

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2017

Spy Pond Park Fun Day 2017

By Betsy Leondar-Wright

On Saturday September 9, we had one of the biggest Fun Day turnouts ever - and everything went great, thanks to two-dozen hard-working and creative volunteers.



PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN

Spy Pond Park was filled with Fun Day participants

A flood of kids made and launched bark boats, made sand paintings and nature crowns, caught bugs, tested water turbidity, created colorful paintings, colored nature scenes, got their faces painted, had their photos taken looking through giant fishes, and won prizes for doing Spy Pond History scavenger hunts, leaf hunts and puzzles with messages about caring for the park and the pond.

Special thanks to all the musicians who filled the park with such great music: The Intuition Quartet, Aunt Mimi, Lokensgard Blechbaser Ensemble, and the band of the hard-working music co-coordinator Joe Burns. Organizing the music behind the scenes also was Mark Sandman, who with Joe runs the open mic at the Kickstand Café. Thanks, also, to Anthony Vogel and Adria Arch for the lovely painted bench, dedicated at the festival.

Marshall McCloskey and Sally Hempstead get the medal for the longest stint, setting up earlier and cleaning up later than anyone else. First-time volunteers Tashi Pique, Jill McArthur, Joanie Walls and Kristi Farrell Simpson added new energy, in particular Tashi's popular "Colors of the Earth" booth.

Reprising their Fun Day roles from prior years were Lally Stowell, Dick Norcross, Bill Eykamp, Judy Berman, Colin Blair, Ram Subramanian, Lisa Reynolds, Pinal Maniar, FSPP



PHOTO BY KAREN L. GROSSMAN

Swans and cygnets swim close to shore near Spy Pond Park

President Karen Grossman, and Spousal Auxiliary members Gail Leondar-Wright, Puneet Syal and photographer Fred Moses.

It's wonderful to have organizations that specialize in children's nature activities increasing the professionalism of Fun Day: Tinkergarten, Mass Audubon Habitat, and the materials from ArtBeat. Thanks to the Book Rack for donating books as prizes. Thanks to the Mystic River Watershed Association for the cute photo board, information table and demonstration of water quality testing. And thanks to the Arlington/Belmont Crew Team coaches and the Arlington Land Trust for collaborating on the boat rides to Elizabeth Island.

FSPP has been holding annual Fun Day festivals for more than 15 years, but the early ones were more low-key and grassroots, just a few activities led by members. Now Fun Day has turned into a bigger and more polished festival, thanks to the involvement of these additional organizations and artists and the special skills they bring.

Let's do it again next year!

Thanks to Volunteers

By Lally Stowell, FSPP Beautification Committee



PHOTO BY KAREN L. GROSSMAN

It was a family affair with Doris Birmingham and her son Geoff loading invasive plants into a bag in one of the planting beds

We would like to thank all of you who volunteered during our monthly Saturday Work Days this past spring, summer and fall. Spy Pond Park would not be the beautiful, welcoming place it is without your many hours of work and dedication. Some of you participated on your own, some with family and friends, and some with your school, community or work group. Some of you are trusted regulars who come many times each season.

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Spy Pond Park Fun Day 2017

PHOTO BY MADELINE MCCLURE



Paloma, Theodore, and Scott McClure's faces popped out through the photo board so that Mom, Madeline, could capture them in this wildlife scene

PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN



Aunt Mimi, a guitar duo, played pop, rock and folk classics to entertain the crowd

PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN



Arlington/Belmont Crew Team Boys Coach, Cian Noone, ferried people to and from Elizabeth Island on Fun Day 2017

PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN



Ruth Putnam, age 8, balanced on stilts and towered over her mother, Sara Tolley, but did not venture forward onto the boat ramp, too bumpy to navigate

Town Day 2017

By Sally Hempstead,
Communications and Outreach Co-Chair

Ah Woman Power! With no men on the set-up committee this year, I was a little anxious about putting together the FSPP booth for Town Day. I packed the car the afternoon before with little trouble and was ready at 7 a.m. Saturday morning to begin the day. Joanie Wall, our new Treasurer, met me at our designated spot just south of Jason Street at 7:30 a.m. and in quick fashion we unfolded the tent, clicked in the legs, attached the sign and were off and running. The Friends of Robbins Park is always on our right and this year we had the Methodist Church from East Arlington on our left. Betty Athanasoulas showed up promptly at 9 a.m., always cheerful and ready to greet old and newcomers alike. Jill McArthur, one of our new Friends, arrived early and stayed late, which was a wonderful addition to our crew. So, with Bev and Wally Williams and their son Charlie, we had a convivial and fun-filled booth attracting many visitors who all love our park. Of course, it didn't hurt to have a bowl of candy on one corner of the table and a newly mounted photo board on the other. During the afternoon, Lally Stowell from the Beautification Committee and Karen Grossman, FSPP President, attracted a number of families and individuals to the booth who then signed up for our newsletter, published three times a year, and for various other FSPP events, Work Days etc... Four T-shirts were purchased for a total of \$48.00. FSPP collected donations amounting to \$36.45 and we acquired one sustaining membership for \$50.00. A good day! At 2:30 p.m., my husband, Marshall McCloskey, FSPP Recording Secretary, pleasantly surprised me by returning from Philadelphia in time to take down the tent and pack it away in the shed until next time....

Thoreau Bicentennial Statewide Read

Robbins Library will host speaker Jennifer Ingram, from the Walden Pond State Reservation for an interactive program in the Arlington Town Garden.

Henry David Thoreau: Seeing the Big in the Small

Highlighting Thoreau's ability to find the remarkable in the everyday, and to observe specific details in nature then link them to larger concerns we all face.

Saturday, October 21, 2017

2:00 p.m.

Meet in the Robbins Library Community Room

We will use the Community Room and Town Garden

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

We have been very fortunate to have response to the solicitation for some of the roles for which we needed help in the FSPP leadership. Although I indicated in the Summer Newsletter that Joanie Walls would be our Recording Secretary, considering her credentials as a CPA, FSPP Treasurer, Marshall McCloskey and I agreed that Joanie would be better suited to be our Treasurer. In addition, Marshall, who has filled in as Recording Secretary since January, has consented to assume that role on a regular basis.


The FSPP Board and others polled regarding these changes have unanimously voted in favor of this action. Thanks to both Marshall and Joanie for their FSPP involvement.

In addition, we welcome Daniel Jalkut to be our Membership Secretary doing database entry and Anne Ellinger who will post information on our bulletin boards, and keep them in order. I also hope a Vice President who can stand in for me, as requested, at meetings with Town Committees and volunteer groups will step forward. I am encouraged by the influx of volunteers, enhancing the vitality of our organization and look forward to even more.

A vote at our October 1 FSPP meeting initiated the publication of three newsletters each year instead of 4, i.e. Winter/Spring 2018, Summer 2018, and Fall/Winter 2018. Sally Hempstead, Communications and Outreach Co-Chair, and the board agreed, especially since not much news is generated during the winter season. We hope you enjoy what we have to offer in our outreach to you and encourage anyone, anytime to write a short article(s) concerning the park, the pond, or your impressions of our activities.

The FSPP end of the year solicitation will be coming to you soon and, if possible, please consider supporting our mission of beautifying Spy Pond Park and advocating for good maintenance of equipment and the park environment. We hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on December 3; we look forward to an interesting speaker TBA, reviewing our accomplishments and formalizing our goals for 2018. We encourage you to attend and give some input to our plans, if you have some new ideas.

Sincerely,



Karen L. Grossman

President

Friends of Spy Pond Park

Thanks to Volunteers

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Together, you pulled or cut back invasive plants that attempt to crowd out native plants and bushes in our planting beds. You collected trash and recyclables, raked the playground, dug trenches and removed tall grasses from the front and back of the fences bordering the planting beds. You cleared weeds and grasses from between the beautiful cobblestones that line the main path. You removed fallen branches, cleaned the South Beach off Linwood Street and trimmed the hedges at Linwood Circle so that visitors always have a clear view of our spectacular pond. You cleared storm drains. You helped us complete a two-year project of removing a long stretch of undergrowth along the shoreline to the right of the boat ramp at Pond Lane that had blocked a beautiful view of the pond from the low stone wall and grassy area next to the parking lot.

Many of you contributed in your own ways by offering valuable advice and suggestions, by collecting trash as you walk through the park, by identifying and pulling poison ivy from the beds, by encouraging other individuals and organizations to participate, by becoming members, and by renewing your memberships to make it possible for us to purchase new tools and supplies. All of your contributions were greatly appreciated.

We would like to give special thanks to the groups who worked so diligently with us this season, several who have participated for many years. Students and alumni from Boston University's Global Day of Service and from Southern New Hampshire University did a great job trimming hedges, clearing South Beach off Linwood Street, cutting back grasses from the fences, clearing storm drains and tackling pervasive and invasive false indigo, bittersweet, Japanese honeysuckle and multi-flor rose. Charles DeVirgilio and members of his Zhen Ren Chuan martial arts classes took on the arduous task of removing thick bushes and tangled bittersweet from the back fence of the playground and the area stretching several feet behind it. Thirty students, teach-



PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN

ers and parents from Matignon High School participated as part of Matignon's Annual Day of Service. They diligently removed weeds and grass from between the cobblestones that line the main paths, dug trenches along the fences to prevent tall grasses from returning, and cut back ever-present invasive plants from the planting beds. A very polite, respectful, hard-working group of teenagers! Great to see youth concerned and involved in working to preserve the environment.

Lori Tsuruda and members of People Making a Difference® return once again to take on end of the season trimming and pruning of our overgrown hedges at Linwood Circle. This job requires long loppers, expertise, wading in the water on the far side of the hedges and a lot of careful teamwork - all of which Lori Tsuruda and her team have in abundance! We benefit greatly and need all this additional help and the students' assistance to keep the park in good condition.

We hope you continue to visit Spy Pond Park over the winter months and return to help us welcome and nurture spring plants and flowers during our monthly Work Days next year beginning in April and ending in October.

Final Spy Pond Park Work Day in 2017

By Lally Stowell, Beautification Committee

Please join us for the last workday of the year to help keep Spy Pond Park looking beautiful:

October 21 10 am-1 pm (rain date October 22 1-4 pm)

Liability waivers are required for all participants in the above Work and Fun Day activity. If you are working, please download the form from the FSPP website www.friendsofspypondpark.org, fill it out and bring it with you. Children below 18 years of age must have a parental signature to participate in Spy Pond Park activities sponsored by the Friends of Spy Pond Park.

PHOTO BY RAM SUBRAMANIAN



Workers on September 23 spent a lot of time grooming the path, sweeping up sand displaced by rainstorms and distributing it back on the eroded path through the park

Spy Pond Shoreline CPA Project

By Lela Shepherd, Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent

PHOTO BY LEILA SHEPHERD



Trees surveyed for the Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project are designated by flags, which should remain attached through the winter

The Spy Pond Shoreline Stabilization Project is being managed by the Conservation Commission and funded by Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, administered by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The primary goals of the project are to preserve shoreline habitat and improve water quality while addressing erosion. To ensure success of the project, the Conservation Commission is relying on community partnerships to educate the public and help control access to unauthorized paths that lead to bank erosion.

Phase 2 of the project is currently underway at the following four portions of the public shoreline:

- Spy Pond Park
- Arlington Boys and Girls Club
- Scannell Field
- Spring Valley Street

This phase of the project involves botanical surveying, wetland delineations, soil sampling, and updating of the existing conditions plan. In the coming months this will result in shoreline stabilization improvements, new plantings, and educational signage. Resource delineation flags will be in place throughout the permitting process. Cooperation in ensuring these flags remain in place throughout the winter, and potentially into next year, is much appreciated.

The following is a timeline and summary of recent shoreline rehabilitation efforts leading up to this project:

- 1992 - The Town renovated Spy Pond Park, but the grass, paths, and shoreline deteriorated rapidly.
- 1999 - Pat Loheed Landscape Architects completed an erosion study.
- 2003 - The Town completed a preliminary plan for a Spy Pond Park renovation project.
- 2005/2006 - The Town undertook a project to restore approximately 1,700 linear feet of shoreline at Spy Pond Park. The existing bank had been severely eroded by stormwater runoff, resulting in compromised water quality, including high phosphorous levels in the pond. The project included surveying the wetland resource areas and sources of stormwater runoff, applying stormwater management techniques, restoring and enhancing bank and shorefront plantings, and addressing the public's desire for access to the water. The park reopened in the Spring of 2006.
- 2013 - The Conservation Commission noticed that the shoreline edge was again deteriorating and that there was the potential for long-term failure adjacent to public open space.
- 2014 - The Commission invited the Friends of Spy Pond Park and other advocacy groups to discuss ways of enhancing, protecting, and further stabilizing the shoreline.
- 2017 - Based on the discussions with the advocacy groups, the Commission applied for and received 2017 Community Preservation Act funding for a Spy Pond Edge Protection and Erosion Control Feasibility Study (i.e., Phase 1 of this project). The study includes an assessment of the existing shoreline condition, alternative preservation and protection strategies that address shoreline stabilization and erosion control, and a final concept plan for the four Town-owned parcels.

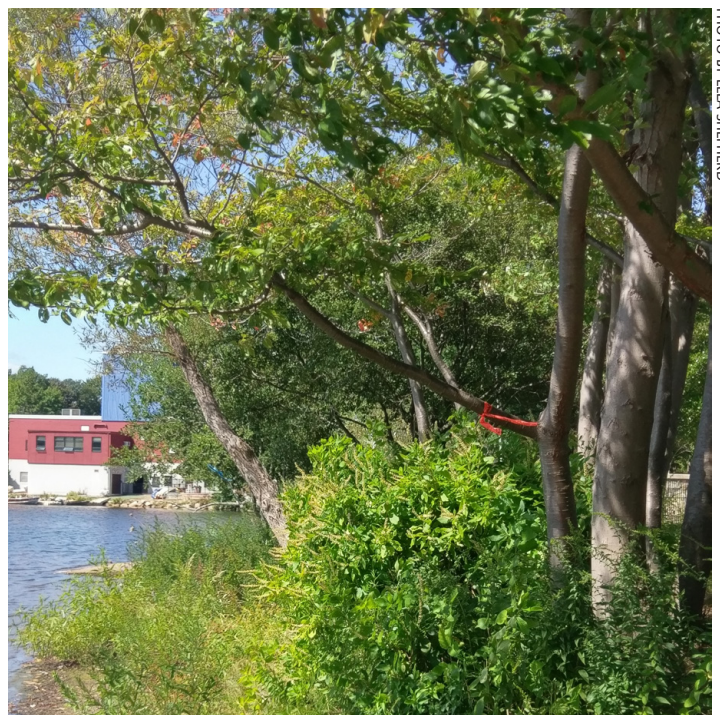


PHOTO BY LEILA SHEPHERD

Friends of Spy Pond Park next meetings

Annual Meeting
at the Jefferson Cutter House
Sunday, Dec. 3, 2017

5 pm potluck dinner, 6 pm meeting

with speaker TBD; details to be emailed and announced
on the FSPP website.

& at Karen Grossman's
Sunday, Feb. 4, 2018, 7:00pm
32 Hamilton Road #402

Park on Linwood Street off Mass. Ave. or on
Lakehill off Lake St. at the far end of the complex.

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

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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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

PHOTO BY NAN VOGEL



At the Fun Day tot lot bench dedication a young visitor playing nearby responded to President Karen L. Grossman's request to name the animals outlined in the newly painted design by architect Tony Vogel (behind the bench)

PHOTO BY FRED MOSES



Hana Amp selected flower petals and leaves to decorate her nature crown at Tinkergarten's Fun Day activity