



# Spring 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.SavetheRiver-SavetheHills.org](http://www.SavetheRiver-SavetheHills.org)

## It's too Quiet...

... and that historically hasn't been good for the Oswegatchie Hills. The last time it was this quiet, Landmark was negotiating with the previous owners of the land to buy it for \$2.3 million. Of course, he turned around and offered it to the town for many multiples of that.

Its puts me in mind of (of all things!) the Battle of the Bulge at the end of World War II. As the Allies pushed toward Berlin they were lulled into a false security. The Nazis were planning a massive counterattack through the Ardennes Forest against thinned out Allied Lines. I remember as a thirteen year old following the break through toward Antwerp that was so devastating and unexpected. That memory says to me: "When the enemy is quietest he's the most dangerous." **Our members should redouble our efforts to fight this threat by contacting our government officials and regulatory agencies to keep this issue on the front burner.** Call the Town of EL and remind them that we are still vigilant and involved when it comes to Saving our Hills!

- Fred Grimsey



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## Quick Fundraiser!

We are announcing a Quick Fundraiser via Facebook and our Newsletter: We have a Great Father's Day Golf basket---2 Any-Day General Admission Tickets to the 2012 Travelers Championship June 18-24 at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell. **Donated courtesy of Kelly Financial Group**—thanks! Other contents of Basket include: 1 Men's Golf Windbreaker, 1 Men's Golf Shirt, 2 Sets of Golf Balls, 2 insulated mugs, 2 classic Coke-Colas. The value is \$125.00. Bids start at \$50.00. Post on our Facebook page or call Eileen at 439-1687 with your bid. We will post 'em as we get 'em!

Bidding stops at Noon on June 13th. We will call the winner (if bid called in) and post the winner on Facebook, as well as announce it in our next newsletter. Good luck!!

## Upcoming Events!

“LIKE” our Facebook page to stay “between Newsletters” up-to-the-minute on our events...

- ☺ East Lyme Day—July 21, 2012. Come support us at our booth!!
- ☺ Our 8th Annual Kayak Regatta - Saturday, August 18, 2012 !!!



Fred on our Water Quality skiff—ready to test the waters for your safety!



We will soon be back out there... Get your kayaks ready!

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

- 1) I want to thank our membership for its continuing support of our efforts on the river. Special thanks go to Eileen O'Pasek our hardworking membership chair.
- 2) Memorial Day weekend saw the start of the Pumpout Program on the River, our tenth year! Boaters can get our services by calling 860- 287-2774 or VHS radio channel 68.
- 3) Monday June 4 was the first day of beach water bacterial monitoring on the upper Niantic River. As in the past folks are cautioned to avoid water contact sports (swimming, wading, skiing, personal watercraft operation etc.) after rainfall events. We are still working on trying to get the towns to address this problem.
- 4) We look forward to the operation of the new multi-town police boat which promises to provide increased patrol time on the river. Call the Waterford Police Dept. to report unsafe boating operation on the river.

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

### CT Outdoors — by Suzanne Thompson

STR-STH members and supporters can now listen to Board Member Suzanne Thompson's weekly CT Outdoors radio show on the Internet, at [www.wliswmrd.net](http://www.wliswmrd.net). The talk show, started by Thompson six years ago to give more local coverage of efforts by conservation and environmental groups, land trusts and garden clubs in the region, is carried on WLIS 1420 AM/Old Saybrook and WMRD 1150 AM/Middletown.

STR-STH has been featured several times, from Fred Grimsey talking about the need for protecting the Niantic River watershed, Deb Moshier-Dunn and Eileen O'Pasek promoting the Kayak Regatta and our annual Wine, Pasta and Song event, to Petie Reed with advice on organic gardening and landscapes.

In 2009 and 2010, STR-STH and Thompson produced Sound Decisions, a series of radio shows, podcasts, print and online articles about efforts to protect and preserve the Long Island Sound and its tributaries. STR-STH received a grant from the Long Island Sound Study Futures Fund for the Sound Decisions series. See archives of articles Thompson wrote about water saving and pollution prevention efforts, organic lawn care and public outreach on the Sound Decisions page of STR-STH's website ([www.savetheriver-savethehill.org](http://www.savetheriver-savethehill.org)).

CT Outdoors can be heard several times throughout the week: Each live show, broadcast on Tuesday 12:30-1pm is also replayed Tuesday evening at 6:30-7 pm, plus Saturday 1-1:30 pm, and Sunday 7-7:30 am. Thompson also writes the weekly Local Dirt column in The Day.

### *A reminder from our friends at Three Belles Marina:*

A reminder of our celebration of National Marina Day to be held in conjunction with an Open House on June 9, 2012. NMD's purpose is to promote the family friendly role marinas play in the community and the benefits of a marina lifestyle. It's focus is on safety, education, and environmental sustainability while providing water access. We have many activities and visitors scheduled. US Coast Guard Auxiliary will be performing courtesy vessel safety checks and the DEEP will present their Boat Safe/Boat Smart program. Save the River- Save the Hills will conduct a membership drive and inform us of the efforts being made to protect the Niantic River and Oswegatchie Hills. Regional Hobie Kayak representatives will be doing demos as well. So mark your calendars and invite your friends!

Best Wishes, *Lee Deer* - General Manager

# STR-STH Program Updates...

## Legal Defense Fund – Help Us Save Oswegatchie Hills!

It is rumored that Landmark is negotiating with the Town of EL. But it has, as Fred mentioned, been very quiet. We are afraid that Landmark is going to develop the frontage acres as 3 acre lots with McMansions... It is zoned that way already. PLEASE CONTACT THE EAST LYME FIRST SELECT-MAN'S OFFICE AND LET THEM KNOW HOW IMPORTANT SAVING ALL OF THE HILLS IS TO YOU!!

The Board is planning on meeting with Senator Andrea Stillman as she is involved with Long Island Sound initiatives and has been a strong proponent of protecting the Sound through legislation. We hope to tie the Niantic River to the Sound initiatives as it flows directly into the Sound. Anyone who would like to join us, please contact Deb at 444-9247.

## Water Quality Testing Program

Thanks to Fred who works tirelessly on the boats to get them ready, and a few volunteers this year (Thank you!), we found and fixed the small leak in the Water Quality Testing boat and have it out on the water. The first testing was done on June 4th. As Fred mentioned above, in the past we have found very high bacterial counts in the water after a substantial (1-2 inch) rainfall. We would not recommend water contact sports on the River for a few days after, to allow the tidal flows to clear the River out. We are working with the Towns of Waterford and EL on coming up with a notification system for when the bacterial counts are high enough that they would shut a lake or beach down.

## Watershed Education Program

The Enviroscape was borrowed by the Children's Museum for the Spring months. They thought it was a wonderful tool for teaching children (and their parents) about what a Watershed actually is and how what we do everyday affects the quality of the water in our Coastal Watershed. If you would like to be involved in an education project or have an idea of a school **or summer camp** that might want to use it, please call Deb at 860-444-9247.



## Pumpout Boat Program

We started our 10th season of the Pumpout Program Memorial Day Weekend! Remember—the Niantic River and the entire Long Island Sound is a No-Discharge Zone by order of the Federal EPA. Tell your friends! The Boat can be contacted by calling the numbers for the pumpout boat: **287-2774 (phone) and VHF Channel 68.**

## A Safety Note:

We would like to advise all boaters that the south channel marker at the entrance of Smith Cove is missing. Apparently the piling was struck sometime last week and is now gone altogether. The Coast Guard has been notified and we hope that the situation gets addressed very soon. In the meantime please be aware that the north piling is still in place. Please keep the north piling to your port side when exiting Smith Cove and on the starboard side when entering the cove. Doing so will keep you in the channel. *(Courtesy of a Three Belles email)*

# www.SavetheRiver-SavetheHills.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

## Volunteer Opportunities:

- ☺ Join Our Board—we are looking for new ideas... come bring yours to STR-STH!
- ☺ Help with East Lyme Day at our Booth!
- ☺ Help with the Education Program — call Deb 444-9247 to borrow the Enviroscape
- ☺ Administration - helping with mailings, etc.

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

## Membership News

Thank you to all our members who have sent in their 2012 membership dues! If you are not current, please renew today. We appreciate your generosity and support of our programs. Always remember, **Membership is the Voice and Backbone of our Organization!**

We are currently working on an addition to the Keepsake Book—a section called “A River of Inspiration”. It will reflect how the Niantic River has inspired the Arts throughout our local history. Stay tuned for more about it in our next newsletter!

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

### Membership & Other Contributions:

New  Renewal

Basic Family \$20

River Keeper \$50

River Saver \$100

River Neptune \$250

River Neptune \$500

River Champion \$1000

All members receive our quarterly newsletters and one STR-STH membership sticker

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)

Water Safety  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 only)

Referred by: