

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2020

“Persistence”

By Cecily Miller, Arlington Public Art Curator

PHOTOS BY ASIA KEPKA



Some of the shapes inspired by microorganisms found in water and warn of the dangers of microplastics in our ponds, rivers and oceans that are installed along the Minuteman Bikeway from Swan Place to Linwood Street in Arlington

You can finally view a new art installation that you may have read about in the FSPP Summer 2020 Newsletter. It consists of 37 colorful sculptures made by community volunteers with Artist-in-Residence, Michelle Lougee. For one year it will be exhibited in trees edging the Minuteman Bikeway along Spy Pond Park. The shapes were made by crocheting cut-up single use plastic bags (plarn), transforming trash into art with a message: reduce plastic to protect the environment. The shapes are inspired by microorganisms found in water and warn of the dangers of microplastics in our ponds, rivers and oceans. This installation was organized by the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture, Arlington Public Libraries, and many community partners. We hope you enjoy this creative project envisioned several months ago.

Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project Fall Wrap-Up

By Emily Sullivan, Conservation Commission Agent

The Spy Pond Edge and Erosion Control Project, which began construction in Spring 2019, focused on shoreline stabilization, erosion mitigation, and restoration planting along Spy Pond Park, Scannell Field, and Town-owned property adjacent to the Boys and Girls Club. The project improved ADA compliance by resurfacing the Spy Pond Park pathway with a porous pavement material and included an ADA-accessible timber overlook. A rain garden was also constructed between Scannell Field and Spy Pond to reduce stormwater pollution from entering the pond. In Spring 2021 there will be a training available to residents discussing the restoration planting schemes and shoreline stabilization techniques implemented in this project, which can be replicated on private property.

Funding sources for this project included the Community Preservation Act (CPA), Community Block Development Grant (CDBG), Park & Recreation ADA funds, and Land and Water Conservation Funds from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Additionally, two generous donations were made by the Friends of Spy Pond Park and the Mass Audubon Judy Record Fund.

To learn more about this project, please contact Emily Sullivan, Environmental Planner and Conservation Agent, via esullivan@town.arlington.ma.us or at 781-316-3012.

Editor's note: Emily Sullivan has filed a preliminary Community Preservation Act application to request \$40,000 for renovation of the North Beach handicapped ramp, not included in the project detailed in this article.

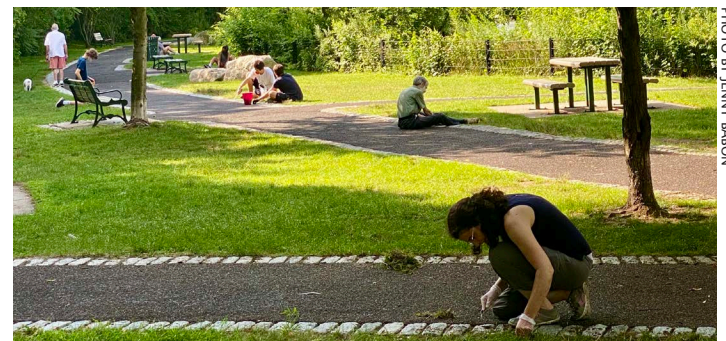


PHOTO BY JENNY BASON

FSPP was happy to have volunteers who responded to our emails, postings on volunteermatch.org and givebacktime.org to help Spy Pond Park on our first Workday during the coronavirus epidemic

FSPP 2020 Workdays

By Lally Stowell, Beautification Committee

PHOTO BY JENNY BABON



Cleaning up the shoreline at Linwood Beach in SPP is this volunteer's assignment.

Energetic and dedicated volunteers, responding to our outreach via volunteermatch.org, givebacktime.org and our own Mailchimp emails, arrived on four Saturday mornings at 8 am this summer for our July - October Workdays. From 8-10 am they weeded between the cobblestones lining the path, removed weeds and debris from both parking lots, dug trenches along the fences bordering the planting beds, cut back or removed invasive growth in the beds and along the shoreline, cleared the storm drains, collected trash and raked the playground. Adrienne Landry, Rachel Oliveri and members of the Gibbs School Green Team cut off sucklings from large trees in the planting beds that take nutrients from the trees and block the view of the pond. They also cut and cleared invasive plants and dead bushes from the embankment. It was rewarding to see so many parents with young children, teenagers, regular volunteers and other adults all interested in contributing to their community in meaningful ways during these challenging times.

What a Catch!

By Patrick Karper

I was born and raised in California. I moved out to MA in 2000 for college and for many reasons, decided to stay, partly because of the vast number of ponds and lakes and, of course, the proximity to the ocean. I am a life-long fisherman and have been fishing out of Spy Pond for over a decade. However, outside of catching a few large Northern Pike, this is my first Muskie. If it weren't for Josue, a fellow fishing buddy who drew my attention to the specific markings on the fish in the photo, I probably would not have realized it was a Muskie for several days. I just assumed it was a Northern Pike.

I caught the Muskie trolling a deep diver lure along the northwest side of the pond. At first, I thought I was hung up on something, as there are several old mooring ropes along this section anchored to the ground, but then I felt the fish and I

knew it was something large. I opened my drag and headed to Elizabeth Island, as I knew I would not be able to land the fish on the canoe. Once on shore, it took me nearly 20 minutes to reel in the Muskie and several people were kind enough to take pictures. For larger fish like this, as tired as they are to allow people to stand and pose with them, they still have to be coaxed 'back to life', if you will, by gently forcing water past their gills for several minutes. One last person wanted to take a picture of me holding the fish and, only seconds passed, the fish whipped its body up, popped off my hands, fell into the water and slowly swam away. I guess the fish had had enough!

I made a quick note where the head and tail were positioned in reference to my body and later used these positions to guesstimate the fish's length at roughly 32 to about 35 inches. Unfortunately, I was not able to measure the fish's weight, but I would further guesstimate the weight to be between 11-13 lbs. I returned to the canoe, launched it back into the water and rested for about 15 minutes. I was indeed tired, but really was just looking over the pictures being texted to me. I spent the next 3 hours trying to catch another.

Amy Gear of Arlington, who took the photo, said she has recounted the story of my catching the fish several times to all her friends and, of course, she has lots of pictures, too. To quote her, "[I] am already famous in her Arlington circle of friends!"



PHOTO BY AMY GEAR

Patrick Karper proudly displayed the 32-35" Muskie estimated to be 11-13lbs. that he caught along the northwest side of Spy Pond on August 22

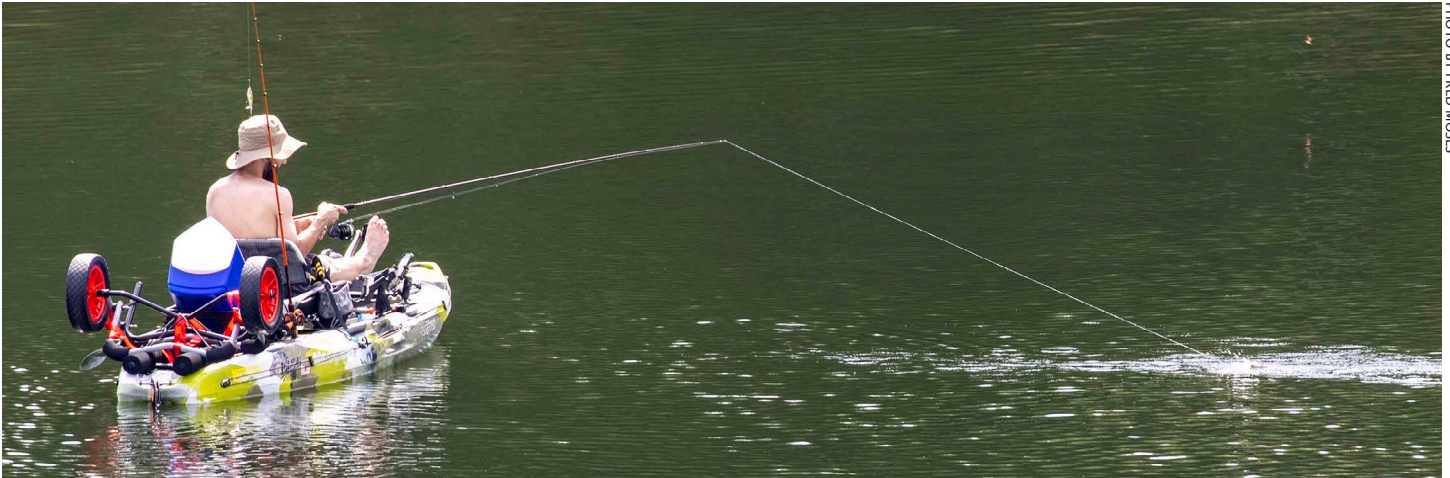


PHOTO BY FRED MOSES

Fishing on Spy Pond

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all doing well during this prolonged period dealing with the presence of the coronavirus while waiting for treatment and vaccination options. As time passes, with patience, observing recommended guidelines, we will continue to live our lives with Zoom interaction and responsible in-person rendezvous. The beauty of the outdoors, including Spy Pond Park serves as a soothing balm to the endurance trials this pandemic places upon us. I hope you go down to the park to enjoy nature and the new art installations along the bikeway near the park.

Many thanks to the fabulous 82 volunteers who helped with Spy Pond Park maintenance this year, especially the Beautification Committee members coordinated by Lally Stowell. Special thanks to Dick Norcross who is retiring after many years of faithful devotion, helping to keep the trees healthy in the planting beds along the shoreline of the park. We and they will miss him! Thanks, also, to Marshall McCloskey for repairing the locked bulletin board off Pond Lane.

We want to thank Joanie Walls, our Treasurer since 2017, for her dedication to receiving your kind and generous donations, acknowledging them, depositing your checks, paying for our expenditures, keeping our financial records in order and reporting on their status at our regular FSPP meetings. We'll miss Joanie's dedication and welcome Kevin Hall who has stepped in to fill the Treasurer's role. We had an opportunity to meet Kevin at our October Zoom meeting. He'll be at our annual meeting and you'll be able to find his short biosketch on our website soon, along with other board and committee members.

You will be receiving our end of year solicitation in November along with a notice of our Annual Meeting that will be held via Zoom on January 10, 2021. We hope you will be able to participate with us, although regrettably, we won't be able to share our annual potluck dinner this time. I want to thank those of you who have responded already to the May solicitation the FSPP made to those in our database. If you have not done so, and are financially able this difficult year, there is still time for you to support our mission of keeping Spy Pond Park beautiful by paying dues or making an additional year-end donation. Please make sure you're on our email list so we can send you the Zoom link to the FSPP Annual Meeting; you can request to be a list member, if not already, via the "Contact us" link on our website.

Please stay well, continue to enjoy our newsletter, and join us on January 10.

Warm regards,

Karen L. Grossman

President

Friends of Spy Pond Park

Friends of Spy Pond Park Annual Meeting

on

Zoom

January 10, 2021

6:00 p.m. speaker, 6:30pm Meeting

Speaker Emily Sullivan, Environmental Planner and
Conservation Agent: "FSPP & Community"

RSVP to 781-646-5990
email fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Details and login information to be announced via email.

To join Friends of Spy Pond Park...

Send your annual dues (\$15 individual, \$25 household, \$5 low-income) to:
FSPP, P.O. Box 1051, Arlington, MA 02474-0021
For more information, call a Friends officer.

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| General Vice-President: Open | |
| Treasurer: Kevin Wall | (781) 254-1153 |
| Recording Secretary: Marshall McCloskey | (617) 548-9877 |
| Membership Secretary: Daniel Jalkut | (617) 276-6672 |
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| Jamie Ciocco | jamcio@gmail.com |
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| Marshall McCloskey | (617) 548-9877 |
| Chair for Publicity: Jenny Babon | (774) 253-6325 |
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| Adrienne Landry | (339) 368-0315 |
| Marshall McCloskey | (617) 548-9877 |
| Richard Norcross | (781) 641-2404 |
| Lally Stowell | (781) 777-2759 |
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| Web Developer: Julie McBride | (617) 823-8084 |
| Chair for Outreach/Park Events: | |
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| Laura Homer | (617) 953-0743 |
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| Photographer's Assistant: Puneet Syal | |
| Post-processing: Mark Sandman | |

Newsletter contributions and general comments can be sent to
fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Friends of Spy Pond Park • <http://www.friendsofspypondpark.org> • P.O. Box 1051 • Arlington, MA 02474-0021

A Spy Pond Reflection

By Jenny Babon

Like a rock thrown on the pond
– Splash!
And just like that,
Our lives were disrupted.

The ripples get bigger,
The wind is picking up,
Adding insult to injury –
A loss of control.

But the water keeps flowing
Nature brings the calm back
And just like that,
Hope springs and I am restored.



PHOTO BY JENNY BABON

Olivia discovered a newer, small version of "Colony" by Christopher Frost that appeared nearby off Linwood Street