

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2022

Appreciating Arlington's Spy Pond Park Volunteers for Fun Day

By Betsy Leondar-Wright, Spy Pond Park Activities Chair and
Fun Day Coordinator

PHOTO BY JENNY BABON



Lally, Sophia, Monét, and other volunteers did a great job setting up, providing information about FSPP, promoting Fun Day that would take place the following week, accepting memberships, selling T-shirts and breaking down at Town Day this year

Saturday September 24 was a windy, chilly morning, but that didn't stop more than 35 volunteers from leading a dozen nature-themed activities for more than 300 children and adults in Spy Pond Park at the 20th Annual Fun Day.

The Friends of Spy Pond Park would like to express gratitude for valuable contributions to Fun Day:

- Emma Dawson, Lauren Casas and Lizzy Hinck helped kids make fanciful bark boats, some of which actually floated
- Darryl and Sue Bullock and Jennie Mansfield from KidsLAHF had kids trekking around the park using compasses to find a geocache and decorating wooden necklaces
- Leah Cirker-Stark, AKA the Faery Queen, was deluged with gazillions of kids wanting to paint and decorate fairy houses
- Peggy Fenner, the artist who made the beautiful fairy-house art on the bike path, introduced kids to how to leave messages for the fairies

- Lauren Backmanlocke and Becca Wickham of Tinkergarten helped kids to decorate rocks and use natural materials to make bracelets
- Lally Stowell showed kids how to make leaf print cards
- Brucie Moulton brought a button-making machine and taught kids about why to "leave the leaves" using cute creature buttons
- Lynn Horgan brought face-paints and sample designs, and as usual there were lines waiting to have faces painted by her, Anne Ellinger, Nancy Gray and Monét Rosenberg, until the whole park was filled with cute animal, flower and rainbow faces
- Sophia Shi was a cheerfully willing floater who divided her time between face-painting, photography and puzzles
- Jenny Babon helped toddlers color, play and hunt for leaves
- Sarah Hager and Jan Lonzaric invented a clever, multi-stage scavenger hunt to learn about local birds, and, along with Betsy Leondar-Wright, educated kids about the pond ecosystem with puzzles and leaf hunts and delighted them with prizes
- Ann LeRoy informed festival-goers about the Arlington Land Trust, and Karen Grossman and Lauren Bonilla about the Friends of Spy Pond Park; Two fantastic bands, Lokensgard's and the Brass Quintet played energizing brass music
- Hardy troupers Sophia Shi, Emma Dawson, Sarah Hager, Jan Lonzaric, Lauren Casas, Gail Leondar-Wright and Monét Rosenberg did heavy lifting to get tables and chairs in and out of the park, with transport in Robin Shaw's and Nelson Tetrault's big van, Lauren Bonilla's station wagon and Adrienne Landry's hand truck
- Photographers Fred Moses, Mithilesh Sharma and Justin Aquino helped by Charlie Uccello, Arlington Catholic High School students, took photos of the event
- Lauren Bonilla checked volunteers in and out and helped President Karen L. Grossman at the Friends of Spy Pond Park information booth, and
- Jenny Babon, designer of the gorgeous poster, Karen Grossman, and the indefatigable Lally Stowell, took 40 posters to libraries, schools and stores up and down Mass Ave for at least the 10th year in a row to publicize the event.

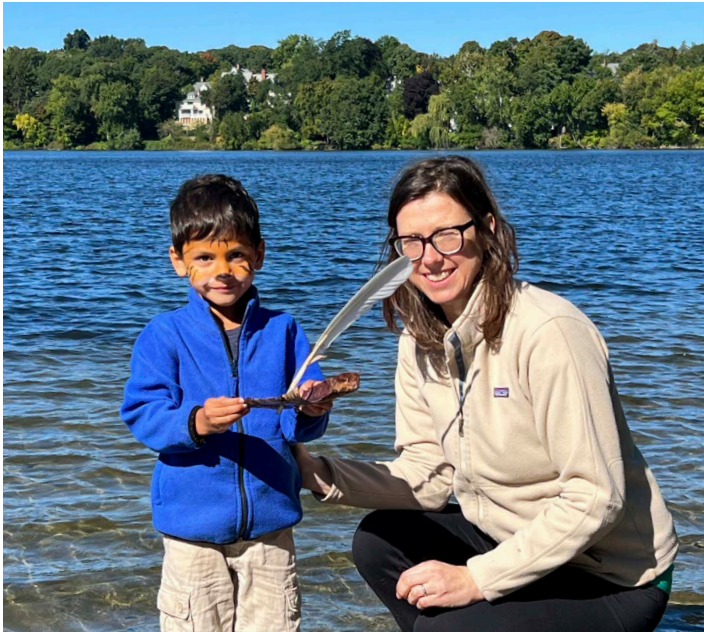
The Fun Day tradition is a celebration of community spirit, a rare gathering of so many non-commercial, low-tech, all-volunteer, collaboratively created, nature-themed, hands-on, delightful activities.

PHOTO BY FRED MOSES



The rainbow on this child's forehead matches Lynn Horgan's colorful vest!

PHOTO BY MITHILESH SHARMA



Smiling with a tiger grin, Dev is waiting to put his bark boat into Spy Pond with his mother, Cheryl, kneeling at his side

PHOTO BY MITHILESH SHARMA



Fairy Leah showed Bijay (behind), Onir and Opal how to communicate with fairies, a very popular activity as Lauren Bonilla documented the photo in the background

Thank you, Volunteers!

By Lally Stowell, Beautification Committee Volunteer Coordinator

A huge thank you to all 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, your enthusiasm and commitment to the community. Some of you participated on your own, some with family and friends, and some with a group from your school or community. Some of you have come more several times each season. Some of you came for the first time and will, we hope, return next season.

Together, you removed invasive plants, helped plant native bushes and plants, collected trash and recyclables, cleared storm drains, raked the playground, 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 Linwood Beach, and trimmed the hedges at Linwood Circle so that visitors always have a clear view of our spectacular pond.

Many of you contributed in your own ways by offering good advice and suggestions, collecting trash as you walk through the park, encouraging other individuals and organizations to participate, becoming members, and renewing your memberships which make it possible for us to purchase new tools and supplies. We greatly appreciate all your contributions.

We would like to give special thanks to the groups who worked so diligently with us this season, several of whom have participated for many years. BU alumni from BU's Global Days of Service tackled the challenging job of clearing Linwood Beach. People Making a Difference® did a great job trimming the hedges at Linwood Circle as they have done so well for several years. Zhen Ren Chuan's martial arts group energetically trimmed overgrown bushes. In October, future scouts - first grade girls from Arlington's Daisy troop and first grade boys from the Tigers den - took on the important job of weeding between our beautiful cobblestones.

Again, many thanks to all of you who participated in our Work Days. We hope you will continue to visit Spy Pond Park over the winter months and return to help us nurture spring plants and flowers during our monthly Work Days next year April through October.



PHOTO BY JONATHAN SPILLER

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

Fall is ramping up with bright, varied tree color as I write this letter to you. Meanwhile, many wonderful activities have been going on in Spy Pond Park. Fun Day was a complete success the last Saturday in September. Thanks especially to Betsy Leondar-Wright for planning this wonderful combination of activities! I know she put in some hard work, effort, and time to plan, to supervise and to participate in this year's event. We were all happy to have so many dedicated volunteers conduct and guide participants through the activities and to have so many enjoy the park and what it has to offer.

Also, with some time lost to equipment supply chain delays, the playground renovation, finally, is continuing. Perhaps the work won't be able to be completed until spring unless there is a week with temperatures above 50°, a requirement for pouring the playground ground cover. We are all excited to be able to enjoy the new equipment, whenever everything is complete. I will notify you if we have an opening dedication to celebrate.

Our Work Day season drew to a close this weekend with much progress, as outlined by the Beautification Committee reports contained within this issue. Thanks to Adrienne Landry and Lally Stowell along with the teams of volunteers who made this year so successful. On our website, Julie McBride has posted photos from 2021. Check them out; it's fun to review last year's endeavors and you may even see yourself or people you know there! Thanks, Julie.

Also, we want to thank Haven Construction and Arlington Parks and Recreation for arranging for and erecting the new fencing that will remind people to respect the planting beds and allow the shoreline plants to thrive, especially the new ones. In addition, this will protect the banks from shoreline erosion that additional paths create. The Edge Protection and Erosion Control Project must have a long-term impact creating a healthy shoreline.

Watch your street mail or email for our end-of-year solicitation. We appreciate all that you can give in terms of financial or physical support volunteering in the park. Thanks so much for your interest in our organization and we hope to see you at our January Annual Meeting on January 29, location TBD.

Sincerely,



Karen L. Grossman
President
Friends of Spy Pond Park

Work in Spy Pond Park

By Adrienne Landry, Beautification Committee Planting Bed Restoration Leader

The warm-weather season of 2022 has been tough for plants and volunteers, but we did get work done!

Although the heat waves, drought, over-growth of invasive plants and poison ivy in several beds made work more difficult, we had many bright spots. Work Day individual volunteers came in spite of the heat, some as far away as Wakefield! In addition to the groups Lally Stowell has mentioned, neighbors came along to help on non-Work Days to get the soil ready for planting on scheduled Work Days. Brian H. and the family of Becca M., Josh and James G. heeded the call for help—on some of the hottest days of the summer.

We continue to work on removal of invasive plants, and much to our surprise found underneath some of them milkweed, aster, ferns, and a chokeberry shrub!

The volunteers planted more winterberry redsprite, button-bush, iris incatata and foam flowers. They also transplanted yarrow to a better area for accommodating their growth. As always, Seth A, Linda C, Julie M. and Bill S. added leadership roles in the planting beds during Work Days.

Learning which plants are best for shoreline stabilization, and which plants are best for other areas in the beds is an on-going and wonderful learning experience. With the aid of several native plant lists such as the Arlington Conservation Commission's Recommended Native Plant Materials List, New England Wetlands Plants catalogue, and the National Plant Trust, it becomes somewhat of a treasure hunt and the outcome is most rewarding.

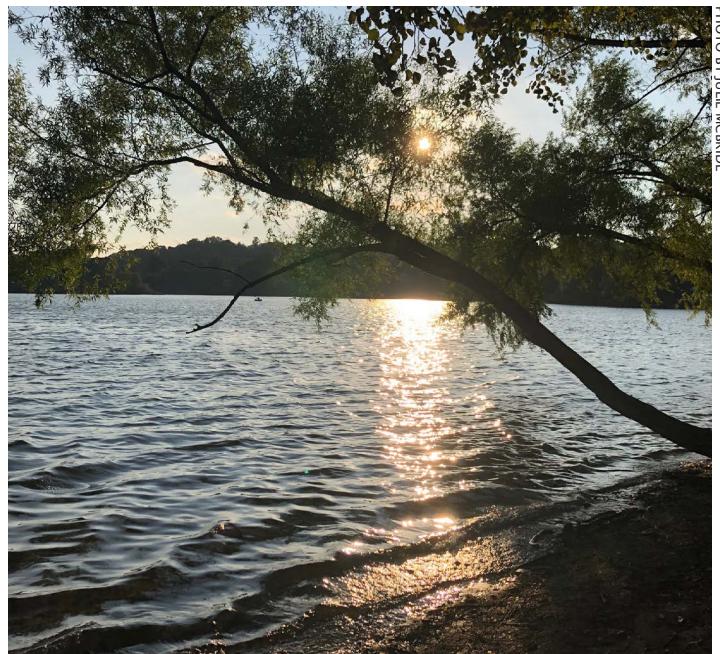


PHOTO BY JULIE MCBRIDE

Late August sun peeks through the willow branches stretching out over Spy Pond

Friends of Spy Pond Park next meetings

on

**Sunday, Nov. 13, 2022
7:00 p.m., Zoom link TBA**

&

**Annual Meeting
Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023
Location & Time TBA**

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.

President: Karen L. Grossman (781) 646-5990

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Betsy Leondar-Wright

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Photographer's Assistant: Open

Post-processing: Mark Sandman

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

Friends of Spy Pond Park

• <https://www.friendsofspypondpark.org>

• P.O. Box 1051

• Arlington, MA 02474-0021

PHOTO BY LISA REYNOLDS



PHOTO BY ADRIENNE LANDRY



Building the new climbing structure in SPP playground

PHOTO BY JUSTIN AQUINO



Playing at the toddler table was fun for all on the windy Fun Day