

Friends of Spy Pond Park Newsletter

Spring 2015

The Friends of Spy Pond Park at the Robbins Library

By Sally Hempstead

PHOTO BY KAREN L. GROSSMAN



Friends of Spy Pond Park Robbins Library display in March

The Robbins Library in Arlington Massachusetts was built in 1892 in the style of a Renaissance Palace. The front entrance was modelled after The Cancelleria Palace in Rome. As you enter through this lovely doorway, immediately on the left there is an area provided by the library for displays by non-profit organizations. In 2015, the month of March was dedicated to anything and everything about Spy Pond and The Friends of Spy Pond Park. A lovely photo board depicting many of the activities available in the park as well as flora and fauna indigenous to the area created a colorful backdrop. It showcased many of our members and their families enjoying all that Spy Pond and Spy Pond Park have to offer. One could also page through an adjacent notebook containing newsletters from prior years enabling those interested to follow our progress in beautifying and rehabilitating the area. Most of this work is done by volunteers like you and by volunteer organizations throughout greater Boston. The FSPP supplied information on the local geese population that is multiplying rapidly. PLEASE DON'T FEED THE GEESE! It is illegal by town bylaw and injurious to the geese and the park. The Arlington Advocate on Thursday, March 12, even wrote an article on this topic and featured our signature goose in the accompanying photo: <http://arlington.wickedlocal.com/article/20150311/NEWS/150318814/1995/NEWS>

Our display featured various handouts on how to handle the geese situation and keep them from eroding the park soil by eating all the grass and leaving droppings on everywhere. Hand-

outs of the schedule for our upcoming Work Days were available, one a month from April through October and you can also find the schedule on our website and in this newsletter. Green membership forms were on hand and we hope any of you passing by took one and filled it out so that you can become a Friend of Spy Pond Park. These will also be on supply at our booth on Work Days, online, and at multiple events in Arlington. The Friends of Spy Pond Park hopes you had a chance to view our display at the Robbins Library and we thank the library for instituting this monthly opportunity for all non-profit organizations.

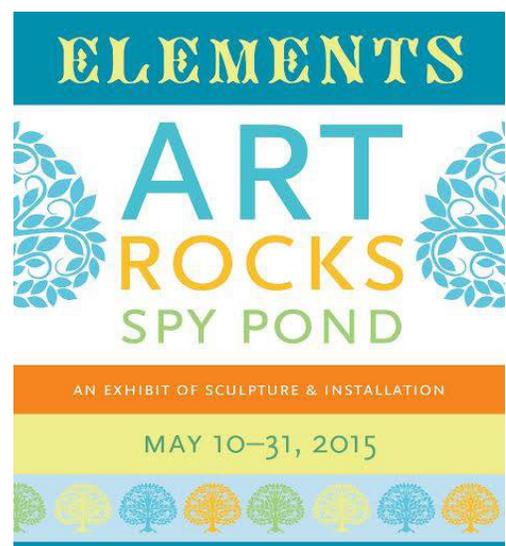
Art Rocks Spy Pond

By Adria Arch

Arlington Public Art, in collaboration with Arlington Recreation, presents a temporary public art exhibition, "Elements: Art Rocks Spy Pond", from May 10 through 31 in the park. Thanks to a generous grant from the Arlington Cultural Council, a local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, we are able to feature 12 sculptures and installations. Artists applied to be part of the exhibit from nearby towns as well as Arlington, and our juror, Lorri Berenberg, chose work that was both appropriate for the space as well as aesthetically interesting. We don't want to give away too much about the exciting choices on view, but we hope that everyone will join us for a free opening reception in the park on Saturday, May 9 from 3 to 5 pm. Art Rocks Spy Pond is our second annual temporary public art exhibit in a park.

For more information, check out our website:
<http://arlingtonpublicart.blogspot.com>

Questions? Email arpublicart@gmail.com.



2015 Work and Fun Days in Spy Pond Park

By Lally Stowell, Beautification Committee

The FSPP monthly Saturday Work Days begin on April 18 this year. We encourage all who enjoy Spy Pond Park to come and join our efforts to maintain and preserve this unique spot for the many families and visitors who come from all over throughout the year. We need your help pulling weeds and invasive plants, removing fallen branches, clearing the beaches and playground, and picking up litter. Our Work Days are scheduled for three hours, but any amount of time is greatly appreciated. A lot can be accomplished, even in a short amount of time. This is an opportunity to meet and work side by side with others who love the park and enjoy helping to keep it looking beautiful. It is also an opportunity to learn more about native and invasive plants.

PHOTO BY JOHN LAPHAM



Anne Ellinger (left) and Annie Hoffman are exhausted, but happy with their achievement. Digging out the storm drains under the 5-foot snow banks at Linwood Circle and at the corners of Belknap and Linwood was quite a job!

For each monthly Work Day, we will provide photographs and mounted samples of plants and flowers we work to preserve and invasive plants that we need to prune or remove. These samples will be available to inform and guide volunteers. Members of the Beautification Committee will be available to assign tasks, work together with volunteers, answer questions and welcome suggestions.

Below is a list of 2015's Work Days. We encourage you to come as often as possible and to encourage your friends, family, members of your community groups and colleagues at work to participate. High school students can earn community service credits. We look forward to a record number of eager volunteers this year! Please join us to help keep Spy Pond Park looking beautiful or assist in providing activities on Spy Pond Fun Day.

April 18 1-4 p.m. (rain date April 19 1-4 p.m.)

May 23 1-4 p.m. (rain date May 24 1-4 p.m.)

May 30 1-4 p.m. (rain date May 31 1-4 p.m.)

Spy Pond Fun Day*

June 20 1-4 p.m. (rain date June 21 1-4 p.m.)

July 18 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (rain date July 19 1-4 p.m.)

August 22 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (rain date August 23 1-4 p.m.)

September 26 1-4 p.m. (rain date September 27 1-4 p.m.)

October 17 1-4 p.m. (rain date October 18 1-4 p.m.)

***Spy Pond Fun Day includes: children's activities in Spy Pond Park sponsored by the FSPP, Arlington Land Trust boat trips and tours of Elizabeth Island for visitors, Elements: Art Rocks Spy Pond sponsored by the Public Art Committee and the Arlington Cultural Council, the Spy Pond Splash sponsored by Vision 2020's Spy Pond Committee, and Water Quality testing by the Mystic River Watershed Association.**

Liability waivers are required for all participants in the above Work and Fun Day activities. If you are working, please download the form from the FSPP website www.friendsofspypondpark.org, fill it out and bring it with you. Children below 18 years of age must have parental signature to participate in Spy Pond Park activities sponsored by the Friends of Spy Pond Park.

Register at www.app.givebacktime.org to document your volunteer time for your school or workplace and find out about other volunteer opportunities.

Spy Pond Fun Day

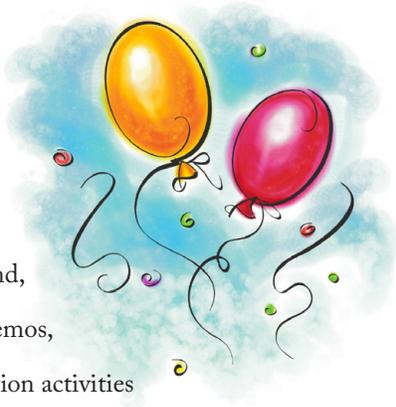
May 30 1-4 PM

By Betsy Leondar-Wright

Spy Pond Park will see the biggest hoopla ever on Saturday May 30 (rain date 5/31)!

Spy Pond Fun Day will involve:

- Boat rides,
- Art installations,
- Fishing,
- Music,
- Tours of Elizabeth Island,
- Water quality testing demos,
- Crafts & Nature education activities



And more....

The festival will take place on the last day of a month long, juried art exhibit in the park, "Elements: Art Rocks Spy Pond", with eleven pieces of art along the path through the park by Arlington Public Art and Arlington Park and Recreation Department. It is partially funded by a grant from the Arlington Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Sponsored by:

- Friends of Spy Pond Park
- Spy Pond Committee
- Arlington Land Trust
- Arlington/Belmont Crew Team
- Mystic River Watershed Association

Brad Barber is coordinating this broad coalition. To join in the planning of this extravaganza notify him at: bradb@shore.net or 781-646-1744.

Volunteers are needed to staff booths, load boats, perform music, set up and clean up. Musicians, please contact Jason Fligg at mrfligg@yahoo.com or 781-724-7638. Craftspeople and general volunteers, please contact Betsy Leondar-Wright at Betsy@classmatters.org 781-648-0630.

Save the Date!

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

It has seemed like winter would never come to an end with all the snow we've had! However, spring on the calendar is finally here and soon we'll be back in Spy Pond Park. I hope to see many of you there to help make the park beautiful for all the events that we've planned for May. We'll have to assess the condition of the park once the snow melts and I'm sure we'll have lots of work to do to get everything in order once again. Foremost, curiosity abounds for our seeing how the new plants fare when the perennials begin to come up. I'm sure you're eager, too, to welcome the spring greenery and the wonderful blossoms throughout the park. I've noticed that the few warm days brought forth the signs of rebirth with yellow blooms on the willow tree branches. As I write this message they are transformed back to winter in the midst of St. Patrick's Day snowflakes! Oh, New England weather! Don't you love its unpredictability?

Watch your mail for our annual membership dues solicitation in May, too. We are grateful to those who continue to support our mission of supporting the preservation, enhancement, and enjoyment of Spy Pond Park and Spy Pond as natural and community resources. FSPP supports:

- Ongoing protection and beautification of the park,
- Preservation of open green space and wild life,
- Prevention and reduction of pond pollution, and
- Use of the park as a community and cultural resource

We will be checking the FSPP PO box for your donations beginning in May.

I've seen the accepted installations in the juried competition: "Elements: Art Rocks Spy Pond" and can't wait to see them in our park. I'm so glad Joe Connelly, Parks and Recreation Director selected Spy Pond Park for the location this year. I'm also looking forward to your participation in the wonderful "Spy Pond Fun Day" on May 30! Great things are going to happen in Spy Pond Park, soon!

Sincerely,

Karen L. Grossman
President
Friends of Spy Pond Park

Community Events

Earth Day Events: April 25th and April 26th

Each spring community groups band together to plan **Earth Day events to help restore the Mystic River Watershed.** Shoreline and park cleanups, garden cleaning and planting, and bicycle and pedestrian path maintenance are among the activities at these family-friendly events. Additional details forthcoming - please check the MyRWA website: www.mysticriver.org

Saturday, May 16, 9 AM – 1 PM (rain date May 17)

11th Annual Spy Pond Trails Day: Sat., May 16, 9 AM-1 PM (rain date May 17)

Meet your neighbors and learn valuable tips for maintaining your own property. Please join us on Spy Pond, Arlington, for our eleventh annual day of trail maintenance, pruning vistas, bagging litter, controlling invasive plants, and generally improving this scenic slice of public land so enjoyed by all. Join us for as little or as much as you like. Equipment and snacks will be provided, but please pack your own lunch for after. This event is hosted by the Spy Pond Environmental Task Group (a committee of volunteers working in partnership with the town) and a variety of other organizations, including the Appalachian Mountain Club. C'mon down and join the party! Participants should bring sturdy footwear, work clothes, water, hat and sunscreen, rain gear. Liability waivers will be available and must be signed by all participants (under 18 need approval from—and are preferably accompanied by—a parent or guardian). Location is along the path that parallels Route 2, between Lake St. and Pleasant St. Recommended parking: exit 60 off Rt. 2, head towards Mass. Ave. (N) on Lake St., first left onto Colonial Drive, left onto Roanoke, left and park along Spy Pond Parkway. For further details, call (781) 641-2506, or visit our website: www.arlingtonma.gov/spypond

Mystic River Herring Run and Paddle: Sun., May 17, 9 AM (bike)/11 AM (paddle)



The 19th annual **Mystic River Herring Run and Paddle** celebrates the return of the herring to their freshwater homes and brings people to the banks of the Mystic River in Somerville. Sign-up today for the 5K road race, 3, 9 or 12 mile paddling

races, or as an event volunteer! Don't miss the bicycle tour led by Bike to the Sea, children's activities, music and more! Go to <http://mysticriver.org/herring-run-paddle/> for more details.

Cause + Event Boston 5k: Sunday, May 17



Sunday, May 17, 2015, runners will gather in Arlington, MA for the **Cause + Event Boston 5k** to race on behalf of their favorite nonprofits. Unlike other charity races, which focus on one cause at a time, Cause + Event allows runners to choose the Guidestar registered 501(c)3 nonprofit they want to support. That organization could be YOURS!

THREE MAIN WAYS you can GET INVOLVED to help the Friends of Spy Pond Park:

1. Register a Runner or Team

They'll donate a minimum of \$15 to your cause for each runner that selects you. All it takes is just ONE runner to register and run as an individual or start a team! You can also have your runner or team start a fundraising page for the event, which is conveniently integrated with our registration system.

The more runners you have, the more money you raise -- but there's an extra incentive to register more runners: the team with the most participants on race day will receive an additional \$250 donation to their cause!

2. Provide 5+ Volunteers for a FREE RACE DAY EXPO BOOTH

Want a free booth at our race day expo? Lend us five or more volunteers from your organization to assist with packet pick-up or race day logistics on May 17 and we'll give you a booth at the race to promote your nonprofit and raise awareness for your mission. This opportunity is limited to the first five nonprofits to register five or more volunteers!

3. Provide 10+ Volunteers for \$100 DONATION

Rather have cash instead of an expo booth? Just provide us with 10 or more volunteers for packet pick-up or race day logistics on May 17 and we'll donate \$100 to your organization. This opportunity is limited to the first five nonprofits to register 10 or more volunteers!

To provide volunteers in exchange for a race day expo booth or \$100 donation, email us at causeandeventboston@gmail.com today!

Ice out on Spy Pond

By Bill Eykamp

I'm not in control of when you will have a chance to read this, any more than I can control ice out. I truly hope it is no longer timely, but...

I've observed the "last days of ice" for many decades. I find that no matter what, it is usually out by St. Patrick's Day, give or take a week. In 2005, there was a tiny remnant on April Fool's Day. It is certain to be late in 2015.

Some lake scientists in Minnesota published a blurb many years ago that fits so well with my observations that I'm going to pass on their major findings.

When the pond ice is snow covered, the snow both reflects the light and insulates the ice. This year, even with the snow, the ice continued to get thicker, and that is unusual. After all, the bottom of the pond is still warmer than the water because of the stored heat from summer.

It got thick enough to discourage my digging holes, but the ice fishermen reported 18" plus. I've seen thicker, but not by much. An engineering handbook quotes the Army Corps of Engineers as saying 15" is adequate for railway trains.

Eventually, the snow thins and the sun intensifies. Light can then penetrate the ice, and amazingly, the ice acts like glass in a greenhouse. The water beneath the ice gains heat faster than it would if the ice were absent. The ice begins to melt, and the counterintuitive fact is that pond ice melts from the bottom!

Now, here comes the tricky part. At some thickness, at around 6" thick or so, the ice is transformed into something that looks like long water candles when viewed from underneath. It is vertical ice crystals interspersed with water, and the features are a few millimeters in diameter. It still looks like solid ice from the top. Because this structure conducts light very well, the ice turns black. It also conducts heat well. This is the begin-

ning of the end; time to put away the skates for the season. The ice is turning "rotten." Many of us have put a leg through it at this stage.

The rest happens fast. A little wind comes up and the ice begins to break up around the edges. Then it starts breaking apart into large sections, with open water in between. I've rowed between these floating floes, only to find myself trapped when the wind shifted. I just had to wait it out.

The last scene has the wind breaking the candle-like structures into little pieces that tinkle when they pile up on the leeward shore. It is a pleasant sound of Spring.



PHOTO BY KAREN L. CROSSMAN

Johanna Soros meets new friends at Linwood Beach on a sunny day late in January

**Friends of Spy Pond Park
next meetings
at
Karen Grossman's
Sunday, April 26, 2015 &
Sunday, June 7, 2015
both at 7:00 p.m.
32 Hamilton Road #402**

RSVP (optional) to 781-646-5990
email fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Park on Linwood Street off Mass. Ave. or on Lakehill off
Lake St. at the far end of the complex.

To join Friends of Spy Pond Park...

Send your annual dues (\$15 individual, \$25 household, \$5 low-income) to:
FSPP, P.O. Box 1051
Arlington, MA 02474-0021
For more information, call a Friends officer.

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| President: Karen L. Grossman | (781) 646-5990 |
| General Vice-President: Open | |
| Treasurer: Marshall McCloskey | (617) 548-9877 |
| Recording Secretary: Beverly Williams | (781) 316-1917 |
| VPs for Communication & Outreach: | |
| Sally Hempstead | (860) 944-1370 |
| Jamie Ciocco | jamcio@gmail.com |
| Chair for Publicity: Elaine Crowder | (781) 648-1927 |
| Videographer: Mithilesh Sharma | (781) 777-2157 |
| Beautification Committee: | |
| Betty Athanasoulas | (781) 646-1343 |
| Gail McCormick | (781) 646-0614 |
| Richard Norcross | (781) 641-2404 |
| Lally Stowell | (781) 777-2759 |
| Beverly Williams | (781) 316-1917 |
| Elizabeth Karpati | (781) 643-4172 |
| Webmaster: Fred Moses | fred@fmoses.com |
| Co-Chairs for Outreach/Park Events: | |
| Betsy Leondar-Wright | (781) 648-0630 |
| Jason Fligg | (781) 724-7638 |
| Fundraising Chair: Jason Fligg | (781) 724-7638 |

Newsletter contributions and general comments can be sent to
fspp@friendsofspypondpark.org

Friends of Spy Pond Park • <http://www.friendsofspypondpark.org> • P.O. Box 1051 • Arlington, MA 02474-0021



PHOTO BY FRED MOSES

Hockey on smooth, January ice this year was wonderful!