

A Word from the President

Oh, how lucky we are! Every day I get up and realize the Six Ponds area is an exceptional and amazingly fortunate place to be during these trying Corona Virus days of seclusion and separation. We get to experience the wonders of beautiful sunsets, spring forests coming to life and the ponds responding to the rain, wind, and warmth of spring. We walk, garden, and work in a place where social distancing is not a problem and we can greet neighbors safely along our many wonderful dirt roads and trails. Many people do not have these advantages and we are so fortunate.

While there will be changes to the ways we interact, some activities in the area will continue . . .

- The Six Ponds Annual Meeting has been moved to a virtual format, and will take place on June 14th.
- We will find a venue for our FIREWISE volunteer day, and do it safely. This is tentatively scheduled for September 12th.
- The summer sailing races on Long Pond will continue, and will following all social distancing protocol.
- We need to be able to welcome and socialize with our many summer residents while maintaining the necessary protocols.

We continue to hold virtual monthly Executive Committee meetings and to work with our local officials and other groups. We are working to ensure that the unavoidable growth around us in south Plymouth has minimal impact both on our community and our environment. It is not an easy task and takes persistence and the efforts of many of our residents both individually and as Six Ponds Members. We thank you all who participate in this effort. For others who can't participate directly, please keep us informed of your needs and hopes so that we can respond accordingly, and help support our work by renewing your membership at this time or becoming a new member to Six Ponds. Dues are \$25 per household, and the funds support our efforts and help keep you informed.

If you are a permanent resident in the Six Ponds community, please remember to vote in the upcoming elections . . . and you can do so via mail-in ballot by contacting the Town Clerk's office. Keep in touch with the Town website to keep current on any changes to voting dates.

Wishing you ALL a wonderful summer!

Pompey

Pompey Delafield, President

Our Native Blue Flag!

Soon to be blooming in and around all our ponds is our native Iris versicolor. It is also commonly known as the blue flag, harlequin blueflag, northern blue flag and poison flag. The genus 'Iris' is named for the Greek goddess of the rainbow, and the epithet 'versicolor' means having various colors.

Northern blue flag thrives in wetland habitats frequented by rushes and sedges. The 'flag' part of the common name comes from the Middle English word *flagge* meaning rush or reed. And the underground rhizome is poisonous.

The Iris has been thought of as a magical plant, with people carrying the root to assure financial gain. It was also traditionally placed in cash registers to increase business.

The species has been implicated in several poisoning cases of humans and animals who consumed the rhizomes, which contain a glycoside, iridin. The sap can cause dermatitis in susceptible individuals.

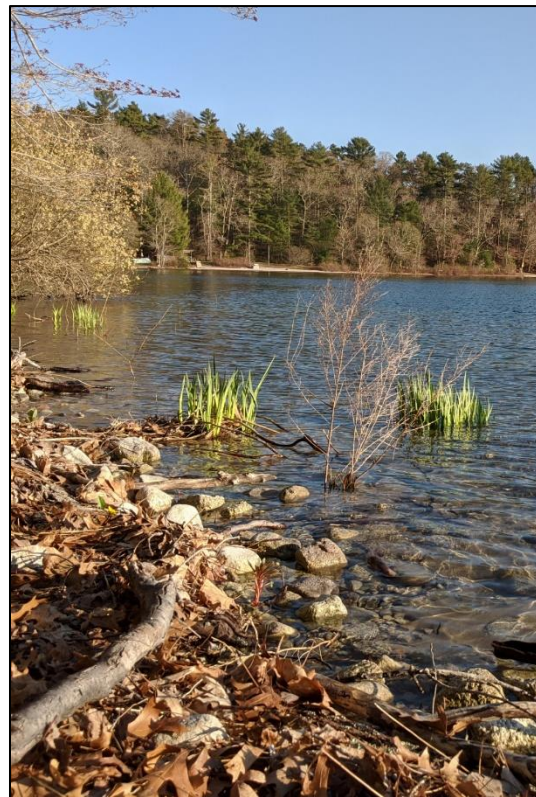
All of that said, these violet-blue blossoms are a glorious sight at the edges of our ponds. A true herald of summer.

ENJOY!|



Follow These Tips for Better Pond Health – Together we *CAN* make a difference!

A lack of pond water clarity, algal excess, and too much vegetative growth are all signs of accelerate pond aging, or cultural eutrophication. This natural process is being dramatically accelerated by human impact. Excess nutrients in the forms of phosphates, nitrates and bicarbonates, erosion that brings silt and additional nutrient load, shifts in pH due to acid rain, and removal of vegetation from the shore and buffer zone all contribute. “But I don’t live right on a pond.” Truth is, every one of us lives within the watershed of some body of water. Everything we do matters. Following these recommendations can help minimize chemical leaching, nutrient runoff, erosion and siltation into our ponds, waterways and groundwater.



- Pharmaceuticals DO NOT FLUSH outdated prescription drugs. Plymouth Police at 20 Long Pond Road has a pharmaceutical take-back bin in the lobby . . . drop off drugs any time, day or night, no questions asked!
- Septic System Make sure your septic system is in good working order. If there is any question, have it pumped. And never EVER use your septic system as a place for disposal of paints, solvents or other chemicals.
- Soaps and Detergents Use absolutely no soaps or detergents in or near the pond. For in-home use, choose shampoos, dishwasher and washing machine products that have NO PHOSPHATES.
- Edge Vegetation Leave existing vegetation at the pond edge to help curb erosion and siltation. It is against the law to alter vegetation or the shore in any way without express permission from our local Conservation Commission.
- Garden Fertilizers Your garden should almost never need fertilizer or weed killers. Use a top dressing of compost and eliminate any “miracle blue” or “shake n’ pour” type fertilizers or weedkillers.
- Lawn Treatments **Eliminate the use of lawn chemicals.** “Five step systems” are full of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers – drugs for your lawn, poison for the ponds. These chemicals are equally unhealthy for you, your family and your pets. Easier said than done? Check out the Six Ponds website for step-by-step procedures to going all natural with your lawn and gardens.
- Water If your lawn is 3 years old or more, or in dappled shade, it should rarely need watering. If you must water the lawn, water less frequently but for a longer duration, and work to PREVENT RUNOFF.
- High and Sharp Re-set your mower to 3.5” or higher (or request your lawn service do this), and make sure your blade is sharp. A sharp blade makes a clean cut, allowing the grass to recover faster & minimize opportunities for disease.
- Leave it Leave the grass clippings on your lawn. Grass clippings quickly break down and give your lawn a natural nitrogen burst that is quickly utilized by the turf.
- Sweet or Sour Test the pH of your soil. Between acid rain and living in the pine barrens, you can bet your soil pH is naturally low or ‘sour.’ Turf grasses like a sweeter soil. Apply lime IN THE FALL.
- Proximity Keep lawns away from the water’s edge. Preferably keep any lawn 100’ or more from the water, but if this is not possible, eliminate all lawn fertilizers and treatments to keep nutrients and poisons out of the pond.
- Say FESCUE When seeding or over seeding, always choose a shade mix, even if you have sunny conditions. Shade mixtures have a greater percentage of turf-type tall fescues, grasses that do beautifully under a wide range of conditions, require minimal nutrition, and are very resilient against drought and pests.

Our septic systems, detergent use and lawn practices don’t need to contribute to the aging of our ponds. Use non-phosphate cleaning products, keep lawns and gardens away from pond edges, bring pharmaceuticals to a safe drop off, eliminate fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, pump out your septic tank annually, mow and water appropriately, and both our properties **and** our ponds can thrive!

New SIX PONDS Website!

In March, the Six Ponds Improvement Association launched its new website. Many thanks go to Karl Stier and Carol Strickland of Watershed Media. Karl and Carol purchased Walter Morrison's old house at 780 Long Pond Road, and moved to Plymouth from West Roxbury. Feeling fortunate to be new neighbors within Six Ponds, they generously donated their time to design the new site! Please take a moment to check it out: www.sixponds.org



Our new site is easy to navigate and contains vital info about our organization as well as back issues of the newsletter. Click on the graphic with the woodpecker ('Six Scenes') to see photos of our neighborhood, submitted by residents. We encourage you to send in your favorite pictures, but please keep in mind we can only use .jpg, .png, or .gif files. Send your images to Susanne Lucas, susannelucas@gmail.com.

The logo has been redesigned and we now have window decals made of the logo for "bragging rights" of membership! When you renew your membership, you will get one!



What is the Foam I See on Pond Shores?

Some people wonder about the foam they see on lee shores and are concerned that it might be the result of human contamination or phosphate accumulation. It is not! It is a phenomenon caused by decomposition of naturally occurring organics. Water has a naturally high surface tension which can be reduced by these decomposing organics just as the use of laundry detergents reduces surface tension in wash water. On a lee shore waves and wind whip up the water which then foams more easily when its surface tension is reduced. You will see this happen in remote and healthy rivers in Maine where the humic acid from decaying leaves turns the water brown and results in a brown foam.

MEMBERSHIP – TIME TO RENEW

***and* SHOW YOUR SIX PONDS PRIDE!**

Six Ponds is an all-volunteer neighborhood association, and to work optimally **Six Ponds** needs you! Your \$25 membership fee gives you regular updates on what is happening around here, tips on how to live around and protect our ponds, and items related to Conservation, Planning, Zoning and other Town Departments.

Please, renew your membership TODAY!

With your membership you will receive a new **Six Ponds** CAR DECAL, so you can show your **Six Ponds** Pride!

Look for your renewal materials in the mail . . . and please send your \$25 check to:

SIX PONDS

Box 1580

Plymouth, MA 02362

THANK YOU!

New Six Ponds Neighbors?

If you know of any new **Six Ponds** neighbors, we would like to offer them a 'welcome' membership to **Six Ponds**! Let us know their names and address and we will give them a membership in your name.

THANK YOU!

RECYCLING UPDATE

Recycling is still going strong despite a few setbacks due to the pandemic and machinations of the plastics lobby. Please continue with your personal recycling efforts!

You can still recycle all the standard recyclables, either in your curbside single-stream bin or at the transfer station. The standards include newspaper, mixed paper, corrugated cardboard, food and beverage cans, glass and some plastics. This graphic showing what you can (and can't) recycle in Massachusetts is very useful. This chart is from RecycleSmartMA.org.

The infographic is divided into two main sections. The top section, titled 'Metal', 'Plastic', 'Glass', and 'Paper & Cardboard', shows various items that are accepted for recycling. The bottom section, titled 'NO!', shows items that are not accepted for recycling, each with a red 'X' over a blue circle icon.

Category	Accepted Items	Instructions
Metal	Food and Beverage Cans	empty and rinse
Plastic	Bottles, Jars, Jugs and Tubs	empty and replace cap
Glass	Bottles and Jars	empty and rinse
Paper & Cardboard	Mixed Paper, Newspaper, Magazines, Boxes	empty and flatten

Prohibited Item	Reason/Instructions
Do Not Bag Recyclables No Garbage	
No Plastic Bags or Plastic Wrap	(return to retail)
No Food or Liquid	(empty all containers)
No Clothing or Linens	(use donation programs)
No Tangles	(no hoses, wires, chains or electronics)

The transfer station on Beaver Dam Road has revised its hours of operation due to the pandemic. It is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. This is still the best option for recycling because items are collected in separate bins that keeps items cleaner and pre-sorted for sale to different recycling companies. Curbside single stream recycling is also still going strong – remember to rinse items and only include permitted items.

Enforcement of the bottle and can redemption rule has been suspended in Massachusetts. You can still recycle bottles and cans at the transfer station or in your curbside recycling bin, but you'll be forfeiting your nickel deposits. If you're stockpiling them, expect long lines when redemption becomes available again or donate them if there are any charity drives when the suspension lifts.

There is one sad backslide in recycling. Governor Baker's Executive Order directed essential businesses, including those subject to local bans on single-use plastic bags (including Plymouth), to use paper or single-use plastic bags. The order also banned reusable bags.

There is a way around this. At the checkout, request that the bagger place your items into a cart. Wheel them to your car and bag or box them there.

For more information about recycling, there are two very good websites: www.RecycleSmartMA.org and www.ssrcoop.info.



Hiking and Learning in Six Ponds

Hooray for pine barrens, oak and beech groves, maples, hemlocks and all the distinguishing features of our precious landscape. Now, thanks to a collaboration between the Wildlands Trust and the Boy Scouts of America Troop #51 in Manomet, there is inspiring new signage that will add to your appreciation. You'll find these signs on the Whippoorwill and Big Point Trails in the Halfway Pond Conservation Area.

Take the Eastern Hemlock tree. Did you know that Native Americans used the cambium layer as a base for breads and soups? That they mixed it with dried nuts and animal fat for pemmican? That they made tea from its leaves, which are high in Vitamin C? The colonists also infused Hemlock leaves for tea, and they used its bark as a source of tannin for the leather industry.

There are signs for Pitch Pine and White Pine; for White Oak and Hemlock; for America Beech and Red Maple; for the history and nature of Kettle Ponds, and more. Eagle Scout Evan Sherman created the text. His mother, Aubrey Sherman, designed the illustrations.

We are grateful to the Shermans, and Troop #51, and to the Wildlands Trust for so enhancing our enjoyment of these public trails!



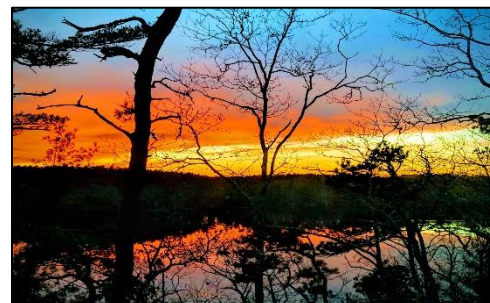
Eagle Scout **Evan Sherman** with new trail signage at the Wildlands Trust – Halfway Pond Conservation Area



The Night Sky and Dark Ponds

Please remember to keep flood lights OFF our ponds, and your outdoor lights doused. Dark skies and dark ponds are healthiest for our wildlife, and healthiest for us. Keep the lights off and on clear nights you might just be able to see the Milky Way!

For more information: darksky.org



The Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe

Until European colonists arrived, Wampanoag people inhabited the lands where we live and hike – lands taken from them during the colonization of the region. On visits to Plimoth Plantation you've likely encountered Wampanoag guides. But you may not know that just south of us lives a small Wampanoag community whose identity is distinct from those in Mashpee or Aquinnah. Our neighbors, clustered around the 19th Century Meetinghouse at 128 Herring Pond Road (Pondville Indian Church), belong to the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, Inc.

Under their current leadership and with support of the Tribal Council, Chairwoman Melissa Harding Ferretti is bringing new energy and dreams to the community. Hopes were boosted earlier this year thanks to a three-year grant of \$156,000 from the Sheehan Family Foundation to preserve and protect the tribe's culture and land stewardship.

A Wicked Local piece from last October chronicles the drama and final victory in a long effort by the Herring Pond Wampanoag to reclaim the six-acre parcel, which included the burial ground where many of their ancestors are buried. It was originally within the boundaries of the Herring Pond reservation lands known to us as "The Great Lot". The community is now working with the Commission of Indian Affairs, state archaeologists and Friends of Burial Hill to preserve their burial ground.

Melissa, a youthful grandmother with a dynamic, forward-looking spirit, is eager to work with organizations that share common environmental goals. She was our guest speaker at the last meeting of the Watershed Action Alliance (Six Ponds is a member of the WAA). We were all inspired by her positive energy and have pledged to build this relationship.

To learn more about the Herring Pond Wampanoag community, go to their website www.herringpondtribe.org and their Facebook page www.facebook.com/herringpondtribe/.

The Fischer!

The fisher (*Martes pennanti*) is the second largest member of the weasel family found in Massachusetts; only the river otter is larger. Although many people call them "Fisher Cats," they are neither cats nor do they catch fish. The epithet 'Fisher Cat' is incorrect, and the appropriate name for this animal is 'Fisher.'

As with other members of the weasel family, Fishers have a long, low profile when moving along the ground. They average 32 to 40 inches in length, and adults weigh 5 to 16 pounds. Males are nearly twice as large as females.

Fishers were extirpated from much of the northeast in the 1700s and 1800s when loggers and farmers cleared the forests and unregulated trapping took its toll. In the 1950s logging companies reintroduced fishers into northern New England to control porcupines. At the time, porcupines were decimating seedlings planted by the timber companies looking to reestablish trees in logged areas. Fisher is the only species to deliberately target porcupines as prey.

Primarily carnivores, Fishers will also eat berries and fruit when available. They eat rabbits, snowshoe hares, squirrels, raccoons, mice, reptiles, amphibians, insects, carrion, and occasionally house cats. Even though Fishers do not catch live fish, they will eat dead fish found on the shore of a lake or pond.

Secretive and elusive creatures, Fishers keep their distance from humans and do not den under buildings.

Fishers live in and around Six Ponds. If you are lucky enough to see one . . . enjoy!



Pilgrim's Progress?

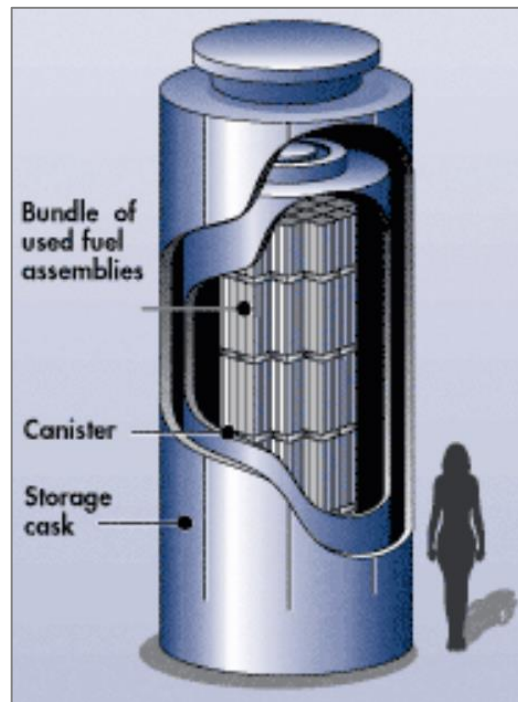
Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant no longer provides electricity to the state, and decommissioning is underway.

Holtec has undertaken its long-planned transfer of spent fuel rods into dry casks. By this August, 748 assemblies will be lifted out of the spent fuel pool and loaded into 11 new casks. These will join the 17 casks already perched 150 feet from Cape Cod Bay.

The impacts of COVID-19 appear to allow the nuclear industry to pursue faster decommissioning with less oversight, which is very concerning for Plymouth and other area towns.

Another casualty of COVID-19 is Plymouth's *Nuclear Mitigation Fund*, started in 2014 with \$1 million, and increased each year by another \$1 million. As of the end of 2019 it held \$6,000,000. This year, given the Town's fiscal emergency, our Town Manager proposes to defer the contribution – understandable under current circumstances. But the situation bears watching.

The lawsuits and petitions filed by our AGO and by Pilgrim Watch have yet to be heard, so state petitions challenging the license transfer are not resolved. But for Holtec-Pilgrim, it's full speed ahead.



MVP Climate Change

What is Plymouth doing about climate change? Actually, a lot, thanks to the forethought and planning of a number of concerned individuals in our town concerned about building a more resilient community.

The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) workshops took place this winter and spring as a part of a state program to help communities develop action-oriented resiliency plans. Communities who complete the MVP program become certified as an MVP community and are eligible for MVP Action grant funding.

Residents from all over Plymouth have been participating in public forums and community workshops in order to provide their input on Plymouth's strengths and vulnerabilities when it comes to environmental resources, infrastructure, and public health. They have also been asked to identify potential actions Plymouth could take to enhance these strengths and mitigate these vulnerabilities.

The town hopes to have a final report submitted to the State by June. Many Six Pond residents have been participants in this process, including Dorie Stolley and Judy Savage as volunteer Community Representatives on the Core Team, and our designated Six Ponds area representative for the current on-line Resiliency Building Workshop is Pompey Delafield.

We are hoping that the process of participating in this program will educate local government, municipal employees, and town residents about the anticipated impact of climate change and the importance of taking action now to mitigate its effect.



THE HUMAN ELEMENT Film Event

On January 5, Six Ponds, the Wildlands Trust, and the South Shore & Cape Chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby, co-sponsored a showing of THE HUMAN ELEMENT, a riveting drama that follows renowned environmental photographer James Balog as he explores wildfires, hurricanes, sea level rise, and our changing air supply. The film highlighted Americans who are on the frontlines of climate change, inspiring us to re-evaluate our relationship with the natural world.

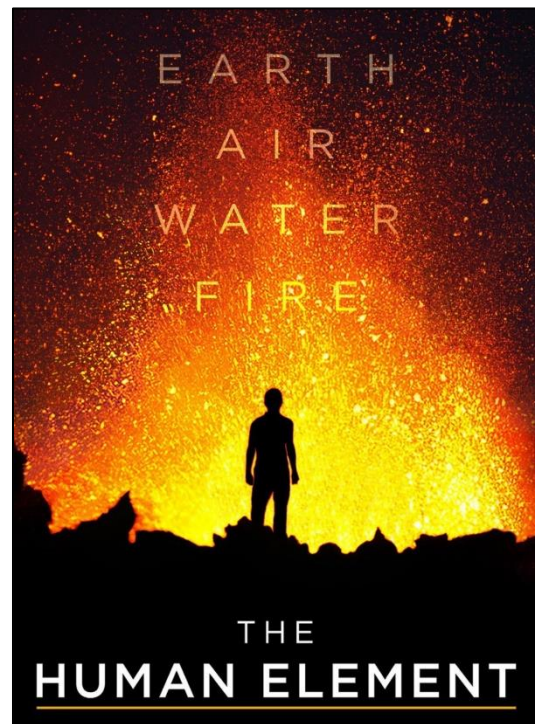
Longtime photographer for National Geographic, James Balog “feels a great sense of urgency to bear witness to the historic moment that we’re in. These changing conditions in our world are not an abstraction – they’re real and immediate.”

Balog broke this dense topic into what ancient societies believed were the four elements of life: Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. To these, Balog adds a fifth element: the human element. The power of human activity has now surpassed all other forces shaping our world. Balog sees humans as part of the whole system of nature, not *apart* from it.

Knowing this, Balog finds great hope that the fifth element, *humans*, can bring the whole system back into balance. “People have always evolved from one technology to another. Ingenuity moves us all forward. And that gives me hope.”

Following the film there was a lively discussion of the impacts of a changing climate on Plymouth and what individuals can do to fight global warming.

The South Shore & Cape Chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby is part of a nationwide, nonprofit, non-partisan, grassroots advocacy organization that lobbies for legislation that will reduce carbon emissions to the levels the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) says is most likely to keep global heating at safer levels. To find out more about the chapter and how you can help work to create the political will for a livable world, contact www.southshoremass@citizensclimatelobby.org or visit the national website at www.citizensclimatelobby.org.



Casino? NO!

A slots parlor casino and racetrack has been proposed south of Six Ponds in Wareham. This project would increase car and charter bus traffic on Long Pond, Bourne and Wareham Roads. A Bill needed to assist the project was filed on Beacon Hill but is stalled there with concerns that the state may be “over-casinoed”. At some point it may be necessary for residents to write in opposition to our legislators and to the Mass Gaming Commission. We will let you know if and when that is needed.



Traffic Mitigation in the Six Ponds Area

The last intersection in the Six Ponds area to be reworked due to the Redbook development is the intersection of Long Pond Road, Halfway Pond Road and Bloody Pond Road. Due to COVID and other town initiatives, this construction is slated for 2021. We will keep you informed as we hear more!

Winter Gathering 2020

And what a gathering it was! On January 25th, Six Ponders gathered at the Wildlands Trust Barn. Members and guests found seats along lines of tables set with goodies, and there were people standing along the sides and in the back of the room. They were in for a treat!

The Winter Gathering was presenting its first Story Slam, probably not its last. Our Story Slam presenters each spoke about an event in Six Ponds history.

Henry Goodhue, 1895 - 4th of July with a surprise balloonist dropping in, featuring Gallows, Little Long and Long Pond.

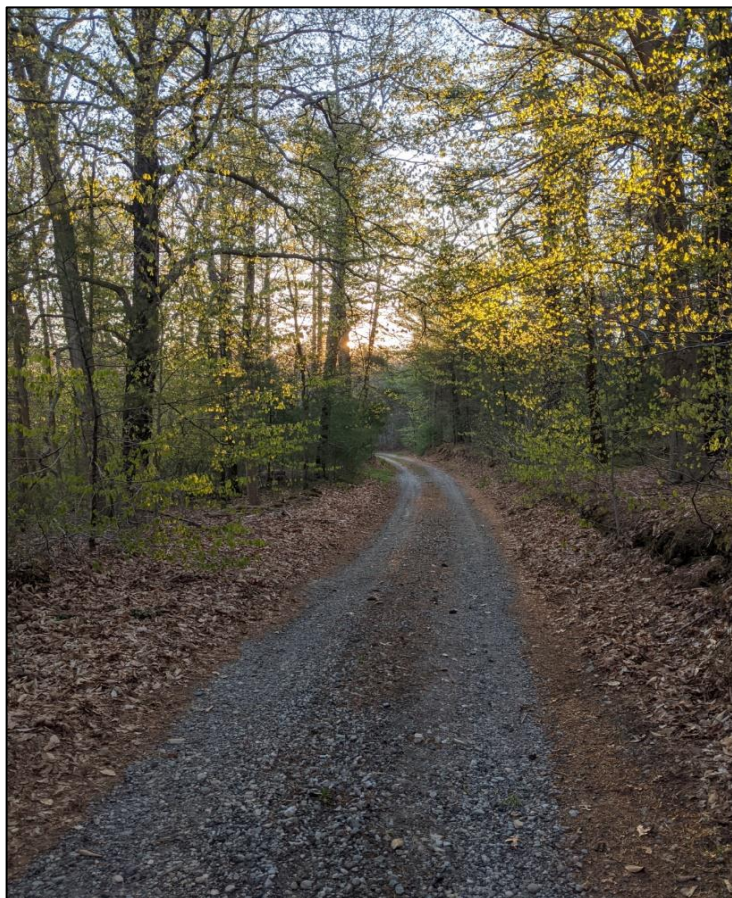
Rusty Briggs, 1900 - The Great Fire starting in the forest (now Myles Standish State Forest) which involved Halfway Pond, Long Pond, Little Long Pond and Gallows Pond and lasted four days.

Susanne Lucas, 19th and early 20th century Morrison family memories of Bloody Pond, making this their home, and building a local horticultural business.

Sam Chapin, 1950's – The last 4th of July bonfire on Long Pond, a 1950's childhood memory.

Judy Savage, 21st Century – A fox family takes over Pinewoods Camp at the beginning of the summer season and what then ensues.

The gasps and laughter that interspersed these tales, told so creatively, was testament to our talented Six Ponds families that stretch over so many generations!



The Music of Pinewoods to Return Next Year

The Six Ponds community will be strangely quiet this summer without the joyful sounds of music and dance from Pinewoods Camp. Due to concerns about COVID-19, Pinewoods Camp, along with its 5 program providers – Country Dance and Song Society, Country Dance Society-Boston Center, Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Folk Arts Center of New England, and the Folk Music Society of New York – announced the cancellation of the 2020 summer season.

The health and well-being of its campers and crew is of the utmost concern and with that in mind, all the organizations agreed that it is safer to wait until next year to resume dancing and singing under the pines. Rest assured this summer will in no way jeopardize the existence of Pinewoods, which had planned in advance for a disaster (with a hurricane or a fire in mind), and as soon as the coast is clear, the dancing and singing will begin again!

While they might not be able to gather in person this summer, the community continues to support each other through financial support for some their most financially vulnerable members, and virtual offerings of support, information, and music. You can join in through the Pinewoods Camp's active Facebook page or website - www.pinewoods.org



A big THANK YOU to the contributors to this issue of Six Ponds News:

Aileen Briggs, Henrietta Cosentino, Pompey Delafield, Kate Harvey, Bruce Howard, Love Albrecht Howard, Susanne Lucas, Ed Russell, Judy Savage and Dorie Stolley

SIX PONDS

PO Box 1580

Plymouth, MA 02360

**Wishing you all a wonderful
summer season!**

Stay Safe . . . and . . .

Happy Six Pondering!



Six Ponds Executive Committee Officers and Members:

President Pompey Delafield

Vice President Bruce Howard

Secretary Lois Post

Treasurer Rusty Briggs

Members: Aileen Briggs, Peggy Conant, Margi Delafield, Sampson 'Les' Leslie,
Jean Loewenburg, Susanne Lucas, Edward Russell, Judy Savage and Hampton Watkins