



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

*<http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org>
fusf@charter.net*

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President's Message

Supporting local agriculture is one way that we can help to preserve open space in our communities. Small family farms are disappearing from the landscape being replaced by tracts of houses, big box stores and parking lots. Stone walls and barns are disappearing along with wildlife corridors and habitat.

Family farms are part of our heritage with the earliest settlers raising crops and animals for their own survival. Today the few small farms that are left are trying to make a living by growing and selling fresh local produce. In many instances the land they are farming is worth far more than the products they sell. We are lucky that they continue to care for the land and to pay taxes on it.

In this area we have opportunities to help preserve what is left. There are several farm stands where we can buy locally grown fruits and vegetables. Some communities offer farmer's markets once a week and I have put a partial list of Blackstone Valley markets on the calendar page. A few local farms offer Community Supported Agriculture or CSA. This program allows you to pay in advance for a share of their produce which you can pick up weekly.

More information is available at www.mass.gov/agr. Click on Go Locally Grown or the "Massachusetts Grown and Fresher" logo for a list of locally grown and produced products.

Ellen

**Members Meeting and Program
October 19, 7 PM at Upton VFW
15 Milford St. (Rt. 140), Upton**

Following a brief business meeting R. Wayne Mezitt of Weston Nurseries will speak about gardening responsibly for the environment. Well known in horticultural circles he is a monthly columnist for the MetroWest newspapers and is currently serving on the Invasive Plant Task Force for the American Nursery Landscape Association.

A raffle will help defray costs for our meetings. Bakers are needed so if you can help please contact Ellen.

Questions: fusf@charter.net
or 508-529-6610

Hiking Through History

Since man first came to the area we have been shaping and reshaping the land. Friends of Upton State Forest is partnering with Upton Open Space to offer a series of monthly hikes to explore that history. Page 5 of this newsletter has dates and details for the 2009 hikes.

Hope that you will be able to join us.

Iron Ranger at Trailhead

Congratulations and thank you to Marcella Stasa. The design she submitted to the DCR Iron Ranger contest was accepted and she will be painting the one at the trailhead this summer. This is a volunteer service so if you see Marcella please say thank you.

Donations stay in the parks where they are collected and usually increase after the "Rangers" are painted.

Massachusetts Park Watch



You may have noticed this logo on new signs around Upton State Forest with a number for Park Watch on

them. This is a statewide program modeled after similar Neighborhood Watch programs. Concerned citizens and park users can serve as additional eyes and ears to help protect our state forests, parks and beaches. This is a cooperative effort between the Dept of Conservation and Recreation, Environmental Police, State and local police departments.

There is a toll free number that you can call to report suspicious behavior or illegal activity when you can do so safely. That number is 1-866-759-2824 or 1-866-PKWATCH. This number is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All reports are recorded and tracked using a computer system to identify areas where education and enforcement may be needed. The report is given to the area Rangers and the information is shared with all appropriate enforcement agencies. You may report anonymously if you choose.

We have signed FUSF up to receive training when it is offered and we are looking forward to having that happen. If you want to be included send an email to fusf@charter.net or contact Ellen at 508-529-6610.

We recognize that limited staff cannot always respond immediately. In an emergency you should always dial 911. If it is not an emergency but you feel a response is needed you should call the local police department in the area where you are hiking. In Upton that number is 508-529-3200. Then you should report the activity to the 24 hour Park Watch number giving as much detail as possible and let them know you called the local police. This call is

important for tracking purposes. Questions about Park Watch can be directed to the DCR Bureau of Ranger Services at 617-626-4963.

Above all, the first concern is your safety and the safety of others around you. Be sure you are in a safe place when you are making a report.

Please Observe Other People's Enjoyment Rights!

(Aka the Pooper Column)

Call me a party pooper if you like but there is a reason for regulations. Some are for safety reasons while others are for protection of the environment and some are necessary so that everyone can enjoy their experience at the park.

When doing my Adopt-a-Trail duties I often meet park users and enjoy talking with them and answering questions. The conversation often gets around to a complaint about the way someone else infringes on their enjoyment of the park. No user group escapes criticism but some complaints are more common than others. The most repeated complaint has to do with animal waste also known as poop (thus the name for this column).

Bags for picking up dog poop are available in the map boxes at the administration building and the trailhead kiosk. Please pick them up on your way to the trails and take them with you when you leave.

Another concern expressed often is with unleashed dogs that are out of sight and control of their owner.

A wise man said that "You can't please all of the people all of the time..." but if we use common sense and respect other users we can all enjoy the forest.

Regulations about bringing animals to state forests and parks are covered under 304 CMR 12.08. Details are available at www.mass.gov/dcr/legal/downloads.pdf. Rules are also posted on the bulletin boards at the park.

Bay State Trail Riders Association Scavenger Hunt at Upton State Forest



Jen Shults with 'Tommy Haflinger'

On May 31st Lurissa Marston coordinated the 11th Annual BSTRA Scavenger Hunt at Upton State Forest. Gary Shults Horseshoeing was ride sponsor. The former CCC Camp at Upton was full with over 100 people, 42 trailers, 85 horses and riders plus 15 family members and volunteers.

Teams of riders rode out at three minute intervals. They traveled along marked trails using a clue sheet. The team that found and retrieved the most clues and answered the bonus riddle won first place. As usual, Lurissa's clues were cryptic and challenging adding to the enjoyment of the ride. The marked route introduced riders to many trails in the forest including Park Rd., Swamp Rd., Hawk Trail, Middle Rd., Loop Rd., Bridge Rd., Whitehall and others.

Stewart Perry of Rhode Island Horse Weighing set up his scale and many riders took advantage of his services. Knowing the actual weight of your horse is important for feed rationing, deworming routines and administering medicine. If anyone did not receive their weight slips or wants to see photos of the event they are currently available at www.rhodeislandhorseweighing.com.

Jen and Gary Shults and Lurissa thank everyone who made the event possible. For more information about BSTRA their website is www.bstra.org.

Smokey Bear's Birthday!

One of our most recognized and most beloved icons, Smokey Bear, was born on August 9, 1944 when the Ad Council introduced a poster designed to create awareness about preventing forest fires. The mascot of the United States Forest Service, he was named after Smokey Joe Martin, a NY City Fire Department hero.

Just a few years later, in 1950, a black bear cub was rescued from a tree with burns suffered in the Capitan Gap Fire at Lincoln National Forest in the Capitan Mountain Range. Nursed back to health he eventually was sent to the National Zoo in Washington, DC where he was visited by thousands of people from around the world. This living symbol of Smokey Bear died in 1976 but his message of "*Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires!*" lives on, although the words forest fires was changed to wildfires in 2001.

River Bend Farm in Uxbridge will be honoring Smokey Bear's 65th birthday with a celebration on August 9 from 1 to 3 PM. Antique fire trucks and other fire apparatus will be on display as well as a camp fire sing along and stories with National Park Service Rangers. Other partners will be there to provide family activities. FUSF will have a CCC display. Come for birthday cake, go fishing with Smokey and stop by our booth to say hi. Don't forget a camera.

The River Bend Farm Visitors Center is at 287 Oak St. in Uxbridge. For more information the number there is 508-278-7604.

Smokey Bear Pledge

I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully to defend from waste the natural resources of my country – its soil and minerals, its forests, waters and wildlife.

Third grade at Upton State Forest

Flag Raising Ceremony



A. Knott photo

The weather on June 1 was perfect for the annual Upton Memorial School third grade visit to Upton State Forest. Around 120 children, teachers and chaperones enjoyed “A Day in the Life of a CCC Enrollee.” The camp is always filled with excitement and energy during this visit. It was summed up best by a third grader who used sidewalk chalk to write “CCC Camp Rocks!”

The children assembled in teams in front of the administration building. CCC alumnus Frank Evans was assisted by two third graders in a flag raising ceremony. After the ceremony orders for the day were given by Tim Rayworth of DCR in CCC attire.

During the day teams rotated between activity stations simulating what a CCC enrollee would have done. Inside the administration building there were displays and a costumed interpretation by Tim. Other stations included a descriptive tour of the footprint of the historic camp and a tool demo using a two man saw. At the Fire Control station there was a demo of antique and modern equipment. The children practiced using real “Indian Cans” squirting water on everything in sight, including each other! Another popular stop was the volunteer service station where the children planted flowers.

Lunch for volunteers and staff was provided by FUSF. Volunteers and bakers included Ellen Arnold, Frank Evans, Alice Evans, Norm Fahy, Phyllis Foley, Bill & Agnita Knott, Jane Milligan and Joan Shanahan.

We extend our thanks to all the DCR staff that worked to prepare the area and present this program. A special thanks goes to Representative George Peterson who took time out of his busy day to visit and observe this very successful partnership between DCR, FUSF and the Memorial School third grade teachers.

Rep. George Peterson and Ellen Arnold



A. Knott photo

Wild Babies

This is the time of the year when we may encounter young wildlife. The best thing we can do is to leave them alone. Our good intentions can do more harm than good. Enjoy the sighting but leave the area so that the mother will be able to care for her baby. Do not be fooled if you find a young animal alone because the mother is most likely nearby. It is not legal to interfere or take wild animals for pets.

At Upton take care when hiking. Turtles are hatching so we should watch where we step. Be especially careful in the parking lot and along the road near the bog. Several sightings of turtles laying eggs in this area have been reported to FUSF.

Hiking Through History

*A partnership between
Friends of Upton State Forest and
the Upton Open Space Committee.*

On all hikes we ask that you dress for the weather and wear appropriate foot gear. Don't forget water, sunscreen and insect repellent. Children are welcome with supervision. A liability waiver will be required. Heavy rain cancels. There is no charge.

Questions may be directed to fusf@charter.net, Ellen Arnold at 508-529-6610 or Marcella Stasa at 508-529-3709. If you want to receive reminders please send an email to fusf@charter.net noting 'Hiking Through History' in the subject line.

"Cellar Holes of Upton State Forest"

September 20 (Sunday) at Upton State Forest. Registration 12:30 to 1PM. Hike begins promptly at 1PM. Meet at the Headquarters area in front of the Administration Building at the intersection of Westborough and Southborough Roads, Upton.

Interpretive hike to cellar holes on Rabbit Run Trail, Hopkinton Spring Trail and Swamp Trail. We will discuss the history of the cellar holes and the families that settled North Upton. In places these trails are part of old roads and there are some town boundary markers on them so we will talk about the tradition of perambulating the boundaries.

This is a moderate hike that usually lasts more than two hours depending on how much time we spend at each site. The terrain is uneven in places and steep in a couple of spots but most of the hike is on fairly flat ground. It will involve road crossings and a short walk along Southborough Rd at one point.

"Company 2105, Camp SP-25 CCC at Upton State Forest"

October 18 (Sunday) at Upton State Forest. Registration noon to 1PM. Hike begins promptly at 1PM. Meet at the Headquarters area in front of the Administration Building near the intersection of Westborough and Southborough Roads in Upton.

Interpretive hike of CCC Camp, water holes, picnic areas and stone steps built by men of the Civilian Conservation Corps. We will discuss the history of the CCC in general and as it pertains to Upton State Forest. There will be a display inside the Administration building relative to CCC history.

This is a moderate hike that usually lasts about two hours on a well traveled loop with some uneven terrain and erosion. There will be a short option for those who want to turn back at the CCC picnic area without continuing to the pond. We will travel to Dean Pond via Park Road stopping at CCC sites along the way. Return will be via Loop Rd.

"Land, History and Stone Structures"

Novembers 15 (Sunday) at The Former Stefan's Farm. Registration 12:45 to 1 PM. Hike begins at 1 PM. Meet at the parking lot on the east side of Mechanic St. (near the power lines).

Enjoy this old farm property while Cathy Taylor talks about the history of the land now owned by the town of Upton. We will see stone walls and visit a stone dam with Bill Taylor sharing his knowledge about stone walls and the history of fence viewing. Marcella Stasa will show us the Community Garden and talk about the process of getting it started.

This is a moderate hike but footing may be uneven in some areas. Hike usually lasts about an hour and a half.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Parting Shot

Friends of Upton State Forest Dates to Remember 2009

August 9 Smokey Bear's Birthday
River Bend Farm, details on page 3

*August 17 Historic Resources
Committee meeting cancelled

August 24 7PM Upton Police Station
Board of Directors

*September –please note members
meeting moved to October 19

Sept. 20 Hiking Through History
“Cellar holes at USF”, details on page 5

Sept. 28 7PM Upton Police Station
Board of Directors

Oct. 18 CCC Hike & display at USF
Details on page 5

*Oct. 19 7PM Upton VFW
General Meeting
Speaker-Wayne Mezitt
“Gardening Responsibly”

Oct. 26 7PM Upton Police Station
Board of Directors

*November-please note no members
meeting.

***Please note there have been several
changes to the calendar sent out to
members at the beginning of the year.**



Cave of the Winds at USF
(E. Arnold photo)

Other Dates to Remember Blackstone Valley Heritage Markets

More info:

<BVHeritageMarkets@gmail.com>

Grafton Common

Thursdays through October 22

2 PM to 6:30 PM

Douglas Farmers Market
E. N. Jenckes Store Museum
283 Main St., Douglas
Saturdays 8 AM to 1 PM

Daniel's Farmstead
286 Mendon St., Blackstone
Sundays 2 PM to 4 PM

Quote of the Month

“.....if we can teach our children to
honor nature's gifts,
the joys and beauties of the outdoors will
be here forever.” Jimmy Carter

Welcome New Members

Welcome to the following new
members: Donald Sunderland and Laura
Davis of Hopkinton, Jill Duhaime of
Uxbridge, Lynn Paresky of Douglas and
Sandra Lajoie of Upton.