


NARROW RIVER NOTES

Narrow River Preservation Association: Preserving the Narrow River and the Watershed Since 1970 / Winter 2015

Jason Considine Receives W.E.R. La Farge Friend of the River Award



Richard Grant, NRPA President, presented Jason Considine (near left) with the W.E.R. La Farge Memorial Friend of the River Award at the 44th NRPA Annual Meeting on October 2.

The award recognizes Jason's "leadership in founding and hosting the Pettaquamscutt Paddle each year since 2008, and for his generous support of NRPA's annual kayak raffle." In presenting the award, Richard also recounted Jason's work with the R.I. Blueways Alliance in developing paddle maps of Narrow River, and praised his environmental stewardship. "Whether it's through his volunteer efforts with NRPA or his management of Narrow River Kayaks, Jason is a constant advocate for responsible use of the river and a true friend of the environment." (Photo: Veronica Berounsky)

Annual Meeting Recap

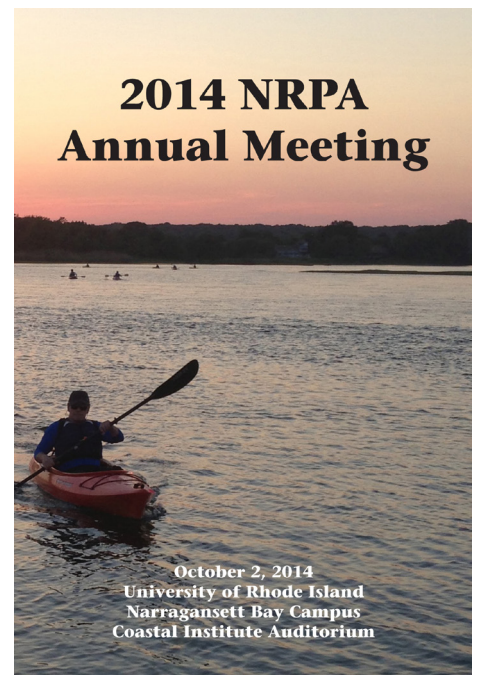
On October 2, NRPA began its 44th year of preserving and protecting the Narrow River Watershed with a fresh look at the role and responsibilities of Designated Watershed Councils such as NRPA and a discussion of ongoing and planned marsh restoration work in the lower Narrow River. The 2014 Annual Meeting at the Coastal Institute Building on the URI Bay Campus in Narragansett also included updates on NRPA programs, exhibits from other organizations in the watershed and, of course, the drawing for

the annual kayak raffle, which was won by Mark and Sandra Crevier.

Year in Review

NRPA President Richard Grant got things started with a review of 2014 with its full calendar of events and programs starting with cosponsorship of the On Pettaquamscutt Winter Speaker Series and continuing through the spring and summer with the Road Race, Turnaround Swim and the educational series at Middlebridge. Richard noted

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President's Cove

I am getting a bit optimistic.

Every September, we ask the residents and friends of the Narrow River Watershed to join NRPA or renew their membership by making a contribution and sharing some contact information. In a sense, on September 1 each year we have no members, as we restart the count with the membership drive and ask every one to commit for another year.

This month we are wrapping up our 2014-2015 membership drive and I am happy to report that so far the membership has increased by 11 percent and there has been a similar increase in the amount of individual contributions. Perhaps it's a sign of economic recovery, or, as I would love to think, increased awareness of the importance of protecting the watershed.

I thank everyone who has committed for another year and know that this show of support will be very valuable as we continue NRPA River Watch, the scholarships and other activities essential to the mission of NRPA.

I am also looking forward to this year as the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service continues its multiple projects to enhance the resiliency of the John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge, especially a planned effort to increase the elevation of the salt marshes in lower Narrow River by spreading a thin layer of material dredged from the river. Experiments are now being conducted in Ninigret Pond to evaluate the techniques to be used in the project. The dredging and deposition of the material will take place in Narrow River at the end of this year.

You can learn more about salt marsh restoration by attending the On Pettaquamscutt presentation on March 29, when Wenley Ferguson will discuss Save the Bay's efforts to promote healthy marshes in Narrow River and elsewhere in Narragansett Bay. And we will keep you posted on the USF&WS projects in this newsletter and on narrowriver.org.

Richard Grant
NRPA President

MISSION STATEMENT

The Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) works to preserve, protect, and restore the natural environment and the quality of life of all communities within the Narrow (Pettaquamscutt) River Estuary and Watershed.

www.narrowriver.org

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NRPA is part of the *United Way Workplace Campaign*.

Our donor option number is
6239

If you plan to give to United Way,
please consider designating
a portion of your gift to NRPA.



NRPA is participating in
the 2015 Rhode Island
State Employees Charitable
Appeal (SECA).
Our fund number is **6239**.

Rhode Island Rivers Council



Annual Meeting Recap

(continued from page 1)

the expansion of NRPA River Watch with the addition of 13 monitoring sites in the lower Narrow River made possible with funding from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

When he discussed the Science Fair Award and the NRPA Lesa Meng Scholarship, Richard publicly thanked Rick Moffitt for his continued support of the scholarship.

Later in the program Board members Veronica Berounsky and Sally Sutherland provided additional details on River Watch and the educational programs.

In addition to Jason Considine being awarded the W.E.R. La Farge Memorial Friend of the River Award, URI senior Eric Peterson was presented with an Environmental Achievement Award (see page 4).

Watershed Councils Have Vital Role

In the keynote, Ken Payne, Ph.D., founding member of the Rhode Island Rivers Council and the Council's first Chair spoke on "the evolving and specifically important role of local watershed organizations." Ken recounted the legislative history of the R.I. Rivers Council, emphasizing the legal status of the "Designated Watershed Councils," which have standing before all state and local boards and commissions when those bodies are considering matters



Tom Ardito, Director of the Center for Ecosystem Restoration, and Julie Sharpe, President of the Narrow River Land Trust, were among those sharing information about their organizations during a meet and greet before the Annual Meeting program. Also on hand was Kat Zuromski (right) to promote the Southern Rhode Island Conservation District's Canada Geese Management Project. Other exhibitors included the Friends of Canonchet Farm, the R.I. Rivers Council and URI Watershed Watch. (Photos: David Smith)



that affect the respective watersheds.

Ken said that the Designated Watershed Councils have broad powers, which include the authority to acquire and dispose of real property. With that power comes the responsibility for a watershed council to educate the public and government entities of its role in stewarding the watershed and responding to the events and plans that impact the river and watershed. He closed with a discussion about responding to incremental changes brought about by climate change and sea level rise, rather than focusing exclusively on the more dramatic storm events.

Update on Saltmarsh Restoration Plans

Tom Ardito, who directs the Center for Ecosystem Restoration, used a slide presentation to

describe the saltmarsh restoration work on-going and planned for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service property on Narrow River. The projects include The Nature Conservancy's marsh edge protection project started in 2014, and marsh restoration work involving "thin-layer spraying" of dredge sediment on top of the marshes, a project that will get under way during the two-month "dredging window" that begins on December 1, 2015.



(l-r) NRPA President Richard Grant, keynote speaker Ken Payne and Bruce Corliss, Dean of the URI Graduate School of Oceanography, chat after the Annual Meeting. (Photo: Veronica Berounsky)

Recognizing a Young River Steward



Last summer URI Senior Eric Peterson assisted in a long-term study of the Upper Pond and the effects of periodic overturns, or ventilations, in which the anoxic waters at the bottom of the pond rise to the upper layers of the water column. His volunteer efforts consisted of both field work and organizing a database from handwritten measurement records. The field work included collecting water samples at various depths and measuring dissolved oxygen (left) and measuring salinity with a refractometer (right). Eric and his family are also NRPA River Watch monitors. Eric was honored at the 2014 Annual Meeting with a Youth Environmental Achievement Award. (Photos: Veronica Berounsky)

NRPA to Award Four College Scholarships

NRPA will award up to four \$1,000 college scholarships to students graduating this spring from the high schools in the watershed: Narragansett High School, North Kingstown High School, The Prout School and South Kingstown High School.

Last year we awarded NRPA Lesa Meng College Scholarships to Shannon Emrich and Kyle Sayre of North Kingstown, Omar Zaki of South Kingstown and Gennifer Keller of Narragansett.

You can download a scholarship application from www.narrowriver.org, or pick one up at the Guidance Department at one of the four watershed high schools.

The scholarship applications are judged on:

- ◆ Student's environmentally oriented activities in and out of high school
- ◆ An original essay on mitigating an environmental problem or issue relevant to Narrow River
- ◆ Science teacher's recommendation
- ◆ Academic achievement in math and science courses.

Completed applications must be submitted to the student's guidance counselor (not to NRPA) by Friday, May 1.

Kayak Raffle



In keeping with tradition, the Annual Meeting concluded with the drawing of the winning ticket in the annual NRPA Kayak Raffle. Eight-year old Jake Pietrzak had the honor of selecting the winner, Mark and Sandra Crevier.

The Creviers (left) took delivery of the Old Town Heron 9XT at their home along Narrow River, while their dog Scarlet tried to discern where she would sit in the new craft.

Our thanks to Jason Considine and Narrow River Kayaks for donation of the kayak. (Photo: David Smith)

On Pettaquamscutt 2015 Offers Great Lineup of Speakers

Do not miss the fourth season of *On Pettaquamscutt: Presentations on the Environment and the History of the Narrow River Watershed*, the winter speaker series sponsored by NRPA, Friends of Canonchet Farm, South County Museum, the Maury Loontjens Memorial Library and Trio Restaurant.

The three presentations are on Sunday afternoons from 1:00 to 3:00 at the Maury Loontjens Memorial Library, 35 Kingstown Road, Narragansett. After each talk, you are invited to continue the conversation next door at Trio, 15 Kingstown Road.

The 2015 lineup includes:

◆ **January 25: Numi Mitchell, "Coyotes in Your Back Yard"**

Coyotes, originally a prairie species, have colonized the Continental U.S. over the last 100 years, and in the mid-1990s even took up residence on the islands in Narragansett Bay. Numi Mitchell, lead scientist in the Narragansett Bay Coyote



Photo: theconservationagency.org

Study, will describe the most successful practices for managing coyote herds.

◆ **February 22: Colin Porter, "King Philip's War at Home: Another Look at the Jireh Bull Garrison House"**



Photo: David Smith

"A few rods from this spot stood the Stone House of Jireh Bull Burned by the Indians December 15, 1675," so reads the stone marker on Middlebridge Road commemorating a preemptive strike by the Narragansetts to prevent Bull's fortification from being used by Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay militia assembling to attack the tribe.

On February 22 anthropologist Colin Porter will tell us the story behind the stone marker and what Jireh Bull's Garrison House meant to Native Americans and Europeans struggling to coexist in the Narragansett Country.

◆ **March 29: Wenley Ferguson, "Salt Marsh Restoration in Narrow River"**



Photo: Veronica Berounsky

Wenley Ferguson, shown above during one of her many visits to the salt marsh on the east side of the river below Middlebridge, will be the final presenter in the 2015 series. Wenley, who is Director of Habitat Restoration at Save the Bay, will discuss Save the Bay's efforts to assess threats to saltmarsh health and to restore healthy, functioning marshes.

The series is free and open to the public. However, you are asked to register in advance for each presentation as space is limited. To reserve a seat at one or more presentations, visit:

www.OnPettaquamscutt.org

28th Narrow River Road Race Set for May 9

Please join us for the 2015 Narrow River Road Race. The race gets under way at 10:00 on Saturday morning, May 9, with 10K runners starting from



2014 10K winner George Marr of North Kingstown, R.I. leads the pack along Middlebridge Road in South Kingstown as the runners return to the start/finish line at Narragansett Beach. George completed the run in 38 minutes, 29 seconds. (Photo: Veronica Berounsky)

the Narragansett Beach North Pavilion, and 5K runners and 5K walkers setting out from Treaty Rock Park on Middlebridge Road in South Kingstown.

The USA Track & Field certified 10K course (#RI06004RN) starts and finishes at the Narragansett Town Beach, where prizes are awarded to first place male and female finishers in each of six age categories for the 10K Run, 5K Run and 5K Walk.

This year's edition is the 28th running of the Narrow River Road Race, which is enjoyed each year by more than 250 runners and walkers from all over New England. Proceeds from the race support NRPA's

educational initiatives and water-quality monitoring programs.

Registration and check-in opens at 8:30 a.m. in the Narragansett Beach North Parking Lot. Shuttle buses from the registration area to the starting line for the 5K events at Treaty Rock Park begin at 9:00 a.m.

The entry fee is \$25 if post-marked by May 5 and \$30 after May 5 and on the day of race.

For more information and a link to online registration, visit:

<http://narrowriver.org/roadrace>

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