

Farmington Memorial Town Forest gets trail kiosks

Farmington's Memorial Town Forest was created in 1926 but few town residents have visited it or even know of its existence. Farmington Boy Scout Will Sanford set out to change that.

In 2012 Will started to formulate plans for his Eagle Scout Service Project, with the goal of raising awareness and use of the forest.

His plan included the construction of a trail kiosk, creating a trail map and blazing trails. He presented the plan to the Memorial Forest Board of Trustees who oversees the management of the forest, and they were very enthusiastic and asked for two kiosks. Will went before the Town Zoning Board in November 2013 and was granted unanimous approval for the project.

Will lead a large group of volunteers and construction of the kiosks started over the winter and was completed June 1. The kiosks are located at the Plainville Avenue and Red Oak Hill entrances to the forest. In addition to the kiosks, the project included rerouting a trail away from a residential area, reblazing the three major trails and creating a trail map. The trail map can be found on the kiosks, the Town's website and can be accessed using the QR codes posted on the kiosks.

The Farmington Memorial Town Forest was established in 1926 as a memorial to the men and



Courtesy photo

Will Sanford constructed trail kiosks, a trail map and blazed trails in Farmington's Memorial Town Forest as his Eagle Scout project. The work was completed June 1.

women who served in World War I. The forest consists of 266 acres between Red Oak Hill Road and Plainville Avenue. The Forest is owned by the Town of Farmington, managed by a Board of Trustees and is open to passive uses such as hiking and bird watching, with no hunting, fires or vehicles allowed.

Boy Scout Troop 68 is actively involved in community service, an integral part of the Scout program. Founded in 1919, Troop 68 is Farmington's oldest Boy Scout Troop.

Will, 17, is a Dean's List student at Avon Old Farms School

and has been actively involved in Scouting for more than eight years. During that time he has camped 100-plus nights, earned the Troop's Mountain Man Award for hiking the tallest peak in each of the New England States, volunteered more than 200 hours for numerous service projects, attended the Boy Scouts National Youth Leadership Training and served the troop as Senior Patrol Leader.

This summer Will has been working as an aquatics instructor at the Boy Scout's Camp Workcoeman in New Hartford.