



February 2015

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Winter 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



Friday Night Folk at All Souls

Bringing folk music ~ old and new ~ to New London and southeastern Connecticut since 1989

Benefit Concert at All Souls UU of NL for Save the River—Save the Hills!



Friday, February 27, 2015

Doors open at 7:00 p.m.

Concert starts at 7:30 p.m

Admission ~ Free

Donations encouraged!

All Souls UU Congregation
19 Jay Street New London, CT 06320
fridaynightfolk.org

(See Flyer inside for more info)

Many Fine Local Acoustic Musicians Playing, including **Geoff Kaufman**, also emcee for the evening, Karen Ethier-Waring, Lauren Agnelli, Ted Phillips, and more!



Find us on
Facebook

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Eileen O'Pasek with auctioneers Dan Steward & Paul Formica at Winter Buffet and Holiday Cheer!



Rep Ed Jutilla addressing the crowd. Fred, Senator Blumenthal & Paul Formica behind.



1st Selectman Mark Nickerson & Marlene Nickerson with Senator Blumenthal

Winter Buffet and Holiday Cheer—Our Most Successful Event to date!

We had a great show of support from our Federal, State and Local representatives!!!



Sen. Paul Formica, Suzanne Thompson, US Senator Richard Blumenthal, Eileen O'Pasek, 1st Selectman Dan Steward, Fred Grimsey, Rep Ed Jutilla



Max Goldman—rep for US Senator Chris Murphy, Matt LeBeau—rep for US Senator Blumenthal, Eileen O'Pasek & Senator Paul Formica

Upcoming STR-STH Events!

- ☺ **Flora and Fauna of the Oswegatchie Hills**—Benefit at **Artisan Framing & Gallery** in Niantic. Paintings by Kelly Leahy Radding—Coming this June!!!

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

Your continuing support has been crucial in our efforts to save the River and the Hills. However, it's appropriate for you to ask, "What have you done for me lately?" Here's a short list of past work and plans for 2015:

SAVING THE RIVER

- 1) **The Pumpout Program.** All of Long Island Sound is now a No Discharge Zone, including the Niantic River. We have not had funding for an evaluation program to measure compliance, but we are planning a volunteer survey this summer to determine the exact percentage of boats who use the program. This year we got extra funding for a welcome sign on the new railroad bridge with Pumpout information and speed limit posting. The sign will be hung this Spring. 75% of the cost comes is paid by our Pumpout program and 25% from WELSCO and the EL and Waterford Harbor Management Commissions. Amtrak has offered to install the sign. The approval process for the sign was lengthy because Amtrak, DEEP and the Coast Guard all had to approve the design.
- 2) **Water Quality Monitoring.** Sampling for bacterial contamination was done during spring and summer 2014. Significant numbers were found following rain events in the spring but a very dry summer produced data in the zero range. This underlies the general notion that polluted rainfall runoff in the watershed is the chief source of river pollution. We hope to design a monitoring system that identifies the main sources of runoff contamination.
- 3) **River Safety.** Kayaking in the upper River has become very popular in the last several years. Three Belles Marina has a thriving kayak sales and rental business which has helped this growth. Existing regulations, if followed and enforced, can keep this activity safe, but this is not always in evidence. We are planning a volunteer effort to improve the lot of human powered craft on the River by advocating for more comprehensive enforcement.
- 4) **Watershed Education.** Our education programs have slowed in the past several years mainly due to a lack of volunteers. This is an area where we hope to improve by engaging a graduate student as a paid intern to organize this effort.
- 5) **Waterborne Illness Study.** We have, over the years, gathered many anecdotal reports of illnesses among people who engage in water contact sports on the River. We have responded by cautioning folks to stay off the water after significant rainfall. We need professional help to design and study the prevalence of waterborne illnesses.

SAVING THE HILLS

- 1) **Important Bird Area (IBA).** Last year we started an effort to have the Oswegatchie Hills designated by Connecticut Audubon as an IBA. The area qualifies since it is a major stop over for seasonal bird migration. We are working with The Friends of the Oswegatchie Nature Preserve and CT Audubon to encourage birders to monitor spring and fall migration and report on Audubon's website. For information, please call Wild Birds Unlimited at 860-739-7302.
- 2) **Legal Defense.** Our attorneys continue to intervene when appropriate in East Lyme's Water and Sewer battle in the war with the developer. We are awaiting the Judge's response to the Town's decision to increase the allowance from 13,000 gallons/day to 14,434 for that parcel. To put this in perspective, LM requested 118,000 for 840 units in Phase 1.
- 3) Kudos to **Eileen O'Pasek** in her role as **Legislative Liaison**. She is lining up support with our Senators and Representatives on the federal, state and local levels. The recent statement in The Day of Governor Malloy supporting the preservation of The Hills is gratifying. Our support of the Preserve in Old Saybrook hopefully encourages support from Save the Sound and the Trust for Public Land for preserving Oswegatchie Hills.
- 4) Check out the **Annual Pete Seeger Concert** flyer inside. Sponsored by All Souls UU Congregation of NL, this year the concert **generously benefits STR-STH**. Please plan to come!



Board members Suzanne Thompson, Eileen O'Pasek, & Deb Moshier-Dunn with STR-STH President Fred Grimsey

Yours for a Clean Niantic River, *Fred Grimsey*



STR-STH Program Updates... see Fred's letter (left)

WE WANT TO THANK ALL WHO DONATED TO OUR NEW SPONSOR PROGRAM FOR THE WINTER BUFFET AND HOLIDAY CHEER FUNDRAISER THIS PAST DECEMBER!

Our sponsor program contributions, support event costs or provides the ability for us to obtain new and different auction items. Our hope is that you will help us expand this program for next year. Your donations are truly appreciated and helped make this the most successful Fundraiser in our history. Thank you to the following:

The Alcamo Family	Gene and Marilyn Lohrs
Rachael Baer, Yoga Keeps Me Fit	Eva Minon, of Lyonesse
The Barone Family	Lisa and Rick Moores
Deb Moshier-Dunn and Mike Dunn	Niantic Plumbing
Jessica and Dan Gale	Eileen and Ken O'Pasek
Geraghty and Bonnano LLC	Three Belles Marina
Deb and Ed Guerra	Joan and Rob Walworth
Kathy and Ted Jablowski	



Thank you to all who donated their tickets but were unable to attend and to all our businesses & members who donated items to our Live and Silent Auctions. Your donations and generosity are appreciated!

Susan and Barry Armstrong	Cindy Rogers—Lia Sophia	Lucira Jane Nebelung
Boat House Blues Band	Niantic Acupuncture and Family Wellness	Niantic Bay Bicycles
Rob and P.J. Brewer	Eastern CT Symphony Orchestra	Mystic Seaport
Roger Desnoyers	Drew Kenny—Landscape Design	Anytime Fitness—East Lyme
Flanders Fish Market and Restaurant	Hammond and ISLES Financial	Arthur Murray—Niantic
Ed Jutila	Eastern CT Ballet	Leona Wasniewski—Cleaning
Kris Lambert	Northern Lights Gems	Smith's Acres
Chelsea Northrup	Karen Doherty—Arbonne	Rebecca and John Starrett
Perennial Harmony	Divine Wine	Jaxon Vibber—Fishers Island Sound Marine Contractors
Rent a Space, Waterford and East Lyme	Dr Primo and Denise Walstra	Francine Schwartz—Pathfinder Counseling
Holly and Ed Riozzi	Cordette Grimsey	Artisan Framing & Gallery—Niantic
Kathy and Dan Steward	Wild Birds Unlimited—Niantic	Kelly Leahy Radding—Artist
Brian and Brooke Vincenti		



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 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:

- ☺ Join Our Board—we are looking for new ideas... come bring yours to STR-STH!
- ☺ Help Educate Children — call Deb 444-9247 to borrow the Enviroscape for your child's school or organization (Scouts, etc.)
- ☺ Events - helping with planning, mailings, etc.
- ☺ River Safety Committee

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

Membership News

Thank you to all our wonderful members for your contributions for 2014! Please continue your support of Save The River-Save The Hills by renewing your **Annual Membership** for 2015. We have started a new calendar year for our donation cycle. Happy, Healthy, New Year to All!

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



Special Thanks to all who came to our Winter Buffet and Holiday Cheer fundraiser!

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 our heartfelt gratitude!

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 and never be shared!!)

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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