Friends of Upton State Forest
Newsletter

http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org
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Volume 8, Number 1 Winter 2013

President's Message -2012

By William Taylor

This was a year of accomplishment and change for Friends of Upton State Forest. We began by updating our bylaws increasing the number of Board members to have more members at large. This has proved successful with new faces and new ideas. The other change involved the DCR reunification. Jurisdiction for Upton changed from the Hopkinton Complex to the Blackstone Heritage Canal and State Park.

At our annual meeting, we usually give our yearly committee reports followed by election of officers. We decided this year to send a written report. Members who have shared their email will receive it prior to the meeting. Other members can pick it up at the meeting or we will mail it afterward.

Since election of officers did not happen until May of 2012, the Nominating Committee has asked the current slate to continue for 2013. All of the officers and members at large have agreed to continue serving. There are still openings for members at large so if anyone is interested in helping the Board of Directors please contact me, and I will give your name to the Committee. A list of current officers is on page 6. If there is no opposition, the Secretary will cast a vote for the proposed slate.

Your membership support is critical to our success. If you have not renewed please remember to do so. Let others know about our work and suggest that they join too. *Bill*

Annual Meeting
February 1, 7PM at
Upton VFW, 15 Milford St, Upton
Snow date February 5
(Public is welcome. Bring a friend.)

Featuring Mark Blazis
The Great Wildebeest Migration-
Crossing the Mara River

"A million and a half animals participate in the great wildebeest migration, a pas-de-deux of predator and prey unequalled anywhere else in the world. With Masai tribesmen wielding their spears and hundreds of species of birds - many of them magnificent raptors - there is no grander wildlife spectacle on the planet. We will see what National Geographic, Discovery Channel, and Animal Planet film crews compete for and strive to capture each year. It took 25 years and 16 safaris to fully understand the whole drama and how to best capture it."

Mark Blazis was personally chosen by the late Roger Tory Peterson for the Roger Tory Peterson award, given annually to North America's most notable nature educators. A safari leader in Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa and Madagascar he has also done research in Ecuadorian Amazonia, where he has led over 30 expeditions.

In Massachusetts, he directs two bird banding research stations. An ardent conservationist, fly fisherman, hunter and former biology teacher he is the editor and co-author of ten books on the fauna and flora of Worcester County.

Membership Report

Membership Chairman, Agnita Knott reminds everyone that it is time to renew your FUSF membership for 2013. There is a 10% discount (excludes Associate) if you renew by or at the annual meeting on Feb 1. We welcome the following new members: Bridget Behringer of Westborough and Alicia & Eugene Bernat, Lorrie & Whitney Loeper, Tom Dorney & Margreta Miner, Michael & Debra Paquette and Stephen Paulson, all of Upton.

Heritage Day

Upton's Heritage Day was a huge success in spite of the gloomy weather. Our booth in the town hall was busy with membership and merchandise sales, raffles and a bake sale. Volunteers who helped at the booth were Ellen Arnold, Phyllis Conlin, Bob Ethier, Chip Kent, Agnita Knott, Chris Scott, Marcella Stasa, Bill Taylor and Jerry Zaslow. Bakers included Ellen Arnold, Mary McManus, Chris Scott, Joan Varney and Tracy Zaslow. Lillian Tolstrup donated hand made walking sticks to sell. Raffles included a quilted Happy Pumpkin door hanger donated by Ellen and won by Agnita Knott; Tailgate Wine Tote donated by Agnita and won by Mary Fedorczuk; and a Trick or Treat Basket donated by Ellen, Alice Evans and Lurissa Marston and won by Russ Wood.

Each year Heritage Day is bigger, and better with participation by local vendors and many organizations. A highlight this year was the yummy apple crisp bake off by five local restaurants.

Website of Interest

Massachusetts Forest and Parks Friends Network
http://www.networkingfriends.net/

Tom Wessels' Program

M. Penko photo

Wet weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of more than 50 people, from 22 zip codes who enjoyed a program and hike about *"Reading the Forested Landscape"* with Tom Wessels. Guests came from as far as Belchertown, Ashburnham, Cambridge and RI to learn about clues in the forest that help you identify the historic land use, how storms shaped the forest and much more.

Volunteers from FUSF and Upton Open Space helped set up, clean up and coordinate the event. Val Stegemoen, park supervisor, and Dave Furey, District Ranger joined us. Upton and Grafton Local Cultural Councils, Metacomet Land Trust and FUSF provided funding for the program.

Thank you to the following volunteers: Ellen Arnold, Ann Cook, Tom & Cathy Dodd, Larry & Donna Doucette, Agnita & Bill Knott, Gerry Lemire, Mike Penko, Chris Scott, Marcella Stasa and Bill Taylor.

A Little Common Sense is Moving!

It has been over a year since FUSF member, Lisa Stratton, opened her store at 62 Main Street. We are grateful to her for carrying our line of logo clothing making it easier for members and others to purchase. The store is moving to a new location at 8 North Main St behind the Upton Common. She will be reopening in mid January.

Wood Duck Nesting Project

By Joe Nava, FUSF member

(Editor's note: Joe worked at Phillips Wildlife Lab from 1948 to 1956. Since 1960, he has continued his career in Alaska.)

Wood Duck nesting boxes are all over Massachusetts. You see them on trees and on poles over water, anywhere in MA. Those nesting boxes are a result of the 1938 Hurricane, which took down most of the dead trees in MA. I worked on the Wood Duck Nesting Project for 12 years from 1948 to 1960. Let me tell you how we made the boxes.

We designed a wooden box about 12 inches deep and wide, and about 2 feet tall. The backboard extended at the top and bottom so it could be nailed to a post or tree. We drilled a 4-inch diameter hole in the front. The box was made of rough-cut, pine boards. The top was removable for inspection. We built these boxes during winters at the Phillips Wildlife Laboratory in Upton (the old CCC Camp).

We needed boards so we went to a State Forest (Hubbardston as I recall) each winter and cut down suitable pine trees. We trucked the logs to a mill, where they were sawed into one-inch thick boards, 10 and 12 inches wide, then stacked for a season to dry. When the lumber was dry, we built the boxes, but we needed more boxes than we could build.

I would take a truckload of lumber to a State Prison (near Taunton I think). where prisoners would make the boxes. Each time I brought a load of lumber I returned with a load of finished boxes. I made many of these trips over several years.

But we still needed more boxes. There were "dump" nests in the boxes we had up, indicating a lack of suitable nesting sites. A "dump" nest would have 50 or 60 eggs in it from many female ducks. One female duck would incubate the top dozen or so and the rest would rot. We had to clean out these messy boxes each year. An exploding rotten egg is no fun!

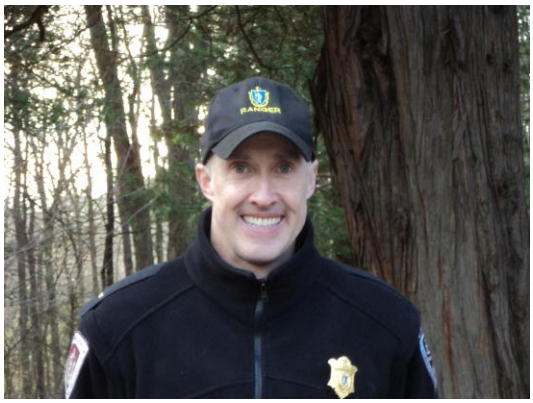
Someone had the bright idea to go to the Hingham Navy Yard and ask about empty ammunition boxes. They had tons of them just sitting around. We rented a semi-truck and drove to Hingham. We loaded the trailer full of ammunition boxes that were about the same size as the nesting boxes we made. The semi trailer was open at the top so we could pile them high. Oops! On the first load, when we came to the railroad underpass on East Main Street in Westborough, the truck went through the underpass, but the entire top row of boxes was knocked off. We did not repeat that mistake!

We nailed the fronts onto the ammo boxes, drilled the 4-inch diameter holes in them and they were ready to hang on a pole or tree. There were over 5,000 wood duck nesting boxes in Mass. by the time I left for Alaska in 1960.

Erecting those boxes is a story for another time. Stay tuned.

Wood Duck Nesting Box
At the Upton bog, 2012
E. Arnold photo

Meet the DCR Staff
Dave Furey



We are pleased to welcome Dave Furey as the Central Valley District Ranger. This new district was created during the recent DCR reunification that combined the Urban Parks Division with the State Parks Division. It includes Upton State Forest, and covers all DCR properties from Franklin, west to Brimfield and north to Rutland. This includes dams, campgrounds, swimming pools, ball fields, forests, and beaches. Dave's primary job is to protect our natural, historic, and cultural resources and to help connect people to those resources.

In 1999, Dave started with the former Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) in a seasonal position working at the Charles River Esplanade, Castle Island and Revere Beach. He became a full time park ranger at the Blue Hills Reservation before being promoted to West District Ranger responsible for properties from Stony Brook Reservation in Hyde Park to Elm Bank Reservation in Dover and North to the Upper Charles Reservation in Waltham. In 2003, the MDC combined with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) to become the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

Dave has a Bachelor's degree in History, and is certified to teach at Junior and High School levels. He is certified as a first responder and a Search and Rescue technician. He has also attended the Auxiliary Police Academy, numerous firefighting courses, and Project Wet, Water, and Wild. He tries to take advantage of every learning opportunity that comes his way. This includes taking courses that range from Verbal Judo with the Mass State Police to Mass Wildlife natural history programs. Most recently, he took several classes with the Commonwealth Supervisor Certificate Program.

He grew up in Bedford, Mass with a big yard that abutted conservation land. Having the forest as his playground instilled a deep love and passion for nature. He feels blessed that his job taps into that passion. Dave enjoys sharing his love of nature with his wife, son and daughter. When he is not working as a park ranger, he is often an enthusiastic park visitor! His interests include mountain biking, kayaking, hiking and reading. During the interview he said, "I thoroughly enjoy every aspect of this job! Being out on the trail meeting people and helping them enjoy our amazing natural resources is a joy!"

When asked for his thoughts about Upton State Forest, he had this to say. "I am a big fan of Upton State Forest! It is an excellent example of the rich natural, cultural, and historic resources that the DCR provides. I am extremely impressed with the Friends of Upton State Forest, a passionate and dedicated group! I look forward to working with you all to protect and enhance the wonderful treasure we have in Upton State Forest."

If you meet Dave on the trails say hi and let him know how much we appreciate having him here!

FUSF Receives National Recognition
By Bill Taylor

Friends of Upton State Forest are proud to announce that they have received national recognition through an award to co-founder and former president, Ellen Arnold. The National Association of State Park Directors recognized Ellen at its annual meeting in September with one of its Presidents Awards, recognizing "outstanding achievement by individuals and organizations that help preserve and enhance our state parks throughout the nation."

This is what the NASPD had to say about Ellen: *"Anyone who works with volunteers knows that just one person can make or break an institution. A person with zeal, passion and energy can transcend the most difficult of circumstances and the direst of needs. By all accounts, Ellen Arnold is that person. As a founding member of the Friends of Upton State Forest in Massachusetts, Ellen came along at a difficult time in the world of park budgets. Bringing energy and enthusiasm to the task of forming a 501(c)(3) organization, Ellen and the Friends have transformed the visitor experience at Upton State Forest. Ellen led the way with fundraising, grant writing, special events and historical research, but that's just part of the story. With a special penchant—some would say crusade— for the CCC era, Ellen has enriched countless lives by bringing the legacy of the CCC boys to the schoolchildren of Massachusetts. Working with DCR interpretive staff, Ellen coordinates a day-long CCC reenactment adventure for large groups of (100-plus) third graders. The children spend an entire day talking to CCC alumni, interacting with interpretive staff dressed as CCC officers and visiting buildings both real and long gone. She makes it all come alive. Upton State Forest is a special place, and it is made better by the countless hours and boundless energy that Ellen Arnold brings to it."*

The award was presented to Ellen by Edward M. Lambert Jr, Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Director of State Parks, Priscilla Geigis during the Massachusetts Park and Friends Network conference on November 17th.

According to Ellen, she had no idea that she was nominated for the award. She said, "I did not do this alone. Many people contribute to the success of the Friends of Upton State Forest. I enjoy what I do because I have met many new friends both in Upton and throughout the state. We have made a significant difference for Upton State Forest and that is very satisfying."

All of us on the Board of Directors are extremely grateful for what Ellen has done, and continues to do, for Upton State Forest.

Sharl Heller photo

Quarterly Quote

Some of nature's most exquisite handiwork is on a miniature scale, as anyone knows who has applied a magnifying glass to a snowflake.

Rachel Carson

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Upton State Forest

Board of Director's meetings
At Upton Police Station, 7PM
January 21
February 18
March 18
April 15

Annual Meeting &
Election of Officers
February 1, 7PM
Upton VFW, 15 Milford St
Snow date-February 5
Speaker, Mark Blazis
Details on page 1

Potluck Supper
May 3 at United Parish Vestry
Speaker, Michael Tougias
"Quabbin: A History
and Explorer's Guide"
Save the Date!
Details in spring newsletter

2013 Slate of Officers and Directors

President-William Taylor
Vice President-Steve Warren
Secretary-Mary McManus
Corresponding Secretary-Agnita Knott
Treasurer-Chris Scott
Members at Large- Chip Kent,
Gerry Lemire, Marcella Stasa
and Jerry Zaslow.

We will vote on the slate of officers and directors at the annual meeting on Feb 2. Anyone wishing to run in opposition, or become an additional member at large should contact Bill Taylor or announce at the meeting. Other automatic board positions include the Past President, and Chairs of the Historic Resources and Recreation Committees.

Discovery Hike
A partnership between FUSF, Upton Open Space Committee, and DCR.

Voices From the Past
April 6
Save the Date

In honor of the 80th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), we are making plans for a special Discovery hike at Upton State Forest. Costumed interpreters will lead us as we follow in the footsteps of CCC enrollees who lived and worked at Upton State Forest building the park we enjoy today. We will hear stories in their own words, about their lives and what they did here at Upton. There will be displays in the Headquarters building and birthday cake too. Watch for more details by email and in the spring newsletter.

Resource Inventory Committee
L. Moore photo

Members of the Resource Inventory Committee have continued to document resources reported to us. This fall they did field work in the North Street, Pratt Hill, Eames Lane and Westborough Rd sections. Shown above are (front) Marcella Stasa, Becky Wetzel, Ellen Arnold, (rear) Cathy Taylor, Bill Taylor, Tom Dodd and Mike Penko. On other days, we were joined by Cathy Dodd and Rufin VanBossuyt.

0912

FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST
PO BOX 258
UPTON, MA 01568-0258

NEW MEMBERSHIP ----- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL------ (check one)
(Please Print Clearly.) (Information is for Friends of Upton State Forest only.)

Date_____

Name: _____

(For family membership please put names of two adults)

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____State_____

Telephone: _____E-mail _____

Would you consider being a member of one of our committees? Please circle your choices.

Auditing	Fund Raising	Newsletter	Refreshments	Trails Committee
Education	Historical Resources	Program	Resource Inventory	
Events	Membership	Publicity	Telephone Committee	

What is your interest? Circle all that apply. (Please use the reverse for comments, or to tell us, if you wish, of other organizations, you belong to that support these interests.)

Bird Watching	Horseback Riding	Orienteering	Snowmobiling
Cross Country Skiing	Hunting	Open Space Preservation	Trail Running
Hiking	Letterboxing/Geocaching	Photography/Art	Wildlife Watching
Historical	Mountain Biking	Snow Shoeing	Other (what?)

Membership Categories: (Prices effective through January 25, 2013) (Circle one)

Family of 2 adults & children (under age 18) ---------- $ 30.00
Individual ----------$ 20.00
Senior 65+----------$ 10.00
Student full time with current student id ----------$ 10.00
Associate member (no voting privileges or discounts) ----$ 5.00

Additional Donation Amount: General Fund or Special Fund:
Anonymous? Yes--- No--- Memorial or Honorarium?
Name of person being recognized?

(* Please note: There is a $20.00 charge for returned checks.)

Below this line is for office use only:

Payment: Cash Check # Amount paid: Category: Year paid:
Card(s) issued by: Newsletter address entered by: