WATERSHED

A Newsletter of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association

Volume 31 No. 1

Spring 2014

Lend a Helping Hand by Alan Desbonnet, WPWA President

WPWA has focused much of its efforts on very large projects that opened up a lot of habitat for migratory fish, and improved public access. Member support, while perhaps small in the overall financial scope of the millions of dollars WPWA has expended on habitat restoration, was huge with regard to implementation. The reality is that funders want to see grassroots "people support" for the work they are backing. WPWA members provided enthusiasm and support at levels that were, well, gushing over the top of the dam.

While our efforts in river habitat restoration and public access improvement continue—for instance dealing with the few remaining barriers in the lower Pawcatuck River—we want to ramp up efforts to improve programming offered to you, our valued members, and the public.

To get there though, we need the involvement of members who are willing to volunteer some time, and bring along their creative effort, so we can establish a Program Development Committee that will explore and develop new program ideas. What this means is that we need you and your ideas for exciting and interesting new member programs, to serve on the committee. We also need program volunteers, so that once new programs are developed, we have the people power needed to provide them to fellow members and the public. So if you prefer to be on the action end of the process, don't worry, there are plenty of opportunities to join in on the fun. But if you like to plan and want to expend some creative energy, serving on a Program Development Committee will be a fun place to be for you.

We also need members who want to help WPWA in membership development and fund development activities.

WPWA Renovations Nearing Completion by David Smith, volunteer contributor

hanks to the Champlin Foundation, WPWA's campus is being transformed with a grant award of \$91,915 for building renovations. This is the third phase of a multiyear effort to update and beautify the buildings and grounds which comes with a total price tag of \$226,150. The work actually began in response to the March 2010 flood when the basement office space was inundated by the Wood River. The space and utilities were quickly repaired and upgraded thanks to a flood insurance payment totaling just over \$26,000.

This project's cost is likely to rise by \$10,000 to cover the cost of putting new roofs on the office building and garage which is being converted into a Welcome Center. New roofing was found to be a necessary step early in the renovation process.

To that end, the WPWA Annual Meeting will be held at the campus on the evening of May 28th and will feature a "Family Reunion" theme with invited guest Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse. The event will be a potluck affair and there will be thank you invitations sent to former board members, staff, donors, and all those who helped make the renovations a reality.



The former kayak storage "garage" being transformed into our new Welcome Center.

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From the Executive Director

It's finally time to get back outside and enjoy all your watershed has to offer. Whether that be fishing, kayaking, birding, biking, or hiking, WPWA can help you enjoy all that the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed has to offer. Our new WPWA Welcome Center is designed to set you off on the right foot for whatever outdoor adventure you enjoy.

We've worked hard over the last four years to completely renovate our campus on the Wood River with an eye toward better serving you. You and the entire WPWA extended family are invited to tour the campus renovations at our **Family Reunion Annual Meeting** on May 28th from 6-8:30pm.

Sheldon Whitehouse has been invited to give an update on his efforts to help RI and the nation adapt to Climate Change. There will be kayaks available for you to take a sunset paddle up the scenic Wood River or maybe bring your fishing pole and cast off from our deck and landings.

We hope to see you here as we honor this year's award winners and thank you for all your support throughout the years. Attendance is free, so bring your favorite dish or drink and join us for a relaxing evening on the river!

See You At The Party,



WATERSHED GREEN CORNER

These articles are brought to you by RI NEMO - Produced by URI Cooperative Extension for RI Stormwater Solutions, a project funded by the RI Department of Transportation, in partnership with the RI Department of Environmental Management and RI municipalities. Articles have been formatted by WPWA to fit this space.

The Brighter Side of April Showers

by Lisa DeProspo Philo & Lorraine Joubert, RI NEMO

April showers might bring May flowers, but how do you deal with all that rain in the meantime? Currently, many RI towns are working to reduce the effects of polluted stormwater runoff, which is the water you see flowing down the street when it rains. One way that each Rhode Islander can make a difference is by diverting rooftop runoff from pavement. a w a y

Did you know that the amount of rain that flows off an average roof, over the course of a year in RI, would fill more than 500 bathtubs?

Instead of allowing that rain to flow down your driveway or sidewalk to the nearest storm drain, it's possible to divert the rain in at least 3 ways:

- Consider using downspout extenders to direct the water onto a landscaped area.
- Purchase a rain barrel, and direct downspout water directly into it. You'll not only reduce stormwater, but you can conserve water by using what you capture for irrigation.
- Investigate a rain garden, which is a natural or hand-dug shallow depression designed to soak up water. Rain gardens are created with highly absorbent soil and the proper mix of plants to facilitate collecting water and infiltrating it back into the ground.

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And as always, if you're interested in learning about additional tips to help safeguard our waters, visit: www.ristormwatersolutions.org



Thank you Don Bousquet for your cartoon donation!

Project Wet Workshop Saturday, May 3, 2014 9 am to 3:30 pm

TEACHERS! Get your feet wet & learn to conduct water quality & wetland exploration field trips as we search for aquatic creatures in the Wood River. Create better lessons around water with this 6-hour workshop based on the Project Wet (Water Education for Teachers) & WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands environmental education curriculum guides. Curriculums align with NGSS & Common Core. All teachers, pre-service teachers, homeschool & non-formal educators from all grade levels are welcome. \$15 per person.

Guides are provided free, courtesy of RIDEM Division of Fish & Wildlife. Sponsored by WPWA.

Contact Denise P. at 401-539-9017 or denisep@wpwa.org. Register online at www.wpwa.org/events.

The old 30- by 24-foot garage that faces Arcadia Road moved to the rear of the campus.

Large culvert pipes that were used to divert the Pawcatuck River during WPWA's Lower Shannock Falls The floor in the Welcome Center has been leveled and Dam removal project will be repurposed as kayak cubbies. The black tubes will be cut, stacked and secured. WPWA's 30+ kayaks will be inserted into them and There will also be two built in bookcases for educalocked. Fox particularly loves this maintenance-free tional displays and two life-like wildlife murals, by storage solution that follows the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle methodology.



Culvert pipes that will be repurposed as a new storage area for WPWA's 30+ nine-foot recreational kayaks that are used for paddling programs throughout the season.

"We want to bring everybody back to the campus to The former garage was completely gutted and now has see the results of their contributions", said Chris Fox. a new roof, flooring, electrical wiring, windows, Besides staffing the Welcome Center on weekends, doors, and siding along with a public restroom. The Fox said the organization will also offer the renovated garage door has been removed and the opening respaces for a donation to members and affiliates for framed for a new patio door. The original wood sill parties, conferences, workshops, and other gatherings. that was resting on a concrete slab and knee wall was rotted and eaten by termites and had to be replaced.

has been getting a major facelift and will soon become Replacement windows had been installed in the garage a Welcome Center staffed by interns and volunteers and office buildings in the 1990s but the original during weekends in the summer. The building was wooden frames that they were installed into had since previously used for kayak storage, but those will be rotted. Along with the new vinyl windows and glass door, there are three new skylights, which bathe the space in natural light.

> will be tiled. Collar ties were also installed to raise the ceiling height making the space feel much larger. Christine McIntyre-Hannon of Hannon Art Works, will adorn the walls. Christine has graciously donated her time and talent to create the murals which will serve as a centerpiece for educating people about the flora and fauna along and within the Wood River.

> The building already has a heated, tiled restroom in the back of the building that is open to the public at all hours. That addition was part of the construction in Phase II. Initially the restroom was going to be a stand-alone building featuring a composting toilet, but the \$50,000 cost and required annual maintenance was deemed too excessive, said Fox.

> All of the trim work on the exterior of the buildings is being done with Azek, a PVC composite that will never rot and does not need to be painted.

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	· ·
	WPWA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Nan	ne(s) Phone & Email
Add	ress
	PLEASE SELECT YOUR LEVEL OF GIVING
	□ \$35 Individual □ \$50 Family □ \$75 Contributor □ \$100 Supporter / Corporate □ \$250 Sponsor □ \$500 Patron □ \$1000 Benefactor
	In addition to my dues, I am enclosing an extra, tax deductible, contribution of \$
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continued from p. 3

nance free as possible and still maintain an aesthetic Annual Meeting. that fits with the area's rural character. That is why he opted for natural cedar shingles on the exterior of both Phase I of construction included drilling a new well buildings as opposed to vinyl siding.

now one large open room. It will have electric baseboard heating, but Fox does not anticipate that the building will get a lot of use during the winter. The heat will only come into play at each end of the sum- Phase II included expanding the public parking at the mer season.

Another maintenance free aspect of the project includes composite patio furniture donated by Seaside \$72,000. Casual Furniture of Coventry, designed with a wet kayaker or fishermen in mind.

workshop, various recreational programs, and a place ades to come. to educate students that often visit the campus on WPWA sponsored field trips.

Work on the main office building includes upgrading its restroom for handicapped accessibility, the addition of new doors and windows, roofing, siding, and upstairs interior renovations, including new flooring and furniture in the conference room.

The interior walls have been painted a pale yellow and 750 square feet of solid, pre-finished ash tongue-andgroove flooring replaced the well worn carpeting. The original wood paneling has been kept upstairs and the new pine trim around the windows has been treated with a white pickling stain so that in time it will match the existing paneling.

A new computer server has also been moved upstairs into a cubby in Fox's office. That will allow the Wi-Fi hub to provide a stronger signal throughout the campus. Fox noted the server upgrade would not have been possible without the volunteer efforts of Lawson Cary.

Boisclair Building Concepts is performing the work in

Fox said he wanted to make the buildings as mainte- time for the ribbon cutting at the late May WPWA

and the installation of a new septic system in the front of the lot. During this first phase, a rental home on the The interior of the garage, which was once divided, is property was demolished to make room for the septic system and an expansion of the public parking. This work cost \$62,235.

> site with natural materials to limit runoff into the river, landscaping, and construction of the public restroom in what is now the Welcome Center. This phase cost

Funding for the projects came from the Champlin Foundation, a partnership between RIDEM and the Program Director Denise Poyer says that opening up U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's sport fish access prothe old garage into one room was necessary to gain gram, private donors, and the watershed association space for various activities. One of the first uses itself. Interestingly enough, it was Champlin funds might be an upcoming fly tying class and watershed that helped purchase the former fishing camp in 1996. workshops for teachers. Other uses for the space in- WPWA hopes that everyone will take full advantage clude kayak training classes, a map and compass of all the campus upgrades this summer and for dec-





The WPWA office building's exterior during the winter facelift (top photo by David Smith) and nearing it's completion in the Phase III and is expected to complete the project in beginning of April (bottom). New windows, doors, cedar shingle siding, and roofing completed the exterior work.

2013-2014 Report of WPWA Members & Donors, Charitable Foundation & Government Grants, & The Salomon Fund * indicates Life Member

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If you feel you have been omitted from any part of this list in error, please contact WPWA.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!

WPWA is running about 20 kayaking programs this summer. We are looking for help with our Urban Kids Paddles. If you are an experienced kayaker who has some time during the week, you can help us teach urban youth the joys of kayaking on the Wood River. Contact denisep@wpwa.org

Congratulations to WPWA
Program Director, Denise Poyer,
who was awarded 2013
Volunteer of the Year by the
Appalachian Mountain Club!

for more details.

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These are critical areas for WPWA—without funding we can't accomplish much in the watershed, and if we don't have members, well, what's the point anyway? If "asking" for money or "recruiting" are scary—or heaven forbid, boring thoughts, put them aside. There are many ways you can help and they aren't necessarily boring. It's difficult for me to summarize the needs in any meaningful way in this short space, but if you have interest in helping in fund or member development, contact the WPWA office so we can arrange to talk personally. Members serving in either of these areas are helping their organization in ways above-and-beyond the norm, and so I say "Thanks" in advance.

Bottom line? You, our members, are the most important asset of this organization. WPWA needs your financial support as members for sure, but it gets so much sweeter if you engage in giving some time and energy to help the organization do all the great things that you joined to partake of in the first place. So, have we piqued your desire to wade into the deeper waters of environmental grassroots action? I sure hope so. Send us an email to info@wpwa.org and tell us what your interests are. We will follow up to see how we can, together, continue to support WPWA and it's vital mission in the watershed.



C'mon Home!

To the WPWA Family Reunion & 31st Annual Meeting



Wednesday May 28th 2014 6:00pm to 8:30pm WPWA Campus 203 Arcadia Rd. Hope Valley, RI 02382 Join us as we cut the ribbon on the new Welcome Center and enjoy food & drinks provided by you, our family.

Come celebrate all that we have accomplished together throughout the years right here at home and congratulate this year's award winners.

Admission is free by bringing your favorite dish and beverage

Bob Schiedler

Lifetime Achievement

Award

Jim Turek & Caitlin Chaffee

Trustees

Award

Dick Quinn

The Mitch & Betty

Salomon Award

Our kayaks will be available for you to take an evening paddle.

Bring your pole & take a few casts.

Tour all the recent campus renovations.

To Promote and Protect the Integrity of the Lands and Waters of the Pawcatuck Watershed

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Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association Protecting Your Rivers Since 1983

WPWA Lecture Series

'Adapting the Watershed'

Join us for three evening presentations addressing the impact of increased storms, floods, & biodiversity in the watershed.

June 28th, July 10th, & July 24th Chariho Middle School 6:30 - 8:30 pm

 $Opinions\ expressed\ in\ \textit{Watershed}\ are\ not\ necessarily\ those\ of\ WPWA, its\ Board\ of\ Trustees,\ or\ staff.$

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