Caffrey  
James and Jane Maran  
Mark Maran  
Shirley K. Dean  
Eric Gray  
Joan Hier and Joe Raser  
Christopher Bensley  
Michael R. Blake, Laura F. Blake, and Ben Farwell  
JoAnn Robichaud  
Lindsey M. Tucker  
Joseph and Tiffany Noonan  
John Deshais  
Schneider Electric  
Paul D. Graveline  
Alan Tucker  
Theresa Days  
JoAnn and Demetrius Spaneas  
Pamela and Eric Tucker



David Dargie and Dick Dillon (baseball cap) are ready to install a bench in the Peggy Keck Reservation. A plaque on the bench says: "IN MEMORY OF MARK TUCKER; HE LOVED THIS LAND". Photo by John Hess

## Finance Report for Calendar Year 2017

### Income

Membership Dues	\$ 30,461
Contributions/Grants	257,189
Change in Investment	61,596
Other	8,757
Total	\$ 358,004

### Expenses

Fundraising	\$ 7,293
Program Services	18,741
Management/General	24,199
Other	3,713
Total	\$ 53,946

Net Income/(Loss)	\$ 285,989
Improvements to Reservations	14,069
Land Acquisition	4,000

The expenses above do not include the tens of thousands of dollars' worth of time contributed by volunteers, including Rangers, Wardens, Trustees, work parties, and pro bono lawyers and graphic designers, who do the work to keep AVIS running and its reservations available for the public.

Where Is It Answer  
Wilson Reservation

AVIS Membership	AVIS PO Box 5097 Andover, MA 01810	Non-Profit Org U.S. Postage <b>Paid</b> Permit No. 344 Andover, MA 01810
Name: _____		
Address: _____		
Town, State, Zip:		
Phone: _____		
Email: _____		
Dues: _____ \$30 Individual _____ \$100 Sustaining _____ \$50 Family _____ \$15 Student & Senior		
You can join or renew online at <a href="http://www.avisandover.org/join.html">www.avisandover.org/join.html</a> 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 <a href="mailto:info@avisandover.org">info@avisandover.org</a> . Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the extent permitted by federal regulations. Thank you!		

For additional AVIS events see  
[AVISANDOVER.ORG](http://AVISANDOVER.ORG)

To check for other hikes visit  
[ANDOVERTRAILS.ORG](http://ANDOVERTRAILS.ORG)

For AMC walks see  
[AMCBOSTON.ORG](http://AMCBOSTON.ORG)

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 1,100 acres of land are managed by AVIS and are open to all for passive recreation.

Please be sure to check our website, [avisandover.org](http://avisandover.org), for hikes and other activities during the fall and winter.

## CALENDAR

### Tuesday, January 1, 2019

#### New Year's Day Hike

10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Skug River Reservation  
313 Salem Street

Start the new year off with a hike and begin the year-long AVIS 125th Anniversary celebration with a New Year's Day hike. No registration. No pets. Leader: Jeff LaFountain, [jefflaf@comcast.net](mailto:jefflaf@comcast.net)

### Sunday, January 27, 2019

#### 50th Annual Harold Rafton Snowshoe/Hike

10:00 am  
Harold Rafton Reservation  
273 High Plain Road

Park near the leaf composting area on High Plain Road. No registration. No pets. Hike if no snow. Rain cancels. Leader: David Dargie (978) 996-4475, [david@dargie.com](mailto:david@dargie.com)

### Sunday, February 10, 2019

#### Family Moonlight Snowshoe/Hike

5:45 pm  
Goldsmith Woodlands  
491 South Main Street

For all ages and abilities. Bring a headlamp or flashlight and enjoy cookies and hot chocolate around a campfire in the woods. No registration. No pets. Hike if no snow. Rain cancels. Leader: David Dargie (978) 996-4475 [david@dargie.com](mailto:david@dargie.com).

### April 2019

#### Annual Dinner

Please note that the Trustees have decided to move the Annual Dinner to April 2019 (rather than March) to avoid the potential for a snow related cancellation for a third year in a row and to celebrate the 125th anniversary of AVIS. Please watch for details on our website and/or in the Spring 2019 newsletter.