

**FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST INC.
NEWSLETTER**



*<http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org>
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President's Message

It was my privilege to accept two awards during 2008 honoring the work of Friends of Upton State Forest. On CCC Day Chapter 158 CCC Alumni presented the Friends with a certificate recognizing our efforts relative to the historic CCC Camp at Upton and our work with the third grade visit to USF.

At Metacomet Land Trust's Annual Meeting I received a personal award for being a cofounder of the Friends, for working to preserve the history of the CCC and for our efforts to pursue having DCR purchase a significant in holding.

I am honored by the award but know that what has been accomplished could not have happened without your support. Many people are responsible for what success we have had and for preservation and conservation efforts in Upton, Hopkinton and the Blackstone Valley.

Awards were presented to one person in each of the towns that Metacomet works in. Listening to the nominations and the reasons for them was inspiring. It made me feel good to know that there are so many people who recognize the value of our natural, historical, cultural, and recreational resources and who do something about it.

Congratulations and thank you for your part in these awards. In the next newsletter I would like to highlight members and their contributions. Give me a call (508-529-6610) or send an email to fusf@charter.net about people you would like to see mentioned.

Ellen

**DCR First Day Hike
at Upton State Forest**

January 1, 2009 Noon to 2:30 PM

Meet after 11 AM at the Headquarters' buildings at the intersection of Westborough and Southborough Roads in Upton. Wear appropriate clothing for the weather and plan on a moderate family hike to Dean Pond. We will pass by natural, historical and cultural features, highlighting the contributions of the CCC to our park system. Cocoa will be served following the hike. For more info or in case of inclement weather call 508-435-4303 or visit www.mass.gov/dcr/events.

**FUSF Annual Meeting and Program
January 12, 2009 7 PM**

**(Snow date, January 16)*

**United Parish Vestry,
1 Central Square, Upton**

**"The Amazon, Where Upton Birds Go
in the Winter" by Mark Blazis**

Mark is back by popular demand! He has led safaris to Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Botswana and Madagascar and has been doing bird research in Ecuadorian Amazonia where he has led over 30 expeditions. Here in Massachusetts, he directs two bird banding research stations, studying the genetics of Lyme disease pathogens carried by Neotropical migrant birds.

The public is welcome and there is no charge. Canned good donations for the United Parish Food Pantry would be welcome. Questions or to help with refreshments: fusf@charter.net or 508-529-6610.

Trails Committee Report



Hopkinton Spring Trail Bridge rebuilt!

Members of the Trails Committee were disappointed that our work party for National Public Lands Day had to be cancelled due to heavy rain. Plans had been made to demo and rebuild one of the bridges on the Hopkinton Spring Trail. Thanks to Jeff Cate, Rich Trubiano and Sean Lovejoy of the Hopkinton staff the bridge has been completed!

Funding for this project was a partnership with FUSF, Bay State Trail Riders Association (BSTRA) and a Partnership Matching Grant through the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). This bridge has been in poor condition for some time. Karen Ober and Dan Salvucci patched it on our first work party in 2006 but the bridge had deteriorated further. Since it is a well traveled area with hikers, horses and mountain bikers using it we are very happy to have it completed.

We want to thank Gloria Duhaime of Mendon for volunteering to help Lurissa

as cochairman of the Trails Committee. Thank you also to Donna Johnson of Bellingham for signing up for the Adopt a Trail program to care for Nuthatch Trail, to Gloria Duhaime and her daughter Jill who are adopting Hawk Trail and to Ellen Arnold for adopting the Trailhead Area. If you have a favorite trail, section or place at Upton State Forest, please consider signing up for this program. More information is available by contacting Rich Trubiano at Hopkinton.Park@state.ma.us or 508-435-4303. If you do sign up please let Lurissa, Gloria or Ellen know so that we can recognize your commitment.

Due to the ongoing drainage and erosion problems on CCC Way there may be times that the road will have to be closed. The park staff has opened up a trail from the area near the parade ground at the CCC complex to the trailhead. In addition they have been adding new signage and suggestions from our members for sign locations have been passed on to them for consideration.

As part of their ongoing “BE SAFE, BE SEEN” campaign the committee purchased five blaze orange vests and made them available to forest users during the hunting season. They were left in the map box at the trailhead kiosk with a sign asking that they be returned when the person is done with their hike.

One of our 2009 goals is to become better at tracking our volunteer hours. You will be receiving a form and we ask that if you do any trail work at Upton State Forest on your own or at a work party that you report it.

If you find any trail damage while using the forest please report it to fusf@charter.net or 508-868-7397. We will report it to park staff and add it to our list of possible projects for our next work party.

Safe and Happy Trails for 2009!

Meet the DCR Staff



Captain Jennifer Stowe, Gerry Lemire and Emmitt Francis shown at a Nipmuc Rod & Gun Club fundraiser which raised over \$8000 for St. Jude Children's Hospital

Captain Jennifer Stowe is a Ranger III Supervisor for the Northeast Region which includes Upton State Forest. She started working for the department in 1992 as a seasonal Park Ranger with the Mounted Unit at Upton. Since then she has worked as a seasonal Island Manager on Gallup Island at Boston Harbor, with the Mounted Unit at the Blue Hills and as a Watershed Ranger at Wachusett Reservoir. Today she also works as the K-9 Search & Rescue Unit Leader and a level III K-9 handler. She is a past president and member of the New England Park Ranger Association.

Jennifer and her search and rescue dog, Emmitt Francis, have a special tie to Upton. In 2001, after losing their search and rescue dog, the Chief Park Ranger sent a letter to the Worcester County League of Sportsmen asking for assistance in purchasing another dog for the unit. That night, by coincidence, Gerry Lemire (FUSF member and then Nipmuc Rod and Gun Club President) was in attendance with a check that was being donated to the League in memory of Francis Walleston.

A well known Upton resident, Mr. Walleston was a sportsman and ardent conservationist. As a member of the Upton Conservation Commission he had been active in many projects including the Lackey Dam restoration. He was a delegate to the Worcester County League of Sportsmen representing Nipmuc Rod and Gun Club as well as Maspenock Rod and Gun Club. In April of 2001 he passed away at the age of 87. His niece, Sandy Smith, owner of Wildwood Lounge, held a pig roast with all the proceeds to go to the Worcester County League in his memory. She asked Gerry Lemire to present the check for her and he was sitting in the audience waiting to present it when the request was made for assistance in purchasing the dog. Gerry presented the check with a motion to use it for the search and rescue dog.

Jennifer had always wanted a dog named Emmitt and all that Sandy asked is that the dog be named after her Uncle Francis. That is how Emmitt Francis got his two names! Emmitt Francis and Jennifer often visit schools and events together. When she is asked how the dog got two names she tells the story and the spirit of "Frannie" Walleston lives on

Some of the training for the Search and Rescue Dogs is done at Upton State Forest so you might see Jennifer and Emmitt Francis on the trail someday!



Emmitt Francis, Rescue Dog

Historical Resources Committee Report



FUSF CCC display at Union Station

FUSF set up historic CCC displays at two events recently. One was at the Union Station in Worcester for the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Forest and Parks Friends Network (MFPFN) and in November at the Metacomet Land Trust 20th Anniversary Celebration in Franklin. We were able to borrow three panel folding portable display boards with material that allows the use of Velcro to secure the display. The committee feels that purchasing a display board of this type would be a good investment to use when traveling to conferences and for use at events at the forest. Cost of a board that would meet our requirements would be \$250.00 to \$300.00 and we will be fund raising to accomplish the purchase. Donations for this purpose can be sent to FUSF at PO Box 258, Upton, MA 01568. Please note on the check that it is for display boards.

Thank you to Steve Warren for the map box he built and installed at the porch on the Headquarters Building. We are stocking it with maps, FUSF info and the CCC brochures developed by the committee.

Upton will be celebrating its 275th Anniversary in June of 2010 and in May of that year Upton State Forest will be 75 years old. Local organizations have been asked to participate in the 275th

celebration so we will be working on plans for that.

All five of the letterboxes placed for CCC Day in October are still intact and in good shape despite the wet conditions. They have been visited by people from Upton, Franklin and Shrewsbury. A few comments in the logbooks: “awesome stamp”, “We came on horseback with two dogs”, “We came on foot!” and “nice pond”.

Nominating Committee Report

The following slate of officers and directors for 2009 will be presented by the Nominating Committee at our Annual Meeting in January:

President	Ellen Arnold
Vice President	Joan Shanahan
Treasurer	Chris Scott
Secretary	Phyllis Foley
Corr. Secretary	Agnita Knott
Member at Large 1	David Kennedy
Member at Large 2	Marcella Stasa

If you would like to nominate other candidates for consideration you may do so at the meeting.

Metacomet Land Trust

Congratulations to Metacomet Land Trust on their 20th Anniversary. Agnita Knott and Ellen represented FUSF at the recent celebration in November. It was a very nice evening with a silent auction and displays by several groups including Mass Audubon, FUSF and DCR.

Following the meeting, at which they honored their founders and activists in the area towns they cover, author, Todd McLeish, did a slide show about research for his book “*Golden Wings and Hairy Toes.*”

Info about Metacomet is available at www.metacometlandtrust.org or call 888-298-7284.

Deer Check Station at Upton State Forest

For three days during shotgun season members of MassWildlife set up a biological deer check station in front of the Headquarters Building at Upton State Forest. From 1946 to 1956 the MA Field Headquarters for their department was located in the buildings at Upton so it was a reminder of an important chapter in the history of Upton State Forest. They welcomed the opportunity to meet and interact with forest users. Ellen got an interesting lesson in telling the age of a deer by its teeth.

During the three days they were here 58 deer from Ashland, Bellingham, Blackstone, Dudley, Franklin, Grafton, Holliston, Medway, Mendon, Milford, Millville, North Attleboro, Northbridge, Norton, Plainville, Seekonk, Sherborn, Sutton, Upton and Uxbridge were weighed and checked for condition and age.

There are stations like this throughout the state and during those three days they gather statistics that help them learn about the condition of the Massachusetts deer population. This program actually started at Upton with Jim McDonough doing autopsies on deer killed by dogs and vehicle accidents.

Massachusetts Forest and Park Friends Network Holds First Annual Meeting

Representatives of 13 DCR Forest and Parks Friends groups met at Union Station in Worcester on Oct. 25. This group was formed with the recognition that an independent network could help facilitate communication and assist new groups in their formative steps. Chris Scott and Ellen represented FUSF.

Following a presentation about the Network and its goals the group broke into two workshops. One group shared

success stories and talked about ways that groups could assist each other as well as how to encourage new Friends groups. The other workshop talked about forestry issues that have arisen recently.

Special guests included State Rep. Anne Gobi of the Fifth Worcester District and Conrad Crawford, the DCR Partnership Director. Rep. Gobi spoke about ways citizens could assist their legislators by keeping them abreast of issues. Conrad answered questions and spoke about ways that DCR and Friends groups could work to support DCR and our parks.

Everyone in attendance agreed that it was a day well spent.

Membership Report

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their 2009 membership. Remember that if you renew by or at the Annual Meeting on January 12 you can deduct 20% from the dues. There is no discount for Associate Membership.

Your membership dues help support our activities, newsletter, website and other administrative costs. Some of you have expressed regret that you are not able to be an active member but want to support our goals. Each membership is important regardless of your level of direct involvement. It is a statement of the importance of Upton State Forest to you and that message is not lost when we speak to public officials. We have members in Nevada, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Maine and our members in Massachusetts live in communities from the coast to the Berkshires. All of you should be proud of your support of our efforts.

We hope you let others know about us and encourage anyone using the forest to join. Some of you have given gift memberships to your friends and we appreciate that. The more the merrier!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Upton State Forest Calendar*

(Unless otherwise noted all committees and Board of Directors will meet at the Upton Police Station.)

Jan. 1, noon

DCR First Day Hike at Upton
Meet at Headquarters area after 11 AM.

Jan. 12, 7PM

Annual Meeting & Program
United Parish Church Vestry
**“The Amazon, Where Upton Birds Go
in the Winter.”** Speaker: Mark Blazis
(Snow date January 16)

Jan. 19, 7PM, Fund Raising Comm.

Jan. 26, 7 PM, Board of Directors

Feb. 16, 7PM, Historic Resources

Feb. 23, 7PM, Board of Directors

March 16, 7 PM, Trails Committee

March 20, 6 PM

Annual Pot Luck Supper
United Parish Church Vestry

March 23, 7 PM, Board of Directors

*Note: All meetings subject to change and weather conditions.



Backyard Wildlife Reports

So what is the fox doing on the roof of Tom & Cathy Dodd’s shed on Mechanic St.? The better to see the 34 turkey’s in the yard my dear!

Cees Thieme saw a Fisher on Middle Rd at Hawk Trail while hiking. From near the power lines at Westborough Rd. Amy Lane reports a fisher cat, red tail hawks, red squirrels, deer, owl and a raccoon. Donna Johnson reports a documented brown bear sighting in Mendon and a video of bob cats prowling a Mendon farm.

From Whitinsville John Fahy tells of being visited by four deer munching on his honeysuckle bushes. Bunny Lyman reports a deer on the road near Osterman Gas Co. (At least two of our members have had deer collisions so please be cautious when driving.)

Many reports of coyote in the area including the ones that got a deer on our Ridge Rd. property Christmas night.

Many of us spent our summer trying to deter deer from wiping out our vegetable gardens. If you have any tricks you would like to share for our March newsletter we would like to hear from you.

Quote of the Month

“For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours, they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear...”

Henry Beston