



# Currents

A Publication of the Saugus River Watershed Council

Volume 14 No.3 , Fall 2005

## SRWC Membership Renewal

Special thanks to all those who have taken the time to send in membership dues or join as new members of the Saugus River Watershed Council during 2005.

A red sticker on the mailing label of this newsletter indicates that your annual membership dues to the Saugus River Watershed Council are now payable.

While individual and family membership rates remain very low, your financial contributions are an important source of income to help support our ongoing efforts to protect and restore the natural resources of the Saugus River watershed.

Please take a moment to check the status of your membership. To renew at this time, simply clip and send your tax deductible donation along with the form located on page 8 of this newsletter. Any questions regarding SRWC membership can be directed to 781-233-5046.

*As always, the many contributions of our members through dues, volunteer work, and other financial or in-kind donations are very much appreciated! ❖*

## Sporadic Water Levels Stress Saugus River Watershed



*Although this segment of Reedy Meadow, adjacent to the Sheraton Colonial Golf Course, is normally under water throughout the year, the area was almost completely dry during August and September 2005.*

This Summer, members of the Saugus River Watershed Council and the Saugus River Flow Task Force observed significant problems with lack of water throughout the upper portions of the watershed. While much of the problem can be attributed to lack of rain during August and September, growing beaver activity and the Mill Pond dredging project also contributed to changes in water flow this summer.

In addition to drying up portions of Reedy Meadow, the lack of water this summer caused Hawkes Brook to go completely dry stranding about thirty small fish in the process. By September, the main stem of the Saugus River was also down to a small brook in many locations.

In the lower portions of Reedy Meadow in Lynnfield and Wakefield, an ever expanding beaver population took full advantage of low water

conditions to construct dams in new locations, further restricting the flow of already limited water resources.

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## **Editorial: Illegal Dumping**

Since our inception in 1991, the Saugus River Watershed Council has worked with our watershed communities to address the environmental problem of illegal dumping throughout the watershed.

Over the years, we have collected hundreds of tons of trash from problem sites in Saugus, Lynn, Revere, Wakefield, Malden and other watershed communities. These cleanup projects were made possible by the tireless efforts of hundreds of volunteers from local residents, to school groups, and employees from area businesses such as General Electric. We have also had significant support from local Department's of Public Works (DPW), the state Office of Coastal Zone Management, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

While conducting cleanup projects is an important part of our work, the environmental problem of illegal dumping cannot be addressed by non-profit organizations alone. To be truly successful, our Campaign Against Illegal Dumping, must include expanded efforts at the local and state level as well. The following steps would help address the major problem of illegal dumping in the Saugus River watershed --

- Local Enforcement - Expanded efforts at the local level are needed to identify those responsible for illegal dumping, and follow-up with fines and required cleanup efforts. During the past few years, both Saugus and Lynn have had some success in nabbing illegal dumpers from other communities. Anyone witnessing illegal dumping should write down license plate numbers and contact local police and their DPW.

- Recycling Programs - One of the problems associated with illegal dumping is the amount of recyclable trash that ends up filling up landfills and creating unnecessary air pollution by being incinerated at the RESCO waste incinerator. Municipal efforts to expand existing recycling programs and increase resident

participation in recycling are needed to increase recycling rates in our watershed.

- Hazardous and Bulk Waste Collection - Expanded opportunities for disposal of hazardous and bulk waste are needed. Local programs to collect hazardous waste, such as unused paint and household cleaners, are often scheduled only once per year. Even residents who want to do the right thing often find it difficult to participate in hazardous waste days. Limited waste collections and fees for disposal of "white goods" such as refrigerators, and other items such as computer monitors and television sets have led to increased dumping of these items in our watershed.

- State Enforcement - While the state's Environmental Strikeforce is available to address large-scale environmental dumping of hazardous materials, it is much more difficult to levy fines or penalties for offenders on a smaller scale. Expanded state support of local enforcement is needed.

- Site Specific Prevention - One of the best ways to stop illegal dumping at a particular location is to transform the site. Effective prevention methods include landscaping and beautification, such as the creation of Marshview Park along the Saugus River in Lynn. Signage, barriers, and hidden cameras have also proven effective in reducing illegal dumping at many sites in our watershed.

- Regional Coordination - Finally, thanks to the coordination of Sharon Byrne Kishida at the Department of Environmental Protection, many North Shore communities are now working together to learn from each other and collaborate on waste disposal programs where possible.

It is only through these and other creative strategies that we will be able to reduce illegal dumping instead of simply responding to this major environmental problem.

*Joan LeBlanc* ❖

## **Campaign for Green Budget a Success**

The Environmental League of Massachusetts and the Environmental Collaborative were successful in their recent efforts to increase state funding for environmental programs. Thanks to the efforts of ELM staff with support from the Collaborative, a network of environmental organizations from around the state (including SRWC), the state's budget for fiscal year 2006 includes a \$14.8 million increase over last year's budget for environmental programs. Hopefully, the success of this year's campaign will lead to continued increases in state funding for environmental protection in Massachusetts. ❖

### **Saugus River**



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## SRWC Tours Saugus Iron Works



Special thanks to Curtis White of the National Park Service for leading an extremely informative tour of the Saugus Iron Works for members of the Saugus River Watershed Council on 16 October 2005. Although we had to cancel our planned canoe trip due to high winds and water levels, we were treated to a fun Sunday morning of history at its best.

Participants learned about the history of iron making in our region as well as the relationship between iron making and the Saugus River. We also heard an update regarding the National Park Service's plans to upgrade historic buildings and restore the Saugus River turning basin. The tour ended with a fascinating demonstration of 17th century nail-making techniques. ❖

## SRWC & New England Discovery Offer New Environmental Education Programs

The Saugus River Watershed Council is working in partnership with Bob Metcalfe of New England Discovery to provide high quality field and classroom environmental education programs to students attending schools located in the Saugus River watershed.

Program topics may include watershed wildlife, tracking and wildlife signs, or wildlife habitat and adaptations. Teachers may choose field trips to locations such as Breakheart Reservation, Reedy Meadow, Town Line Brook, or Rumney Marsh. Classroom programs may include slide shows and hands-on environmental education activities.

To find out more, or schedule a program, please contact Bob Metcalfe of New England Discovery, 781-233-5046. Reserve your program early -- a limited number of programs will be scheduled on a first come / first serve basis.

*These programs are offered by the Saugus River Watershed Council free of charge to schools and youth programs located in the following watershed communities -- Saugus, Lynn, Revere, Peabody, Wakefield, Lynnfield, Stoneham, Melrose, Everett, Malden and Reading. ❖*

## RESCO Third Burner

Although, RESCO is not formally pursuing a third burner for their waste incinerator in Saugus at this time, several actions may have an impact on the company's ability to do so in the future.

This summer, Rep. Kathi-Anne Reinstein introduced legislation that would prevent a third burner from being added to the facility at any point in the future. SRWC strongly supports the legislation which would prevent the introduction of new pollution from waste incineration into the Rumney Marshes Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

At a recent Board of Selectmen Meeting in Saugus, the Board voted unanimously to reaffirm their position in opposition to the addition of a third burner at RESCO.

In related news, RESCO was successful in overturning a local by-law that would have capped the ash landfill in Rumney Marsh at 40-feet. RESCO will still have to get environmental approvals from the state Department of Environmental Protection if they seek to increase landfill levels above the currently approved level of 50 feet. ❖

## SRWC Welcomes New Intern



SRWC welcomes Matt LaMothe of Lynn as our new intern this Fall. So far, Matt has assisted us with restoration projects at Marshview Park in Lynn and helped with writing our newsletter. Matt has previously worked with the Department of Conservation and Recreation as a lifeguard at Nahant Beach and is very enthusiastic about working with the Council to protect and restore natural resources of the watershed. ❖

## Marshview Park Improvements



*SRWC board member Mary Kinsell, Kinsell's grandson Davis Rennella, and board member Kathy Wrynn removed weeds from a flower bed at Marshview Park, October 2005.*

This fall, SRWC spent two days working to improve plantings at Marshview Park in Lynn. On October 11 and 13, staff and volunteers removed weeds, picked up trash, and generally cleaned up this waterfront park located along the

Saugus River. Staff from the Department of Conservation and Recreation coordinated a community service crew to assist with the project. Special thanks to the Lynn Department of Public Works for planting a beautiful fall display of mums under the Marshview Park sign. ❖

## **Sporadic Water Levels Stress Saugus River Watershed**

*Continued from page 1*

While August and September were some of the driest summer months of recent years, rainfall during October has been exceptionally heavy causing flooding problems throughout New England. For the Saugus River watershed, October rains have restored water levels to higher than normal for this time of year.

This year's sporadic water levels have made it difficult for SRWC and the Saugus River Flow Task Force to effectively assess fish spawning habitat in the upper portions of the watershed. With funding of \$14,000 from the Gulf of Maine Habitat Restoration Program, SRWC hired the consulting firm of Gomez and Sullivan Engineers to conduct a hydrology study of the upper portions of the watershed. The underlying goal of the study is to determine if water levels are adequate to support fish spawning and passage upstream of the Lynn Water and Sewer Commission dam.

In support of the study, members of SRWC and the Task Force have been conducting field work to evaluate fish passage opportunities throughout Reedy Meadow, assess connections to Pillings Pond and Lake Quannapowitt, and evaluate water quality in potential fish spawning and rearing habitat. Results of the study will be available later this fall. ❖



*Mike Callahan of Beaver Solutions examines new beaver dam constructed during August and September in lower Reedy Meadow, September 2005.*

## **SRWC Upcoming Events**

### **Annual Meeting** **15 November 2005**

SRWC members and friends are invited to join the Saugus River Watershed Council for our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, 15 November 2005, at Prince Restaurant on Route 1 South in Saugus. Guests will enjoy a delicious Italian dinner buffet and learn about SRWC's ongoing projects.

The evening will also feature a keynote presentation regarding the Saugus River Watershed Council's 2005 habitat assessment and fish monitoring projects. A brief business meeting will be conducted to elect the 2006 Board of Directors. SRWC will also present its annual River Stewardship Awards.

Guests are asked to contribute \$10 toward the costs of the dinner. Volunteer water quality monitors are invited to join us at no charge.

Mark your calendars now. A more detailed flyer regarding this event will be in the mail soon. Please call SRWC at 781-233-5046 for more information.

### **Public Meetings** **Eastern Ave., Saugus**

The Saugus River Watershed Council and the Department (DCR) of Conservation and Recreation will host public meetings this fall to develop a plan for improvements to the parcel of land located at the corner of Eastern Avenue and Bristow Street in Saugus. The property is co-owned by the DCR and the Saugus Italian American Club. The plan will identify designated parking areas, recommend actions needed to improve stormwater management, enhance public access to Rumney Marsh, and prevent illegal dumping. Once the dates are selected, SRWC members will receive notice and an event listing will be sent to local newspapers. ❖

# Around the Watershed

## **FOLQ Annual Breakfast 20 November 2005**

Friends of Lake Quannapowitt will host their annual breakfast on Sunday, 20 November 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the Comverse cafeteria in Wakefield. Call 781-245-3282 for more information or advance tickets. This annual event is a great opportunity to meet with friends and talk about environmental issues affecting Wakefield and Lake Quannapowitt.

## **Native American Hike**

The Department of Conservation and Recreation will host a hiking tour on Sunday, 13 November 2005, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Participants will learn about how indians used the natural resources of Breakheart Reservation during this easy two-mile hike. Meet at the visitor center off Lynn Fells Parkway, Saugus. For more information, call 781-233-0834.

## **Persons of the Year**

Janet Leuci and John Burns, two long-time environmental advocates, were named "Persons of the Year" at the Town of Saugus' Founders' Day event in September. Ms. Leuci and Mr. Burns are long-time members of Saugus Action Volunteers for the Environment (SAVE). They have also been involved with many other projects and organizations (including SRWC) working to make their community a better place. SRWC appreciates their extensive contributions toward protecting the environment.

## **Earth Night**

### **19 November 2005**

The Environmental League of Massachusetts will host its 10th Annual Earth Night dinner and auction on Saturday, 19 November 2005 at the Boston Convention

Center, 415 Summer Street, Boston. This year's event will include many exciting auction items including hybrid cars, entertainment, and sports tickets. For more information about the event or a preview of auction items, see the Earth Night website at [www.earthnight.org](http://www.earthnight.org) or call Classic Communications at 508-698-6810.

## **Wakefield Brook, Culvert**

For the past several months, work has been underway to relocate the culvert for Wakefield Brook as part of the construction of a new Shaw's supermarket on Water Street in Wakefield. Despite heavy rainfall in October, the culvert relocation portion of the project was recently completed without incident. Wakefield Brook drains via culvert into the Mill River which empties into the Saugus River.

## **New DCR Commissioner**

Governor Mitt Romney recently appointed attorney Stephen Burrington as Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the state agency that manages public parklands and recreational facilities. Burrington has extensive environmental experience in the private and public sectors. Since 2003, he has served as undersecretary within the Office for Commonwealth Development, which works to promote sustainable development across state environmental, transportation, housing, and energy agencies. Prior to his work in state government, Burrington was Vice President and General Counsel for the Conservation Law Foundation. For more information about DCR, go to [www.mass.gov/dcr/](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/).

## **Saugus River History & Art**

SRWC Board Member Kathy Wrynn of Lynn will give a talk about the history and artwork of the Saugus River on Wednesday, 9 November 2005, at St.

John's Episcopal Church, located at the corner of Central and Prospect Street, Saugus. The program is part of the Saugus Historical Society's annual meeting. A pot luck dinner at 6:00 p.m. will be followed by a brief business meeting. Keynote presentation by Kathy Wrynn will take place at 8:00 p.m. For more information, please call Phyllis Brown at 781-233-5387.

## **FOLQ Annual Meeting**

SRWC Director Joan LeBlanc was the guest speaker for the Friends of Lake Quannapowitt Annual Meeting on 18 October 2005. LeBlanc gave a presentation about the Council's ongoing habitat study to assess fish spawning potential in the upper reaches of the watershed. She also presented results from the Council's 2005 Saugus River fish monitoring program which took place last spring.

Members of FOLQ highlighted their ongoing efforts to assess water quality in Lake Quannapowitt, ensure continued improvements at the Gertrude Spaulding park, protect vegetated buffer zones around the lake, and several other projects.



*Above, Joan LeBlanc and volunteers check the Fyke net for smelt and other fish in the Saugus River, spring 2005. ❖*

## Kayak Winner!



Mike Colantuoni (far right) of Saugus was the lucky winner of an Old Town Kayak raffled off by the Saugus River Watershed Council. The winning ticket was drawn in September at Founder's Day in Saugus. Mike's neighbors Ryan, Davin and David Procopio (left to right) are also shown in the photo.

Special thanks to all those who generously purchased tickets for the raffle which raised approximately \$1,000 in net proceeds to support the Council's natural history and education programs. ❖

## Tennessee Gas Pipeline

SRWC staff and board members recently met with representatives of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline to discuss plans for the Essex-Middlesex Lateral Project. The company plans to install 7.6 miles of 24" pipeline connecting existing lines in Saugus and Lynnfield.

SRWC highlighted concerns about sections of the pipeline that would potentially travel through Reedy Meadow in Lynnfield and Wakefield, Breakheart Reservation in Saugus, and cross under the Saugus River. SRWC urged the project proponent to consider alternative routes to avoid sensitive environmental areas. Mitigation measures to protect wetlands were also discussed.

According to Project Manager Trisha Eshleman, the pipe would be located a minimum of three feet underground in all locations. Any wetlands disturbed would be restored and monitored for three years. Federal, state and local environmental permitting will begin this fall. Potential construction would take place in 2007. SRWC will submit written comments during the environmental permitting phase of this project. ❖

## "Framing Dollars for Charity"

I Did It Myself Frame Shop at 3 Lewis Street in Lynn has generously agreed to donate \$10 to the Saugus River Watershed Council whenever a customer orders a custom framing job and presents the certificate below at the shop. Please take advantage of this great opportunity to purchase high quality framing services while supporting the Saugus River Watershed Council. Clip out the coupon below and present it when ordering your framing job.

### **I Did It Myself**

Gratefully Acknowledges Sponsorship of

### **Saugus River Watershed Council \$10 Donation Certificate**

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3 Lewis Street  
Lynn, MA 01902  
781-595-8070

## Daniel Noon Helps with Hurricane Katrina Relief

This fall, SRWC Board Member Daniel Noon went to Purvis, Mississippi for three weeks to assist with the government's efforts to help victims of hurricane Katrina. As an employee of the National Park Service, Daniel took time off from his job at the Saugus Iron Works to answer the call for volunteers to work with FEMA.

During his time in Mississippi, Daniel worked with FEMA to receive and transport trailers that were being provided to victims for transitional housing. According to Daniel, "It was a great experience, I learned how FEMA operates and had the opportunity to meet many kind people who were able to smile even through adversity". ❖

## Eagle Scout Project at Prankers Pond

By Sean Christopher LeBlanc  
Boy Scout Troop 61, Saugus



*Sean LeBlanc (5th from right) and members of Boy Scout Troop 61 in Saugus removed debris, built and installed benches, and improved natural resources in Prankers Pond and the Saugus River.*

For my Eagle Scout project, I wanted to do something original and with a personal touch that also helped the community. As a kid I remembered the good times I used to have down at Prankers Pond in Saugus. I went down there and tried to find out what I could do to help this special section of environment still left in Saugus. I decided to put in two new benches near the waterfront to help get some more families down there to enjoy the pond's beauty. With the help of Prankers Pond warden, Mr. Tringale, I also decided that a river clean up would be the best thing that I could do to help the environment, because the river was clogged up with debris.

Together, my fellow scouts and I hauled out three different man made bridges that had spanned the river having been used to cross over in the past. We also removed other debris and trash. There was also a section of the river, where a sand hill had built up blocking the flow of the water so we dug channels through it and cleaned out a lot of the sand to help the flow. The river now has a constant flow and looks ten times better. We also cleaned up all of the walking trails at Prankers Pond. After we removed all the trash, Saugus Department of Public Works Director Mr. Attubato and the DPW picked it up the following day.

All that is left for my project is putting up a sign at the entrance to the area that I am fabricating with the name of the pond. I would like to give special thanks to Mr. Tringale, Nelson Miller scoutmaster of Troop 61, Saugus DPW, the adult leaders of Troop 61, all the scouts, and especially my father Fredrick LeBlanc for the hours he put in helping me fabricate the new benches. After high school I will be going on to college and trying to find a career in helping or maintaining the environment.

*Editor's Note: In addition to completing this Eagle Scout Project, Sean has been an enthusiastic volunteer helping the Saugus River Watershed Council with canoe trips and cleanup projects for the past several years. We really appreciate all his efforts to protect the environment! ❖*

## Saugus River Picnic & Children's Festival



*This drawing by Mark Panetta, Age 9, of Saugus highlights a historical building at the Iron Works.*

Despite threatening weather, this year's Saugus River picnic and children's festival was a great success. Over 100 people attended the event held in June at the Saugus Iron Works.

Families enjoyed great music from Dave Simmons and friends, participated in a nature Scavenger Hunt, made bird feeders, and much more. Children were delighted by the giant bubbles and balloon creations by Bruce Lawson of Peabody. Paul Ericson Studios presented a fun musical show highlighting marine creatures from the Saugus River watershed and beyond.

This year, SRWC held an art contest for children highlighting scenes from the Saugus River picnic. The following children received awards --

### Ages 4-5:

- 1st Place - Sabrina Panetta, 5
- 2nd Place - Alessia, 4
- 3rd Place - Talia, 4

### Ages 6-7:

- 1st Place - Breanna Curiale, 6
- 2nd Place - Samantha Thomas, 7
- 3rd Place - Allison Sparrow, 7

### Ages 8-10:

- 1st Place - Shelby Katis, 9
- 2nd Place - Danielle Thomas, 10
- 3rd Place - Stephen Chapman, 9

### Honorable Mention:

- Emily, Age 10
- Michelle P., Age 4

Special thanks to the staff of the Saugus Iron Works and our many volunteers for making this event such a great success. ❖

Saugus River Watershed Council  
P.O. Box 1092  
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## Making a Difference

The Saugus River watershed stretches from Lake Quannapowitt to the Lynn Harbor / Saugus River estuary, encompassing all or part of eleven communities.

The Saugus River Watershed Council is a non-profit organization founded in 1991 to protect the natural resources of the watershed. Our priorities include restoring water quality, expanding public access, restoring habitat for anadromous fish and other wild life, and protecting critical resources such as Rumney Marsh and Reedy Meadow.

Please consider adding your voice, as a member of the Council, to our efforts to protect the natural resources and beauty of the Saugus River watershed.

## Join the Saugus River Watershed Council

Yes! I would like to become a member of the Saugus River Watershed Council.\*

New Member     Membership Renewal

Individual (\$10)     Family (\$15)     Friend (\$25)  
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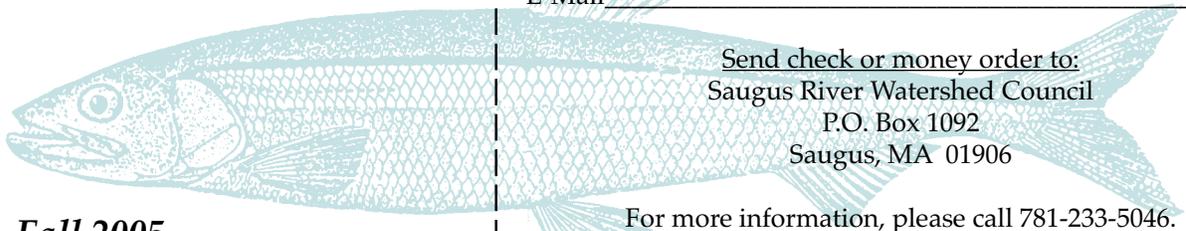
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For more information, please call 781-233-5046.



*Fall 2005*