



Spring 2026 ROBBINS FARM ALMANAC

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A Park for All Seasons

A Letter from the Friends President

Dear Friends and Neighbors of Robbins Farm Park,

Spring is finally here, and the park is lovely with flowering trees, children playing, birds singing, and people strolling, sitting, and enjoying being outside. This past winter, Robbins was blanketed in deep snow, great for sledding on both hills. At first it was hard to traverse, but as each person walked, their steps tromped down the snow, and person after person turned the steps into a walkable path. Together we made the vast snow field usable for sledders, families, and dog walkers. A wild cherry tree at the top of the hill became adorned with lost gloves, keys, a small bicycle helmet, and bright red ribbons. It was a simple reminder that a community is built through small acts.

2025 was an exciting year for Friends of Robbins Farm Park. In March, we were honored by the Arlington Center of the Arts for our work on the new playground and our free cultural programming. Then in June, we were awarded the **Best Outdoor Play Space** by *Boston Magazine*, highlighting the playground's inclusive design coupled with the park's skyline views and sledding hills, iconic 16-foot slides, and full calendar of events. We successfully advocated for two handicap parking spaces next to the playground making the playground even more accessible.

For this year, the Friends are busy planning a full summer season of three concerts, a family art activity at the end of May, Spring and Fall Park Cleanups, the annual 4th of July town celebration, Movie Night, Field Day featuring old-fashioned kids games, and more. We're also planning enhancements to the park for everyone.

Robbins Farm Park is a beloved park, whether it's for watching night sky events, playing sports, enjoying the playground, gathering with friends, walking dogs, or simply enjoying the iconic view of Boston.

The Friends of Robbins Farm Park is a volunteer-run organization. If you'd like to help at any of our events or consider joining the board, I'd love to hear from you!

Warmly,
Mona ZefTEL
mzefTEL@gmail.com

FORFP 2026 EVENTS

Sun 5/17 - Spring Cleanup
Sat 5/30 - Robins and Friends Art Project
Sat 6/13 - Arlington Philharmonic
Sat 7/4 - Fourth of July Celebration
Tue 7/14 - Rockin' Robbins
Wed 7/29 - Harvard Alumni Jazz Band
Sat 9/12 - Movie Night
Oct - Field Day
Nov - Fall Cleanup

see FORFP website for the most up-to-date schedule



Field Day Returns to Robbins Farm By Corinne Schippert and Tony Vogel

After several years on pause during the playground rebuild, Field Day returned to Robbins Farm in 2025 — a welcome revival of a long-standing local tradition.

Held on the field between the playground and the community garden, it was a perfect autumn afternoon, with blue skies and dappled sunlight.

The sack race course was in steady use, with kids and adults starting their own informal races. The egg-and-spoon race took place along the same course, adding a slower, more careful challenge. Cornhole games rotated all afternoon, and two bouncy houses were popular with big and small kids alike.

Under a large shady tree, a hula hoop area offered a quieter spot to play. A tattoo artist was also a popular stop, and refreshments leaned into fall favorites with apple cider, cider donuts and apple pie.

Up the hill at the History Project, the area where big granite stones mark the site of Nathan Robbins's original farm house, kids and families learned about the farm's history through fun activities and art projects - a scavenger hunt, puzzles, games, and of course drawing (and riding) the iconic dog statue!

Musical chairs offered three heats for different ages. With stiff competition in each heat, the proud winners were rewarded with a whole apple pie of their very own!

The tone of the day was easy going and relaxed. In many ways, it felt like a rare step back in time—a reminder of how simple old-fashioned events like Field Day are still fun for everyone.

Field Day is back again this year in October. Spread the word and bring your friends by for another great day at Robbins Farm Park!



Off-Leash Hours

Mon-Fri

(7/1-8/31) 6-9am

(9/1-6/30) 6-7:45 and 8:30-9am

Sat & Sun

(4/1-6/30 & 9/1-11/15) 6-8:30am

(11/16-3/31 & 7/1-8/31) 6-9am



"Treats: 8 Ball: 1" by Emily Wang

If a field is in use for school dept. activity or other organized, permitted events, off-leash activity is allowed only behind the backstop. The entire Robbins Farm Park, except the playground area, is open for off-leash use except as detailed above. Fields are generally closed to all users in wet weather.

For e-mail alerts regarding park and field closures, subscribe to the Field Conditions Notification email list www.arlingtonma.gov/connect/email-subscription-lists

Dan Fox & Arlington Express take the Stage at Robbins!

Rockin' Robbins Concert is Tuesday, July 14th

By Tony Vogel & Corinne Schippert

Arlington is home to an extraordinary community of musicians, and Rockin' Robbins has long showcased local talent. This summer, we're excited to welcome standout Dan Fox and his band, Arlington Express.

Dan is a dynamic multi-instrumentalist—on trombone, drums, and bass—and a graduate of Berklee College of Music with a career spanning concerts, international festivals, radio, and television. He has performed with groups including the Boston Pops Swing Orchestra, Gene Krupa Orchestra, Cab Calloway Orchestra, and The Either/Orchestra, and at venues such as the Kennedy Center, Newport Jazz Festival, and Monterey Jazz Festival. He has also toured with groups like The Cadillacs, The Chantels, and The Drifters, and continues to teach summer sessions at Berklee.

In addition to performing, Dan is deeply committed to music education and community building. His Morningside program, founded in 2007, has grown into one of New England's largest ensemble programs, connecting students through local performances and international experiences in places like New Orleans, Italy, Spain, and Cuba. He also founded the Arlington Jazz Festival 15 years ago, a nonprofit that brings together top performers, local ensembles, and students while strengthening Arlington's cultural identity. This year's five-day festival culminated in a sold-out performance by guitarist Stanley Jordan at the Regent Theatre.

Arlington Express is a jazz-funk ensemble featuring Larry Terry on alto sax, Steve Monahan on electric bass, Neal Itzler on guitar, Dan Fox on drums, and



Dan Fox

Mike Valdez on keyboards. The group's Arlington roots run deep—Larry, Dan, and Steve are local residents, and Steve teaches at Morningside. Larry is known for his expressive saxophone style and has performed jazz and R&B with groups including Saklamara. Steve Monahan is a sought-after freelance bassist and instructor, while Neal Itzler teaches ensembles at Berklee and has performed extensively in Boston and New York. Mike Valdez is a pianist and drummer who performs locally across genres including classical, jazz, rock, musical theatre, Motown, and R&B. **Come for a memorable concert with Arlington Express!**



Rescheduled for 2026

**Making Robins and Friends
at Robbins Farm Park!**

Sat, May 30th from 1-3pm



Join us for a creative afternoon at Robbins Farm Park, when children can make a fun art project led by art teacher Kathy Lobo. In this hands-on workshop, families will have the chance to sew their own three-dimensional birds using calico cotton patterned shapes, button eyes and decorations of your choice. If you prefer to draw, we'll supply paper, bird books, and art supplies to inspire beautiful 2D bird creations. Real birdwatching and ID'ing included!

Voices from the Playground by Jim Hampe

It's been a little more than a year since the playground re-opened, and while it has been consistently busy even in the cold winter months, with the turn of the weather, we were excited to get out during April school vacation week and hear some opinions from the experts on their favorite parts of the playground.

On a nice sunny spring day, the playground was packed with kids climbing, scrambling, swinging, sliding, and spinning. A few kids were willing to pause amidst all of the action and provide some real-time reactions to "What's your favorite part of the playground?"

Here's what we heard:

- *"The Big Slide!"*
- *"Running up the hill part and battling with my friend while doing it."*
- *"The big roller slide and 'surfing' down it."*
- *"Mine is running, running, running, and then going down the slide!"*



As I sat on one of the hillside path benches, watching from afar as my big kid played in the structures, I was also struck by one other feature - how useful the accessible paths are in connecting the different areas of the playground. One example I saw was a mother pushing her baby in a stroller up the path to the top of the playground while also keeping close to her very mobile toddler!

It's great to see our park blooming and the playground coming more alive again in the warmer sunshine.



Garden Fresh! - Tucked in below the playground near Eastern Ave lies a vibrant community garden overflowing with organic vegetables and community spirit! Robbins Farm Garden is a resource for teaching both children and adults how to grow your own food and work together as a community. Stop by the Community Garden on Saturday mornings! For more info, go to www.RobbinsFarmGarden.org.

Our Mission

The Friends of Robbins Farm Park (FORFP) is a community organization formed to promote the beautification, restoration, and improvement of the Robbins Farm Park located along Eastern Avenue in Arlington Heights, Massachusetts.

We sponsor and promote cultural, educational, recreational and other community activities throughout the year. We invite active membership in the organization and seek to represent the Robbins Farm Park community.

Friends of Robbins Farm Park

P.O. Box 750013
Arlington, MA 02475

Email: friends@robbinsfarmpark.org

Volunteer: volunteer@robbinsfarmpark.org

Website: www.robbinsfarmpark.org

Great Read!

Robbins Farm Park: A Local History

Explore the rich history of Arlington's Robbins Farm Park with expanded content, photographs, and community stories. \$ 15/each

To order, go to our website:

www.robbinsfarmpark.org/join donate

Join Us!

Support FORFP and honor the legacy of Nathan Robbins, Farmer-Philanthropist. FORFP seeks to continue his tradition of bringing this community together. Funds go towards events & upkeep of our wonderful park.

Join or renew your household membership:

1-year \$10, 3-year \$25, or 3 year with book \$ 40

Join or donate today:

www.robbinsfarmpark.org/join donate

