



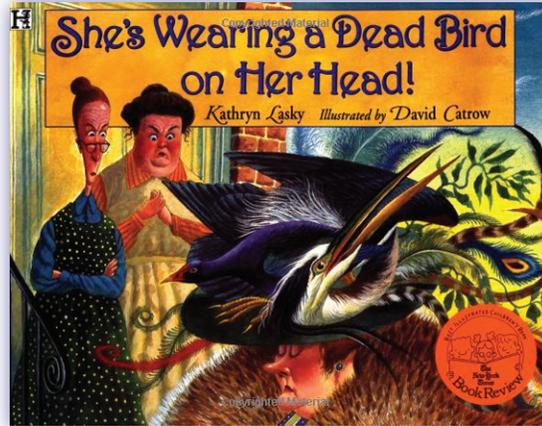
Friends of Hall's Pond

Spring/Summer 2013

A Letter from the Co-Presidents

Ellen Forrester and Betsy Shure Gross

IN 1997, Kathryn Lasky published *She's Wearing A Dead Bird On Her Head* which won The New York Times Book Review's Best Illustrated Children's Book designation.



communities and “they decided to bring their cause to the children ... and soon there were over ten thousand junior members of the Audubon Society in the State of Massachusetts.”

Ms. Lasky tells the story of Minna Hall, a Brookline resident for whose family our Hall's Pond is named, and of her cousin, Harriet Hemenway “a very proper Boston lady.”

In 1896 these two volunteers, as many know, began a campaign because “huge populations of birds, from egrets to pheasants to owls to warblers, were being slaughtered for hat decoration—none were spared.”

These two local women were wise, very wise, campaigners: they enlisted the leaders in their neighborhoods, the activists in their

By 1903 and 1904, because of their work, Acts were passed “to protect herons and bitterns, two popular hat birds, from hatmakers, forbidding them to sell, display, or possess the feathers. In 1904 there was another victory when a law was passed to protect shore, marsh and beach birds. Soon there were laws against hunting birds during their breeding seasons. And then a federal law was passed preventing the importation of feathers from Europe and the tropics for hats.”



Ellen and Betsy, at a recent Spring Community Day event.

The *Friends of Hall's Pond*, now celebrating our 38th year of volunteerism

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SPRING COMMUNITY DAY

at Hall's Pond Sanctuary

Sunday, May 5th,

11am to 2 pm

Planting, family fun and more!

ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 9

Please join us for the ANNUAL MEETING of The Friends of Hall's Pond

2-4: Tours of the Sanctuary

4-6: Annual Meeting and Reception at Brookline BookSmith, 279 Harvard St.

SANCTUARY NEWS



“Adopt the pace of Nature, her secret is patience.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Spring/Summer 2013

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Hall's Pond: A Park Rangers Take

by Brandon Schmitt, Park Ranger,
Division of Parks and Open Space, Town of Brookline



Park Ranger Brandon Schmitt orients Brookline Summer campers to Amory Playground last summer before touring Hall's pond and helping with removal of invasive plants. Campers learned the importance of native species and basic principals of habitat management.

AMIDST the drone of car engines zipping down Route 9, the bustle of commerce in Brookline village, and the regular interruptions of passing green-line trains, there are tranquil places in Brookline. The seasons define these special havens: humid summer evenings are marked by the croaking of bullfrogs, fall waves goodbye to greenery and welcomes bursts of red, orange and yellow, in winter stillness one can hear the swoosh of a downhill sled, and in the spring one can find flowers blooming under every tree.

Brookline is a truly unique place to be a Park Ranger. Parks and open space are in high demand here, and the mixed-use and historical aspects of the Brookline park system offer

park guests infinite ways to interact with the parks. Brookline really is land of discovery, where every intersection leads to an historic feature or beautiful green space. Fortunately, the Town's legacy of citizen leaders knew how important these places were, and the current legion of advocates continues their work today.



Bruce Wolff

Of all the parks in Brookline, certainly one of the most special is Hall's Pond. On a visit to Hall's pond, one is virtually guaranteed to see wildlife. On a very short walk, a visitor to Hall's pond can encounter numerous birds, turtles and frogs, and common mammals like squirrels and chipmunks, even the occasional fox. Keeping a watchful eye over the pond is the regal resident Blue Heron, while ducks busily patrol the shoreline. On a recent snow-blown visit to Hall's, guests conducting a winter bird count saw or heard the following species: Red-tailed hawk, Mourning Dove, Chickadee, Carolina Wren, and Blue Jay, among others.

Like other parks in Brookline, Amory Playground and Hall's Pond offer a variety of opportunities to connect with nature. Those looking for leisure can set up a picnic or lay in the grass, while others can play sports on the field, or go for a hike along the boardwalk and trails around the pond. Tending to this small, but wonderful sanctuary are the committed volunteers who maintain the natural balance and protect against the competing forces that threaten the delicate balance that makes Hall's pond such a diverse, and consequently dynamic ecosystem.

The echoes of Hemenway, Hall and Albrecht can regularly be heard in the creaking of knees and backs used to pull endless bittersweet, or plant new trees and shrubs. It is truly a pleasure to work at a place like Hall's pond with such a committed group of stewards. Through their efforts, they welcome the next round of stewards into this sanctuary, and promote an appreciation for beauty and the understanding that rest is not always idleness, and work is not always laborious.

As a Brookline Park Ranger, I am

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Bruce Wolff



Bruce Wolff

“The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Sanctuary Maintenance Team Welcomes Additional Volunteers

by Frank Caro, *Chair of the Maintenance Team*



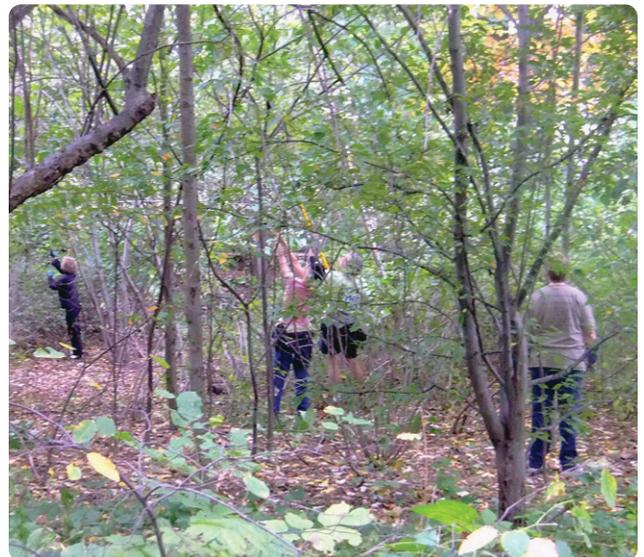
THE *Friends'* volunteer Sanctuary maintenance team welcomes additional members for the 2013 season. The team is active from early spring through late fall in keeping the formal garden attractive and controlling the growth of invasive species in the Sanctuary. The team complements the work done during the spring



and fall Community Days. All of the work done by the volunteers is consistent with the maintenance plan approved by the Conservation Commission in 2010.

Participation on the team is an excellent way to get exercise, learn about nurturing a nature preserve in an urban setting, and appreciate the beauty of the Sanctuary. The twice-monthly work sessions are scheduled on mornings that are most convenient for members of the team. Work sessions are announced a week or more in advance. Members come only as often as their schedules permit. For more information, contact volunteer coordinator, Frank Caro. The e-mail address is frank.g.caro@gmail.com or call 617-739-9228.

From early spring through late fall, a team of volunteers helps keep after the constant attention the Sanctuary needs to look as good as it does. Please join us whenever you can.



“For the environment after all is where we all meet; where we all have a mutual interest; it is one thing that all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become.”

— Lady Bird Johnson

Behind the Scenes at Hall’s Pond

by Tom Brady, *Conservation Administrator and Tree Warden, Town of Brookline*

AS we look to the Spring of 2013 our focus in the Conservation Office begins to turn towards the annual rebirth of our conservation sanctuaries. Our hope and expectation is that each year the Spring will bring an influx of visitors from near and far who come to enjoy the splendor of Hall’s Pond and Amory Woods. As the visitors enjoy their experience they may not be aware of all the effort that takes place on a regular basis to maintain this unique piece of open space. The overall maintenance program is guided by our Hall’s Pond Sanctuary Work Plan which was developed jointly by the Brookline Conservation Commission and the



Town workers provide emergency repairs to the forebay grate due to recent storm damage.

Friends of Hall’s Pond. The maintenance needs can be broken down into two broad categories: horticulture-based activities and infrastructure-based activities.

Ongoing horticulture activities include work in and around the formal garden as well as work on the trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, and wetland systems that can be found throughout the Sanctuary. These activities include planting, pruning, management of invasive plants, and where appropriate, removal of plant materials. Working with the *Friends*, these are shared responsibilities, which are completed using volunteers, town forces, and contracted services.



The infrastructure maintenance activities encompass a wide array of items. These are managed and administered by the Town and are generally completed using either town forces or contracted services. This includes a number of items, including:

- Annual maintenance and upkeep of the underwater aeration mats as well as the solar panel which supports them.
- Regular cleanouts of the sediment forebay to remove accumulated sediment and prevent the material from entering Hall’s Pond.
- Application of new stone dust to the pathways each year.
- Regular repair and upkeep of the extensive boardwalk system, including all decks and railings.
- Ongoing tree pruning and hazardous tree removals.
- Ongoing non-native invasive plant management.
- Regular maintenance of the two entrance gates.
- Repair of any catastrophic events that may impact the sanctuaries such as wind events or flooding impacts. (Unfortunately we’ve had way too many of these in the past few years!)
- Regular maintenance of the physical structures and paved pathways in the Sanctuary.

As you can see there is a substantial amount of work that goes into maintaining the Sanctuary. So the next time you’re visiting, if you happen to see a crew of volunteers, perhaps some town forces, or a contractor doing some work to keep the Sanctuary in fine form, perhaps take a moment and provide a word of thanks.

Enjoy the Spring!

*“For in the true nature of things, If we rightly consider,
Every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold or silver.”*

— Martin Luther King

Nan's Meadow

by Ellen Forrester, Co-President

HAVE you noticed a change to the area near the gate to Hall's Pond Sanctuary? In the fall of 2011 the Town of Brookline, *Friends of Hall's Pond*, and Brookline Conservation Commission decided to reduce the amount of lawn in the sanctuary. We are helping the landscape change from a mown lawn to a more natural meadow. It may appear weedy at first (and has been) but this change will increase habitat for wildlife (birds, bees and butterflies) and also reduce maintenance in this area.

Succession, the process of change in the landscape from one habitat to another through time, is what the



Heather Charles, LIS



Asclepias incarnate, Swamp milkweed



Sporobolus heterolepis, Prairie dropseed



Schizachyrium scoparium, Little Bluestem



Spirea tomentosa, Steeplebush

Volunteers readying the area for the new meadow. Some of the plant selections used to begin the transformation are already in place.

Friends and the Town of Brookline are helping to happen in this area.

The space was left alone for most of a year so all of us could see what would establish naturally. Then at the Community Day in the spring of 2012, a number of native shrubs, grasses and perennials were added. Again this year, more plants will be added to help and speed up the establishment of the area and encourage wildlife.

The *Friends of Hall's Pond* will identify this natural area as *Nan's Meadow* to honor long time board member Dr. Anne St. Goar whose love of horticulture and nature continues with her commitment to the ongoing management of Hall's Pond Sanctuary.

“If no way be better than another, that you may be sure in Nature's Way.”

— Aristotle

Spring Sprouts Musings and Recollections

By Fred Bouchard (© 2013)
Photos by Shawn Carey except as noted

I LOVE going over old journals of my Hall's Pond prowls, especially just before spring again bursts forth. These much-edited snippets drawn from 1998 anticipate, then revel in, its vernal awakenings. I doubt that the primal drama will unfold much differently this year.



Mockingbird



White-breasted Nuthatch

branch. Three jays, mulling over bread crusts in the elbow of the huge fallen elm, skedaddle into the birches. The dog-walker clique is



Song Sparrow

branches make a broad, beige haze in the falling snow. The cedar platform exudes a whiff of leaf mulch, but no birds. No wrens in the oak pile. I bike to Peet's for a cup of bitter Yemeni.

March 30: S. Carey and I go for L. Kaplan's reported Fox Sparrow in the uplands — and find four under the pines and by the apple tree over the fence. And, in the pines, our two (first!) Phoebes, six Robins, and a startled Song Sparrow. No Sapsucker cruising Amory Woods. Is that a different Fox flock gathering by the water's edge? As I hop the fence, I glimpse one more

Feb 18: White mantle covers the Pond, with a black rim of thaw. It is snowing gently, deliberately as I lock my bike. The sentinel Mockingbird, flushed from his post in the berries by the Beacon Street gate, eyes me from a low



Eastern Phoebe

subdued, and distant crow-caws are muffled in the white. I don't go far on the path, scanning the cedars for nuthatches. The willow

where my bike is parked next to cedar behind chain-link in private yard. Great Blue hunkers on the usual roost 15' high over the wa-



Night-Heron, at HP

March 31: There's a Black-crowned Night-heron in the GBH's spot, another year first. I get a proprietary glow watching her from the gangplank over the rusty-looking oily water. The Great Blue clambers down from overhead onto a roost ten feet away, but doesn't stay long, with chatty people bustling through: with a 'kwaak!' he soars off toward the Charles, but the Night-heron remains calm, focused on fish.



Flicker

of mulch and poison ivy sproutlets. They mix in with House Sparrows, along the parking lot chain-link fence, and pick up a Song Sparrow for a minute.

This kind of day there's often

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First G. B. Heron at the Pond in 2010

ter. E. Donneweerd says the first bird this winter died, and this is his replacement; her schoolkids have championed the pond and monitor its denizens.



Titmouse

May 2: Grey drizzly 8am. Trees budding furiously, half-leaved. Great Blue hunched on the near stick in the water. Songs galore: Titmouse wheeters, Cardinal whoops, two male Redwings trade cackles, all occasionally punctuated by a mad-cap Flicker. White-throats in feeble voice — youngsters trying out? In fact, I see almost no adult birds among the 15-20 flitting across carpets



W.T. Sparrow

Bruce Wolff

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter.”

— Rachel Carson

Spring/Summer 2013

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Board Profile

FRED BOUCHARD

The *Friends of Hall's Pond* Board of Directors doffs its hat, and dedicates this edition of the Newsletter to our longtime board member, Fred Bouchard bird watcher extraordinaire. For his gift of time over time: abundant thanks.

Fred has been leading bird watching expeditions at Hall's Pond, sharing his talent and sharp eye, and educating people about the value of Hall's Pond as a sanctuary for resident and migrating species. His teaching skills have engendered lifelong pleasure for his groups of bird watchers and fostered our commitment to environmental protection and sanctuary management for our avian friends.

We acknowledge Fred's skills and his generosity and are always grateful for his participation in our stewardship endeavors..

*Thanks Fred! You walk in
Minna and Harriet's footsteps....*



Fred (in blue cap) often leads birding walks right here at Hall's Pond.



Most years Fred (center) joins fellow birders for a hawk watch at Lighthouse Point, Conn., followed by a gathering at the world famous Frank Pepe Pizzeria in New Haven.



Good birding at North Monomoy.

I met Fred Bouchard over twenty years ago on a birding trip to North Monomoy Island (Chatham) in search of shorebirds and terns. From that first meeting, Fred and I have been great friends in the world of birds, music and good food. We have teamed up with our "Bird Gang" every year for the past 17 years taking part in the Mass Audubon Bird-A-Thon, raising money for Norman Smith and Trailside Museum. We have traveled to Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania many times and Cape May in

New Jersey, in fact we were there in 2004 watching the Red Sox win their first World Series.

I moved to Cambridge in 1984 from Erie, Pennsylvania and have made many friends in my "new" home. Fred is without question one of the dearest and best friends I've made in all my years living in Massachusetts, I feel lucky and blessed to count Fred as a friend.

Shawn P. Carey, Migration Productions

“If the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy / If a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you / If the simple things of nature have a message that you understand / Rejoice, for your soul is alive.”

— Eleanor Duse

Local Business Owner and Friends Board Member

Dana Brigham, co-owner, Brookline Booksmith

WHY, you might ask, do those two things go together? Community is the answer. Brookline Booksmith has spent 51 years here, building a life in this town. That life covers not just our retail business but the business of connection, as well. Hall’s Pond is a gem of nature a few blocks from our store. It’s a place of respite, of inspiration and of education. That might well describe our store’s very essence. So, far from being an odd pairing, board membership is a great fit for me.

I’ve “only” been at the Booksmith for 31 years and a resident for 26. Part of my role at the store is to be the somewhat public face of it. That has afforded me the chance to sit on a number of boards, business and nonprofit. I’ve met numerous wonderful townfolk in this fashion. And had the opportunity to turn them into customers if they were not already. In turn, I’ve learned many layers of what makes this community so

very special—committed, passionate, very smart, very funny and very diverse people. Again, I see parallels with the people who work in our store and the very nature of being booksellers.

As it happens, I’m also fond of gardening though not very expert at it. Being involved with the Hall’s Board has allowed me to learn from very knowledgeable plant, tree and bird individuals. The sanctuary is truly a marvel. In these days of distress about and for our planet, knowing the value of our natural world has never been more important. The word gentle comes to mind when I think of Hall’s Pond and its stewards over many decades. Our world could use a lot more gentle.

I hope readers will get right out of their chairs and head down Beacon St. to Amory St. It’s beautiful in the Sanctuary and Amory Woods at all times of year. Then, whether a business person interested in doing well by doing good or a private individual wishing to make a meaningful contribution, contribute to and participate in the upkeep and survival of this treasure.

Booksmith: Latitude, North 42° 20.557’
Longitude, West 71° 07.307’

Hall’s Pond: Latitude, North, 42° 20.737’
Longitude, West 71° 06.739’

Walk this way to Hall’s Pond Nature Sanctuary

How many steps are there between Brookline Booksmith and Hall’s Pond ???

Starting at the Booksmith, walk left...

... and the intersection of Harvard and Beacon is only 31 steps away, left again,

heading inbound, the corner of Beacon and St. Paul takes 227 steps,

to Powell Street is another 149,

123 more to the alley before 1120 Beacon,

and you’re just 53 steps from Hall’s Pond! Bingo!

PHOTOS BY BRUCE WOLFF

There is no better place to read a book than Hall’s Pond Nature Sanctuary!

For further information please contact friendsofhallspod@gmail.com

“Spring is the time of plans and projects.”

— Leo Tolstoy



Celebrating the Town's purchase of the Sanctuary in January 1975 are (left to right): Conservation Commission Director Hooper Brooks, Sara Wallace, Sen Jack Backman, Merrill Diamond, Environmental Secretary Evelyn Murphy, Representative John Businger, and Conservation Commission Chair Mary Nelson.

Basic Principles of Stewardship for Community Volunteers

- Acknowledge the difference between the sanctuary's garden-like areas, which exist for the benefit of human visitors, and its natural areas, whose primary purpose is to feed and shelter wildlife.
- Minimize disturbance of plants, soil and water, especially in natural areas. Despite the best of intentions, cleanup efforts may cause significant damage.
- Work only on projects and in areas designated by the Commission.
- Remove or add plants only as directed by the Commission. Non-native invasive plant species require careful management over the long term.

From the "Hall's Pond Work Plan, Approved 7-20-10 by the Conservation Commission"

What is a Wildlife Sanctuary?

Hall's Pond is one of Brookline's three wildlife sanctuaries. It is owned by the Town and managed by the Brookline Conservation Commission. Brookline sanctuaries have been set aside to maintain habitats for wildlife and to protect the Town's groundwater resources. People also need our wildlife sanctuaries, whether for studying nature or for quiet moments in a natural setting.



Sanguinaria canadensis, Bloodroot, near the Pond.

Sanctuaries are different from parks. They protect ecosystems—tangled networks of living things which depend on each other—that cannot survive the mowing, raking and planting that are needed in parks. Nor can they tolerate the disruptions caused by intensive recreational use.

Brookline sanctuaries contain wetlands, including ponds, streams, and vernal pools. These resources are valuable for holding floodwater and replenishing ground water. Since 1972, wetlands have been protected under the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act.

From "Hall's Pond Sanctuary," a brochure produced by the Town of Brookline in 1999



The full versions of both of these publications may be viewed, and downloaded, from brooklinema.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=715&Itemid=1056 (or from within BrooklineMA.gov, navigate to: Departments > Parks and Open Space > Conservation > Nature Sanctuaries)

“Spring work is going on with joyful enthusiasm.”

— John Muir



Polygonatum multiflorum, our native variety of Solomon seal, near the formal garden behind Jo's bench.

**The Friends of Hall's Pond
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Founder:
Jo Albrecht

Co-Presidents:
Ellen Forrester
Betsy Shure Gross

Treasurer:
Joseph Collins

Board Members:

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Harry Breger
Dana Brigham
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Deanne Morse
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Deborah
Raptopoulos

Michael Sandman
Nan St. Goar
Tommy Vitolo
Bruce Wolff
Janet Wynn

Sanctuary News is produced by Friends volunteers,
and printed with support from Century Type.

Mission Statement

The Friends of Hall's Pond is dedicated to the preservation and protection of Hall's Pond sanctuary in Brookline, Massachusetts. Through the encouragement and coordination of volunteers in education, conservation and maintenance, the Friends seek to ensure a healthy future for this valuable urban resource.

Park Ranger, from page 2

very lucky. I get to accompany tour, school and camp groups to this special place. While I always point out my favorite aspects of the park, I encourage them to observe at their own pace and under their own filters. I also remind them that this is not a place to take for granted; it takes a lot of work to make it appear as if there is no work. Finally, I remind them of the legacy

of this place. I hope that they understand that small movements can make enormous impacts, and that the work of a committed group like the one at Hall's Pond can contribute to a cause that produces immeasurable benefits to humans, plants and animals alike, and lives on through generations.

Musings and Recollections, from page 6

more on the ground than in the air. At the end of the runway, two huge (1–2 lb., 12") Carp make a ruckus: laying eggs in the shallow spot by budding sheaths of lilies. They show folded dorsal fins and black cross-hatched diamond pattern on a grey back. I rarely see them at all.



House Wren

Chipping sparrow pops up, and wren calls that sound more like House than Carolina. Overhanging fronds of multiflora rose should be lopped off on tomorrow's cleanup. Robins rip through Amory, as the Whitethroats just amble along playing



Waterthrush

hopscotch. House Finches pipe up from the usual high ground spot, near Carolina wren nest.

As I stand outside the ball-field willows scanning across the pond for the Waterthrush, huge splashes signal more grey-weather activity by the resident Carp. Amory's quiet, except for a Catbird (first!) heard by bike-parking spot. Chunk of wood and a squirrel fall 20 feet in front of me by the gazebo bench! Mallard pair in Amory pool, resting. Not one thrush. Pair of Sapsuckers moves slowly, deliberately, from large elm to the next, eastward. One's an adult; the other? not sure.

Community Day: Neighbors Coming Together to Benefit the Sanctuary

by Renee Portanova, *Chair of Education and Community Day Committees*

LAST fall, neighborhood volunteers and the *Friends of Hall's Pond* came together for our biannual Community Day. Together, we put the garden to bed for the winter, performing basic maintenance to the formal garden and removing young, invasive trees from out of



Bruce Wolff

our newly formed meadow. Our multi-generational crew of volunteers included cubs and chaperones from Pack 6. In addition to the hard work and manual labor, volunteers and *Friends* could participate in the environmental programming offered by the town of Brookline.

This spring, Community Day will be on Sunday, May 5th, 11am–2pm.

This spring's Community Day will include garden work and educational programming. We have also invited others to table at the event and plan to offer information on bicycling, beekeeping, rain barrels and more. For more information or if you would like to volunteer please contact Heather Charles Lis at hclis@brooklinema.gov or by calling 617-730-2088.



Bruce Wolff

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