We hope that you took the opportunity to visit the gardens in the park this spring and summer. The daffodils in the Dell were beautiful this spring, the Butterfly Garden along the wall west of the greenhouse has been flourishing, and the Sensory Garden in the playground area has been replanted.

_Pictured on the left is the garden in front of the greenhouse looking west toward the Dell._

The six new tennis courts at the park were available for play in August. In July repairs were made to the surface and a completely new fence was placed around the first set of courts. The fence was made possible by a $28,000 donation to the Friends by members, Dr. Paul and Mrs. Elaine Chervinsky. In September Mayor Jon Mitchell officially opened the courts.
Why has the grass on the western side of the pond not been cut?

This question has been asked by many people. The Canada geese remain a problem on the pond. The geese damage the turf, leave excess fecal matter on walkways, roads and athletic fields and are a human health and safety issue, and they are aggressive towards people.

Various measures have been tried. Letting the grass and weeds grow is supposed to make the geese uncomfortable. Signage asking that the geese not be fed is often ignored. For the second spring in a row, a group of Friends and others have been addling the duck eggs. This is done by oiling the eggs which will not hatch as they have been deprived of oxygen.

So far these measures have not seemed to deter the geese. The City of New Bedford has entered into an agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Wildlife Services for Canada goose control. The Wildlife Service will visit eight to ten times for the next year to perform damage management. This will include monitoring, harassment and removal of the geese by air rifle, live capture, and egg and nest treatment.

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What is being done about the water quality in the pond?

Beginning in July a crew from Ecological Laboratories has been applying an anti-algae treatment to the pond. The bacterial treatment contains living bacteria that metabolizes nitrogen. Depriving the plants of nitrogen should reduce the algae and plants and produce clearer, cleaner water. The New Bedford Conservation Commission approved the work which will be done at no cost by Advanced Marine, a New Bedford company.

The treatment, called Microbe-Lift, was applied weekly for five weeks, and will be followed by monthly treatments for the rest of the year. If state environmental officials do not object, the pond will be treated again next year. UMass Dartmouth is monitoring water quality to document the pond’s response. As of October 1, it is too soon to know if the treatment is working.

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Buzzards Bay Coalition is instituting a water quality project for Buttonwood Brook, which flows from Turner Pond north of the New Bedford Airport, through the park and into Apponagansett Bay in South Dartmouth. The Friends has been asked to give their input to the project.
Our Champion Tree - the Camperdown Elm

The Camperdown elm is a weeping tree with gorgeous twisted branches and dense dark green foliage. The history of the Camperdown elm started over 100 years ago in Scotland. In 1835, a forester for the Earl of Camperdown found an elm tree growing with contorted branches in Dundee, Scotland. He transplanted the young tree within the gardens of Camperdown House, where it still stands under 9 feet tall with a weeping habit and contorted structure. Later, he grafted branches of it to other elms, producing the Camperdown weeping elm cultivar. The tree only grows to 25 feet tall, but can even spread wider than its height.

Our Camperdown elm located in the Arboretum has seen better days. In the past several years the Friends have had an arborist spray the tree for an ant infestation and trim the dead limbs. While looking somewhat lopsided, the tree is looking fairly healthy. We have considered purchasing a

Coffee in the Dell

On Sunday, June 9th from 10 am to 12 noon, the Friends held their third Coffee in the Dell. Those attending were treated to coffee and donuts provided by Dunkin Donuts, protein bars from Cliff Bars, and other donations from Shaw’s Supermarket in North Dartmouth, Stop & Shop and BJ’s Wholesale. Sunday papers were available for perusing and good conversation with friends was enjoyed. Frank Farrell gave two 45 minute tours of the Arboretum for those that had not had the opportunity in the past.
The 33rd Annual Meeting of the Friends of Buttonwood Park, Inc. was held on May 30, 2019 at 6 pm at the Lawler Library, Rockdale Avenue, New Bedford. President Richard Leary welcomed the members and guests noting that of the Friends groups that were formed 33 years ago in Massachusetts to receive Olmsted grants, only the Buttonwood Friends group still exists. Following the acceptance of reports, the Officers and Board of Directors were elected for the ensuing year. Our current Board of Directors and Officers are listed at the left. Our guest speaker, Peter DeFusco, gave a talk on “Vernal Pools”.

Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are short lasting pools created by rain or snow melt. They are usually found in wetlands and fill with water in the fall and winter. These vernal pools hold water in place and dry up every year or couple of years, thus not allowing fish to survive. They sustain life and provide mosquito control and are often found in wooded area with limited sunlight. Different species found in the pools make each pool unique. Species dependent on vernal pools are the wood frog, mole salamander, Jefferson salamander, blue-spotted salamander, marble salamander, the spotted salamander (most common). Also found are frogs, turtles, beetles, mosquitoes, leeches, fairy shrimp, and many others. In Buttonwood Park a vernal pool is located southeast of the tennis courts. Vernal pools may be certified through the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program at the MassWildlife Field Headquarters. This certification process relies on volunteers to survey possible vernal pools and submit documentation of certain biological and physical evidence. If the wetland basin meets the criteria, it is considered a “Certified Vernal Pool”.

Annual Meeting

Please visit us at www.buttonwoodpark.org

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Mailing Address:
Friends of Buttonwood Park Inc.
P.O. Box 2011
New Bedford, MA 02741
Fall 2019