

Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows Annual Report for 2014

This report recaps the accomplishments of the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) in 2014 and an update of happenings during the year. We wish to thank everyone who has helped in one way or another with these efforts.

Stewardship Activities

Maintenance and Outreach

This year the ACROSS Lexington program extended into East Lexington and included parts of AGM in its path system. There are two loop trails C & D which are well marked and extend to the Whipple Hill Conservation land and the Arlington Reservoir.

<http://www.lexingtonma.gov/selectmen/committee/acrosslexington.cfm>

This year the trail markers, entrance signs and bikeway kiosk were updated as part of Liam Lanigan's Eagle Scout project and everything now looks much better. We also continued with other regular maintenance including replacing broken and rotting boardwalk treads.

A Butterfly Walk at AGM was held this Spring led by Tom Whelan and sponsored by the Citizens for Lexington Conservation (<http://www.clclex.org/>).

Mowing of upland meadows

Four years ago, we undertook a project to restore the upland "entry meadow" at the northwest corner of AGM, which had been rapidly reverting to woodland, to its historical open condition.

In the fall of 2010, with the assistance of a large group of volunteers, we cleared the area of trees and dense shrubbery. In the spring of 2011, we planted a mix of native wildflowers in the southwestern corner of the meadow. Since that time, with the help of volunteers, we have worked to control invasives and the re-growth of woody vegetation by hand trimming.

To maintain this lovely meadow, we continued this year with the mowing program. The work was done in the early fall to avoid interference with nesting birds and to minimize the impact on wildflowers.

Invasive plant control

We continue our efforts to clear and maintain an approximately 100-yard stretch of AGM along the Minutemen Bikeway that had become densely overgrown with the invasive plant Japanese Knotweed. Permanent eradication of this invasive is extremely difficult, particularly without the use of herbicides. However, over the last ten years, with volunteer labor and purely mechanical means, we have succeeded in keeping this area mostly knotweed-free, preserving a stunning view of the Meadows from the bikeway.

Financial

Donations to AGM in 2014 were up about 5% from 2013. Income exceeded expenses and we continue to hold healthy cash balances. All of our income was from the generosity of individual donors and private foundations, and was not dependent on municipal budgets, corporate funding, or fundraising events. FoAGM also continues its successful partnership with the Arlington Land Trust (ALT) as fiscal agent.

Summary of activity in FoAGM's fund balances as of the end of 2014:

2014 Income

\$ 1,570.00 in 26 donations

2014 Expenses

\$ 593.89 Kiosk and sign replacement/maintenance

\$ 593.89 Total Expenses

Fund Balance as of December 31, 2014

\$ 12,944.87 FoAGM fund balance at beginning of the year

+\$ 976.11 Net change

\$ 13,920.98 FoAGM fund balance at year-end

We thank our new and trustworthy regular donors who have contributed to the preservation of one of the largest natural open spaces in the Arlington/Lexington region. Those wishing to make a tax-deductible donation can make a check out to "ALT FoAGM Fund" and mail it to FoAGM, Box 492, Arlington, MA 02476, or use a credit card online at www.networkforgood.org (Enter "arlington land" in the search field and select state of MA. Select Arlington Land Trust and enter "FoAGM" as a designation.)

Mike Tabaczynski, Financial Officer

Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows Steering Committee

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If you would like to help out or just want more information please contact us at:

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