

# Comments on Connetquot

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FOC Advisory Board Member Joe Mikulas (left) instructs angler and new FOC member Brian McAuliff on the art of fly fishing at our “Fishing with a Friend” Memorial Day event.  
Photo: Janet Soley

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings Friends!

So many activities took place this spring at Connetquot that the time just flew by! We've included our favorite stories in this newsletter, and we hope you enjoy reading.

Summer is upon us. Connetquot Preserve slows down as the temperature heats up. When the Preserve becomes less hectic, I can find the time to walk the trails less traveled. It is on these walks that I become mindful of my surroundings. What is mindfulness? It's the transformative power of being fully present in the moment, allowing yourself to delve into a state of calm, focused awareness, disconnecting from the digital world and engaging in the sense of interconnectedness with the world around you. On my mindful walks, I enjoy the beauty of the environment and the connection with the present moment.

Mindfulness Day is an emerging event, celebrated on September 12 to raise awareness of the value and benefits of mindfulness, and with this in mind (no pun intended), we are offering some new programs in the fall that I hope you enjoy.

Wishing you well and tight lines,  
Janet

Not yet a Friend of Connetquot? Please support our efforts to enhance our beautiful preserve. Join us online! Visit our website, [www.friendsofconnetquot.org/join](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org/join).

# Historical Bits

## LEGENDS OF THE CONNETQUOT RIVER

by Bob Giffen

There are several old legends and stories that involve the Connetquot River. Several newsletters ago I wrote about the “Phosphorescent Ducks and the Ballyhoo Bird,” great stories that came from the 1880s and the “Birdsall Legend” of the 1600s involving the Connetquot River and Lake Ronkonkama. This river had a very colorful past history. But there are several more stories and legends that come from this magnificent place called the Connetquot River. I wrote briefly about most of them in my book, *One Little River*.

I have another legend involving Fire Island and the Connetquot River. It is called the “Legend of the Beach Pirate and the Mermaid of Raccoon Beach.” Fire Island was once called Raccoon Beach. The story was penned in the 1830s by a young writer, William Post Hawes, a New York lawyer who fished and hunted on the Great South Bay and Snedecor’s Inn on the Connetquot River. Hawes used the pen name of J. Cypress, Jr., and the story was found in his *Legends of Long Island*. This was later printed, after he died at the age of 38, in the 1842 book, “Sporting Scenes and Sundry Sketches: Being the *Miscellaneous Writings of J. Cypress, Jr., Volume 1*, and was edited by Henry William Herbert. Herbert also was a noted fisherman and writer and wrote under the pen name, famous in his day, Frank Forester.

I will give you a quick short version of this remarkable story. The story takes place on Fire Island and concerns one Jeremiah Smith, who was the beach pirate of Raccoon Beach (Fire Island). He lived in a house he built with timber from wrecked ships. Jeremiah also lived off the booty of the wrecks of these sailing ships that foundered on his Raccoon Beach. It was said that he sometimes helped cause wrecks by lighting fires on foggy nights on the beach and tricking sea captains who thought they were Fire Island Light (completed in 1826), causing them to wreck their ships on his beach. While his pirate trade was lucrative, he was a lonely man.

Then one moonlit night he heard strange music coming from the ocean and spied actual mermaids cavorting in the ocean just off the beach. One called out to him and told him her name was Galatea. She had green hair and pink eyes, and Jeremiah was smitten. She then disappeared into the sea. She came back with her sister mermaids on the next full moon, and he told her of his love for her. He asked Galatea to marry him, and she agreed. He wrapped her in blankets and sailed over the Great South Bay to the Connetquot River to take her to Snedecor’s Inn on the river. He asked Squire Snedecor (Eliphalet Snedecor) to fetch a judge to marry him and Galatea and compensated well the squire and the judge.

After the marriage the happy odd couple retired back over the bay to Fire Island. It was said that they had three sons who were the best fishermen and hunters on the Great South Bay. So, my readers, the Connetquot River has many old legends and most interesting stories, even one filled with a mermaid and beach pirate.

## HOOF BEATS

by Carole Scialdone

Springing into summer is such an exciting time. The trees have all filled in, with their leaves creating a lovely canopy and shelter from the sun. Riding the trails, we get to witness the tom turkeys strutting their stuff for the lady hens and the geese and swans teaching their young to swim. The eagles and ospreys gliding over the big pond looking for their next meal never gets old. The fields have turned green, much to the delight of the deer. We’ve seen lots of foxes this year, with one especially curious fox following our horses up the trail for a stretch.



The weather has been beautiful these past few months; the warm sun and crisp air was the perfect mixture for a refreshing ride with friends. But we all know that summer’s heat and humidity is on its way. Even so, Connetquot is such a beautiful place, every ride is a new and special adventure. There are hikers, runners, fishermen, families and of course my fellow equestrians all enjoying every corner of this park in their own way. What a blessing!

The 2023 Bridle Path Permits are currently on sale at the Park Office in the Administration Building. The permit is only \$50 per horse, per year. Getting your permit gives New York State a way of evaluating the equestrian use of our Park Preserve. This information is used to allocate funding and staffing for the park. Permits are to be attached to the horse’s saddle or pad at all times while in the Preserve. If a horse gets separated from its rider, the permit can help park staff identify who the horse belongs to. Riders without permits will be denied use of Connetquot’s bridle paths. Please support your Park Preserve and get your permit today so you can enjoy Connetquot River State Park Preserve, too.

One of Carole’s many rides on Duke, with her daughter Nicole on Heart 2 Heart. *Photo: Mary Dannals-Johnson*





## Spotlight: Jessica Anderson-Ruiz

*FOC is happy to welcome Jessica Anderson-Ruiz as Park Manager of Connetquot River State Park Preserve, succeeding Suzanne Wuehler. We'll let Jessica introduce herself in her own words:*



I began my career with New York State Parks in June 2000 as a summer seasonal at Heckscher State Park. Working at the South Bay Pool complex, which has since closed, I assisted with the daily operations of the pool and during my last summer, I was promoted to Pool Manager.

After graduating from State University of New York College at Cortland with a Bachelor of Science in Recreation Management, I began working in the Regional Recreation Department in January 2007. As a Special Event Coordinator, I coordinated and implemented many small- and large-scale events, quickly advancing from seasonal to a permanent position.

In October 2012 I became Assistant Manager at Connetquot River State Park Preserve, having the pleasure to work alongside Gil Bergen. I learned as much as I could from Gil about the history and operations of the Preserve. I worked closely on the beginning phase of plans for the reopening of the hatchery and assisted with the tremendous cleanup of the Preserve after Superstorm Sandy.

I returned to the Recreation Department in September 2014 as Supervisor and was promoted to Director of Recreation for the Long Island Region September of 2019. As Director, I managed the daily operations of five regional departments while working closely with various federal, state, and local agencies as well as assorted user groups on various regional permits and special events. I returned to Connetquot as Manager at the end of June 2023.

I currently live in Bay Shore with my husband, Abel, sons Andrew, 11, and Christopher, 9, the best pup, Lita, and a crested gecko, Yoshi. My family and I are extremely excited to make the transition to Connetquot! The kiddos cannot wait to live in the Preserve and further develop their love for nature. I look forward to working closely with the Friends of Connetquot and assisting with your mission and commitment to protect all the wonders that make up the 3,473 acres of the Preserve.

## *FOC Scholarship Awards*

by Janice Fischer

This year's Friends of Connetquot scholarship winners were announced on Sunday, June 11, during Living History Day at the Sayville Grange. This scholarship was based primarily on volunteer hours, with the hope that student involvement would create a new generation that loved Connetquot River State Park Preserve.

Our scholarship winner is Nicolle Perea from Central Islip High School. Nicolle was awarded our \$1,000 scholarship. Nicolle completed 20 hours, 35 minutes of volunteer work at the Park Preserve, including helping with: holiday decorating, the Luna Walk, Family Game Night, club house cleaning (twice) Tiny Tots, Snowflake, and Lee Krasner Art. Nicolle's participation even included dressing in animal costumes to help children with animal quizzes. She will be attending Stony Brook University with a major in Biology.

Our runner-up, Sarah Vasquez, is from East Islip High School. She was awarded a \$200 Visa gift card. Sarah completed 14 hours, 20 minutes of volunteer work on programs at Connetquot, including helping with the Haunted House, Railroad Lecture, Holiday Decorating, History Project. Sarah has been an indispensable part of our activities. She will be attending Catholic University with a major in Nursing. These young women embody leadership characteristics of determination, commitment, competence, as well as empathy and vision. Both intend to continue their service to others in their future occupations.



L. to r.: FOC President Janet Soley, Islip Supervisor Angie Carpenter, Nicolle Perea, Janice Fischer, Sarah Vasquez and Islip Town Historian George Munkenbeck.. *Photo: Daniel Goodrich*

## Friends of Connetquot Program Series at Connetquot River State Park Preserve

### *Perimeter Fence Cleanups with Keep Islip Clean* **Saturdays, July 15 and 29 – 9:00 AM**

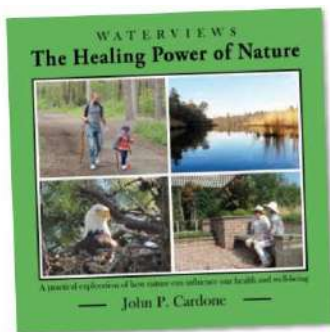
Sadly, Long Island's roads are strewn with litter. Help us fight back as the Friends team up with Keep Islip Clean in sprucing up Connetquot Preserve's fence line. KIC will provide pickers, vests and bags.

On July 15 we will work on Pond Road. Meet in the Go West/Eleanor's Lounge parking lot, north side of NY 27 between Oakdale-Bohemia Road and Pond Road.

On July 29 we will work on the north and south fences along NY 454. Meet at the Greenbelt Trail crosswalk on the south side of NY 454, just east of Connetquot Avenue. Registration is open on [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org).



### *The Healing Power of Nature: A Practical Exploration of How Nature Can Influence our Health & Well-being* **Sunday, September 10 – 1:00 PM – by John P. Cardone**



September is Mindfulness Month. Join Long Island author, lecturer and photographer John P. Cardone, as he uses a PowerPoint presentation to get you thinking about how nature can help you feel better physically and mentally. This talk is based on John's research for his book, *The Healing Power of Nature*.

John will present information on how spending time with nature can influence your health and well-being. Along the way, he will call on his over 40 years in healthcare education, his own fight with illness, and his years as a lover of the outdoors while presenting the scientific facts. Enjoy his nature photos of wildlife and waterscapes, most taken while kayaking and hiking Long Island. Find out more about the importance of calming your mind, the health benefits of the outdoors, and why it is especially important to share this spirit with children—all of which will get you wanting to spend more time with nature!

Register online at [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org)

### *Forest Bathing Walk* **Saturday, September 16 – 10:00 AM – by Linda Lombardo**

Based on the Japanese tradition of Shinrin-Yoku, a wellness practice developed in the 1980s, forest bathing walks inspire mindful connections with the natural elements of the woods for a range of healthful benefits. We'll slow down, wander and notice what most of the world simply walks past; the beauty of nature in any season. We'll do some grounding, connect with the trees and water, and may even create some nature art together. These walks are always slow and easy-going, not a hike; not a tour of plants. Walks always end with a ceremonial tea; something that could have been foraged in the forest. According to Linda, "Take this time to be present, lower any stress you may be experiencing, and naturally boost your immune system." Dress for outdoor weather. Closed shoes and long pants are recommended. Organic bug spray only, please. Meeting location TBD. For more information on forest bathing visit Linda's website, [www.wildheartnatureconnection.com](http://www.wildheartnatureconnection.com).

Register and pay online at [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org). **Members pay \$10. Non-members pay \$15.**



Most programs are free for members of Friends of Connetquot and \$5/person for non-members unless specified.

Please consider becoming a member and enjoy our programming all year long. Seasonal parking rates apply.

To register or to become a member, please visit [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org).

## Great State Park Programs!

Connetquot River State Park Preserve announces a wealth of interpretative programs for the summer of 2023. There's something for visitors of all ages on this busy schedule!



Fee: \$4.00 per adult, \$4.00 per child, and children under 3 are free.

\$8.00 parking fee during the fee collection season.

Outdoor programs are rain or shine, so please dress appropriately.

**Reservations are required and are taken beginning 2 weeks prior to each program.**

To make a reservation, visit **Eventbrite.com** and search **#NatureAdventure**. (Notice that's "Ed," not "Ad.")

If you are unable to keep your reservation, please call or cancel so others may have the opportunity to attend. Please be prompt.

If others are waiting, your place may be given to them if you have not arrived when the program starts.

### **Tiny Tots: "Nature Discoveries"**

Explore the natural world around us. These programs will connect children and their parents with nature through short walks, animal visitors, and crafts. Children ages 3-5.

**Saturdays, 10:00 – 11:00 AM**

### **Bat Safari: (Family Program)**

Enter the mysterious world of these fascinating and misunderstood animals! Join us for a short presentation then take a walk in the Preserve to observe bats during their evening insect hunt.

**Friday July 14 – 7:30 – 9:30 PM**

### **Firefly Night: (Family Program)**

Investigate the fascinating world of fireflies! Join us for a short night walk and some fun activities, as we observe these amazing creatures light up the night sky.

**Friday July 21 – 8:30 – 10:00 PM**

### **Impressionist Painting (Adult Program)**

Impressionism is a style of painting that shows life-like subjects painted in a broad, rapid style, with brushstrokes that are easily seen and colors that are often bright. We will learn about some of the most famous artists of the time as well as create our own impressionist style painting. Indoor presentation followed by painting on the porch.

**Saturday July 29<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 AM – Noon**

### **Reptiles and Amphibians (Family Program)**

Snakes, Frogs, and Turtles Oh my! Connetquot is home to many reptile and amphibian species. Join us as we hike around the hatchery grounds to explore the habitats of these amazing animals.

**Sunday July 30 – 1:00 – 2:30 PM**

### **Bat Safari: (Family Program)**

Enter the mysterious world of these fascinating and misunderstood animals! Join us for a short presentation then take a walk in the Preserve to observe bats during their evening insect hunt.

**Friday August 4 – 7:00 – 9:00 PM**

### **Pastels on the Porch: (Family Program)**

Bring the colors of summer to life with an oil pastel artwork you will create inspired by the different habitats of Connetquot. No artistic experience is necessary! All materials will be provided!

**Saturday August 5 – 10:00 – 11:30 AM**

### **Meteor Showers: (Family Program)**

Join us after hours and look up at the sky, you may see something out of this world! The Perseids Meteor Shower occurs at its peak between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of August! Join us for a short hike to open fields around the park as we search for the perfect view of the meteor shower along the way!

**Saturday August 12 – 8:00 – 9:30 PM**

### **Butterflies and Gardens: (Seniors Program)**

Explore the world of butterflies! Join us for a short presentation about these beautiful creatures. Then take a walk to view butterflies in the wild, finishing with a visit to the pollinator garden.

**Friday August 18 – 10:00 – 11:30 AM**

### **Sunset Hike: (Family Program)**

We'll take a hike around sunset through the preserve to see what wildlife are out and about. Who knows? We might even get a beautiful sunset over the Connetquot River! Please be prepared to hike for 2-3 miles!

**Friday August 25 – 7:00 – 8:30 PM**

**REMEMBER: Reservations and fee required.**

Continued on next page



## More State Park Programs

### \*\*\*\*Clubhouse Tours: (Family Program)

Season starts Sunday September 3 – Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month from 1:00-3:00 PM

A docent will discuss the history of the tavern and the high society Club which shaped Connetquot River State Park Preserve into what it is today. Tours of the historic Nicoll Grist Mill are included and will be offered after your house tour. Recommended for children 8+. House tours are about an hour long and run consecutively every half hour. There will be a short talk outside before viewing the inside.

### Bird and Breakfast: (Adult Program)

Saturday September 16 – 8:30 – 10:30 AM

Enjoy a continental breakfast (courtesy of The Great South Bay Audubon Society) and a presentation introducing the local and migratory birds seen in our area. Afterward, take a walk through the preserve led by experienced birders from the Audubon Society. Binoculars and identification books will be available for loan.

### Harvest Moon Hike: (Family Program)

Friday September 29 – 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Fall has officially arrived! Let's take a hike throughout the moonlit trails of the preserve! The term "harvest moon" refers to the full, bright Moon that occurs closest to the start of autumn. Dress for the weather and be prepared to hike up to 3 miles.

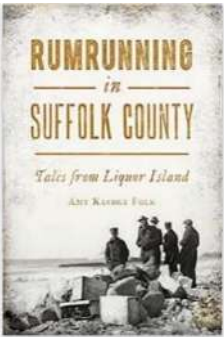
## Friends of Connetquot Program Series – Fall Previews

More information coming in the next issue, via email and on our website.

### *Rum Running in Suffolk County*

Saturday, October 14 – 1:00 PM – by Amy Folk

Born from the grand experiment of Prohibition, rumrunning impacted the entire nation during the early 20th century. With its proximity to New York City, Suffolk County was one of the places that witnessed the struggle between federal agents and the liquor smugglers. The book *Rumrunning in Suffolk County* explores local rumrunning through documented accounts found in local newspapers. Register online at [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org) Non-members fee is \$5 payable upon entry.



### *Fossil Daddy*

October 22 – Time TBA



Come meet Fossil Daddy and learn about the study of fossils through the use of pop culture.



### *FOC Fall Fishing Outing*

October 27

The Friends would like to invite all to enjoy a day of fly fishing and a tasty lunch from the Snapper Inn. Mark your calendars for October 27, 2023. Admission is \$80 per person. Note: all park rules apply. Registration will be open in September.

*And Last but Not Least ...*

**SAVE THE DATE: FOC Gala – Thurs. Dec. 7 at the Snapper Inn**

## History Project Update

Board Member Ritamarie Weigand reports that little of more than half of the attic boxes the History Team has sorted pertain to the South Side Sportsmen’s Club or Connetquot River State Park Preserve. The rest relate to areas around the preserve: Vanderbilt’s Idle Hour Estate, Bourne’s Indian Neck Hall, Bayard Cutting’s Westbrook Hall, Peace Haven, the Idle Hour Artist Colony, Pepperidge Hall, the Hollis family’s Meadow Farm and personal items of Muriel Vanderbilt. Ritamarie is engaged in the time-consuming process of getting in touch with 15 or so local historical societies or town historians to donate artifacts, photographs or various documents that do not fall within our collection policy.

Many of the documents the team examines are more than 100 years old and very fragile but irreplaceable. When these items are found, team members gently place them in plastic sleeves for preservation and fill out an archivist’s metadata form with specific information for authentication and the establishment of the item’s provenance.

Sadly, for whatever reason, several irreplaceable items have been lost, misplaced or stolen. They have simply disappeared from our locked rooms. These include an SSSC scrapbook, circa 1900 to 1940, with extraordinary photographs; an entire box of the A and B files of SSSC members, approximately 80-100 files; and five blueprints of homes built in the Idle Hour estate subdivisions, circa 1960s-70s.

Mystery surrounds the disappearance. Ritamarie personally handled the blueprints, placing them in a file labeled “Artist Colony Blueprints (5)”. She placed the file in the front of the box scheduled to be gifted to the Vanderbilt Museum, then wrapped that box in clear packing tape. That box was locked in the FOC Office until the museum picked them up. A week or so later, the museum’s archivist informed the Team that the blueprints were not in the box and have not been seen since. It’s a puzzlement!

On the bright side, the more boxes we go through and donate to appropriate organizations, the closer we get to the documents that are directly related to the SSSC and the CRSPP. SSSC documents recently discovered by the team are a 1915 payroll, 1922 employee lists, and a copy of the SSSC Constitution and Bylaws from 1874. Also, the History Team recently donated to CRSPP two items received from the Vanderbilt Historical Society: an antique can opener and an Indispensable Kit, a first aid kit dating to 1923.

Finally, we are in possession of ledger books that contain a wealth of information about the workings of the SSSC. Some are in delicate condition, and FOC is investigating the possibility of having them rebound.

SOUTH SIDE SPORTSMEN'S CLUB		PAY ROLL MONTH OF September 1915		
NAME	RATE	MONTHS	TOTAL	REMARKS
Mr. Schmitt	80.00	1	80.00	Stamps
Mr. Taylor	45.00	1	45.00	"
Mr. Jones	30.00	1	30.00	"
Mr. Smith	30.00	1	30.00	"
Mr. Brown	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. White	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Black	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Green	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Gray	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Hall	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. King	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Lewis	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Clark	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Adams	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Baker	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wilson	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Moore	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Taylor	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Evans	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Foster	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Green	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Hill	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Kelly	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Lane	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Little	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Long	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Martin	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Mason	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. McCallister	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Miller	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Mitchell	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Moore	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Myers	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Nelson	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Norris	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Owen	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Parker	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Quinn	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Reed	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Rich	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Ross	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Roy	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Rubin	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Ryan	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Smith	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Stewart	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Sullivan	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Taylor	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Thomas	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Thompson	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Turner	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Vance	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Walker	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Ware	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. White	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wilson	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wood	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wright	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Young	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Zimmerman	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Baker	20.00	1	20.00	"
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Mr. Reed	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Rich	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Ross	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Roy	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Rubin	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Ryan	20.00	1	20.00	"
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Mr. Vance	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Walker	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Ware	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. White	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wilson	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wood	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Wright	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Young	20.00	1	20.00	"
Mr. Zimmerman	20.00	1	20.00	"

Above: the 1915 payroll.  
Left: The "Indispensable Kit."  
Center: One of the missing blueprints.  
Below: A ledger book in need of repair.

Photos: Ritamarie Weigand





## I My Parks Day: Thank You All!



Hearty applause to those who chose to show their love for Connetquot on I Love My Parks Day, May 6. After a continental breakfast hosted by State Parks Regional Director George Gorman, everyone went to work! A total of 48 volunteers fanned out and applied elbow grease to many tasks, including a spring cleanup of the butterfly garden, planting 12 flats of native perennials around the trout raceways at the hatchery,



and removing 18 bags of invasive species of the vicinity of the historic grist mill. Others repainted the hatchery storage shed, and yet more helpers tackled cleaning every window on the first floor of the Clubhouse, inside and out. The Idle Hour Fishing Club worked north of the Hatchery, clearing snags and helping stream flow. Great work, everyone! Thanks to Park Manager Jessica Anderson-Ruiz and Assistant Park Manager Patrick Hein for the recap.

## ... And Friends Connetquot!



FOC partnered with Keep Islip Clean and Save the Great South Bay for a cleanup along the perimeter fence. Two additional cleanups are planned for July. (See page 5.) Please volunteer!

Girl Scout Troop 340 planted 250 bare root native trees. Help us this summer by stopping by to water the nursery farm!



Goldman Sachs Community Teamworks planted more than 20 trees at the hatchery. Does your group or company want to participate in a team building event? Contact us! We have lots of project ideas!

Photos: Ritamarie Weigand; Girl Scout photo Terri Esposito



## Thank You, Orvis!



Sporting goods purveyor Orvis' Give Back Days program supports not-for-profit conservation and sustainability organizations by sharing a percentage of its profits and encouraging donations.

This year Orvis' Westbury store selected the Friends of Connetquot as the recipient of its Give Back Day in May—and we gratefully accepted a check for \$2,360!

This money will go towards projects deemed necessary for the betterment of our beloved trout! Thanks so much for Orvis Westbury for choosing us as partners, to everyone who donated, and a major shout out to Tom McCoy, Rich and Ann Marie Cosgrove, Patrick Hein, Matt Caputo and Carole and Tom Scialdone for volunteering!

Pictured left: Orvis Store Manager Fred Versaci, FOC Director Carole Scialdone, FOC President Janet Soley and Orvis Fishing Manager Chris Vlacich. Photo: Tom Scialdone.

## WHAT'S COOKING??

Last year, we introduced you to Estelle Gervasio, who is now an active member of the History Team. Estelle worked at the SSSC for one day so she could be the third generation of club Employees! Estelle's aunt and uncle met while working at the club, and her uncle proposed on the Mill Bridge. Estelle shared wonderful stories of her uncle, a chef, writer, singer and Chef of the South Side Sportsmens Club.

After months of searching, Estelle found several of Chef John Pasquarelli's and wife Estelle's recipes. (See next page.) Enjoy the history! Bon Appetit!



Photo left: Janet Soley; right: from FOC's archives

## Soup Tetrizzini

*From the South Side Club's Chef*

¾ cup chopped lean beef  
¾ cup cooked dandelions, coarsely cut  
1 cup reserved dandelion cooking water  
¾ cup cooked watercress, coarsely cut  
¼ cup reserved watercress cooking water  
3 cans beef broth  
3 cans of water  
8 teaspoons pastina, or 2 eggs beaten with 2 Tbsps. Parmesan cheese

Combine beef, broth and the waters. Cook for 10 minutes.

Add the greens and pastina and boil for 8 minutes. If you prefer the eggs, add to the broth and boil for a second or two.

Season with salt and pepper.

Note from Chef John Pasquarelli:

*I first served this recipe in a Roman restaurant at 54<sup>th</sup> St, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, in the theatre district. Our clientele were artists of the Metropolitan Opera in the year 1929. This was the original recipe created for Miss Tetrizzini and the Opera Manager, Mr. Gatti Casazza.*

*I again made this soup when I returned to New York to the same restaurant in 1935. This time I made the soup for Mr. Richard Crocker, a tenor for the Metropolitan and his wife. Mr. Crocker asked me to sign "Child of the Golden West" and I was honored to comply with his request.*



## Croquettes Florentine

1 ½ cups milk  
1 Tbsp. butter  
1 Tbsp. orange peel, grated  
2 tsp. sugar  
3 tsp. farina  
½ tsp. vanilla

Boil milk with butter and grated orange peel. Add sugar and farina and cook for 5 minutes. Spread on greased pan to ½ inch thickness. Allow to cool.

Cut farina into diamond shapes.

Dip pieces in beaten egg to which you add a drop of milk.

Roll in flour and fry in butter until light golden brown.

Note from Chef John Pasquarelli:

*A very good and nourishing dish for a not-so-sweet palate.*

## Crepes Suzettes

Compliments of Chef John's wife, Estelle

Sift together:

2/3 cup flour  
1 Tbsp sugar  
Pinch of salt

Beat together 3 eggs and add to dry ingredients. Add 1 ¾ cups milk and mix until smooth.

Add 2 tsp melted butter and 1 Tbsp rum. Let batter stand for 2 hours before cooking crepes.

Heat butter in frying pan until it begins to bubble and pour a generous tablespoon of batter into pan. Rotate pan quickly to spread batter. Cook about one minute, turn and cook other side. Remove and set aside.

Cream together ½ cup butter and ½ cup powdered sugar. Add zest of 2 oranges, juice of one orange and several drops of lemon juice. Spread on cooked crepes, fold, roll and serve.



# What's Happening in the Park

Assistant Park Manager Patrick Hein tells us that trail maintenance and hazardous tree remediation are ongoing activities. Connetquot hosted a portion of the Greenbelt Trail Conference's annual 32-mile Shore2Shore footrace from Sunken Meadow to Heckscher State Park. Over four miles of the trail passes through the park.

Our little brook trout eggs are happy, healthy, and growing. They are now fingerlings! Evening fishing sessions are up and running. You MUST make a reservation and MUST check-in by 3:45 PM on the day of your reservation.

## Tiny Treat

This unobtrusive flower, spanning less than half an inch, was spotted near the Connetquot hatchery. It's a roadside weed found in many countries and survives poor soils. It bears the Latin name *Anagallis arvensis*, but we know it more familiarly as the Scarlet Pimpernel.

Fans of classic films will remember one of that name in which Englishman Sir Percy Blakeney affects an effete manner but carries out dangerous, heroic rescue missions in revolutionary France, slipping in and out of the country at will. The famous line associated with the character: "They seek him here, they seek him there. Those Frenchies seek him everywhere. Is he in heaven or is he in hell? That damned elusive Pimpernel."

Like Sir Percy, the plant is indeed elusive. It's not native to our area. And good luck finding it!

Photo: T. Casey



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#### Mission Statement

The Friends of Connetquot is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation, conservation and history of the 3,473-acre Connetquot River State Park Preserve. We work to help management protect a pristine environment and historic buildings and artifacts. We also support educational programs, fishing facilities and hiking and equestrian trails. The records of the Friends of Connetquot can be viewed in our room at the Preserve. The New York State Office of Charities Registration holds copies of the annual charities reports required by law.

PLEASE NOTE: Automatic defibrillators are available in the administration office, the BOCES room, the main building and at the hatchery. Preserve staff is trained in their use.

For Emergencies in the Preserve: Call the New York Park Police at 631-669-2500.

Also notify the Entrance Booth at 631-581-1005.

**Give Us Your Best Shot:** As always, we encourage you to share your photos of the Preserve with us. Send us up to four photos in .jpeg or .png digital format for a chance to receive a year's subscription to the FOC newsletter. Photos must be current (within a year of submission) and shot within the park. Please give the approximate location of the scene, if possible. DEADLINE for next issue: **September 11, 2023**. Send your files to Tom Casey at: [2caseys@optonline.net](mailto:2caseys@optonline.net).

## Not Yet a Member?

If you love Connetquot River State Park Preserve as much as we do, become a Friend! Be a part of our work to help maintain and improve the preserve and offer programs to the public. Membership levels include:

Senior Citizen \$20 - Individual \$25 - Family \$30 - Supporting \$50 - Sponsor \$100 - Donor \$500

Feeling especially generous? Consider one of our Lifetime Memberships:

Patron \$1,000 - Guardian \$2,500 - Benefactor \$5,000

Visit [www.friendsofconnetquot.org/join](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org/join) to pay online.

And while you're on our website, check out our volunteer opportunities. We can always use help for various projects, and many hands make light work!



The Friends of Connetquot thanks Parks and Trails New York and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for their support of our efforts.



Cleanup Days  
July 15 and 29

The Healing Power of  
Nature  
September 10  
Forest Bathing  
September 16  
Full Slate of State  
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Recipes from the  
South Side Club

Visit us at [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org)



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## *Seven Years Ago*



These pictures from 2016 show the devastation caused in Connetquot Preserve by the Southern Pine Beetle. Native to forests as far north as southern New Jersey, the beetle moved inexorably north as the climate changed and is thought to have been given a boost by strong storms Irene and Sandy in 2011-2012. One of the first places on Long Island to suffer noticeable damage was—you guessed it—Connetquot.

Felling and sectioning infested trees, preferably in cold weather, is the only treatment known to slow the spread of SPB. The tiny beetles, about the size of a grain of rice, aren't very mobile, and exposure to cold kills them. The cutting, while creating an ugly scene, actually had side benefits, opening up a too-crowded forest so that remaining trees and understory growth could better thrive.

Walk our trails now and you'll find a much-improved landscape, with these scenes of destruction mostly a memory. However, the battle is not won. SPB will be with us to stay, though its severity may wane. Farther east on Long Island, the beetle is still ascendant, and we have lost tens of thousands of pines. The fuel load of all that dead wood in the Pine Barrens is a big concern, especially in wildfire season. Also, it costs roughly \$30,000 to cut a thousand trees, straining both park budgets and the labor of park staff.

Our natural world remains ever in flux, full of surprises both pleasant and unpleasant. Climate change is accelerating that process, so hang on for the ride.

Photos: T. Casey

**Please check the date on your mailing label and renew your membership if it has expired. Together you and the Friends of Connetquot can have a powerful impact on revitalizing the Connetquot Preserve for future generations.**