22nd Annual Narrow River Run
Underwritten by the Citizens Bank Foundation

The 2009 edition of the Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) Narrow River Road Race—the 22nd if you’re counting—will be held on May 16th. The Citizens Bank Foundation has once again generously agreed to underwrite the event, and many other businesses and individuals will also be donating their support.

The Road Race is NRPA’s largest fundraising event of the year; the proceeds help support all of our land, water, and education programs. It is being planned and managed by a committee from the Board of Directors, again chaired by Blue Wheeler.

The Narrow River Road Race includes a 10K run, 5K run, and 5K walk through the historic Pettaquamscutt Watershed. The race course parallels the Narrow River, crossing both Sprague Bridge and Middle Bridge and passing through the John Chafee National Wildlife Refuge, home to one of the state’s most beautiful estuaries. The 10K run begins at the Narragansett Beach North Pavilion, turns around at Treaty Rock Park on Middlebridge Road, and finishes back at the Beach.

The 5K run and 5K walk will both start at Treaty Rock Park and finish at the Beach. The course has been certified by the USA Track and Field Association (#RI06004RN). Registration begins at 8:30 AM at the Narragansett Beach North Pavilion. All three events will start at 10:00 AM, rain or shine. Participants in both 5K’s will be bused to the starting line; the buses will depart from the registration area promptly at 9:15 AM. At the conclusion of the races, there will be a refreshment table and an awards ceremony at the North Pavilion, Narragansett Town Beach. There will be prizes for the first-place finishers in each age category in both the 10K and 5K runs, and for the first overall finisher in the 5K walk, plus many other participant prizes.

The entrance fee for the Road Race is $20.00 until May 6th, and $25.00 after that, up to the day of the race.

Visit the NRPA web site (www.narrowriver.org) for on-line registration, or to print out an application for registration by mail, or for a map of the course and directions to the Narragansett Town Beach.

—Richard B. Grant

Environmental Awareness Day

The Narrow River Preservation Association will be participating, along with the Narragansett Parks and Recreation Dept. and several other environmental organizations, in the 6th annual Environmental Awareness Day on Saturday, July 18th. The event is from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and is held at the Narragansett Town Beach. It is a fun and informative day for kids and adults alike. There will be information on NRPA and our programs, and an assortment of activities for the family including a wading pool with a variety of marine life from the River, face painting, a scavenger hunt, shell painting, a balloon toss, and the very popular sand-castle building contest!

—Sally Sutherland
The President’s Cove

When you sit in a darkened theater and watch a play unfold on the stage in front of you, what you don’t see is all of the activity going on behind the scenes. The same holds true for most of the volunteer work at NRPA. Let me mention a few behind-the-scene activities among the more obvious apparent and more proclaimed programs such as the AWEsome Education Program and River Watch. They include the Lesa Meng College Scholarships and Science Fair Awards. Behind-the-scene activities also include writing and editing the newsletter, rounding up the participants for the Environmental Awareness Day at the Town Beach, and organizing the fundraising activities such as the membership drive, Road Race, Kayak Raffle, and Turnabout Swim event. Never mind the people sending out press releases, writing grant proposals and progress reports, and keeping NRPA’s activities and bank account.

A recent program in which NRPA participated is the South Kingstown Elementary School Community Learning Project. People from the community were asked to speak to the elementary school children about particular topics. The children then created a journal around the subject. NRPA was pleased to participate in this activity, which reached out to 2000 students. The creations results of some of the students can be seen at http://skesclp.blogspot.com/.

Our newsletter is a building block, providing information about the activities and achievements of NRPA. Board members write the material and the behind-the-scenes characters put it together. Another area that happens behind the scenes is grant administration; many of our activities are paid for, at least partly, from grant money received from foundations. Our grant writer and her staff assists us in writing grant proposals and following up with reports back to the granting agencies. Our program coordinator monitors all the little details, and our treasurer keeps track of when all the money is spent.

Your participation in the form of both monetary donations and your time adds immeasurably to our programs. Contributions of time from our volunteers help weave a close-knit pattern of productive work. Granting agencies look closely at the number of members, and they also count volunteer time as “match” when they decide on grant amounts. Although the applause may be small, your participation is our reward. Your participation is also your reward.

NRPA thanks you for your applause.

—Richard B. Grant, President

Narrow River Swim

Recently bald eagles have been spotted soaring over Narrow River, probably looking for fish. Soon another type of fish, open-water swimmers, will be returning to the waters of Narrow River. At 9:00 AM on Saturday, June 27th, the Fourth Annual Narrow River Turnaround Swim takes place, following the usual route. The swim will start from the beach at URI’s Campanella Rowing Center off Walmsey Lane in North Kingstown, round a buoy a half a mile down the River, and return back to the starting point. Due to the popularity of the Swim and because it is limited this year to 150 swimmers, pre-registration by June 17th is strongly encouraged.

The Swim raises awareness of the River as a scenic area and a place to swim, and also promotes open-water swimming as a lifetime activity to local residents. Plus it raises monies for the Narrow River Preservation Association, which will be used to help fund our education, preservation, and protection programs. New for 2009— when you register for the Swim you can also become a member of NRPA by paying $40 total. This is a discounted membership rate, exclusively for our swimmers!

Since the inception of NRPA, thanks to NRPA and others, water quality in Narrow

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Bald Eagle Sightings

I am a bird watcher from a bird-watching family. Originally from central Connecticut, I have lived in Narragansett since 1976, and in the North End since around 1980. I have been swimming in, skating on, and navigating the Narrow River in all description of boats from one end to another since the late 70’s. Today (Saturday, March 14th) for the first time I saw a Bald Eagle there while paddling my kayak there. He was roosted high in an oak almost directly across from Edgewater Beach in Narragansett. I drifted right under him (probably at a distance of about 30 meters from the trunk of the tree on the bank), paddled south, and came back north along that shore and under him again. I got a good long, unobstructed look. It was unmistakably an adult bald eagle. Very exciting! I later saw him in flight and clearly saw the unmistakable white head and tail. I do not know if they’ve been reported on the River or in the Watershed, but that’s the first I’ve ever seen, and I’ve been looking. I often see several types of herons, gulls, turkey vultures, various hawks, the ubiquitous belted kingfisher, and a variety of ducks and songbirds depending on the season, but this was my first bald eagle in nearly thirty years of familiarity with the River. That has to be a good thing.

—Felix Sarubbi, Edgewater

[Editor’s Note: According to “Rare Birds Along the Narrow River Watershed,” in the Fall 2000 issue of Narrow River Notes, a bald eagle was seen in the Watershed in January 1999. This year’s eagle was seen by several people, and was apparently in the area for well over a month. The accompanying photo was taken by someone named Kate and emailed around, but I still haven’t been able to find out her last name to make sure she gets full credit.]

Narrow River Swim
Continued

River has improved. In the words of Narragansett Elementary School physical education teacher Paul McCaffery, who along with URI swimming and diving coach Mick Westcott co-chairs the swim, “The title Turnaround was indicative of the path we chose for the course of the Swim and also for the course of the River. The Narrow River has been turned around from one that wasn’t healthy to one that is.”

We are pleased to be returning to URI offered to return to help make the Swim run smoothly and efficiently again. More information about the swim is on the NRPA website, www.narrowriver.org. Application forms for swimmers can be printed from the website and mailed with a check for the registration fee to NRPA at P.O. Box 8, Saunderstown, RI 02874. Pre-registration deadline is June 18, 2008. There will be free t-shirts for the first 100 swimmers!

—Veronica M. Berounsky

Rowing Center, a beautiful spot on Narrow River’s Lower Pond, and also the location of Lafarge Point Park. W.E.R Lafarge was one of the founders of NRPA in 1970 and remained active in NRPA until his untimely death from cancer in 1994. He bequeathed a piece of his farm as land for the Rowing Center, which is again providing invaluable support.

Many comments were received about how well-organized and safety-conscious the Swim has been, and the same committee will again run it. In addition to Paul and Mick, other people on the Swim Committee are: Felix Sarubbi, Jason McNamee, Lori Pugh, Perry Moylan, Richard Grant, Pat Gannon, Shelagh Donohue, Karen DeQuattro, Owen Devine, and Veronica Berounsky. They will be assisted by the many friends, relatives, and colleagues who have

The swimming Spinnazzola siblings dominated the 3rd Narrow River Turnaround Swim in June; from left to right are Luca (1st place), Angelica (3rd), Bianca (2nd), and Chiara (6th) (photo by Annette DeSilva).
LET’S LOOK AT THE LAWN — A QUIZ

Water is finite. Here in Rhode Island, surrounded by it, we are lulled into thinking that water is in endless supply. Yet, as water supplies diminish, water is now being termed “the next oil.” Worldwide, and in the US, water wars are being fought as large corporations to small towns vie for control of water supplies. Take the following quiz to learn more about what you can do.

1. A healthy lawn needs:
   A. 1 inch per week
   B. 2 inches per week
   C. 5 inches per week

   A. 1 inch per week. Over-watering a lawn causes roots to grow shallowly. Such a lawn will dry out MORE readily in dry conditions. Over-watering also stresses grass, lowering its resistance to disease and insects. Use an inexpensive rain gauge and water once a week, only when the lawn has not had its 1-inch allotment from rain.

2. In summer, water use increases in Narragansett by how much?
   A. 24%
   B. 56%
   C. 78%

   C. This past summer, water use increased a whopping 78%. And that’s with the weekend and odd/even ban on outdoor water use!

3. Once a sprinkler system is installed, you’re locked into its capabilities.
   A. True
   B. False

   B. False: You can make your system work for you AND the environment. Adjusting your time clock during weather events is easy. Make sure your system waters evenly by placing shallow empty cans in different areas of your lawn, turn your sprinkler on for a set period of time, and compare the amount of water in each. This and a visual inspection will tell you where your system needs adjusting. Correcting any problems will reduce wasting by needing to “water to the dry spots.”

   Consider retrofitting your system with a rain shut-off device and/or a soil moisture sensor to over-ride controls during wet weather. Rain shut-off devices are inexpensive and easy to install yourself. Soil moisture controls are more pricey ($250 should buy an adequate system) but require a competent do-it-yourselfer or a professional. Once the latter is installed and adjusted properly, however, system maintenance is minimized. (Learn more at: www.h2ouse.org.)

   As you save water, you’ll also save money as you reduce utility bills, irrigation system wear and tear, and possible disease damage. These steps will also help protect our streams, ponds, rivers, Bay, and drinking water supplies by reducing the storm-water run-off that carries pollution. A win-win for all of us.

4. Installing rain barrels is an efficient, effective substitute for using drinking water on lawns and gardens.
   A. True
   B. False

   B. True: Forty-nine inches of rain falls on Narragansett each year. According to the EPA, the average lawn uses 10,000 gallons of water over and above the rain that falls on it. An average house is around 2,330 square feet, spread out over two floors. If you live there, 34,251 gallons of water sheet off your roof every year that you can collect and use. You are only limited by the number of rain barrels you have hooked up. They can easily be linked, so there’s no reason not to add more. Rainwater is also better for your plants, free of the chemicals that most towns need to use to purify drinking water.

5. All grass is created equal.
   A. True
   B. False

   B. False: There are vast differences in grass types. Kentucky bluegrass, the kind you almost always get with lawn sod, uses lots of water, requires high nitrogen, does poorly in shade, and spreads aggressively. Fescues, on the other hand, use much less water and nitrogen, grow better in shade (especially the fine fescues), and either bunch or spread, depending on the variety. (Tall fescues bunch, and creeping red fescue, a type of fine fescue, spreads.) Both Kentucky bluegrass and fine fescues will handle dormancy
well. There are now even seed mixes called “no mow” which grow 5–6 inches tall and lean over, forming a gently waving surface. (Google “no mow lawn” for more information and sources.) There are also lawns with more than grass. See “This Organic Yard” for more on this.

6. A lawn will use less water than an equivalent garden area.
   A. True
   B. False
   C. It depends…

   C. It depends, mostly on what is in your garden and lawn. Most grasses are really thirsty organisms, especially the traditional Kentucky bluegrass. To keep them continuously green takes watering, at least during dry spells. In contrast, gardens, especially those with local and/or drought-tolerant plants, may never need watering. Consider the woods in our state. They don’t need watering, do they? Trees and shrubs will shade the ground and mulch themselves, decreasing evaporation. They develop deep root systems that can travel down to where the water is. They also filter pollutants from stormwater. With the added benefits of wind breaking (warmer in winter) and shading (cooler in summer) that shrubs and trees give, there’s a lot to recommend replacing some grass with them. You can also intersperse vegetable or herb crops with your other perennials, taking care that plants with similar water needs are growing together, or “root-watering” the veggies with recycled plastic bottles. Think scarlet runner bean flowers glowing against a silver-green bush! And you’ll have the joy of eating those beans fresh from the vine!

7. Lawns need regular watering to stay healthy.
   A. True
   B. False
   C. It depends…

   C. It depends. If you crave an ever-green expanse, then, yes, it will need watering. In some savvy circles, however, “brown is the new green.” Most lawns, once allowed to go dormant, will bounce back, as

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you will notice in the fall or after a rain when lawns once again green up. Generally, grasses will survive, if they get any water over a month’s time. Consider allowing your lawn to go dormant during dry seasons. And save the drinking water for, well, drinking.

8. Longer grass needs more water.
   A. True
   B. False

   B. False. If your lawn mower is not on its highest setting, your lawn is probably too short, both for its health and for water conservation. Longer grass shades itself, and will need less water. Leave your grass between 2.5 and 3 inches long.

9. All fertilizers, conventional or organic, do the same thing for your lawn.
   A. True
   B. False

   B. False. While equal amounts of nitrogen in any type of fertilizer will boost blade growth, organic fertilizers have many more elements that promote healthy lawns. If you use manure, compost, or grass clippings, you add organic matter to the soil at the same time. Organic matter lightens the soil so air and water travel to roots more easily and nourish those beneficial soil micro-organisms. Organic matter also increases the soil’s water-holding capacity, so roots stay moist longer between rain events. While too much of any fertilizer can cause pollution by leaching into groundwater or running off into surface water, organic fertilizer is generally safer because it releases its nutrients more slowly.

   —Susan Letendre
   Southern RI Conservation District
NRPA Science Fair Awards

In order to encourage the curiosity of young scientists and to help them gain respect for the environment, NRPA has judged high school and middle school science fairs in towns in the watershed for NRPA Science Fair Awards since at least 1989. During the past school year, NRPA Board members have been visiting science fairs in schools in these towns to judge these awards. One Award is given to one student in each school in recognition of the quality of the student’s research and its relevance to NRPA’s goal of protecting the Narrow River, its Watershed, and its communities as a unique, dynamic, and fragile ecosystem. Honorable Mentions are given to students in each school in recognition of participation in a well-done, environmentally oriented science fair project with relevance to NRPA’s goals.

The students receiving the “Narrow River Preservation Association Science Fair Award” received an award certificate, a $50 U.S. Saving Bond, and presented their projects at a reception at the March 3rd NRPA Board of Directors’ meeting. They will also be recognized at NRPA Annual Meeting in October. Students receiving Honorable Mentions were recognized at that same Board meeting, and will be recognized at the NRPA Annual Meeting.

At the South Kingstown High School, the winner was Julia Casagrande of Kingston, with the project entitled: “Garlic Mustard’s Effects on Native Trees.” There were four Honorable Mentions at that school:

- Brandon Alvino: “What Prevents Erosion Best?”
- Chloe Cullen: “Small Fish of the Narrow River.”
- Kevin Redmond: “Acid Rain’s Effect on Grass.”

At the North Kingstown High School, the winner was Jenna Gibson of North Kingstown, with the project: “Do the Levels of Nitrogen, Phosphate, and pH Change Depending on the Location in the Hunt River Watershed?” There were no honorable mentions.

At the Curtis Corner Middle School, Katherine Moore and Amy Bannon, both of West Kingston, worked together on the winning project, entitled: “What is the Effect of Pollution on Tidal Marsh?” This is the second science fair award for the Bannon family; Amy’s sister Christine won several years ago. There were three Honorable Mentions at that school:

- Marisa Albert: “Acid Rain Harms Plants.”
- Kendall Feaster and Valerie Cyr: “You Should Cry over Spilled Milk.”
- Sam Segar, Catherine Hogarty, and Felicia Carroll: “What is the Effect of Pollution on Plants?”

If you know of other schools in the Watershed planning science fairs, please contact the Narrow River Preservation Association, P.O. Box 8, Saunderstown, RI 02874 or via email at nrpa@narrowriver.org. In addition to judging at middle schools and high schools, Board members also visit elementary school science fairs to give out “Narrow River Preservation Association Science Fair Participant Award” certificates to students with appropriate environmental projects.

- Veronica M. Berounsky
TO ALL WHO RESPONDED TO OUR APPEALS IN 2008:

$1,000 – $4,999
Jonathan Nelson
Susan Sosnowski
Henry and Julie Sharpe

$500 – $999
Andrea Falcione
Paul Choquette, Jr.
Robert Leeson, Jr.

$200 – $499
Eugene and Angela Weber
Robert Fetzer
Virginia Chafee
W. W. Cummener

$100 – $199
Mark Nally
Douglas Gray
Kenneth Hogberg
Peter Nalle
Daniel Shramek
John Riley
Charles Washburn and Frances Anthes
Richard Travisano
William Velle
David Carroll
Lawrence Purtill
Anne Sammis
Charles Bluto
Jeri Levesque
Eric Smith
Leslie and Margaret Stone
Burton Strom
Robert and Marion Humphrey
J. Michael Falvey
Kevin Mulholland
Peter Hunt
N. Beverly and Constance Tucker Jr.
Henry Lindh
Richard Carolan
Robert and Joyce Kenney
Peter Claypool
Albert Lowenthal
Susan Van Ness
Leslie and Margaret Stone
Christopher Ogden
Susan Van Ness
Albert Vanderbilt
Christopher Little
Norman Kalen
Kathleen Kelleher
Elizabeth Freeman
Larry and Nancy Geller

William Viall
Richard Smith

$50 – $99
Randall and Linda Arendt
Robert Thoresen
Michael Murogo
Emile Marcionetti
James Durkin
Mark Silverman
Jeff and Lisa Hollister
Peter and Diane Weitzman
Melissa Hughes
Richard McCorkle
Walter Soba
Edward McDermott
Richard and Judith Hoyer
Robert Marchand
Charles and Camilla Lee
Bryan and Elizabeth Moylan, Jr.
Jerold Ehrlich
Bruce Smith
Donald Lally, Jr.
David and Elizabeth McNab
Tom Farrell
Dennis Roberts
Robert Burgess
Edward and Maureen Grove
Jonathan and Karen Noblet
Emile Marcionetti
Bradford and Monica Pease
Mike Ford
Joyce Butler
Joseph Dowling, Jr.
George and Joan Gardiner
Elizabeth McLaughlin
Daniel and Geraldine Kronson
Michael and Donna Wilusz
Gary and Kathryn Williamson
Roger Smith
Thomas Hines
Stephen and Lynne Halle
James and Joy Ziegler
William Krui
Matthew Curley
John Calvino
David Klein
Harold Baker
Rodney and Shirley LaBrecque
John Roach
Geoffrey and Lynne Grene
Gilbert Stuart Birthplace
Larry and Martha Parks
Robert Perry
Joseph and Donna Dube

Stephen Lind
Caroline Ewing
John Gouveia
David Rubien
Edward and Maureen Grove
Avery Brooke
Stanley Wojciechowski
James and Wendy Ernst
Roger Smith
Richard Curtis
Clare Bailey
Patricia Moore
Mary Jane Palm
Thomas Green
Wayne and Archie Douglas III
Joseph Dowling, Jr.
Rick Moffitt
John O’Brien
Winfield Tucker
Gary and Kathryn Williamson
Jeff Parker
Clark Sammartino
Ernest and Nancy Flewwellin
Stephen Sullivan
Steve and Martha Cavanagh
Allen and Jean Zipe
Roy and Sandra Campanale
Thomas Regan
Ted and Denise Winston
David Klein
Phil Brencher
Arthur and Marcia Campbell
Joseph De Stefano
John Costello
Joseph Mullen, Jr.
David Burnham
Roy and Joann Waldheger
Paul Carvalho
Arthur Strauss
Robert A. Moskol
Michele Ferrucci
Scott Fairbairn
Daniel and Carrie Di Prete
Bogdan Nowak
Stephen Delpapa
James and Ann Kowalski
David and Katy Tetreault
Milton and June Walberg
David Rubien
Richard Lafond
Michael Yi
David and Rosemary Smith
Diana M. Kennett
Paul Carty
Wayne Durfee
Patricia Cushman
Peter Kohlsaat
Fredericka Hazard
Joseph Sauro
Andrew Erickson
Carol Sarubbi
Kirk Kamien
Meg Kerr
Katherine Burg
Kathleen Shea
Jane St Coeur
James Transue
Walter Anacko
Steven and Marie Berube
Phil Owen
Ernest Esposito
Barbara Tate
Janet Stone
Elizabeth Aschman
Karim Melton
Coleen Sullivan
Alden Clayton
Barbara Rampo
Kathryn Palen
Herci Marsden
Rose Epstein
Robert Warren
John Stokes II
Norma Staley
Jane Cote
Jo-Ann Avedisian
Marc Lamson
Karl and Molly Midusnky
Peter Marx
Mario J. Zangari
Robert Falciglia
Henry Beckwith
Nancy Brown
Henry Meloney
Barbara Tally
Pamela Watson
Kathleen Kelleher
Christopher Morris
Tim O’Neill
David Joyce
Carl Sivo
Michael Lapisky
Judith Jenison
Ken McShane
Martin Wenczek
Karen Montgomery
Blue Wheeler
Diane McGregor
Jean Madden Jr
Linda Green
Jon Buser

Susan L. Hammen-Winn
Cindy Roy
Clarice Coleman
John and Elaine Sewatskey
Margaret Decubellis
Kevin Donoghue
Patricia Dalton-McKee
Richard Grant
John Lonati Jr
Stephen and Jane Vincelette
Marilyn Foythu
Donald Johnson
Alan Currie
Lawrence Goldberg
Raymond Moffett, Jr.
Erin Rousseau
Jay and Nancy Sutton
James Trumble
Arlene Callan
Richard Rocha
Holly Rao
Marla Hauslaib
RC Hanvma
Earl and Constance Noblet
Martha Trask
Geraldine Citrone
Daniel Baruti
Mark Castro
Ernie Little
Denis and Karen Desjardins
Sharon Toner
Jane Williams
Amie Limon
John Walsh Jr.
Vincent Cullen
Kathy Couchon
Brian Gardner
John Cascone
Jacqueline Wilk
John Eldridge
Stephen Gill
Ann Fabrizio
Joyce Ryan
Gregg C. Eckert
Susan Licordi
Vincent Sullivan
Cindy Roy
Thomas Furey
Janet Poirier
Christine Jennings
John Quigley
Jennifer DeAngelis
James Tackach
22nd Annual
Narrow River Road Race
Presented by

NARROW RIVER PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

† 10 K Run
† 5 K Run
† 5 K Walk

Saturday May 16, 2009