

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Summer 2015

Service with a Smile

By Lindsey Kotowicz

PHOTO BY KAREN L. GROSSMAN



BU alumni and students worked hard to clear away refuse and natural debris on the FSPP first Work Day as part of BU's Global Days of Service

After serving as the Director of the Boston University Community Service Center for nearly 9 years, it wasn't a question of whether I'd participate in Global Day of Service, but rather a question of which of the wonderful sites to choose. The Boston University Community Service Center partners with Development and Alumni Relations to send students, faculty, staff, parents and alumni all over the globe to volunteer. BU has always prided itself on being 'in service to the city' and this past spring was not an exception, as volunteers gave more than 6,944 total hours. I myself love not only the idea of giving back to the community in which you live but the idea that service creates community globally. Being a North Shore resident myself, I wanted a site close to home and one in which I'd get to interact with current students so I could hear all about the goings on at BU. The Friends of Spy Pond Park (FSPP) was a perfect fit and Betty Athanasoulas was a wonderful site contact.

So, on a brisk yet sunny Saturday afternoon, I made my way to Spy Pond Park where I met up with a group of about 20 undergraduate students, parents and alumni. The three hours flew by as we raked, trimmed and cleaned the banks of Spy Pond. Our group joined forces with many other volunteers that day and by the end of the afternoon the pond seemed to look even more beautiful than when we had started. The real beauty though was in the constant chit-chat that permeated the banks with stories of BU experiences shared across the generations. I was reminded again of how service brings people together. After being thanked and applauded by the fantastic FSPP staff, we all headed home feeling accomplished, satisfied and full of pride for a job well done. What an amazing way to spend a Saturday afternoon!

Spy Pond Fun Day

By Karen L. Grossman, Friends of Spy Pond Park,
<http://friendsofspypondpark.org>
and Brad Barber, Spy Pond Committee of Vision 2020,
<http://arlingtonma.gov/spypond> *

Spy Pond Fun Day May 30 was a resounding success! Planning started last year with joint meetings between the Spy Pond Committee of Vision 2020 and the Friends of Spy Pond Park, followed by monthly meetings at Brad's house. Pinal Maniar's beautiful flyers appeared in shops and bulletin boards throughout Arlington. The Arlington Advocate published Elaine Crowder's press release with front page leads for two weeks before the event and sent a reporter and a photographer for an article that appeared Thursday afterwards. Volunteers stepped forward from a half dozen organizations as well as GiveBackTime.org and VolunteerMatch.org.

On Saturday at 11:45 am Sally Hempstead began signing in volunteers. Many helped set up tables, pitch canopies, and carry boats including: Colin Blair, Kevin Duffy, Marshall McCloskey, Afnan Mohammed, Ginna Reeder, Peter Rontea, and Cameron Sacarny. Some were eventually enlisted to direct traffic as legal parking spots diminished and cars kept coming. Everyone helped clean up afterwards.

At 1:00 pm, the music started. We offer many thanks to the music organizers, Mark Sandman and Joe Burns (Jump'n Java at Kickstand Café). Stroker Rogovin's Creek River String Band had an energetic mix of bluegrass, country, folk, blues and rock. Laura and Brian Tracey's Lokensgard Brass Quintet played pop, patriotic and classical music to add to the excitement on the

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PHOTO BY FRED MOSES

"Stroker" Rogovin's Creek River String Band entertained us with their energetic mix of bluegrass, country, folk, blues and rock

Spy Pond Fun Day

(Continued from page 1)

sunny Saturday afternoon. Creek River closed the event with a marching parade of the rowing team. A martial arts demonstration by Charles DeVirgilio and his Zhen Ren Chuan students entertained visitors between sets.

The Mystic River Watershed Association's outreach distributed literature while Bill Eykamp performed water quality testing demonstrations with the help of many children who helped him count the drops of chemicals involved. Charlotte Milan and Karen Einstein showed an interesting depiction of Spy Pond's watershed and the effects of storm water. They presented Peter Howard's recycling quiz and disseminated information for Arlington Public Works.

The Arlington Land Trust's Ted Siegan and Peter Belknap gave tours of Elizabeth Island while Ann and Richard LeRoyer managed the long line at the boat ramp. Ari Zamelis and Caroline Draper, coaches for the novice crew teams, ferried a record number of 170 passengers back and forth! ALT was so busy they didn't get any photos of their activity. If you did, please forward your pictures to: tedsiegan@gmail.com so they can post some on their website.

We filled Spy Pond with boats, much to the delight of their occupants! Arlington's Recreation Department provided canoes and kayaks with the help of Marianne Comeau, Joey Glushko, Elaine Crowder, and Pete Howard. Arlington/Belmont Crew taught a lucky few to row a sixty foot shell with coaching by Mark Grinberg and Laura Rothman. The Spy Pond Committee of Vision 2020 sponsored canoes and kayaks provided by Still River Outfitters with direction from David Cudmore, Jane Howard, and Steve Ricci. Young and old tried the rowing machines (aka ergs).



PHOTO BY FRED MOSES

FSPP member Agnes O'Donnell helped children make leaf prints

As in past annual Family Fun Days, the Friends of Spy Pond Park engaged youngsters in various crafts and nature activities organized by Betsy Leondar-Wright. Lally Stowell, Susan Savage-Tennant and Dick Norcross engaged toddlers in crafts and a leaf hunt. Judi Berman and Agnes O'Donnell helped children make pretty leaf prints on paper provided by Playtime. Anne Ellinger and Amber Espar supervised and awarded prizes to those who completed challenging scavenger hunts and paper puzzles. For a short time, Christopher Ellinger sat with them playing his [Hang Drum](#) and invited people to play with him. At North Beach, Rafé Ezekiel, Kathy Modigliani, Pinal and Puneet Maniar, and Emily Hancock distributed natural materials for building creative bark boats. Some of these handmade vehicles floated on the pond, but many constructions were seen proudly marching through the park with their owners. Chris Cassaloro from Mass Audubon Habitat in Belmont talked about the fascinating insects he displayed in specimen boxes.

At the Art Spot, Suman Appadwedula and William Staub helped children paint acrylic impressions of the pond at six easels from the Arlington Center for the Arts. A long line of patient observers waited for Loren Wherry and Samantha McKean's wonderful face painting, even an hour after Fun Day was over! And, it was the last chance on a sunny day to view the creative art installation: "Elements: Art Rocks Spy Pond" with Arlington Public Art's Lorri Berenberg, thanks to the financial support of the Arlington and MA Cultural Councils. We give final thanks to Fred Moses for his photographic eye documenting it all.

Spy Pond Fun Day, 2015 was a great gift to approximately 350 people from our community, thanks to all our volunteers.

** Editor's note: The Spy Pond Committee is a group separate from, and not affiliated with, the Friends of Spy Pond Park. They are one of the task groups organized under the auspices of the Town of Arlington's Vision 2020 Committee, which reports to Town Meeting on issues of concern to its various task groups. Among the things the Spy Pond Committee does are: monitors Spy Pond water quality, restores and improves the pond's south edge (much as FSPP does for Spy Pond Park), conducts educational activities about the pond, and works with State government on larger issues related to the pond. It typically meets the first Tuesday September-May and welcomes any interested party to attend at 7:30 pm at the Town Hall Annex's first floor conference room.*



PHOTO BY FRED MOSES

There was much activity at the boat ramp where the Arlington Land Trust and the Arlington/Belmont Crew members helped people travel to and from Elizabeth Island

Environmental Action

Get out on the Mystic River in a canoe or kayak and keep invasive water chestnuts from clogging up the river! Sign up for the first community water chestnut pulling event on June 27th! Boats can be provided for you if you don't have one: <http://mysticriver.org/water-chestnut-sign-up-form>. Save the dates for future water chestnut removal community events: July 18 and August 8. Have fun on the river and benefit the environment, too! Read about the Coalition to Save the Wetlands at the Mugar site in Arlington near Spy Pond Park:

<https://www.facebook.com/saveourwetlands>. Help control flooding in East Arlington and continue maximum water filtration in the Mystic River Watershed by supporting and keeping informed of our community's actions.

2015 FSPP Work Days

July 18 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (rain date July 19 1-4 p.m.)

August 22, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (rain date August 23 1-4 p.m.)

September 26 1-4 p.m. (rain date September 27 1-4 p.m.)

October 17 1-4 p.m. (rain date October 18 1-4 p.m.)

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

President's Letter

Hi Friends,

Now that spring has come to a close, I can look back and say we had a great spring season in the park. There were productive Work Days, as you can see reflected in this newsletter. We enjoyed the art installations and even negotiated unsuccessfully to try to keep some up on a longer, temporary basis. Since it was the first attempt to do this under the guidelines for public art in Arlington, my uncertainty about the process led to a learning curve that, hopefully, will yield success in future such attempts. Finally, Spy Pond Fun Day was a fantastic way to end this season of renewal in the park!

Deepak Bidwai, who has joined our Website Committee, has redesigned the Friends of Spy Pond Park website so you can easily access it using smaller portable devices such as cell phones and notepads. Check it out: <http://www.friendsofspypond-park.org>. Thanks to Deepak for volunteering his time to perform this great service for us.

Some of you have become members for the 2015-2016 year, responding to our solicitation in May. In answer to questions and confusion about your dues payment: we've always conducted this effort when our work seasons in the park begin. Springtime is when people visit the park and are more likely to donate to our cause. This request was originally held in April, but somehow with the busy tax-filing season then, I don't seem to find the time to organize the mailing until early May.

Thanks to those of you to whom Marshall has sent acknowledgement letters for your responses already. Please keep those letters on file for tax purposes and keep in mind that our solicitations are twice a year. The last two years we also have conducted an end of the year solicitation to supplement the earlier in the year contributions. Some of you are inclined to make your initial donation or give additional money then. You have no obligation to send in money both times. We do appreciate what you can give, in any case.

You may also support us by volunteering. Please note the announcement for the openings that provide additional ways you can serve our organization. We hope you enjoy this issue of our quarterly newsletter and I look forward to seeing you in the park soon.

Warm regards,



Karen L. Grossman, President
Friends of Spy Pond Park

MyRWA Herring Run and Paddle 2015

(a plug for, and a, hopefully, somewhat humorous account of your author's experience)

By Marshall McCloskey

Many of you are probably familiar with, and may also be members of, the Mystic River Watershed Association, an organization concerned with preserving and enhancing the environmental quality of the entire Mystic River Watershed. (cf. www.mysticriver.org) Our President, Karen Grossman, is on their board, not that she's not busy enough with FSPP and many other activities! They put on their 19th consecutive Herring Run and Paddle this past May 17. A rather unique combination of athletic pursuits: a 5K run, and 3, 9, and 12 mile "paddles" up the Mystic River toward the Mystic Lakes from the Blessing of the Bay boathouse in Somerville (named after the first ship built on the Mystic River) in any contrivance of your choice, canoe, kayak, paddle board, etc. It always seemed intriguing to me, an occasional 5K race participant, but lacking anything to paddle, and any real experience in paddling, I had dismissed thoughts of entering it before.

When, lo, I discovered that my very good friend and fellow partner in FSPP activities, Sally, had in fact been a canoe instructor in a past life... Perhaps not completely of sound mind, she agreed, under mild duress, to enter the 3 mile paddle race with me. She had almost a month to teach me the rudiments of paddling a canoe. No problem, I thought. Problem, perhaps she thought.

We were shortly off to the South Bridge Boat House in Concord to rent a canoe, where she could take the measure of me on the Concord River. "How long will you be gone?" asked the attendant. I thought perhaps an hour would be plenty of time. Sally answered two. Huh? I knew enough not to say a thing. As it turned out, we had a very pleasant sojourn on the river, very picturesque, out for a little over 2 hours. Sally taught me a few turning tricks, and the all-important technique of feathering your oar, so as to not let the wind catch it and slow you down. Later, figured out that we had paddled close to a total of 7 miles. Well, 3 miles should be a piece of cake, I expressed! Sally was still not completely comfortable with the whole idea... What exactly were my expectations??

Another session on the river a week later, and we were ready, or at least as ready as we were going to be.

Race day dawned beautifully, not raining, not too windy!! I made it OK through the 5K run, and everything went smoothly with getting our rented canoe, supplied on site by Charles River Canoe and Kayak. We got on the water, and the 3-mile pad-

dling race, 32 entrants, took off precisely on time at 11:30 am. Up the Mystic River, our destination was essentially Medford Square.

Was it the thrill of competition? Was it a fear of stopping? This was definitely not the leisurely sojourn on the Concord River. Where was that darn turn-around point? Finally got there, and still only halfway through! Oh my. Sally wasn't saying much (probably a good thing). She was just paddling away, like a trooper. Why was this a lot harder than I thought it would be? And it didn't get any easier on the return trip.

But we made it, finishing 6th out of 8 in the tandem canoe category. Thanks to Sally's giving me timely help with strokes on my side of the craft as requested and definitely required!

We had responses from three of our FSPP members who also participated in the event this year.

Matthew Dorson and his son Alexander both ran in the 5K running race for the fourth time this year. Alexander took top honors in the 10 and under boys age category. Matthew Dorson's company, Mystic River Engineering, has sponsored the race for the last four years. See his company's website at mysticriverengineering.com

Anne and Fred Paulsen paddled a canoe in the 3-mile race. For them, it's been a yearly tradition since the first race!

Karen Grossman says, "Being at the MyRWA outreach table was an enjoyable experience. When participants and their friends come to the HR & P, they often don't know about MyRWA's advocacy for and activities to enhance the water quality of the Mystic River. So, this event and others are always great times to talk to people about the efforts of this fine organization. You can go to <http://www.mysticriver.org> to read more and view photos from this exciting event on the river. Find out about helping in any of the fun water chestnut pulling events over the summer, becoming a member and, perhaps, participating next year in the 20th Annual Mystic River Herring Run and Paddle!"



PHOTO BY ARTURO GOSNAGE

Marshall McCloskey and Sally Hempstead finish the 3 mile paddle race

Spy Pond Work Day: May 23, 2015

By Beverly Williams

Volunteers set up canopy, move tools and gloves from shed to lawn.

Two men, older, cut branches, saplings in planting beds.

A **new neighbor** attacks false indigo in beds and along the shore.

Crew team, used to cooperating, move along fences to dig long trenches.

Young adults pick up branches, trash.

Food Links driver leaves yummy sweets for tired bodies.

4:00 p.m. Time to quit! Willing arms carry bags of invasive plants, cuttings, tools, canopy back to the shed.

Monday, May 25 Town workers collect bags and weekend trash.

A **pristine Spy Pond Park**, full of walkers, picnickers, viewers of art.

Saturday, June 20 - 1:00 p.m. Time to start over!

Feast of the East 2015

By Sally Hempstead

The Feast of the East dawned bright and fair on June 13 with only a small setback due to automobiles still parked on the street in the tent locations. Town folk began to appear around 10:30 AM with popcorn in one hand and balloon animals in the other, ready to have fun and learn more about their neighborhood on the south and east side of Arlington. Friends of Spy Pond Park had a booth near the corner of Egerton and Mass Ave. sharing the block with "Walking in Arlington", Arlington Tourism (ATED), Arlington Public Art (APA), Sustainable Arlington and Arlington Eats. As the day progressed, our booth was visited by scores of young families who eagerly signed our e-mail list. All were enthused about our park and its variety of activities including the playground, groomed paths for carriages, picnic tables, kayak and canoe rentals, and a pond with swans, ducks and, yes, the inevitable geese.

Afternoon brought lots of sun and a cool breeze as well as a super rock band, The Hardy Boys, all fathers from The Hardy School on Lake Street which enlivened our day and accompanied the crowd as they munched their way through a variety of street food, including pastry, pizza, ice cream, Nepalese, Indian and Per-

sian fare. As always, our friendly and welcoming volunteers from FSPP: Sally Hempstead, Marshall McCloskey, Ruth Slotnick and Petre Rontea on hand to share their love of Spy Pond Park with all visitors. They answered questions pertaining to the pond's future role in Arlington, especially as a possible swimming venue. As usual, the Feast of the East demonstrated Arlington's warmth and charm of a small town feel in a big town setting.

Romance on the Linwood Circle Park Bench

By Karen L. Grossman



PHOTO BY KAREN L. GROSSMAN

The original park bench donated in memory of FSPP member Enid Caldwell has been replaced by a new, more durable bench at the Linwood Circle overlook where she loved to sit

Enid Caldwell's loving spirit must have shone that day on the wooden park bench at Linwood Circle when a young man asked his sweetheart to marry him over a year ago, I think. Prior to their wedding, a family member offered to purchase the bench to give it to the couple as a wedding present. Since the FSPP had donated the original bench in memory of a dear FSPP member Enid Caldwell years ago, Park and Recreation Director Joe Connelly asked our permission. The family would purchase an upgrade replacement to which we could have the dedication plaque transferred, so we agreed. If you go to Linwood Circle and sit on the bench at the pond overlook, think of the happy couple that will forever enjoy the romance of their wedding proposal on their beautifully refurbished bench. We fondly recall Enid Caldwell's friendship memorialized there on the new bench in Spy Pond Park.

Spy Pond Canoe and Kayak Rentals Available June 13 – August 23, 2015

By Beverly Williams, Beautification Committee

The Arlington Recreation Department is once again pleased to announce canoe and kayak rentals at Spy Pond for the spring/summer 2015 season.

PHOTO BY KAREN L. GROSSMAN



Hourly rentals are planned for Saturday and Sundays from 12:00 noon to 6:00 pm at the Spy Pond public boat ramp at Spy Pond Park, Pond Lane. The season will be from mid June to late August. Hourly boat rental rates will be \$10 for a single kayak, \$15 for a tandem double kayak, and \$15 for a canoe. All participants must wear life jackets.

First come, first serve. Prepay and/or reservations not available.

Ages 18 & Up: Adults ages 18 and up may sign our rental Release From Liability and Indemnity Agreement form and paddle on their own.

Ages 13 to 17: Small groups of up to four (4) children ages 13 and 17 may paddle unaccompanied when each child's parent or guardian signs our Release From Liability and Indemnity Agreement form. The waiver or permission form must be presented in person by a parent or guardian. Children 13-17 years old in groups of more than four (4) must be accompanied on the water by an adult. Each adult is responsible for up to six (6) children of this age.

Ages 12 and under: All children ages 12 and under must be accompanied on the water by an adult (age 18 and older) but may paddle their own boat. Each adult can be responsible for up to two (2) children of this age.

For further information please call Arlington Recreation at 781-316-3880 or visit arlingtonrec.com.

FSPPP Open Positions

Social Media Coordinator

The Friends of Spy Pond Park needs someone to post our events and activities on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, and YouTube.

Fundraiser

The Fundraising position involves soliciting financial assistance from businesses or individuals for special projects in Spy Pond Park via Kickstarter campaigns or direct solicitation.

If you have the interest, time and ability to assume either of the above positions, please contact us at fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org. You'd be doing the park a big favor by helping to spread the word to potential volunteers and park visitors about all our endeavors and help support our organization's mission. We look forward to your contributing to our community.



PHOTO BY FRED MOSES

One of "Spy Pond Characters" depicted in Adria Arch's exhibit of wood and acrylic paint was Jerome Moisand who teaches a fishing class from Spy Pond Park each year

"Elements: Art Rocks Spy Pond"

By Karen L. Grossman

PHOTO BY FRED MOSES



"Petrified Fish", limestone, by Tim DeChristopher, stood on a concrete slab soon to be re-occupied by a park bench

This exhibit, created by Arlington Public Art, and sponsored by Arlington Recreation, opened May 9 with about 50 people attending that beautiful sunny afternoon reception and guided tour. The temporary exhibit featured sculptures by 12 local artists who used the site to inspire their work. You can get a glimpse of the works in a slideshow at: <http://www.yourarlington.com/component/categoryblock/spy-111514.html?cbprofile=1>.

PHOTO BY FRED MOSES



"Spy Glass," painted wood by Michael Dewberry, stood at Linwood Beach before a view of the Spy Pond Mural across the water.



PHOTO BY PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE® (WWW.PMD.ORG)

President Karen L. Grossman was happy to receive an award for FSPP's long-term partnership with People Making a Difference®

Friends of Spy Pond Park next meeting at Karen Grossman's Sunday, August 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. 32 Hamilton Road #402

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

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

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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Fundraising Chair: Open

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 FRED MOSES



"Grass extension" by Freedom Baird changed shape with each person who manipulated the strands

PHOTO BY FRED MOSES



Doris Powell (DP), a faithful fan of Spy Pond Park for many years, was depicted in Adria Arch's "Spy Pond Characters"