



Summer 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

Summer Time is Kayak Regatta Time!!

Our 16th Niantic River Appreciation Kayak Regatta will be Saturday, August 17 from 10am to 2pm! (raindate Sunday July 18)
Come enjoy a day on the Niantic River with friends!

Short, fun Kayak Races for t-shirts and bragging' rights!

Floating Dock with Demo peddle kayaks & SUPs by **Three Belles Marina!**

Kayak Parade Behind the Goshen Fire Boat! (meet at Sandy Point at 10am)

Free Hot Dogs from **The Dock!**



Free Clam Chowder from **Flanders Fish!**

New this year—Floating Yoga!

Launch and meet us at Sandy Point to get behind the Goshen Fire Boat for a kayak parade up the Niantic River. The Fire Boat will lead us up to Point Comfort where we will hear **music by Jess Mancuso** under the tent at 47 Oswegatchie Road while trying **Floating Yoga** on anchored SUP boards set up by Three Belles Outfitters **with Barbara Daversa (a ERYT certified yoga instructor & certified SUP yoga instructor—photo to right)**, eating our free Clam Chowder and Hot Dogs. Around noon, we'll hear an update on STR-STH's programs and a legal update on the ongoing battle to save the Hills. And we will hear from our local representatives and (possibly a Senator or Congressman) 1:00pm Short Kayak Races and 1:45pm our free drawing for a Kayak!

JOIN US FOR A FUN DAY ON THE WATER !



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A Regatta participating member will win this Pelican kayak with paddles at the event!

Save the Date!

Annual Fundraiser at Flanders Fish—SATURDAY, December 7



“LIKE” our Facebook page or go out to our website at SavetheRiverSavetheHills.org to stay up-to-date

President's Message:

We have restarted our bacterial testing at strategic points on the Niantic River. We are testing the water for the same Enterococci as Ledge Light Health District does for town beaches. Jamie Vaudrey, PhD, will be conducting the tests with our new Lab Equipment that we were able to purchase because of member contributions—Thank you! We will test the water after a one inch rainfall at five different points on the River and will provide copies of the data gathered to town officials. In the coming weeks, we will be working with the towns of Waterford and East Lyme to set up some form of communication mechanism to let residents and visitors know more about water quality so they may make informed decisions when deciding to partake in water contact sports on the River. Our goal is to help people avoid water borne illnesses caused by contact with water that contains high bacterial counts. In the past we have found high bacterial counts after a substantial rainfall— enough to close a town beach if it tested at this level. We will keep you posted on this ongoing program.

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



Raffle Winners Donate Their Boat Sale Proceeds to STR-STH—our members are THE BEST!!

Congratulations to PJ & Rob Brewer who won the boat and motor so generously donated by Boats Inc., Niantic!! Once they heard of their winnings, the Brewer's announced to us that they would sell their own inflatable with motor and donate the proceeds to STR-STH. Their boat was sold and they donated the proceeds to support STR-STH's programs! Thank you PJ and Rob for being such wonderful, generous members!

(Left: Our winners, members PJ & Rob Brewer (on right of boat), with Zach Sousa (in shorts) & Don MacKenzie from Boat's Inc., as the Brewers picked up their boat after the June 7th Raffle Drawing.)

Legal Defense Fund – Help Us Save Oswegatchie Hills!

We continue our legal battles with the developer. We agreed to a 6 week delay asked for by the developer, so the next court hearing will be in late August or early September. Our attorney Roger Reynolds of CT Fund for the Environment will be on hand at the Kayak Regatta for a legal update. We continue to be hopeful that the Judge will weigh the environmental issues on this case as much as the other considerations. **Please remember we are still engaged in the battle to Save the Hills when you renew your membership!**

Pumpout Boat Program

We started our 16th season of the Pumpout Program Memorial Day Weekend. Spread the word—the Niantic River and the entire Long Island Sound is a No-Discharge Zone by order of the U.S. EPA. Our Pumpout Boat can be contacted by calling the cell number for the boat: **287-2774 (cell phone)**. Although fully funded by grants, tips for our workers are appreciated!!



Our new Pumpout Boat next to our backup boat.

Program Updates

Watershed Education



Pump It Up campaign graphic designed by Marlene Anderson, East Lyme HS 2019 graduate & will be used in multiple educational pieces for East Lyme residents in coming months.

If you live in East Lyme, watch for this “Pump It Up East Lyme” logo. This catchy graphic, created by 2019 East Lyme High School graduate Marlene Anderson as part of STR-STH’s public education outreach, will be used by Town of East Lyme Public Works department to remind residents on septic systems to keep them inspected and pumped out every three to five years.

Over the past year, STR-STH worked with science classes in East Lyme, Montville and Waterford High Schools, covering the sources of nitrogen pollution in the Niantic River Watershed and local, state and Federal programs to reduce the pollution. It started with a Project Oceanology boat trip to Niantic Bay in June 2018 and a Niantic River Watershed Day hosted by Waterford High School in September. The students heard from multiple external experts on topics ranging from the Clean Water Act and Long

Island Sound Study to Niantic River Watershed Committee, and state and local programs and efforts to clean up the impaired waterway. Over the winter, students at each school chose to work on different aspects of public education and outreach in their respective town.

In May 2019, the students presented their public outreach campaigns to each other and STR-STH reviewers at a Niantic River Watershed Workshop hosted by East Lyme High School. Although these students have moved on, their output will be used in brochures, displays and newspaper articles in coming months. For example, the Pump It Up campaign using the above logo was kicked off during Celebrate East Lyme Day in Niantic River Watershed Committee's (NRWC) tent. (See picture at right).

And, our thanks to STR-STH members who braved the incredible heat in the Save the Oswegatchie Hills Coalition tent on July 20, too. We continue to raise awareness for this cause with Connecticut Fund for the Environment and Friends of Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve.

These projects were made possible by a Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut environmental grant and Watershed Assistance Small Grants Program, administered by CT Rivers Alliance.

NEW: “Do Not Feed Waterfowl” Program

As part of our Water Quality Program STR-STH is now also focusing on educating watershed residents (we ALL live in a watershed!) on the importance of not feeding waterfowl. The DEEP has created the enclosed brochure to help spread the word and educate people on the harms of feeding waterfowl—to the birds themselves, the local people and the environment. Please take some time to read through the brochure and then share it and its educational contents with friends and family. **We know it seems like a harmless pastime, but it is truly hazardous to feed waterfowl. Among other problems, it can cause Rat Infestations as happened in Keeney Cove when someone was feeding there. Spread the word!!**

Eagle Scout Project—a new Kiosk at Grimsey Beach!

STR-STH is truly happy to announce we were chosen by a young man going for his Eagle Scout badge. His project will be to build an informational kiosk at Grimsey Beach, much like the one at the head of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve. We will have more information on this project during the Kayak Regatta and in our next newsletter. Like Eileen always says, “Our members are the backbone of our Organization.” The support of our community is awesome!



NRWC volunteer Ralph Bates (East Lyme) and Judy Rondeau, Eastern CT Conservation District & NRWC coordinator, used this poster and handed out Pump It Up septic system brochures at East Lyme Day.



STR-STH Board Member Mark Sperry and Pumpout Manager Nic Caruso manning the Save the Hills Coalition table on the hot East Lyme Day.

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 the Oswegatchie Hills.

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

Volunteer Opportunities:

- ☺ Help with our 16th Annual Kayak Regatta
- ☺ Help with the Education Program
- ☺ Administration - helping with mailings, etc.

Join us in anyway you feel comfortable and take action to Save the River and the Hills!

Membership News

Happy 90th Birthday, Roger Desnoyer!! Thank you and your family for suggesting your well-wishers send a donation to STR-STH in lieu of a gift. Thank you to the following donors: Kathleen Burton, Marta Cove, Gene Darin, JoAnn Staves, Sharon and Richard Torrenti, and Patricia and Robert Whitcomb (if any names were missed please let us know and we will put them in our next Newsletter). We couldn’t do what we do without our amazing Members & Donors!

Our 16th Kayak Regatta is coming up on **August 17th!** The Kayak Parade is a fun way to experience the Oswegatchie Hills and Niantic River in all their beauty. It's a day to **renew membership and bring new members** into our dedicated grassroots organization. The day is filled with fun, free food and camaraderie on the Niantic River and at the beach at 47 Oswegatchie Road. Please invite a friend to kayak, enjoy the food and prizes. Be sure to stop by the membership table to learn about the Save the River-Save the Hills programs, fill out a free drawing ticket and buy a t-shirt. Let’s make this our best year for new members and renewals!

Please remember to send us your email with the form below. You won’t want to miss crucial meetings or news on the River & the Hills!

Sincerely, *Eileen O’Pasek*, Membership & Fundraising Chair

Membership & Other Contributions:

New Renewal

Basic Family \$25

River Keeper \$50

River Saver \$100

River Protector \$250

River Neptune \$500

River Champion \$1000+

All members receive our quarterly newsletters.

Note: first \$25.00 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

Please make checks payable to:

Save the River-Save the Hills, Inc.

P.O. Box 505

Waterford, CT 06385

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Corporate Match By:

(please let us know if your employer will match!)