



FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST INC. NEWSLETTER

<http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org>
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President's Message ~ by *Ellen Arnold*

DCR Partnership Workshop

Around 1970 Upton State Forest (USF) became a satellite of Wachusett Mountain State Park before becoming a satellite of Douglas State Forest in 1977. Since 1981 when the Heritage State Park was established at River Bend Farm Upton has been managed from there. All of these areas are part of the Central Region. Several months ago I became aware that we were going to become a satellite of Hopkinton State Park in the newly formed Metro West District in the Northeast Region. It appears that will probably happen soon.

So what does that mean to the Friends of Upton State Forest? To most users the change will be transparent. For those of us that need to contact DCR officials on behalf of USF we will need to develop some new relationships. John Pelczarski will be working with us to ensure a smooth transition.

Upton is a Gateway Town to the Blackstone Valley and as such is a part of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. That will not change so we will still have those important contacts.

I am looking at this change as a way to meet and work with new friends while keeping in touch with our old friends.

Thank you to John, Val, Paul, Don and all the people that have helped maintain Upton State Forest. We will miss our regular contact with them but will remember all that they have done to help us. We wish them "Happy Trails."

Agnita Knott and Ellen Arnold attended the DCR Partnership Workshop at Elm Bank Reservation on March 10. It was a full day with presentations by key DCR officials and afternoon workshops. Questions were answered on many subjects including permits, budget, legal topics and more.

Not only did we come away with a better understanding of the way DCR is managed but we made many contacts with other Friend's groups. These are already proving valuable.

As you know in 2005 we were successful in getting the historic CCC buildings at Upton on the Preservation Mass "*List of Ten Most Endangered Historic Resources in Massachusetts.*" During an afternoon workshop I listened to the stories of neglected buildings, understaffed parks and infrastructure needs from other Friends. It occurred to me that the entire park system of the Commonwealth is endangered. When I made that comment I was told that in 2006 another organization was successful in getting the entire Massachusetts Park System on the Preservation Mass list and is working to get it on a national list.

Did you know that Massachusetts is 48th out of 50 states in per capita spending on parks and recreation and that DCR staff has been reduced by 20% (324) in five years?

I want to hear from you as to what you think our role in the big picture should be.

Ellen

Work Party at Upton State Forest

Meet at the headquarters parking lot on April 29. First shift 9AM to noon. Second shift 1PM to 3:30. Lunch will be provided from noon to 1 for both shifts. Please RSVP for lunch to 508-529-6610. A liability waiver will be required. **No power tools.** Bring hand tools and work gloves and dress accordingly.

Trails Committee Report

\$253.98 was raised by the bake sale for Trails Committee projects. Thank you to everyone that supported the bake sale through donations of food, money and time. (Not to mention those of us that purchased goodies!) The Board has set up a line item in our budget that will be used at the discretion of the Trails Committee with the Board's approval. These funds can be used to support work parties, for special projects, to buy materials for bridges or for matching grants

The committee has prioritized their list of projects. Bridge repairs are needed and contacts will be made with Scouts looking for Eagle projects. A discussion of the map kiosk location is underway since much of the year there is standing water or ice limiting access. Mike Ryan and Bill Knott have been placing NO ORV signs at strategic locations and the committee has identified other places if we can get the signs. John Fahy will be working on trail information for the website. This will include trail length, terrain and historic and natural highlights.

We encourage anyone interested in trails to attend these meetings and join the work parties. The more the merrier!

If you find a problem on the trails that needs to be addressed contact Karen Ober or Lurissa Marston or email us at fusf@charter.net.

Walking, Hiking and Beyond

By John Fahy



***Since a forest environment includes uneven pathways and some elevation changes you should prepare yourself for this level of exertion. Remember to check with your doctor if you are just starting out. ***

In the spring a person's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of – of hiking of course! (My apologies to Lord Tennyson)

Winter has finally been left behind yet April torments us with cold, rain and snow. These too eventually pass and the roads, trails and ponds, of Upton State Forest clean, green and lush with new growth will attract an increasing number of various users. Walkers, hikers and bikers are preparing spirit, mind and body for the exertions of the new season. This preparation derives from common sense and an awareness based on our knowledge of what is right and what is wrong.

This awareness is, in this instance, **an outdoor ethic**. Listed here are the seven principles of the **Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills and Ethics**.

- 1.) Plan ahead and prepare
- 2.) Travel on durable surfaces
- 3.) Dispose of waste properly
- 4.) Leave what you find
- 5.) Observe campfire regulations
- 6.) Respect wildlife
- 7.) Be considerate of others

An ethical person knowing the difference between right and wrong; will conduct themselves with these seven Rules above as a guide to enjoy and protect the environment -- the natural resources -- for the present and the future. The users of our parks, beaches, forests and trails have a responsibility to protect and improve this often fragile environment for the generations to come, and because it is the **right and ethical thing** to do. (continued on page 3)

The Back Yard



This is the time of year that we keep the binoculars and Peterson's Field Guide on the kitchen

counter near the window to the back yard. For many of us in the greater Upton State Forest area our windows look toward the forest.

The Northern Juncos are still with us but will be heading north soon. Our summer friends are returning one at a time. "Foxy" the Fox Sparrow was at the feeder on March 26th for the first time this year. He has returned as early as January 5th in 1991 (maybe he never left) and as late as April 30 in 1990. The Pine Warbler was on the suet for the first time April 14th this year.

It has been a strange winter. We had a Northern Flicker with us most of the winter. Bluebirds have been around off and on for several years during the winter. This month we saw the first crow we have seen on Ridge Rd. in five or six years since the population was decimated, presumably by a virus.

Before I retired I used to plan my spring vacation for the first week of May to watch for the Northern Oriole and Rose Breasted Grosbeak. They arrive in time for the bloom on the Quince Bush.

Our yard has changed over the 34 years we have lived here. The edge has changed, trees have grown, some of the first growth trees are gone, predators have increased and man is changing the climate. The rabbits and partridge were numerous when we came and now we strain to hear a lonely partridge on a drumming log.

Soon we will open our home in the North Country. I will look for the Northern Juncos and wonder if perhaps

one of them was a visitor on Ridge Rd. in Upton.

Remember that if you don't want to attract skunks, raccoons, mice and other assorted wildlife close to your home that you should be taking in your feeders soon. Before you put them back next fall don't forget to clean and disinfect them.

Thank you to Rich Johnson for sharing his wonderful wildlife photos with us. Fifty one people enjoyed his presentation on a snowy March night.

I would like to hear from you about the wildlife in your yard. Maybe one of you would like to do a regular column with reports from the area or share wildlife photos you have taken. Let me hear from you at 508-529-6610 or fusf@charter.net. *Ellen*

Walking Hiking and Beyond (cont.)

In May, my hiking buddy and I **plan** to hike the Mid-State Trail, 92 miles north from Rhode Island to the New Hampshire border adding 21 miles to North Pack Mountain in Greenfield, NH for a 113-mile hike. Our Guidebooks are by Globe Pequot Press, *Hiking Massachusetts* and *AMC Massachusetts Trail Guide*. This hike will be done on 9 or 10 individual day hikes with member Norm Fahy doing "sherpa" duty by dropping off and picking us up every day. Along the way, **we will strictly follow the seven LNT Rules**. We will also note the condition of the trail and the State Forests we pass through and report on what is pertinent and applicable to Upton State Forest.

Please have a great and safe hiking season.

If any of you are doing long distance hikes this year we hope that you will contribute reports to share in the newsletter. Please contact Ellen Arnold or John Fahy. *John*

Upton Pictures at Smithsonian!

It came to our attention that the Smithsonian Institution has pictures of the CCC Camp at USF so we gave them a call. Much to our delight not only did they locate twelve pictures but sent us Xerox copies.

The pictures include men planting trees on Park Rd., the camp band, an awards presentation with the water tower in the background, enrollees searching for a lost child and practicing fire suppression with "Indian Cans", an interior of a barracks, the Company soccer team and others. The clarity of the pictures is excellent.

The Historic Resources Committee has decided to raise the money to purchase copies of these pictures at 600dpi for a cost of \$260.00. Anyone wishing to donate toward their purchase can send a check to Friends of Upton State Forest, PO Box 258, Upton, MA 01568. Enclose a note indicating that it is to be used toward the pictures.

Heritage Corridor Celebration!

In March the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor held their annual dinner and reauthorization party. Barbara Burke, Bill and Agnita Knott and Ellen and Russ Arnold represented the Friends. The five year reauthorization is important because of the federal resources it makes available to Upton and the other Corridor towns.

Historic Resources Committee Report

At the first meeting Steve Warren and Ellen Arnold were selected as co-chairmen. Possible projects and areas of research were discussed with the decision to prioritize these at our next meeting. The committee invites anyone interested in the history of USF to join them at their meetings.

CCC Day at the State House



CCC Alumni being honored on CCC Day at the State House

March 30 was CCC Day at the State House. During the ceremony the 100,000 men that served in the "C's" from Massachusetts were honored. In addition it is the 50th Anniversary of the Student Conservation Association and their 10th Anniversary in our state. CCC Alumni passed a ceremonial shovel to the youth of the SCA to carry on the legacy. A young man from Milton was honored because his Eagle Scout project restored CCC sites at Blue Hills Reservation.

Sponsors included Senators Augustus and Morrissey as well as Representative Peterson. Representative Rush and Priscilla Geigis, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) also spoke.

Representing Upton State Forest and FUSF were Bill Annese, Ellen Arnold, Barbara Burke, Frank Evans (CCC Alumnus), Agnita Knott, Christina MacConnell, John Pelczarski, Irene and Romuald Radziewicz, Joan Shanahan, Val Stegemoen and Joan Varney. Both Joan Varney and Christina MacConnell are daughters of CCC Alumni.

Before the ceremony we toured the Nurses Hall, Grand Staircase area and located our town flags in the Hall of Flags. After the ceremony the Upton delegation was given a tour of the Senate Chamber and the office of Senator Augustus by his staff.



CCC Day at Upton State Forest

May 26, 2007



In partnership with the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Friends of Upton State Forest and Upton Historical Society cordially invite you to CCC Day at Upton State Forest. The public is welcome. Rain or shine. Children welcome. Afternoon events free.

Noon ~ combined picnic ~ Upton Historical Society, Friends of Upton State Forest and their guests ~ cold buffet

Picnic Tickets ~ Adults \$8.00

Children 10 and under \$5.00

- 1 PM ~ Tree dedication in honor of the men of Camp SP25 CCC at Upton State Forest.
- 1:30 Fireside chats begin. Join us at the fireplace. We will invite Civilian Conservation Corps alumni to share their memories of life in the “C’s” and others to share their memories of Upton State Forest. This will be captured on video. Assistive listening devices will be available.
- 1:30 Trail walks begin. There will be a long hike with Ranger Val Stegemoen to view CCC sites within the forest and a short hike to view historic cellar holes.
- 2:00 Children’s games and scavenger hunt begin.
- Ongoing ~ Indoor displays, historic CCC power point, dessert, coffee, raffles and more.

RSVP for picnic only:

fusf@charter.net

Ellen 508-529-6610

Barbara 508-529-6600



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Upton State Forest

- April 24** Tree planting 11AM
Headquarters Area
Arbor Day & Earth Day
Refreshments to follow
- April 29** Work party at USF
Details on page 3
- May 14** Trails Committee
Meeting, 7 PM
Upton Senior Center
- May 21** Historical Resources
Committee, 7 PM
Upton Senior Center
- May 22** 10 AM Work party to
clean building for picnic
- May 25** 10 AM Work party-set up
for picnic and CCC Day
- May 26** Noon-combined picnic
with Upton Historical
Society at USF-see pg 5
1 PM-CCC Day at USF
(see flyer-page 5)
- May 30** Board Meeting, 7 PM
Place TBA
- June 18** Historic Resources
Committee, 7 PM
Upton Senior Center
- June 19** Trails Committee
Meeting, 7 PM
Upton Senior Center

Quote of the Month – *Robert Frost*

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.

Partners in Parks Conference

There is a Partners in Parks Conference on June 9 at Worcester Technical High School. Registration is between 8 and 9 with a full day of speakers, workshops and performing artists. Lt. Gov. Murray has accepted an invitation and Gov. Patrick has been invited. There is a \$35.00 fee that includes lunch.

If anyone is interested in attending let me know as soon as possible. FUSF has a scholarship for one person to attend and the Board has voted up to \$35.00 for a second person to go.

More information is available at <http://www.conservationandrecreationcampaign.org/> or call Ellen at 508-529-6610.

Upton Open Space Committee (uptonopenspace@charter.net)

- May 20** Hike at Stefans Farm
1 PM meet at the power
lines on Mechanic St.
508-529-6811 or
508-529-3709

Great Grafton Geocache!

- June 2** Registration 9AM to 1PM
at Grafton High School.
Beginner seminars all day at Brigham Hill Community Barn. Sponsors-Tufts University, Grafton Land Trust, Grafton Schools and the Brigham Hill Barn

Yard Sale – September 8

To donate items contact Ellen Arnold, John Fahy, Norm Fahy, Mary Fedorczuk or fusf@charter.net. Pick up can be arranged.