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# NARROW RIVER NOTES

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Narrow River Preservation Association: Protecting, Preserving and Restoring the Narrow River Watershed Since 1970 / July 2023

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## Navigating the Narrow



NRPA and the Mettatumet Improvement Association sponsored the annual Navigating the Narrow, Boating Safety and Awareness Informational Session, on Saturday 1 April at the Mettatumet Yacht Club. The event was well attended with residents, boaters and NRPA members, photo. Representatives from CRMC, DEM, and South Kingstown participated in a panel discussion and responded to audience questions.

General Boating Safety and the changes to RI boating safety regulations for the 2023 boating season were reviewed: They were effective on 2 April 2023. Specifically they include the following:

### **Mandatory PFD Wear for all paddlecraft:**

1) All operators & passengers of canoes, kayaks, sailboards, kiteboards, paddleboards, and any other paddlecraft shall wear a US Coast Guard approved Pfd at all times while underway regardless of age.

### **Fire Extinguisher compliance:**

1) Per US Coast Guard and now RIGL all fire extinguishers must be in compliance 33 CFR 175 Subpart E, this includes the fact that fire extinguishers will expire 12 years after their date of manufacture. The date of manufacture is normally printed on the bottom of the fire extinguisher.

### **Engine Cut Off Switch compliance:**

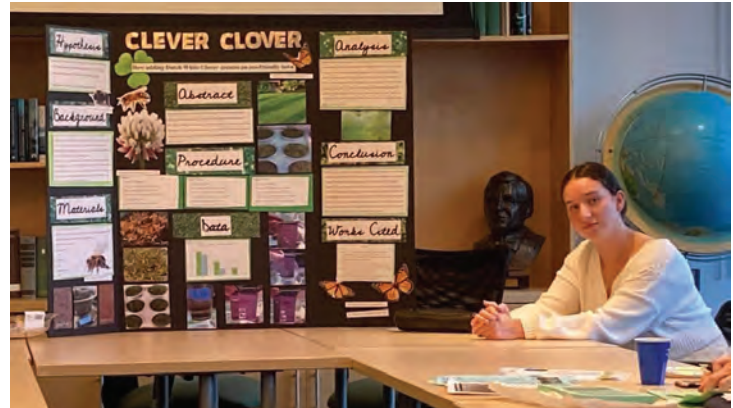
1) Operators of recreational vessels less than 26 feet in length that are equipped with an engine cut off switch shall be required to use said engine cut off switch while the boat is on plane or above displacement speed

### **Bow Riding restriction:**

1) No operator of a vessel under power shall allow

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## Science Fair Winner!



Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) is happy to share that Anna Kelly, South Kingstown High School Senior Student, was the winner of the South Kingstown High School 2023 Science Fair. Her presentation was called "Clever Clover" and focused on the benefits of incorporating clover into the landscape. The Science Fair was held on January 18 and had 10 projects presented by the students.

NRPA Board Directors, James Vogel and Nate Vinheiro, were guests at South Kingstown High School's Science Fair. They were in attendance to review the various student projects and select a winner for NRPA's Science Fair Award.

After viewing all the projects at the South Kingstown High School Science Fair, Jim and Nate awarded Anna for her project "Clever Clover"

The purpose of Anna's project was to test the effects of adding clover to a conventional lawn to increase its overall health. The experiment aimed to test clover's impacts on nitrogen levels and lawn greenness. This was done to see if clover will decrease the need for lawn maintenance and fertilizer. In the experiment, clover, grass, and a grass/clover mix were grown in soil. One test did not use fertilizer, whereas one trial did not get watered. The control, however, was both fertilized and watered. After comparing the control and no fertilizer experiment, the data showed increased nitrogen levels when adding clover. In addition, the drought experiment was shown to have increased greenness in the lawn when clover was added. As a result of the experiment, it was concluded that the addition of clover to grass lawns is a low-maintenance and

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# Presidents' Cove

Dear Friends of Narrow River,

Ever since Richard B. Grant and I became Co-Presidents of the Narrow River Preservation Association at our Annual Meeting last October, we've been writing the President's Cove together. But for this issue, unbeknown to Richard, I appropriated it because Richard recently had a momentous occasion: on June 9 he turned 85. NRPA was started in 1970, and Richard joined the Board of Directors two years later in 1972 so has served for 51 years or 60% of his years. In 1996, Richard was elected the President of NRPA and has been continuously re-elected so has served in that capacity for the last 27 years or 31% of his years. So longevity, and longevity of commitment, is a trademark of Richard. Not many organizations have officers or members with such a long-term commitment. I mention this for two reasons. If you are overdue for renewing your membership or sponsorship of NRPA, do so now to show us your commitment. And if you would like to honor Richard's commitment, you can donate to the NRPA General Fund or the Richard B. Grant Endowment Fund . Checks made out to "NRPA" with a note may be sent to Narrow River Preservation Association, PO Box 8, Saunderstown, RI 02874. Online donations are welcome at <https://narrowriver.org/join-donate/> or <https://narrowriver.org/grant/> respectively.

Thanks,

*Richard Grant*      *Veronica M. Berounsky*

## 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 Estuary) River and Watershed.

## NARROW RIVER PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

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### Board of Directors

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- Richard Grant, Co-President
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- Nathan Vinhateiro
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Submissions and correspondence  
to [nrpa@narrowriver.org](mailto:nrpa@narrowriver.org)

SAVE THE DATE FOR ANNUAL MEETING  
**Tuesday October 3 at 7:00 p.m.**

## Join NRPA!

Membership is NRPA's largest source of funding and connects you with all NRPA's activities, events, and advocacy! Our annual membership cycle runs from January 1 through December 31 each calendar year. Renewals or sign-ups received after our membership drive in the fall, are considered active from date received through the end of the following calendar year. If memberships are renewed in the spring, they will be active through the end of that same calendar year. To get the most from your membership, we encourage renewal or sign-ups in the fall or winter or simply schedule recurring annual donations from your registered PayPal account. Join by sending a check to NRPA, PO Box 8, Saunderstown, RI 02874 or online at [narrowriver.org/join-donate](http://narrowriver.org/join-donate). Thank you!

United Way of  
Rhode Island



You can give back to NRPA through your **United Way workplace campaign**. Simply write in Narrow River Preservation Association on your pledge form or search/write-in and add us via electronic pledging.

Rhode Island  
Rivers Council



Rhode Island Rivers Council has designated NRPA as the official watershed council of the Narrow River and its watershed.

# NRPA's Annual Outdoor Classroom: A fun educational event for young and old

By Padma Venkatraman



On Saturday, 10 June, the Narrow River Preservation Association witnessed a large and enthusiastic turnout during their annual WHAT LIVES IN THE RIVER event. “This crowd is definitely on the high side” said longtime volunteer Jim Roche.

This event, which takes place near a bend of the river off Middlebridge Road in Narragansett, is an educational but fun party of sorts, in which parents and children of all ages, from toddlers to teens can enjoy a few hours learning, among other things, about the amazing animal life in their own backyard.

With seine nets and dip nets, attendees take water samples which they transfer into buckets, and scientists – many of whom work at the Graduate School of Oceanography – and other volunteers are close at hand to help them identify their catch and teach them about it. The volunteers’ knowledge is extensive and their enthusiasm is palpable. The air rings with the happy shouts of children and their chatter,

their curiosity is encouraged and nurtured. At the makeshift touch tanks that are set up at tables and oxygenated by solar powered aerators, young and old are encouraged to dip their hands in and gently interact with the incredible array of creatures they’ve caught: among them eels, shrimp, crabs, sea cucumbers, sea squirts, hermit crabs, and minnows. Catalina Martinez, a NOAA scientist, patiently watches to ensure the animals aren’t harmed by eager hands, as she shares her expert knowledge with the visitors in a tone of infectious enthusiasm. A stereoscope and a microscope stand at the ready at a nearby table, where a scientist volunteer helps people take a closer look at what’s in the water.

Richard B Grant, who has been associated with the organization for about 50 years, says the ultimate goal of this fun family event is educational. While the accent is on children of all ages (from toddlers to teens), it also provides a space for adults to learn and explore and understand more about the need for clean water and environmental conservation. NRPA’s ultimate goal is to heighten awareness about critical and current issues associated with the local environment; especially narrow river and its watershed, where about 3600 people live. Judging by the number of repeat participants and dedicated long-time volunteers, as well as the sheer delight on every face, this annual event has and will help the NRPA achieve this vital goal.

*Padma Venkatraman is an oceanographer and the author of five novels including THE BRIDGE HOME and BORN BEHIND BARS.*



# Science Fair Winner!

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more environmentally sustainable alternative to grass lawns alone.

Anna chose this topic mainly because she is a plant enthusiast. She has many gardens in her yard, and even when flowers are not in season, she has multiple different plants growing in her room. When picking a topic, she was very curious about the plants that tend to grow on their own or are commonly found in the average yard. She started to research clover and went “down the rabbit hole” of its possible impacts. She found that clover tends to grow in lawns that are lacking in nitrogen, so she decided to test nitrogen levels and that is how she came to the topic for her experiment. Science classes have always been her favorite.

Anna attended the monthly NRPA Board of Directors Meeting on May 2 and presented her research and findings to the Board. NRPA is proud to recognize Anna for her use of the scientific method and the relevance of her project to current environmental concerns. The NRPA award consists of a certificate, cash award, membership with NRPA, and recognition in the NRPA newsletter and at NRPA’s Annual Meeting.

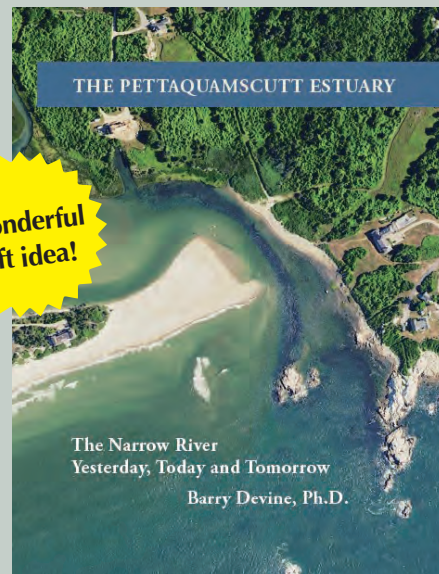
NRPA’s Board wishes Anna a great end to her senior year at SK high school and wishes her much success at Simmons College where she has chosen to pursue her education in the field of nursing.



## Narrow River Land Trust

Did you know that the Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) and Narrow River Land Trust (NRTL) are two, completely separate organizations? The NRTL mission is to preserve land in the watershed in order to protect water and agricultural resources, wildlife habitat, and open space for outdoor recreation. NRTL preserves land through conservation easements, donations, fee acquisitions, and bargain sales of land. NRTL is growing their Board of Directors and volunteer committees for activities including trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and stewardship monitoring. For more information about NRTL, please contact [office@narrowriverlandtrust.org](mailto:office@narrowriverlandtrust.org).

## The Pettaquamscutt Estuary Book

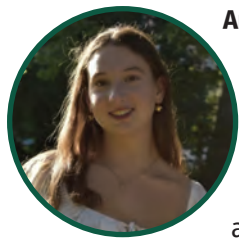


***The Pettaquamscutt Estuary: The Narrow River Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*** by Dr. Barry Devine. Barry’s book is available online at the incredible price of \$30 for members and \$40 for non-members; please visit [narrowriver.org/nrbook](http://narrowriver.org/nrbook) for details. 100% of book sales go directly to supporting programs and projects of NRPA.

# 2023 NRPA Lesa Meng Scholarship Winners

Since 1993, as part of its Youth Environmental Education Program, NRPA has awarded scholarships to seniors graduating from high schools in the Narrow River Watershed. In 2007, the scholarship was renamed the NRPA Lesa Meng College Scholarship in honor of a former NRPA Board member who passed away. Lesa Meng served on the Board and was chair of the Narrow River Road Race. The NRPA Lesa Meng Scholarship applications are judged on the student's environmentally oriented activities in and out of high school; the quality of an original essay on the river; science teacher's recommendation and academic achievement. We are very pleased to announce our 2023 NRPA Lesa Meng Scholarship winners: Anna Kelly, Cole Capizzo, Bridget Blessing and Veronica Sabatino.

numerous beach clean-ups and planned a tree planting service for Narragansett community members in celebration of Arbor Day. Bridget was her class president, where she organized many successful events. Bridget will be attending Simmons University, Boston in the fall.



**Anna Kelly**, a graduate of South Kingstown High School (SKHS). Ms. Kelly was also this year's NRPA Science Fair winner, with her presentation on clover as a natural lawn fertilizer. At SKHS, Anna was a National Honor Society member and a varsity swimmer for four years including Captain her senior year. She

was also on the Varsity Softball and varsity Cheer Teams, in addition to being a member of the Student Council. Anna is a Girl Scout Gold Award recipient, where she implemented a peer-to-peer mental health awareness program. In the fall, she will be attending Simmons University in Boston to study nursing.



**Cole Capizzo**, a graduate of South Kingstown High School (SKHS). Cole who enjoys kayaking and paddle boarding on the Narrow River will be studying Marine Transportation in the fall at Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards BA, MA. Cole is a US Sailing Level One instructor where he taught sailing

in the summer and in the fall taught sailing to URI students. At SKHS, he was an accomplished tennis player as a member of the varsity tennis team for all four years. In addition, he was a member of the unified volleyball team.



**Bridget Blessing** is a graduate of Narragansett High School (NHS). Since the 6th grade when she attended a middle school field trip to the Narrow River, Bridget has felt a strong connection to the Narrow River. Bridget was vice-president of the NHS ecology club, where she participated in



**Veronica Sabatino**, a graduate of Narragansett High School (NHS). Veronica would like to become a lawyer specializing in environmental policy after completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, MI. For her senior project, she was involved with RI House Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources, where she focused on the Beverage Container Deposit Recycling Act of 2023. She was chosen as a Rhode Island State House, Legislative Page. Veronica was a member of NHS National Honor Society, the NHS Ecology club and participated in the school Environthon.



## Matt Johnson sampling on June 1, 2023 in Narrow River.

Dr. Matt Johnson, of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Woods Hole, MA, came to Narrow River recently to collect water with a Niskin bottle to look for ciliates, specifically Mesodinium chamasleon and Perispira ovum, that steal chloroplasts and other organelles from their prey. These are some of the unique microscopic organisms found here.

## Osprey Nest, Webcam & Education Program



On a cold day in late February, a small team of dedicated volunteers trekked out to the nest platform equipped with the webcam overlooking Narrow River hosted by NRPA and Narrow River Land Trust. They stabilized the nest platform by adding additional guy wires, did some routine maintenance and

installed a perch near the nest. The birds routinely use the fence posts in the far background as a perch. This measure was undertaken in hopes of having both the male and female in closer proximity to the camera.

Our resident pair returned to the area about a month later - the same pair that has nested at this site since 2019. The couple got right to work 'housekeeping' (building up the nest with sticks and seagrasses) and the female laid the first egg of the season on April 20, the same day as she laid a first egg in 2022.

Three eggs hatched in early June and the chicks are thriving.

Also recently, volunteer Bob Facey upgraded the webcam's internet connection by installing a cellular connection at the nest platform. Now, audio and video from the webcam are uploaded to the internet directly from the nest platform instead of being sent as a radio signal across the river, received at the former Narrow River Kayaks office building, and connected to an internet router inside the building. This had been the setup since 2020. As with the other technologies at the nest platform, the new connection is powered by solar panels and a battery pack at the nest site.

Many thanks to Jason Considine and Narrow River Kayaks for hosting the radio and internet upload system for 3 years!

Happily, this year, NRPA's Osprey Education Program for local fourth grade students was completely in person after a few years of virtual and hybrid presentations. Fourth grade students at Monsignor Clarke Elementary School (South Kingstown), Narragansett Elementary School (Narragansett), Hamilton Elementary School (North Kingstown) and all three South Kingstown



Elementary Schools (Matunuck, Peace Dale, and West Kingston) enjoyed our educational presentation and asked interesting questions.

Already, more than 60 students have become official 2023 NRPA Osprey Observers by making scientific notations during three 15 minute observation sessions.

Our osprey were also featured in this year's RI Nature Video Festival. The 6 minute video 'Osprey Chick Growth' by Alison Kates shows the remarkably quick growth of osprey chicks over the short 2022 summer season. It won Honorable Mention at the festival.



That video can be seen on the webcam web page: [narrowriver.org/ospreycam](http://narrowriver.org/ospreycam) along with dozens of other video clips of activity at the nest and several compilation videos.

All are welcome to watch the osprey on our live, 24 hour webcam at [narrowriver.org/ospreycam](http://narrowriver.org/ospreycam)

If you enjoy the osprey webcam, please thank the Farrell Family! The Farrell Family generously donates the operating expenses for the cam in loving memory of Eileen Farrell. This is a large gift and we are so very grateful. Thank you!



NRPA is excited to have season 32 of the River Watch program underway! This year, the season began in late May and will run through mid-October. Thirteen sites along the length of the River continue to be monitored. Every two weeks during the season, volunteer monitors take measurements and collect water samples that will help us better understand the water quality of the Narrow River. Measurements

## River Watch – Season 32 Is Underway!

and samples include temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll, bacteria, nutrients, and pH.

NRPA greatly appreciates the efforts of our volunteers who have dedicated their time to monitor the River. Last year, volunteers included Veronica Berounsky, Margaret Bradley, Elizabeth Donovan, George and Suzanne Faucher, Michelle Goldman, Chris Gouveia, Marcia Izzi, Karen Killian, Eric and Jennifer Kohlsaas, Alison, Ted, and Lily Kutcher, Marc Lamson, Nancy McLean, Betsy Motyl and Quest students, Perry Moylan, Jill O’Neill, Michael Remington, Paula Santos, Rick Schultz, Mark Silverman, Rosemary and David Smith, Clare Stone, Kate Sullivan, James Vogel, and Craig Wood. Many, many thanks to all of the 2022 volunteers! Most of these volunteers are continuing

to monitor in 2023. NRPA is also thrilled to welcome the following new volunteers to the program: Rich Bourbonnais, Deborah Casey, Jeri Levesque, and Jake Pietrzak.



## Navigating the Narrow

*Continued from Front Page*



any person to ride or sit on the gunwales, tops of seat backs or on the decking over the bow of a boat while underway unless the bow of the vessel is equipped with seats designed to accommodate passengers or a handrail that encompasses the bow and all persons on the bow are inward of such handrail. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to persons in or on the bow of a vessel engaged in anchoring, mooring, or docking.

2) B. No operator of a vessel under power shall allow any person in or on the bow of such vessel to hang any portion of the body beyond the handrail or outside the vessel over the top of the gunwale while underway. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to persons in or on the bow of a vessel engaged in anchoring, mooring, or docking.

### Slow Down/Move Over requirement:

1) A person may not operate a vessel faster than headway speed within 300 feet of an emergency vessel, including but not limited to law enforcement vessels, United States Coast Guard vessels, firefighting vessels when such vessel’s emergency lights are activated, or vessels engaged in activities recognized by the US Coast Guard displaying rotating or sequential flashing red and yellow lights.

Links: [https://dem.ri.gov/press-releases/dem-announces-changes-boating-safety-regulations-time-2023-boating-season#:~:text=DEM%20Announces%20Changes%20to%20Boating%20Safety%20Regulations%20in%20Time%20for%202023%20Boating%20Season,-Published%20on%20Thursday&text=PROVIDENCE%2C%20RI%20%E2%80%93%20Wearing%20a%20life,of%20Environmental%20Management%20\(DEM\).](https://dem.ri.gov/press-releases/dem-announces-changes-boating-safety-regulations-time-2023-boating-season#:~:text=DEM%20Announces%20Changes%20to%20Boating%20Safety%20Regulations%20in%20Time%20for%202023%20Boating%20Season,-Published%20on%20Thursday&text=PROVIDENCE%2C%20RI%20%E2%80%93%20Wearing%20a%20life,of%20Environmental%20Management%20(DEM).)

**Watercraft Safety Resources**

Watercraft Safety Video  
No Wake Zone Map  
Tide Charts  
Paddle Maps  
Boating Resources  
and more!

[narrowriver.org/boating](https://narrowriver.org/boating)  
or focus your smart phone camera on the QR code above!

**No Wake/Wakes Zones on the Narrow River**

It is easy to boat safely by following these simple rules:

1. Be prepared - Plan for your trip!
2. Use jackets are essential!
3. Know the river.
4. Follow boating rules.
5. Do not drink and boat!
6. Educate and train yourself!
7. Exercise good judgment!



NARROW RIVER PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

# MANY THANKS TO NRPA's 2023 SPONSORS!



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in Memory of Eileen Farrell**



**Wilmot Wheeler  
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