

NARROW RIVER NOTES

Summer

Narrow River Preservation Association: Preserving the Narrow River and the Watershed

Fall 2004

NRPA INVITES YOU TO OUR 2004 ANNUAL MEETING

The Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) invites our members and the public to our 2004 Annual Meeting—our 34th. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 5th, at the Coastal Institute Auditorium, URI Bay Campus, South Ferry Road, Narragansett. Refreshments will be served at 7:00 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Annual Meeting will feature a presentation by Meg Kerr, Director and Chairperson of the Rhode Island Rivers Council. The title of her talk is "Rhode Island's Rivers Council—working in partnership with watershed councils to protect our rivers and their watersheds." Meg will introduce us to the Rivers Council, explaining who they are, how they were established and what they do. She will tour the state, introducing the nine watershed councils working in partnership with the Rivers Council.

The RI Rivers Council was formed in 1990 and is charged with "coordinating, overseeing, and reviewing efforts to im-

prove and preserve the quality of rivers and to develop plans to increase the utilization of river areas throughout the state." The Council advocates for strong watershed management policies within the state, then formally recognizes and works in partnership with community-based watershed councils. Today, there are nine recognized watershed councils, including NRPA. The Rivers Council also works in partnership with the RI Land Trust Council.

Meg Kerr is an environmental scientist who worked for the URI Coastal Resources Center from 1989 to 2003. She began volunteering with the Rivers Council in 1990, serving as Vice Chair in 1996-2001 and as chair since 2001. She has been the Director since January 2003. Meg has broad experience in environmental planning and management, with special expertise in water-quality assessment and monitoring, especially volunteer-based monitoring programs. As a mother of four, she is

keenly interested in environmental education. She is a marathon runner and loves kayaking on Rhode Island's inland waterways.

The Annual Meeting will also include reports on NRPA activities and highlights from the past year. Updates on important issues affecting the Narrow River will be provided. These will include water use and habitat management issues, water quality improvement projects, and land conservation efforts. Highlights from NRPA's education programs will be reviewed. Observations from this year's River Watch program will be reported and volunteer River monitors will be recognized.

The W.E.R. La Farge Memorial Award will be presented, and this year's kayak raffle winner will be announced.

The annual meeting provides a forum to meet NRPA members and to learn more about the Narrow River and its Watershed. We hope that you will join us.

—Annette DeSilva

2004 SCHOLARSHIPS: SENIORS AWARDED \$500 FOR COLLEGE

For the tenth year, NRPA has awarded \$500 scholarships to seniors graduating from high schools in the Narrow River Watershed. This year, NRPA Scholarships were awarded to Rosalinda Fortier of Narragansett High School and Kevin Smith of North Kingstown High School.

Applicants for the scholarships were judged on the quality of an original essay about the impact of human activity on a watershed, their participation in environmentally-oriented activities in and out of school, a science teacher's recommendation, and their academic achievement in science and math courses.

Kevin and Rosalinda both were very active in environmental programs during high school. Kevin participated on his school's Envirothon and National

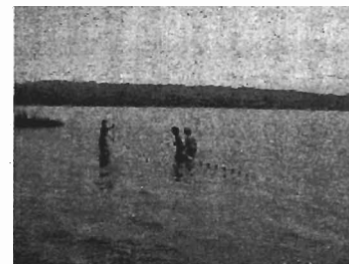
Ocean Science Bowl teams and was a member of the Environmental Club. In addition, he volunteered for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's piping plover protection program and assisted in RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) fish studies. Rosalinda captained her school's National Ocean Science Bowl team for three years and was a member of the Envirothon team for two years. She also organized a neighborhood recycling project.

—Melissa Hughes

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CAMP SPRAGUE VISITS NARROW RIVER



Camp-goers seine the River.

Did you ever wish you could spend some summer days exploring the Narrow River and finding out what lives there? Children attending the town of Narragansett's summer camp, Camp Sprague, got to do just that for ten days this summer.

In a new program, NRPA collaborated with the Town of Narragansett's Recreation Department and took campers out to different sites on Narrow River over the summer. The sites were:

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The President's Cove



As summer nears its end, we are reaching out to every Watershed resident and friend of Narrow River to participate in our Annual Membership Campaign. Your membership dollars are critically important to our success. A substantial percentage of the funds we raise each year comes from people like you and provides funding for NRPA's vital programs.

We hope that you will participate and contribute by filling out the enclosed membership envelope and returning it to NRPA. To further encourage your support, we are offering some incentives from Buckley Heating and Cooling and Damon Hardware for those signing up for one of our membership categories before October 1, 2004.

We know that not everyone can give his or her time in the same way that our active, hands-on Board of Directors does. Becoming a member of NRPA adds your financial support and, more importantly, adds one more voice when we speak together in defense of the River and the Watershed against the next assault. We ask you to sign up now for a one-year membership and be a part of our preservation efforts. If you are willing to volunteer your time to NRPA, even if only in a small way, make a note of that when you send in your membership form. We want you to be part of solving the challenges that face the communities—natural and human—in our shared environment.

During the last 34 years, NRPA has accomplished a great deal. We've had active roles in designing the new Middle Bridge, preventing over-development in the Watershed, preserving open space within the Chafee Wildlife Refuge, reducing pollution in the River, and educating the public about the issues. There are far too many accomplishments to list here but we hope you'll visit our website at www.narrowriver.org to find out more. At the present time, NRPA is actively opposing an attempt to reduce protection of areas designated by CRMC as "lands of critical concern," initiating an environmental education program with Narragansett's summer day camp, and expanding our AWESome (Active Watershed Education) Program.

We are making a special appeal this year because we want to continue informing everyone with a vital interest in the Watershed about the NRPA activities that affect their lives, their property values, and in a small part, their Earth. With the help of funding from Rivers Council and The Rhode Island Foundation, we have updated our mailing lists so that we can do a better job of reaching and informing all Watershed residents and friends of the River.

So whether you have been a member for many years, or have never joined us before, we hope that you will make every effort to send in your membership form and a contribution before October 1st. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you.

Richard B. Grant

NRPA is proud to be a member of the Rhode Island Rivers Council.



Rhode Island Rivers Council
Working together to protect and restore
Rhode Island's rivers and their watersheds

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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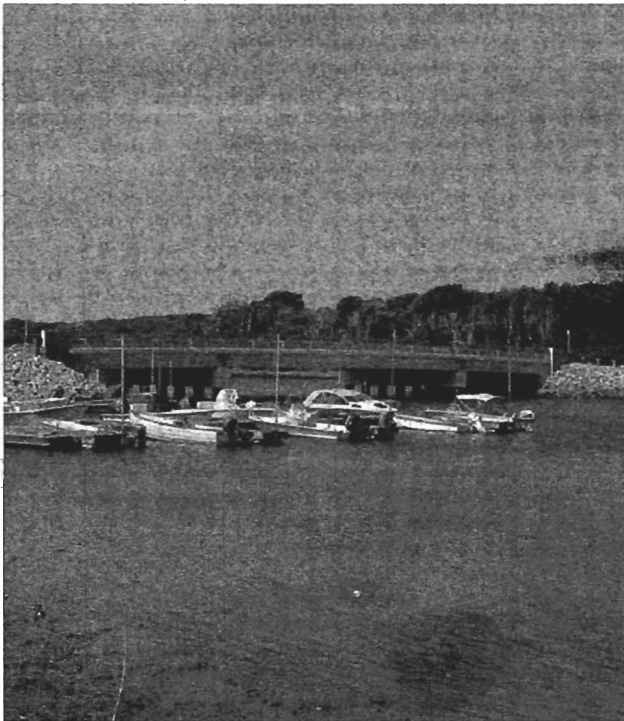
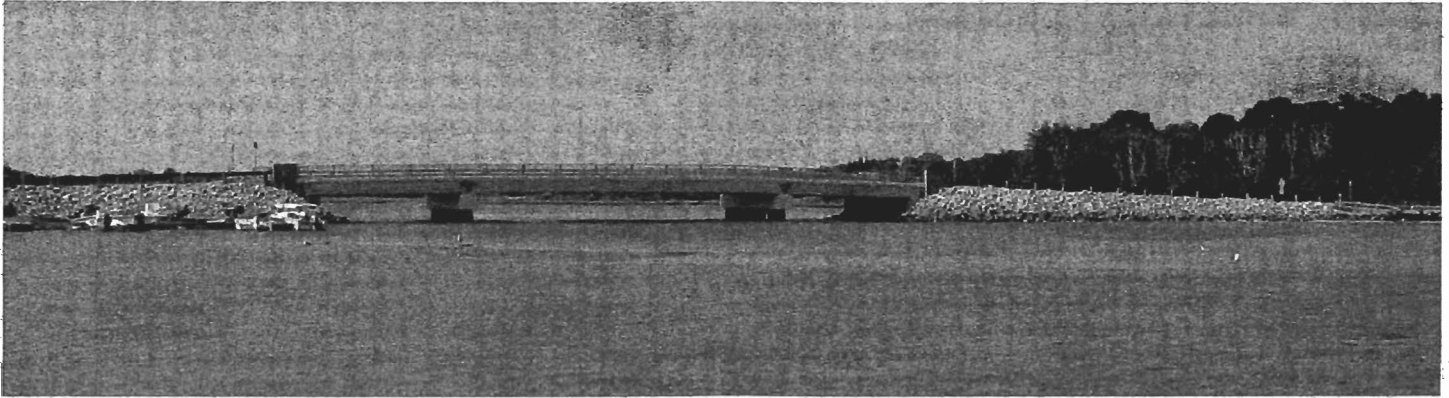
Jeremy Doak, Program Coordinator

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NRPA is part of the United Way Workplace Campaign. This is our donor option number.

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

THE NEW MIDDLEBRIDGE



Photos by Robert D. Kenney

The new Middle Bridge, connecting Narragansett and South Kingstown over the Narrow River, was formally opened to traffic by Rep. Donald Lally and RI DOT director James Capaldi on May 26th. The new bridge has a sidewalk on each side and 4-foot shoulders for the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and fishermen, as well as an open-railing design for maximum visibility.

Input from NRPA was instrumental in getting a bridge design with a wider opening. In an upcoming issue of *Narrow River Notes*, watch for an article with details about how the new bridge does and does not affect flow in the River.

CAMP SPRAGUE VISITS NARROW RIVER



Trying to catch fish at the fish ladder.

(Continued from page 1)

- Gilbert Stuart Birthplace and Museum,
- Girl Scouts of Rhode Island Camp on Upper Pond,
- Mettatuxet Beach and Yacht Club,
- Sprague Bridge access area,
- University of Rhode Island (URI) Crew Team Center on Lower Pond,

•Historic New England's Casey Farm, which extends from Upper Pond to Narragansett Bay.

There were two days of field trips during each two-week camp session. The campers' activities varied from site to site, but included:

- using nets to sample the River for



Looking for worms and shellfish.



Observing birds at Chafee Wildlife Refuge.

plants and animals,

•testing the water for nutrients and bacteria with Narrow River Monitors and URI's Watershed Watch staff,

•trying to catch fish at the fish ladder in Gilbert Stream with scientists from RI DEM,

(Continued on page 4)

CAMP SPRAGUE VISITS NARROW RIVER



Checking out the rowing sculls.



Feeding the chickens at Casey Farm.

- checking out the rowing sculls with the URI women's crew team,
- taking photos to document the plants and animals that we saw,
- spraying "rain" onto a watershed model made by students at the Davisville Middle School, while hearing about better ways to plan neighborhoods from Narragansett's Director of Community Development,
- feeding the chickens at Casey Farm,
- walking from the River to the top of the Watershed across Casey Farm.

(Continued from page 3)

- drying seaweed samples onto paper with experts from URI and Roger Williams University,
- digging into the mudflats below Sprague Bridge to look for worms and shellfish,
- observing the birds at Chafee Wildlife Refuge with experts from URI's Graduate School of Oceanography,
- marking storm drains in Mettatuxet with stickers that say "Don't Dump, Drains to River,"



Spraying "rain" on to a watershed model.

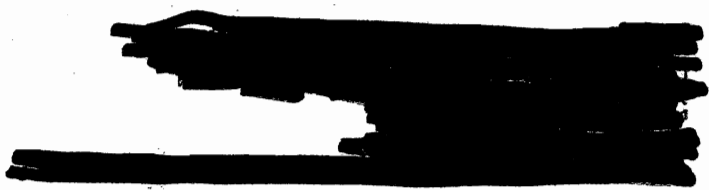
In addition to thanking all those people and organizations who volunteered to help with activities, NRPA also thanks the Town of Narragansett's Recreation Department and Recreation Board for encouraging this new program and working with NRPA. Funding for this program came from a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation and donations from the Inez Sprague Fund and the Buckley Heating Company.

—Veronica Berounsky

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 Coastal Institute Auditorium, URI Narragansett Bay Campus
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