



# FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 3

May 2006

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### CCC DAY JUNE 10, 2006

Page 5 of this newsletter is a flyer about CCC Day and the activities being planned. The day will be a family friendly event that will highlight both the historical and recreational resources of Upton State Forest. We hope that you will attend and invite your family, friends and neighbors. Please feel free to make copies of the flyer to pass out and post at your workplace.

Bring a picnic lunch and relax to music provided by Lou and Marion Despres. There will be a concession with bake sale goodies, snacks, water and soda. Children can enjoy Smokey Bear, a scavenger hunt and sit on a pony for a picture. There will be displays inside the building, a mountain man camp and antique vehicles outside. At the Friend's booth there will be several raffles to support our work. If you would like to donate a new item for the raffle let Ellen know.

Join Tom Dodd for a bird walk, Chris Scott for a beaver walk and Ranger Val Stegemoen for walks to historic CCC sites including Dean Pond.

We need volunteers to help with the set up, clean up and various activities as well as to bake goodies for the bake sale. If you can help on June 10 or any day of the previous week please contact Ellen at 508-529-6610 or [fusf@charter.net](mailto:fusf@charter.net). We are asking all of our members to bake something for the bake sale or to consider a donation to defray the expense of purchasing snacks,

### !!! CELEBRATE !!! UPTON STATE FOREST

soda and water. Baked goods can be dropped off in the morning after 8:00 AM.

#### **Civilian Conservation Corps at Upton**

During the late 1800's and early 20<sup>th</sup> century we were a growing country that needed lumber. Clear cut logging throughout the United States was causing land erosion and wildfires.

When FDR came to office in 1933 the country was in a wide spread economic depression. Five days after his inauguration he introduced a bill establishing the Civilian Conservation Corps. Young men were put to work doing emergency conservation work to restore the land. Known as "Roosevelt's Tree Army" they were paid \$30 a month and \$25 of that was sent to their families helping to spur the economy.

In May 1935, 23 enrollees arrived in Upton from Plymouth to clear a camp area for the 187 men that would follow in August from Ft. Devens. While here the CCC cleared and burned slash to prevent forest fires, planted over 230,000 trees and destroyed thousands of gypsy moth eggs. Among their other accomplishments they built Park Rd., Loop Rd. and the Dean Pond Dam.

The park that we know today was mostly created by these men and we will honor them on June 10. Please come and **Celebrate Upton State Forest.**

## Walking, Hiking and Beyond

By John Fahy



*(This article is one in a series about the use of forest trails by those who walk, hike and trail run. John will cover health in this issue followed by weather, safety, solo walk or hike, equipment, pests and ethics.)*

The 2660 acres of Upton State Forest offer a variety of options for pleasure walking, trail running, hiking and the serene contemplation that is becoming harder to locate in this area. Upton State Forest is local to all of Central Massachusetts and is easily accessed by anyone looking for a place that is appropriate, well maintained and safe. Upton is defined as a mixed use forest and depending on the season is used by equestrians, bikers, snowshoers, skiers, hunters and others.

Walking is one of the first skills a new human being learns. We develop this skill to the point where we do not think about it until we have to. There comes a time when this skill can be of benefit as part of a healthy lifestyle, improving the overall physical condition of the walker while expanding his awareness of the world we live in.

By definition a “walk” is usually of short duration over any convenient pedestrian surface such as sidewalks, streets, tracks and forest environments. A “hike” is a walk of longer duration planned to cover more difficult terrain.

Part of any health regimen is the requirement for a cardiovascular routine. In the health club this exercise is provided by the treadmill, the elliptical strider and the bicycle. Upton State Forest offers another beneficial option. The wide trails over several small hills allow for a walk or hike of as many miles as the user needs.

**If you are new to the moderate rigor of trail walking you should check with a doctor first.** The idea is to be aware of your abilities and limitations. Have a program in mind. For example, start walking one or two miles every other day increasing to five and even ten miles per day after several weeks.

Keep a log book of your trail walking exercise. The Upton State Forest trail map can be used to estimate your mileage.

Over time you will notice that your routine has evolved and that you are adding miles and different trails to your daily walks. Then one day you will head out to Mt. Wachusett to hike up to the two thousand foot bare and windy summit. On another day, with hiking buddies, you will do the White Dot Trail on Mt. Monadnock. You will look down upon Jaffrey, NH from three thousand, two hundred feet and realize that the walk you started on the pine covered trails and hills of Upton State Forest gave you the skills and strength needed to accomplish this hike. A simple walk in the woods might well be a preliminary step up Mt. Washington or down into the Grand Canyon.

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## Vernal Pools Workshop

Thank you to Tom and Cathy Dodd for an interesting and informative program. Ten people met at the Upton Police Station for a slide presentation about vernal pools and the certification process. We learned about the ephemeral nature of vernal pools and about fairy shrimp, spotted salamanders and green frogs. Tom explained the requirements that must be met before a pool can be certified.

The following Saturday morning a group of 13 met at the Trailhead Parking lot ready to visit a pool and begin the certification process. It was an enjoyable hike followed by an interesting morning of identifying salamander eggs, Caddis fly larvae and other life in the pond. One young lady donned a pair of waders and joined Tom in the center of the pool scooping up water to see what we could identify. We filled out the paperwork to begin the certification process.

It made all of us more aware of the fragile nature of these pools and the creatures that depend on them. We will all take more care when we walk in the forest.

As a bonus we accidentally discovered a geo cache and signed the logbook!

## Trail Etiquette

By John Fahy

### Leave No Trace

It is the responsibility of the individual user of the Forest to help protect the land. One important way to do that is to be aware of the impact upon the land that the users must inevitably have. Over time and unmanaged, the impact can be devastating to land, water, forest and experience. It is with this understanding that outdoor organizations have developed a program known as Leave No Trace (LNT).

Leave No Trace is now an educational program with a standard set of seven principles that is used by all the major hiking clubs, adventure travel organizations and the Boy Scouts of America. Most of these groups partner with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, a nonprofit organization with research and educational functions. The Appalachian Mountain Club describes LNT as "...guidelines for those who care about the land..."

The seven principles of LNT in brief are:

1. **Plan Ahead and Prepare.** Know the routes and local regulations. Check a weather report and dress accordingly.
2. **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces.** Use existing trails and campsites. Camp away from water. Do not trample on green or pristine areas.
3. **Dispose of Waster Properly.** Very important. Pack it in and take it out.
4. **Leave What You Find.** Take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints.
5. **Minimize Campfire Impacts.** Use a stove and know where fires are permitted.
6. **Respect Wildlife.** Keep your distance from animals. Do not feed wild animals.
7. **Be Considerate of Other Visitors.** Travel in small groups. Be quiet. Respect private property.

More detail on these seven principles can be found on the websites of most of the outdoor organizations listed above.



Karen Ober, Bill Johnston, Rufin VanBossuyt  
Doing data collection on March 5, 2006

### Data Collection Surveys

We have done data collection on three occasions totaling 8 hours all at the Trailhead Parking Lot. During the time we were there we spoke to 156 visitors who were very receptive when we explained who we are and why we were there. The information that we gathered will help us make decisions as to where to focus our energy and resources.

The interviews showed that people are coming from throughout Central Mass and Rhode Island to enjoy the Forest. We gathered 25 zip codes including one from California.

Members that conducted the surveys were Cathie Anderson, Ellen Arnold, Lou, Marion and Glen Despres, Bob Ethier, Bill Johnston, Karen Ober, Ed & Betty Roche and Rufin Van Bossuyt. If you want to get involved let Ellen know because we will be doing more surveys periodically.

### Great News

We have just received word that our Articles of Organization have been accepted and that we are officially incorporated! The next step is to apply for 501c3 non-profit status. Thank you to Betty Roche for her persistence and patience with the paperwork.



(John Fahy photo)

Dean Pond after Trail Maintenance Day

### **Trail Maintenance Day**

Thank you to BSTRA for letting us join them for their annual Trail Maintenance Day. Lurissa Capobianco did a great job organizing the event. Thirty people representing eleven organizations came to work on the trails and headquarters area including one Girl Scout, one Boy Scout and Karen Ober's two sons. When we finished we had accomplished over 100 man hours of work. Thank you to everyone that participated.

At the headquarters area Bill Knott cleared the area around the entrance signs on Westborough Rd. and the parking lot road. When you approach Southborough Rd. the Upton State Forest sign is clearly visible now and we plan to plant flowers there so it will be a welcoming sight.

Several people worked around the driveway perimeter brushing back so that you can drive a vehicle there without having it scratched! The yew near the building was pruned, in back of the building was brushed back to the property line, a broken limb was removed from the lovely Japanese Maple near the cottage and there are two large brush piles to show for our hard work.

The rest of the crew headed out to the trails. A temporary bridge repair was made on the Hopkinton Springs Trail, a vista was opened up at Dean Pond and several trails were brushed back. John Pelczarski and Doug Usher headed out with a chain saw to remove large trees from several trails.

Bob Ethier of the Friends stayed at the Trailhead Parking Lot to do surveys and to let visitors know what was going on.

Thank you to BSTRA for the subs and to members of the Friends for dessert. Bakers included Ellen Arnold, Karen Ober, Betty Roche, Chris Scott and Linda Usher.

After a relaxing lunch everyone headed home except for Russ Arnold and Frank Evans. They were having so much fun that they stayed to do more work at the headquarters area!

### **Earth Day Cleanup**

Once again members of the Friends joined BSTRA for the Earth Day Cleanup. Forty riders on horse back and 11 walkers competed to see who could collect the most unusual and largest amount of trash.

Some of our members couldn't help on the scheduled day so they went out on their own collecting trash. The Despres family cleaned up the Rabbit Run Trail and Ridge Rd., Mary Fedorczuk collected trash on the Westborough Rd. and Frank Evans showed up the day after to get a trash bag and clean the Southborough Rd.

Betty Roche and Ellen and Russ Arnold cleaned a half mile both sides of Westborough Rd. They ran out of time and bags before they ran out of trash! In that half mile they filled the back of a pick up truck. Nick Paulson cleaned the Trailhead Parking Lot area and Carl Paulson collected over 200 cigarette butts.

Some of the more unusual finds were a bed spring, full can of paint, gas tank from a vehicle and a brand new size 5 child's sneaker. Lurissa Capobianco kept track as the finds were brought back and awarded prizes in several categories.

Agnita Knott won the raffle basket donated by Barbara Burke. It was a coffee break basket with a mug, coffee and several cookie mixes.

Everyone enjoyed pasta and salad for lunch provided by BSTRA and once again the Friends baked dessert. Bakers were Ellen Arnold, Barbara Burke, Karen Ober and Betty Roche.

# CELEBRATE UPTON STATE FOREST



## Civilian Conservation Corps Day June 10, 2006

Upton State Forest  
Junction of Southborough Rd &  
Westborough Rd, Upton, MA

Info: Val Stegamoen 508-278-7604  
Ellen Arnold 508-529-6610  
fusf@charter.net

**\*\*Bird Walks with Tom Dodd 6:30 AM & 8:00 AM Meet at Trail Head Parking Lot**

**\*\*Beaver Walks with Chris Scott 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM Meet in front of cottage**

**\*\*Historic Walks with Ranger Val Stegemoen Meet in front of cottage**  
10 AM to 11 AM 1 PM to 2 PM 3 PM to 5 PM

**\*\*Smokey Bear arrives after 11 AM \*\*Pictures with Ponies (fee) 10 AM to 2 PM**

**\*\*Children's Games Scavenger Hunt Sack Races**

**\*\*Mountain Man Camp \*\*Antique Vehicles**

**\*\*Lou and Marion Despres provide music to picnic by 11 AM to 2 PM**  
**Bring a picnic lunch (Baked goods, snacks, soda and water will be available to purchase)**

**Logo Contest Award Presentation**

**Raffles to benefit the work of Friends of Upton State Forest**

**Indoor Displays 10AM to 4 PM**  
**Civilian Conservation Corps Committee-display and power point**  
**Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni**  
**Friends of Upton State Forest**  
**American Chestnut Foundation**  
**Fish and Wildlife**  
**BSTRA**

**\*\* indicates weather permitting, other events rain or shine**



Friends of Upton State Forest  
PO Box 258  
Upton, MA 01568-0258

### **Off Road Vehicle Report**

Karen Ober and Ellen Arnold attended a DCR hearing in West Boylston regarding off road vehicles in state parks. The department has been seeking input from several organizations that are involved in the environment as well as representing motorized vehicle clubs. We felt that it was important that our group have a presence at the hearing because this has been a consistent issue that comes up at our public meetings. In addition it has been one of the issues that people comment about when we do surveys. As you know off road vehicles are not allowed in Upton but continue to come.

We continue to hear from people who are upset and report environmental damage, near misses and confrontation. While preparing for the hearing I checked with the local police department to get statistics on the number of reports made to them about ORV in Upton State Forest. They found none in the last three years.

We have had discussion about it at our Board meetings. It is a tough subject to deal with because we are not the people who are supposed to enforce the rule. It appears that there is a need for some regulatory changes that would require dealers that sell these vehicles to take some responsibility. This could be in the form of requiring registration before the vehicle leaves the lot, requiring safety courses for operators and some form of licenses and age restrictions.

Before that can happen there has to be enough of a documented problem so that if we approach our legislators they can see that this is needed.

If you have a problem you should make a report **if you can do it safely. Confrontation should be avoided.** If you make a report it should be done as soon as possible with as much information as possible. Include the license plate, make/ model/color, location of sighting, date & time, and direction of travel. The calls should be made to the following numbers in the order they appear:

**EPO Radio Room 1-800-632-8075 (24 hours)**  
**Upton Police non-emergency 508-529-3200**  
**DCR Radio Room 1-800-831-0569 ext 6**

We have made a supply of wallet cards for anyone that would like to have one. They will be available at our meetings and on June 10.

### **CCC Day at the State House**

March 30 was CCC Day in Massachusetts. Frank Evans and Ellen Arnold attended the ceremony in Boston as guests of the DCR CCC Committee. Senator Augustus, Representative Peterson, Senator Morrisey, Senator Durand, members of the DCR CCC Committee and several CCC Alumni were also in attendance to recognize the contributions of the CCC to the state park system.

This year's theme was "The Educators" honoring the men who taught the CCC boys in the camps.