

# Warmth for Waban Kennebunk Savings donates big bucks to TREE Center

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On a cold winter day, with the temperatures hovering in the low teens, Brad Paige and Heather Harris, of Kennebunk Savings Bank, stopped by Waban's TREE Center to make a \$25,000 donation that will provide warmth and comfort for many years to come.

The TREE Center offers opportunities in teambuilding, leadership, recreation, and environmental education. Nestled on the shores of Bauneg Beg Lake, the center's programs create awareness in the stewardship of the 84-square-mile watershed and ecosystem that includes the lake, while also providing experiential learning and opportunities for individuals, organizations, businesses, and corporations through its certified staff, meeting spaces, accessible trail system and low ropes challenge elements.

The hub of the TREE Center, the 3,600-square-foot Commons building, is in the process of being renovated into an energy-efficient, 4-season program center that will house the environmental education lab as well as snowshoe, skating, boating and other equipment rentals. When completed in early summer 2014, the center will have a lodge-like atmosphere complete with meeting and exhibit space as well as the Commons Cafe, where hungry and thirsty program participants will be able to get a hot or cold beverage, something tasty to eat, and be able to warm themselves and relax with friends by the fireplace.

In keeping with the environmental awareness of the TREE Center, the building will be kept warm by a geothermal heating system that transfers the heat from two 500-foot deep wells into a radiant heating system installed underneath the concrete floor. With over 3,000 feet of tubing embedded in the concrete, the floor and the super insulated building will be comfortable and exceptionally economical to operate.

Kennebunk Savings Bank's generous contribution will be used toward the cost of the geothermal heating system and exemplifies the sustainable, long term, and value-building approach that both the TREE Center and the bank embrace.

Neal Meltzer, the executive director of Waban, accepted the donation.

"For several years, the employees of Kennebunk Savings Bank have volunteered hours of time and have helped build our handicapped accessible trail network," Meltzer said. "With this generous donation, the bank is truly walking the talk and demonstrating with dollars another way that they support and give back to the community. We are very fortunate and grateful to have Brad, Heather, and the rest of the Kennebunk Savings Bank as partners in the work that Waban and the TREE Center do."

Recent events at the TREE Center included workshops in snowshoeing, ice fishing and ice skating in addition to the Great Maine Outdoor Weekend on Feb. 15, when more than 100 participants came out to play on the snow and ice, learned to ice fish, tried snowshoes and enjoyed tasty treats by the camp fire.

For more information about ongoing winter workshops at the TREE Center, please contact Ann Rossignol at 324-7955 ext. 644 or [TREE@waban.org](mailto:TREE@waban.org) or visit online at [www.facebook.com/treectr](http://www.facebook.com/treectr).

The TREE Center is a social enterprise of Waban.



Brad Paige, left, the president and CEO of Kennebunk Savings, hands Neal Meltzer, the executive director of Waban, a check for \$25,000 as a donation toward the geothermal heating system of the renovated Commons building, which will serve as the hub of the TREE Center on Bauneg Beg Lake. (courtesy photo by Selena Brock)