# FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST NEWSLETTER

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April showers bring May flowers and we certainly had our share of rain in April. In addition to the rain, April also brought in a month of lockdown thanks to Covid-19. The Friends board certainly hope you are safe and have been managing the stay-at-home directive.

As with most crises, people seem to rise to the occasion by volunteering, helping neighbors and finding new ways to cope. You've probably noticed that more people are out walking around their neighborhoods and enjoying the outdoors. As a result, Upton State Forest has been getting lots of visitors during some of the nicer weather we've had recently. Parking lots are full with family and friends enjoying all that the park has to offer. For the most part, visitors are respecting the social distancing guideline which helps keep us all safe. DCR has posted the social distancing guidelines I've included here.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has forced the cancellation of our program on the History of the Blackstone River scheduled in March, Park Serve Day scheduled in April and our pot luck supper scheduled in May. Only time will tell as to whether we will be able to schedule these later in the year, so stay tuned.

The Board of Directors' are taking advantage of Zoom to hold our monthly meetings…..it's a great way for us to continue our work.

# President Bill Taylor

One outcome of the COVID-19 stay-at-home order has been an increase in visits to Upton State Forest and Upton's conservation and open space areas. Marcella and I have been hiking the trails in these areas and have found that collectively trail-users are following the social distancing rules, leashing dogs, and carrying out what was carried in. Our experience is that people are respectful of fellow visitors and the properties. We are fortunate to have these areas to visit and for me, and I imagine for others, they have been of special solace during these difficult times. If you find that the Upton State Forest parking lots are crowded, or if you just want to explore someplace new, consider visiting Upton's open space and conservation areas. Maps can be found on Upton's web site showing the parking areas and the trails and there are kiosks with trail maps at the trailheads. Wherever you visit, be safe and follow DCR's guidelines on how to safely visit state parks during COVID-19. I look forward to seeing you out there, although at a distance. Bill.
(Here is the link to the Upton trail maps: https://www.uptonma.gov/land-stewardship-committee/pages/upton-conservation-land-and-trail-maps)

Article:
Learn more about and comment on Upton's 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Upton Open Space Committee is holding a virtual meeting on Thursday, May 28, at 7:00 p.m. at which the public will have the opportunity to learn more about and to comment on Upton's new Open Space and Recreation plan. The plan includes an inventory of Upton's open spaces and natural resources, an analysis of community needs, goals and objectives, and a 7-year action plan. For this version of the plan, an open space and recreation survey was conducted and almost 900 responses were received. The presentation will include a summary of the survey results. One thing that was clear from the survey is that Upton State Forest is an important part of Upton's open space resources. The link to the virtual meeting and a call-in number will be included with the agenda posted on the Town of Upton's website. The plan can be viewed at: https://www.uptonma.gov/open-space-committee/pages/open-space-recreation-plan-2020. If you have any questions please call Bill Taylor at 508-529-6369.

# Welcome New Members

William and Ruth Shelley, 16 Hickory Lane, Upton

## FUSF Board of Directors

Bill Taylor, President
Joyce Sandvik, Vice President
Mary McManus, Secretary
Chris Scott, Treasurer
Agnita Knott, Membership
Members-at-Large

- Alisa Bernat
- Suzanne Nicholas

# Earth Day – 50 Years on April 22

On April 22, 1970 Americans took part in the first Earth Day. Denis Hayes was selected by Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson, Earth Day founder, to organize the first Earth Day.

The legacy of Earth Day is legislation such as the Clean Air Amendments of 1970, Clean Water Act. The Endangered Species Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act are a few of those that were also passed. Climate change is an emerging crisis that Earth Day can help provide awareness and focus on.

Also on this day, naturalist and conservationist John Muir was born. John was an avid supporter of nature and all things wild who fought to protect places like Yosemite, Sequoia, Grand Canyon and Mt. Rainier as national parks. He had a strong relationship with President Theodore Roosevelt and was instrumental in working with him to create our national park system.

For additional information on John and his life's work, visit:
https://www.nps.gov/bestideapeople/muir.html?fbclid=IwAR0n_dRNjd5D-uCRBRznWktbbI49FAc_YAj2tNv1GPNSYbqJPTB9b2RWlHM

# Whitehall State Park BOG Bridge

Contributed by Mary McManus

Whitehall State Park bog bridge project put on hold for a second time this spring.

With camps and summer camps not part of the Governor's Phase I reopening plan, a bridge project co-sponsored by DCR and Friends Of Whitehall (FOW) has been delayed again. In April, the Student Conservation Association (SCA) had planned to begin construction on 3 badly needed Gadbury Type bog crossings on a section of the east side perimeter trail of Lake Whitehall. The project was delayed until June due to concerns of the coronavirus. Because the SCA work is not in Phase I of Governor Baker's state reopening plan, the project has been put on hold again for at least another 3 weeks. According to Kevin R. Hollenbeck, DCR Central Valley District Manager, "if the SCA does start up this summer we will have to look at which projects to do. Whitehall would be one of the ones I would recommend doing." Hopkinton DCR Forest and Parks Supervisor Rich Trubiano will continue to monitor the situation and keep FOW up-to-date on any new developments.

A busy day at the park
Pic by Ellen Arnold

# Calendar of Events

**Summer**
**Hikes with Bill Taylor – schedule coming soon**

**September**
**9/26 –** BSTRA pumpkin ride – no parking at the headquarters

**October**
**10/25 –** BSTRA luau ride – no parking at the headquarters

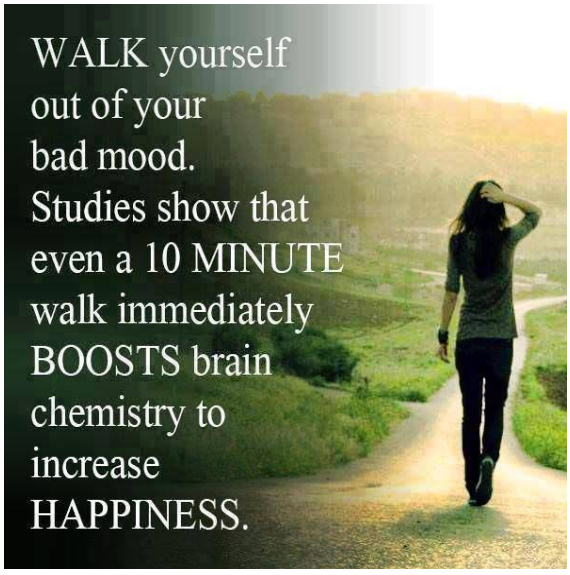
Be sure to frequent our **Facebook Page** for great nature pics, local info on our environment and announcements of future events.

**Board of Directors meetings** – 3rd Monday of each month @ 7:00 PM
in the 1st floor conference room at the Upton Town Hall.

**Watch for future programs and events as our calendar for 2020 unfolds!**

## FUSF Merchandise for Sale

Visit the FUSF store on our website to order tees, sweatshirts, caps, vests, and tote bags. Go to www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org




Available at amazon

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**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 two names)

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____State_____Zip code_____

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 | Historic 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 12/31/20) (Circle one)

Family of 2 adults & children (under age 18) ---------- $37.50
Individual ----------$25.00
Senior 65+----------$12.50
Student full time with current student id ----------$12.50

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

**(* Please note: There is a $25.00 charge for returned checks.)**

Below this line is for office use only:
Payment: Cash Check # Amount paid: Category: Year Paid:
Cards issued by: Newsletter address entered by: