



Autumn Newsletter

Save the River-Save the Hills, Inc., is dedicated to preserving the health of the Niantic River Estuary, its watershed and the natural beauty of the Oswegatchie Hills.

www.SavetheRiverSavetheHills.org



Winter Buffet & Holiday Cheer!

Our annual Fundraiser



Chef Olivia and Natalie welcome you!!

Flanders Fish Market and Restaurant **December 8th, 2017**

**22 Chesterfield Road,
East Lyme, CT 06357**

Friday evening

6:00pm-10:00pm

New: Small gifts at our Holiday Boutique!
New more comfortable seating arrangement
Exciting Live Auction Items
Delicious Flanders Fish Buffet Menu
Our spirited, entertaining Auctioneers return!
Remember sending the return ticket portion with your check is your reservation.

Find your Tickets and more details on the flyer enclosed.
\$30.00 per person if you send in your payment and tickets (\$35 at door) Kids \$15.00
For info call Eileen O’Pasek at 860-439-1687

Plus Silent Auction & Raffle!
All items are donated and all money raised supports STR-STH programs.
If you have an item to donate or want to sponsor an auction item, please call Eileen!!



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President Fred Grimsey with Congressman Joe Courtney at our Kayak Regatta in August



The Goshen Fire Boat with full plume in front of the Oswegatchie Hills



The crowd on land getting clam chowder at KR

Legal Update

We now have the full support of the CT Fund for the Environment (CFE/Save the Sound) in our legal battles vs development in the Oswegatchie Hills! CFE’s legal team will now be working on both the Zoning Application court case (which is in Appellate Court now) and the water-sewer case (also in appeal). Rogers Reynolds, lead attorney for CFE, recently attended the 10th anniversary of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve’s opening and said he was “guardedly optimistic, with an emphasis on the optimism” about our strong case in advocating for the environment as intervenors in support of the Town’s decisions in each of these cases. Stay tuned & please continue to give generously to our legal defense fund—our donations help support having these high powered attorneys!

A Note from the President and Founder of STR-STH:

November 1st marks the year end of two important and fully funded activities: the Niantic River Pumpout Boat program and the Unified Water Quality Study.

Pumpout Program: Thanks to coxswain Max Veilleux and deck hand Tim Foss for their efforts this 2017 season—our 15th year! Thanks also to Mike Veilleux (Max's dad) for his volunteer work and to Nick Caruso for his consulting.

Unified Water Quality Study: This study, sponsored by Save the Sound, is an attempt to gather consistent data on the embayments of Long Island Sound. Our sincere thanks to our Manager of the Niantic River Study, Dr. Jamie Vaudrey of UConn Avery Point and her son Riley for their data gathering and reporting. Special mention to Ted Norris and his boat for getting Jamie and Riley out on the water and Jim Paganetti and his boat for filling in and making this testing possible.

Yours in Saving the River and the Hills, *Fred Grimsey*

Kayak Regatta – 2017 – Our 14th!!

The Save the River-Save the Hills 14th Annual Niantic River Appreciation Day Kayak Regatta on August 19th was a beautiful day shared with the public showing up to support saving the Niantic River and the Oswegatchie Hills. Kayakers were treated to music while on the water by The Denise and Tony Band and the Goshen Fire Boat wowed participants with their ability to quickly save a person with their water-rescue demonstration.



Denise and Tony Walstra singing us up the river!



Congressman Courtney, State Senator Paul Formica and EL 1st Selectman Mark Nickerson

Congressman Joe Courtney was on hand and spoke on the importance of grassroots efforts to save imperiled lands like the Oswegatchie Hills. STR-STH President and Founder Fred Grimsey was honored for his persevering focus and efforts on improving the water quality of the Niantic River by State Senator Paul Formica who read the General Assembly citation to the crowd of about 100. **The bipartisan show of local support for saving the Oswegatchie Hills continues to be a highlight of this event!**

Special thanks to our new Regal Cinemas Waterford 9 Volunteers who helped us dish out the delicious clam chowder that was once again donated by Flanders Fish Restaurant. Peddle kayak & peddle SUP demonstrations by Three Belles Marina and the fun, short kayak and SUP races were a hit. Check out the great pics by Debbie Beckwith at our website www.savetheriversavethehills.org and our videos on our Facebook page.

Kayak Race Winners: 1) **Woman's Short Boat:** Billy Jo Williams; 2) **Men's Short Boat:** Brian Williams; 3) **Kids Races:** Boy: Lucas Girl: Maddy; 4) **Woman's Long Boat:** Karen O'Leary; 5) **Men's Long Boat:** Michael Dunn. Congratulations all!

Drawing Winners: **Kayak and Paddle** (donated by Mike & Deb –Thanks!!) – Stephanie Hughes; **Life vest** – Cordette Grimsey; **STR-STH T-shirt**—Mike Lyons; **STR-STH Beach Bag**– Corenne LaFleur; **STR-STH hat** – Jimmy Perez.



Denise & Tony's view of our kayakers coming up the river—Thanks once again to the Mathews who donate their porch every year!

Thank you all for coming out on our beautiful river in support of Save the River-Save the Hills!



Mark, Paul, State Rep. Holly Cheeseman, Fred and grandson Kelan with the General Assembly Citation

Save Oswegatchie Hills Coalition – Update



Suzanne with Ayla Fox, of Shed Light Productions, filming for the documentary during the Kayak Regatta

We're going viral! In coming weeks, our Coalition will unveil a short video documentary that gives an overview of the Oswegatchie Hills and Niantic River estuary and our ongoing quest to protect the remaining 236 acres of undeveloped, unprotected coastal forest on the East Lyme banks of the Niantic River.

We're excited to be able to create this outreach and advocacy tool with CFE and Save the Sound. The production and accompanying social media advertising have been made possible by a grant from Temper of the Times Foundation, which supports advertising for the environment by non-profit organizations, to Connecticut Fund for the Environment.

The video includes passionate statements by STR-STH and Friends of Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve members. There's stunning drone footage of the lower watershed, people hiking in OHNP and splashing on the Niantic. It encourages viewers to join us in our cause.

There are many ways we plan to use this video with multiple audiences and venues. **Please let me know if you have ideas.** The video will be hosted on Connecticut Fund for the Environment's YouTube channel, (www.youtube.com/user/SavetheSoundCT) and STR-STH website and Facebook will help promote it. We'll distribute the video to schools, libraries, community centers, civic group meetings, and local businesses – Wild Birds Unlimited in Niantic has already asked to show it!

Watch for the video on your local Cable Public Access channel and listen for some radio spots about it on WNPR FM in November.

And, you'll see the video on the TV screens at our December 8th fundraiser at Flanders Fish!

Suzanne Thompson, Save Oswegatchie Hills Outreach Coordinator, 860-662-1531



Suzanne joining in at the Kayak Regatta!

A Note from the Treasurer – Liz Caruso

We often get the question “What happens to the money we donate?” Well, I'm glad you asked!

First are legal expenses related to our intervenor status supporting the town of East Lyme in their court case vs Landmark LLC who is still attempting to develop the remaining 236 acres in the Oswegatchie Hills. Then we are also involved with the Water-Sewer case as an intervenor for environmental reasons, but as a separate entity from the town. We are currently in appellate court on both cases. Maintaining a nest egg to continue our legal battle for the Hills is a huge priority. We have also begun donations to the CT Fund for the Environment since they and their attorneys have joined us as intervenors. For 13 years we—through our membership—have been successfully blocking Landmark's attempts to develop. And by saving these hills, we have saved the river!!

Additionally, we have expenses for our 2 boats, Water Quality Monitoring, the Pump Out Program, the Kayak Regatta, Coalition Events, public education, fundraising expenses, our newsletter and special announcements. If you are interested in any more specific details, feel free to join us at a board meeting and ask questions.

I am proud to say that with the exception of the costs associated with running the Niantic River Pump Out Program, Suzanne's Coalition work with CFE and our new Water Quality Monitoring Manager, all the work being done by STR members, including our president, is volunteer. I have been astounded by the generosity of our board members as well as our amazing membership! Keep up the good work!!!

Kayak regatta photos taken by Deborah Beckwith and Deb Moshier-Dunn.



Winter Buffet & Holiday Cheer! December 8th 6-10pm

Volunteer Opportunities:

- ☺ Donate Live or Silent Auction Item
- ☺ Sponsor an Auction Item
- ☺ Board Members - Secretary position is open

Like Fred said, "Please Join Us!"

www.SavetheRiverSaveTheHills.org

Save the River – Save the Hills, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) grassroots environmental organization based on the Niantic River Estuary in Waterford & East Lyme. We are dedicated to abating and preventing pollution of the river, its Watershed and advocating the preservation of Oswegatchie Hills.

To donate or become a member clip and mail the form below, or call Eileen O'Pasek @ 860-439-1687

Membership Chair Update

Dear Members and Friends,

I want to mention how fortunate and excited we are to have Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound more involved in our Legal Defense but **we need your continued support help for our financial part.**

It is almost holiday time and our "Winter Buffet & Holiday Cheer" is December 8, 2017 at Flanders. **Please send your tickets and check to us on or before November 27, 2017** as we have rearranged the room to be more comfortable and there is Limited Seating! Your paid tickets are your Reservation.

You can make this OUR best Fundraiser ever by being a Sponsor, donating a service or monetary amount or through ticket purchases even if you can't attend (please read & use Sponsor Form enclosed). It would be a huge help!

Remember we are nearing the end of the year and your contributions are tax deductible. Thank you for your continued support in Saving the River and the Hills!

Sincerely, *Eileen O'Pasek*, Membership Chair

Membership & Other Contributions:

New Renewal

Basic Family \$20

River Keeper \$50

River Saver \$100

River Protector \$250

River Neptune \$500

River Champion \$1000

All members receive our quarterly newsletters. Note: first \$20.00 of any membership category goes to the general fund and is used as required for all programs. Additional amounts may be directed as below:

Water Quality (testing, education, pumpout programs)

Legal Defense Fund

General Fund



Please make checks payable to:

STR-STH, Inc.

and mail to

Save the River-Save the Hills

P.O. Box 505

Waterford, CT 06385

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

(email will be used for Action Alerts for STR-STH issues)

Referred by:

Save the River-Save the Hills, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible.

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