

ELCCT Volunteer Spotlight

Bill Pastyrnak

A very special Thank You to Bill Pastyrnak!

Bill began volunteering with Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut in 2018 and since then has volunteered over 450 hours- 267 of them in 2020! Bill has been an asset to the organization taking the lead in the annual pruning of the apple orchard. Pruning is a time-consuming but important management practice of an orchard necessary to influence growth, modify canopy shape, improve light distribution and airflow for the trees. Indian Rock Nature Preserve has just under 100 apple trees and 24 different varieties. In early spring while the trees are still dormant, the previous year's regrowth is removed. A single tree could take over an hour to prune, depending on how vigorous the regrowth had been. You can do the math! He was literally up in the trees for hours to complete the process before the trees became active again. Once orchard maintenance was complete, Bill assisted with the laborious task of spring clean-up of the grounds raking, removing debris and other general beautification projects around the Preserve. Bill also helps with special event prep and the events themselves.

Although 2020 did not allow for many of our normally scheduled events, we were able to add a virtual Halloween program and modify our signature holiday event for December. For CT Legends Live virtual program, Bill played a spooky character. He then helped with new Santa Lights up the Lake event hanging lights on buildings and other surfaces and even created a drive-through lighted tunnel! If you came to Santa Lights up the Lake, Bill was the person who greeted you at the admissions booth. Whether he is slinging hay bales in the summer heat or helping spread the word about the things happening with ELCCT, he always brings a positive attitude and a great sense of humor.

Volunteering is about giving, and we are thrilled about all the care and support you have given ELCCT. May it return to you many times over!