

An old Rhode Island community faces a familiar modern dilemma: whether to welcome new industry or preserve the land and bay

LIFE

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Tides

MAGAZINE



Save The Bay Turns 50!

NARRAGANSETT BAY

SAVE THE BAY®

50

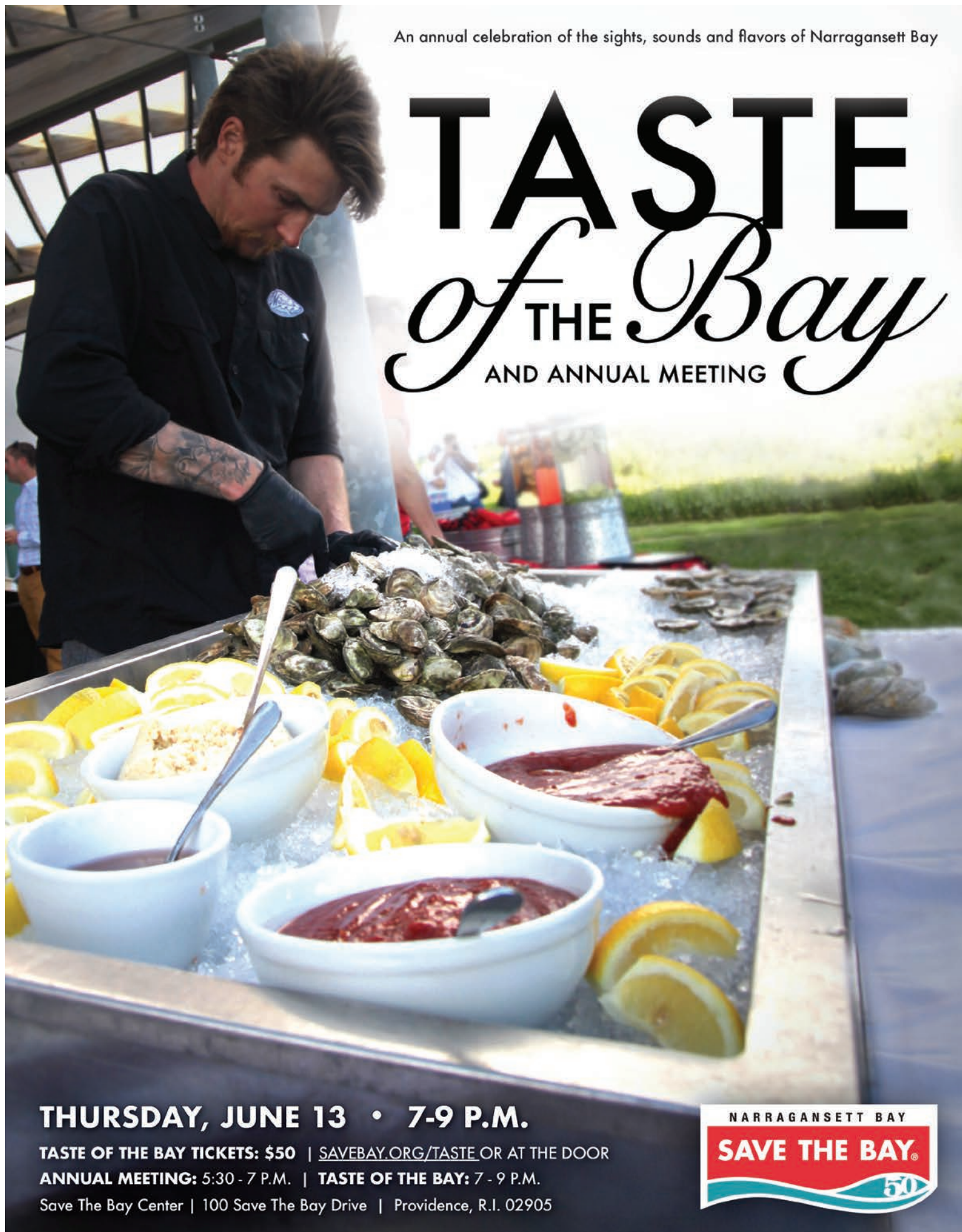
Energy Hub or
a Bay for All?

The Long Battle
With Litter

50 Ways We've
Saved the Bay

An annual celebration of the sights, sounds and flavors of Narragansett Bay

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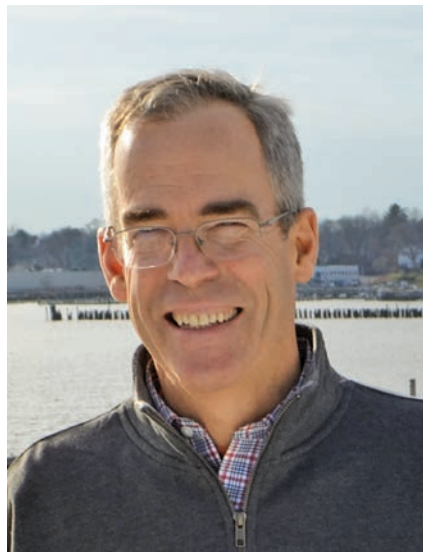
Save The Bay: 50 Years on the Front Lines

Do you recall the Bay 50 years ago?

Perhaps you grew up along its shores, visited during the summer months, or moved to the Ocean State for work or school. You may remember the industrial pollution, raw sewage, fish kills, damaging coastal development, oil sheen, tar balls, and the blind eye of government. By 1970, people from all walks of life cried foul, stood in protest, demanded action, and started a movement. Save The Bay, founded in 1970, became this movement.

Save The Bay turns 50 in 2020, and we have much to celebrate. We've been on the front lines of every major battle to protect and clean up the Bay. By all accounts, the Bay is cleaner and healthier than it's been in a century. The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's 2017 *State of the Bay and its Watershed* report documents this remarkable recovery.

This issue of *Tides* is the first of four issues that celebrate our 50th anniversary and take stock of our past accomplishments and look ahead to the future of Narragansett Bay and Save The Bay. We have much to be proud of, but it is unsettling to see so many recurring themes as we compare our earliest decades



to the present day. Some environmental challenges don't really go away; they just change in shape or color. Take energy infrastructure projects, the foundational issue for which Save The Bay was formed. In the 1960s and '70s, the Bay was threatened by proposed oil refineries, LNG terminals and nuclear power plants. Today, the Bay's watershed—critical to the health of the Bay—is threatened by a natural gas power plant and solar sprawl (see story on page 16).

Given the looming challenges of a changing climate, land use changes, development pressures, and constrained government, Save The Bay as the voice and defender of the Bay is as relevant as we have ever been in our 50 years. I hope you enjoy the stories in this and our upcoming anniversary issues that bring this point home.

Jonathan Stone
Executive Director

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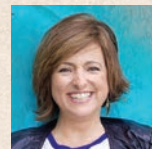
In 1971, in a story called "The Tempting of a Small Town," *LIFE* magazine published a feature story authored by Rhode Islander Roger Vaughan, about how the town of Tiverton battled to defeat a proposal for a new oil refinery. The group, called Save Our Community, would become Save The Bay. In the photo, the seven members of the Tiverton, R.I. town council sit on the wooded property proposed as the refinery site.

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Mission and Vision: Save The Bay works to protect and improve Narragansett Bay and its watershed through advocacy, education and restoration efforts. We envision a fully swimmable, fishable, healthy Narragansett Bay, accessible to everyone and globally recognized as an environmental treasure.



Save The Bay is Turning 50: Join the Celebration!



BY CINDY M. SABATO,
DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNICATIONS



Guests at Tenth Anniversary celebration enjoy celebrity guest Ted Turner.

Save The Bay SENTINEL 1980

Save The Bay Ten Years Later

December 1979

By TRUDY COXE
and BILL REYNOLDS

Remember 1970? Love beads, acid rock, the Chicago Seven, Vietnam? It was, of course, the Age of Aquarius, a turbulent time when it often seemed as if the country was having a national nervous breakdown. Richard Nixon was in the White House and people had taken to the streets. Here in Rhode Island, Frank Licht was the governor and Joe Doorley was the mayor of Providence. And buried in the small print someplace was that a fledgling environmental group, to be called Save The Bay, was being formed.

Well, now the 70's are about over, Hollywood has memorialized Vietnam, Nixon writes his memoirs, Licht and Doorley are local history and Save The Bay is the largest environmental group in Rhode Island.

When Save The Bay got started, the offshoot of an internationally-recognized victory by Save Our Community to defeat the locating of an oil refinery in Tiverton, bookies were making bets that the little group wouldn't last longer than 6 months. John Scanlon, the group's first executive director, was hired with the understanding that the poorly-paid job might be a brief one. But he and his active Board went pub-

lic and collected signatures from anyone who would sign the dotted line of commitment to Narragansett Bay. The group grew. First there were 7 members, then 7,000 and then 20,000. People who loved the Bay and knew how important it is to the state joined.

Environmental affairs were chic back then but not so chic that the protection of the environment was easy. After all, a highly-touted study appeared early in Save The Bay's existence, stating the best use of the Bay would be as a cesspool. When the state was putting together its Recreational Guide Plan in 1973, it took all the cunning that Scanlon had to ensure a simple concept — that the highest and best use of the Bay was for recreation — be written into the record.

Oil refinery proposals popped up again and again, and Save The Bay was there to ask hard questions and demand that those questions be answered. It was in the early 70's, also, that Narragansett Electric wanted to put a nuclear power plant on Rome Point. Radioactive wastes, meltdowns, and human errors were unknowns back then; rather the controversy centered on the cooling of wastes. That proposal couldn't meet EPA's scrutiny and the proposal collapsed in disfavor.

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 1 & 2)

FIVE DECADES OF PROGRESS: 1970 - 1983

1970

Save The Bay is founded after Save Our Community defeats a proposal for an oil refinery on the shores of Tiverton.



1972

Opposes and defeats construction of a nuclear facility at Rome Point in North Kingstown, R.I.

1972

Champions and participates in the formation of the Coastal Resources Management Council.



Left: Providence River, circa 1973. Center: Scarborough Beach, 1973. Photos courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration. Below: About 500 community members joined us for our Earth Day Birthday Party on April 27, an afternoon filled with science, activities, performances, music and more to kick off our 50th Anniversary Celebration.



Today, in 2019, love beads, acid rock, the Chicago Seven, and Vietnam are behind us, but Save The Bay remains steadfastly on the watch protecting and improving Narragansett Bay for all to enjoy. This "little group (that) wouldn't last longer than 6 months" will celebrate 50 years of advocacy for Narragansett Bay next year.

"On April 27, we kicked off an 18-month-long celebration of our 50th anniversary with a community-wide Earth Day Birthday Party at Easton's Beach. Hundreds of community members joined us, starting off the day with a beach cleanup, something that's become a signature volunteer activity for Save The Bay," said Executive Director Jonathan Stone.

"The afternoon was filled with activities, games, performances, and science demonstrations. And we announced award winners of our Art Contest, in which school-aged kids were asked to capture the theme 'My Bay' in drawings and painting. We'll use the winning designs on our BayCamp t-shirts this summer," Stone said.

Follow
the fun at:
**SAVEBAY.ORG/
50-YEARS**



1975

Successfully campaigns to defeat placement of a Liquefied Natural Gas plant on Prudence Island, R.I.



1977

100 people take part in a cross-Bay swim from Jamestown to Newport to call for greater efforts to improve water quality in Narragansett Bay. **The Save The Bay Swim is born.**

1979

Save The Bay turns its focus to water pollution problems that literally make the Bay an open sewer. Our first target is the Providence sewage treatment plant, rated second-worst in New England by the EPA for dumping millions of gallons of untreated sewage into the Bay each year.



Saving the Bay has always been a community effort, and today we invite our community of members and supporters to join our 50th Anniversary Celebration between now and September 2020.

- Share your favorite Narragansett Bay memories, stories and photos on our new 50th Anniversary webpage, and explore others' stories as well. SAVEBAY.ORG/50-YEARS
- Revisit some of our historic victories in our *50 Ways We've Saved The Bay* story series, which will continue to grow throughout the year (see page 24 for one of them). SAVEBAY.ORG/50-YEARS
- Get a copy of our new coffee-table book on the history of advocacy for Narragansett Bay, coming in June 2020. Authored by local naturalist and writer Todd McLeish, this easy read begins well before the founding of Save The Bay and takes readers through the many eras of the cleanup of Narragansett Bay. "While Save The Bay has been at the vanguard, the cleanup of Narragansett Bay has always been a community effort; we love that Todd is highlighting many of the people, organizations and agencies that have played a role in the Bay we know today," Stone said.
- Be A Champion for Narragansett Bay and help propel Save The Bay into the next century of Bay advocacy by making a donation to our \$8 million 50th Anniversary Campaign (see story on page 22).
- Plan to attend our waterfront 50th Anniversary Gala on September 12, 2020.

- And in all the months in between, help make our events bigger and better than ever:

- Sponsor a swimmer or swim team at the Save The Bay Swim on July 27, 2019.
- Join us at our 2019 Annual Meeting and Taste of the Bay, June 13, 2019.
- Volunteer for the International Coastal Cleanup on September 14, 2019
- Attend our Artists for the Bay Show Opening on December 5, 2019.

"These are all critical fundraisers for us, but importantly, they are tremendous opportunities to celebrate the incredible improvements in Narragansett Bay from 1970 through today," Stone said.



Nearly 30,000 community members connect with marine life of Narragansett Bay at our hands-on Exploration Center and Aquarium at Easton's Beach, Newport, R.I.

FIVE DECADES OF PROGRESS: 1970 - 1983

1980

Wins passage of an \$87 million Bay bond to fund the upgrade and repair of the Providence treatment facility. As a result, thousands of acres of shellfish beds are reopened in the next few years.



1982

Publishes "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly" to raise awareness and issue a call to action to **clean up wastewater treatment plants.**

Revisit Some of Your Favorite Bay Memories

“One of my favorite memories on the bay is **kayaking with my dog Rocco**. He was a young boxer pup at the time and we weren't really sure how well or if he could swim at all, so my buddy and I tossed an extra life jacket on him, put him in my inflatable raft while we scooted around Narrow River. Every time I drive over that bridge it reminds me of a baby Rocco.”
~ Josh C.



“I have loved watching my children grow on the banks of the Kickemuit River, learning to swim, sail, wind surf, dig for clams, and love and protect nature!”

“Every July 4, as a child, I'd kayak with my cousins to watch **a panoramic view of firework displays** from dozens of little communities along the water.”



“One of my favorite memories of Narragansett Bay was a perfect summer day in New England with my family a couple years ago. We went on a friend's boat, the kids swam in the water and played by the shore and we enjoyed dinner at an outdoor restaurant overlooking the Bay. We went home smelling of sunscreen and salt water with smiles all around. I love having **wonderful family memories** that involve the Bay.” ~ Jackie C.

“I have so many memories and stories. The Bay is an integral part of my life, from stepping in its cold waters in the early morning for swim lessons at Sand Hill Cove to laughing hysterically as we fell off our stand-up paddleboards by Pawtucket Cove. I could go on and on.”



“One of my favorite memories was the time a small group of crabs went swimming by the dock where I was sitting in Barrington, while osprey circled about overhead. My daughter got to see **osprey chicks in their nest**.”



TAKE ACTION!

Share YOUR favorite Bay memories and photos with us at savebay.org/your-stories-and-memories

1982

Initiates the Aquidneck Island Pollution Prevention Project to shed light on pollution problems related to land use and development.



1983

Begins a campaign to **reduce pollution waste** discharged directly into the Pawtuxet River by Ciba-Geigy Corp.

1986

Helps win passage of a \$4 million bond issue to pay for improvements to Newport Sewage Treatment Plant.

WHO SAVES THE BAY? STAFF PROFILE

Topher Hamblett: Save The Bay's Voice on Smith Hill



BY CINDY M. SABATO,
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

One of our longest-serving staff members, Topher Hamblett started at Save The Bay as an intern in 1988, after a two-year stint in the Peace Corps. Within a year, he was on our full-time staff, focusing on initiatives in Mount Hope Bay and the Blackstone River. By the late 1990s, he'd been trained to do legislative lobbying and was director of advocacy, the position he holds today.

What do you do as Save The Bay's director of advocacy?

I'm responsible for the work of what we call the "policy team." That is our group of front-line advocates, Waterkeepers, and habitat experts working on some of the most important issues, to make a real, tangible impact on the health of the Bay and public access to the Bay. I also represent Save The Bay at the Rhode Island Statehouse, in coalitions and before the media.

What has been the most exciting time or battle for you during your time with us? And why?

The sweetest victories are the ones that have required our perseverance over many years. For decades, we fought for the transformation of the Providence River and the Upper Bay from an open sewer to a thriving waterway used by all. We waged this battle in the courts, at the Statehouse, in city and town halls, and at the ballot box.

In the wake of the 1996 North Cape Oil Spill, Save The Bay led the volunteer response. We also moved quickly to advocate for policies that would protect the Bay from future oil spills. We championed legislation to require oil tankers to be double-hulled and "notched," so tug boats could guide them to port in a much more controlled way. (see story on page 24)

What's the key to Save The Bay's nearly 50-year longevity?

An ability to adapt to ever-changing conditions has kept us strong and effective since 1970, and it will see us through the next 50 years. I have a deep and lasting respect for the founders of Save The Bay—people like Louise Durfee, who answered a threat to her community, and John Scanlon, who created a strong, lasting citizen's voice for Narragansett Bay. The organization has done spectacular work harnessing people's love and concern for the Bay.



What do you wish more people knew about Save The Bay?

I wish more people knew how much we depend on member support to achieve our mission. A lot of people say they support what we do. But we need people to become actively involved, through whatever financial contribution they can make and through volunteering.

How have you seen Narragansett Bay and the issues it faces change over the years?

When I started at Save The Bay, we were still dealing with dumped raw sewage and industrial waste on a regular basis. Beach and shellfish bed closures were more frequent and widespread. Salt marshes were choked by roads and the dumping of dredge material. Now we're getting closer to having a swimming beach open up at Sabin Point on the Providence River. Save The Bay has worked hard to reclaim damaged salt marshes and rivers that were blocked by Industrial Revolution-era dams.

This great progress is now threatened by climate change. Salt marshes are drowning under rising seas. Warming waters are changing the ecology of the Bay. High tides are higher than ever, and flooding from tides and storms is increasing, both threatening public access to the shore.

Do you have any concerns about the future of Narragansett Bay?

My biggest worry for Narragansett Bay is complacency. Every day we hear: "The Bay is so much cleaner than it used to be." And it is, but we have to protect those gains. Every day we are asked, "So, is the Bay saved yet?" No, never. Saving the Bay requires constant vigilance.

Where would you like to see Save The Bay in the next half century?

I want to see Save The Bay leading the way, more than ever before, on helping the Bay and local communities adapt to climate change. I hope we are successful in our advocacy for moving infrastructure back, away from the coast, so that the natural systems of the Bay can survive and flourish. This is incredibly daunting, and I think Save The Bay is up to the challenge. ■



Save The Bay Action Updates

Advocacy

- Save The Bay's advocacy team is reviewing discharge permits, which are all up for renewal, for three of Rhode Island's larger wastewater treatment facilities. We are urging DEM to add stricter nitrogen discharge limits to these permits, to move Rhode Island closer to meeting water quality standards for Narragansett Bay.
- During this legislative session, Save The Bay is proposing the creation of an Ocean State Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Fund that could generate nearly \$2 million a year for projects that protect natural resources and public access to the coast in the face of rising tides, increased flooding and storm surge caused by climate change. This "OSCAR" fund would be supported by an increase to petroleum import fees collected in our ports, from 5 cents to 10 cents per barrel.
- Also during this legislative session, the Office of Energy Resources has proposed legislation concerning the siting of ground-mounted solar facilities. Save The Bay supports *some* provisions in the bill, including the creation of a plan steering renewable energy resources development to already disturbed areas (such as rooftops and gravel pits). However, we object to allowing state incentives that support development in our most valuable forests.

Restoration

- Riverkeeper Kate McPherson is now implementing a fish monitoring plan in the Mattatuxet River to see how last summer's removal of the Shady Lea Mill dam has affected, and hopefully improved, the anadromous fish run in this important river.
- We are helping the Town of Seekonk, Massachusetts begin a process of planning for climate change resiliency and prioritizing projects to help with the town's municipal vulnerability preparedness.

Education

- This year, three schools are participating in our Salt Marsh Nursery Program. Students of Lincoln School, Chariho High School, and East Providence Career and Technical High School came out with Save The Bay last fall to collect seeds and are now all growing *Spartina* plants in their classrooms. This spring, they join us once again to replant to growing salt marsh grasses at our various salt marsh restoration project sites.
- Pell Elementary students are planting dune grasses with us this spring. For seven years, Save The Bay worked with Pell Elementary School on year-long, multi-experience Bay-based education. Pell students join Save The Bay educators several times each year for learning experiences that include sand dune adaptation and restoration projects, going on seal tours, learning about Narragansett Bay animal diversity, watersheds, the impact of pollution on marine life and water quality and more.
- Save The Bay Education Specialist Adam Kovarsky has just completed an intensive training program with the National Network of Climate Change Interpretation. Now a nationally certified climate change interpreter, he leads the climate change curriculum within our award-winning education program.

How You Can Help

Tell Your Elected Officials What You're Thinking. Save The Bay has a new tool, called VoterVoice, that empowers community members to quickly and easily make their voices heard by legislators. When we send you an Action Alert about an issue important to Narragansett Bay, asking you to contact your representatives, VoterVoice will automatically match you to your correct elected officials and guide you through the simple process of sending a pre-written and/or personalized message to your representatives. The whole thing takes just seconds. So the next time you receive our Action Alert, open it, and help us tell elected officials just how important it is to voters that we continue to protect Narragansett Bay.



Volunteer for Narragansett Bay.
savebay.org/volunteer

- **Join a Beach Cleanup:** Running now through November at locations all over the state, shoreline cleanups are a chance to enjoy the warmer weather and Rhode Island's beautiful coastline, while getting the whole family outside to do something great for your local community.
- **Volunteer for the Swim:** We need more than 200 volunteers for a variety of roles during the 2019 Save The Bay Swim on Saturday, July 27.
- Join our CVS Health Charity Classic volunteer parking team on June 23-24.



Creation and Reform of the Coastal Resources Management Council



BY TOPHER HAMBLETT,
DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY

Coastal Resources Management Legislation Historic Step Forward For Rhode Island

In mid-July, as the R. I. General Assembly was closing up shop, two major environmental bills were passed. The "wetlands" bill, originally introduced by Sen. Julius C. Michaelson, gives the same protection to freshwater marshes, swamps and bogs that is already offered, through earlier legislation, to similar saltwater areas.

H2440(B), introduced by Reps. John J. Skiffington, Jr., and John A. Lyons, created the Coastal Resources Management Council whose duties will include the formulation of standards, adoption of regulations, and issuance of permits for development of Rhode Island's shoreline. Dr. William W. Miner, chairman of the Executive Board of Save the Bay, has been appointed by Governor Licht to serve on the Council. A list of other members will be found at the conclusion of this article.

Quoting from the bill: "The Council is authorized to formulate policies and plans and to adopt regulations necessary to implement its various management programs."

"Any person, firm, or governmental agency proposing any development or operation within, above, or beneath the tidal water below the mean high water mark, extending out to the extent of the state's jurisdiction in the territorial sea shall be required to demonstrate that its proposal would not 1) conflict with any resources management plan or program; 2) make any area unsuitable for any uses or activities to which it is allocated by a resources management plan or program; or 3) significantly damage the environment of the coastal region. The council shall be authorized to approve, modify, set conditions for, or reject any such proposal."

"The authority of the council over land areas (those areas above the mean high water mark) shall be limited to that necessary to carry out effective

resources management programs. This shall be limited to the authority to approve, modify, set conditions for, or reject the design, location, construction, alteration, and operation of specified activities or land uses when those are related to a water area under the agency's jurisdiction, regardless of their actual location. The council's authority over these land uses and activities shall be limited to situations in which there is a reasonable probability of conflict with a plan or program for resources management or damage to the coastal environment. These uses and activities are:

- a) power generating and desalination plants
- b) chemical or petroleum processing, transfer or storage
- c) minerals extraction
- d) shoreline protection facilities and physiographical features
- e) intertidal salt marshes
- f) sewage treatment and disposal and solid waste disposal facilities."

Members of the Coastal Resources Management Council are:

Vincent J. Oddo, Jr., Chairman, Sen. Eugene McCaffrey, Sen. Erich O'D. Taylor, Rep. John A. Lyons, Rep. William C. O'Neill.

Rep. Alfred Travers, Jr., Alvaro Freda, James F. Hanaway, Jr., Paul T. Hicks, Dr. William W. Miner.

John M. Murphy, John J. Noury, Jr., Henry W. Papa, Joseph Turco, Chester T. Whaley, Jr.

Edward C. Hayes, Jr., Joseph E. Cannon, M.D.

The December 1971 issue of the Save The Bay SENTINEL—the forerunner to this magazine—trumpeted "Coastal Resources Management Legislation Historic Step Forward for Rhode Island." Creating a state agency dedicated to protecting Rhode Island's coastal environment and managing development in coastal waters and lands was one of Save The Bay's very first actions. And we won. We know this agency today as the Coastal Resources Management Council, or CRMC.

Embedded in the new law was a clear and powerful statement of the CRMC's mandate: "preservation and restoration of ecological systems shall be the primary guiding principle upon which environmental alteration of coastal resources shall be measured."

Back then, the CRMC included a professional staff of environmental experts and a politically appointed council of eight gubernatorial and eight legislative members. Among them was Save The Bay president Dr. William Miner, who had led the fight against a Jamestown oil refinery more than a decade before. The CRMC was charged with developing rules, procedures and plans for coastal protection and development. Its jurisdiction is generally defined as three miles offshore to 200 feet inland from a coastal feature, such as a beach, dune, barrier, wetland, cliff, bluff or rocky shore, and 200 feet from manmade shorelines. The CRMC established application processes for development proposals, and adjudicated contested cases. The CRMC had sweeping authority over the development of Rhode Island's coastline.

Throughout the 1970s and '80s, the CRMC presided over hearings on development proposals for hotels, condominiums, marina expansions, energy facilities and more. And Rhode Islanders witnessed brazen political influence at work.

A series of controversial decisions by the CRMC revealed serious conflicts of interest among appointed members of the Council, some of whom were elected officials. CRMC members also included lobbyists from the petroleum, real estate and marina industries, some of whom contributed to the campaigns of the legislators who appointed them to the Council.

One of their controversial decisions was approval of the Atlantic Beach Hotel in a fragile coastal feature in Middletown. Another was a development project at Bonniecrest in Newport, which "led to the National Park Service stripping the area on Ocean Drive of its National Historic Landmark status, the highest designation it bestows," according to Save The Bay archives.

Having championed the creation of the CRMC and keenly aware of the CRMC's shortcomings, Save The Bay joined Common Cause, the Audubon Society and Friends of the Waterfront in a 1984 coalition called "Reform the CRMC" to "propose an alternative structure for the Council." As Save The Bay president Michael Keating put it, "Here in Rhode Island, we are entitled to a Coastal Resources Management Council that makes critical decisions about the future of our environment free of the perception of conflict of interest."

While the coalition succeeded in enacting some reforms, it was unable to change the law that allowed the Speaker of the House to appoint legislators to the Council. That proposal was considered a direct attack on the power of the General Assembly itself. That fight would be fought, and won, some 35 years later.

In the 1990s, Save The Bay once again joined Common Cause in a "Separation of Powers" campaign to deal with built-in conflicts of interest throughout Rhode Island government. For Save The Bay, this fight was largely about the CRMC. With legislative leaders appointing their fellow lawmakers to the CRMC, oversight and accountability were impossible because "the fox was guarding the henhouse." After years of relentless struggle, the Separation of Powers campaign claimed victory in the mid-2000s, first through a voter referendum and then a Rhode Island Supreme Court advisory opinion. Legislators serving on the Council resigned their seats.

However, the written law about CRMC's makeup didn't reflect the separation of powers amendment until 2018, when Save The Bay legally challenged several of the governor's appointments. In response to our legal action, the R.I. General Assembly codified the power of the governor to make appointments and the Senate's "advise and consent" role in approving them. The 2018 reform also specified that the governor must clarify the appointed or elected office that each municipal appointment holds, to ensure that coastal communities, which are most directly affected by CRMC decisions and regulations, are adequately represented on the Council.



The Coastal Resources Management Council considers the Block Island offshore wind farm proposed by Deepwater Wind. Photo: CRMC.

"CRMC is nationally recognized as a leader in developing coastal plans; its experienced staff works hard to protect our coastal resources. While the 2018 reform bill represented an important step forward for the legitimacy and accountability of the Council, the bill fell short on other key reforms," said Executive Director Jonathan Stone.

"Today, Save The Bay is doggedly pursuing the unfinished business of strengthening agency capacity, professionalizing the Council, and aligning the agency's policies, procedures, and regulations more closely with Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management. We are working with legislative leaders and agency personnel to enact additional reforms," said Stone.

One cannot overstate the importance of these reform efforts. After all, the Ocean State faces severe environmental impacts from rapid climate change. Given its coastal jurisdiction and specialized expertise, the decades ahead will see the CRMC play a critical role in protecting natural resources, preserving public access, managing coastal development, and reducing vulnerabilities to rising seas. Time is short. The moment for reform is now. ■

Oct./Nov. 1984

'Reform the CRMC' presents a proposal

In an effort to provide a remedy to the problems plaguing the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), a group named Reform the CRMC was formed by Karl Haffenreffer to propose an alternative structure for the Council.

Reform the CRMC intended, as *Save the Bay* went to press, to hold a press conference at Bonniecrest in Newport to issue their proposal. Bonniecrest was chosen for its significance as the site upon which the CRMC approved a development project which led to the National Park Service stripping the area on Ocean Drive of its National Historic Landmark status, the highest designation it bestows.

Reform the CRMC was supported by a coalition of groups including Save the Bay, RI Public Interest Research Group, the Audubon Society, Common Cause, Ecology Action, Friends of the Waterfront and the Easton's Point Association. Save the Bay's Sue Kiernan was actively involved in planning the proposal with Haffenreffer's group.

Reform the CRMC A Proposal

The Coastal Resources Management Council has mismanaged our coastal resources. Its enabling legislation (General Laws of RI, 46-23) allows too much appointive and administrative power to a few. Without proper checks and balances, power naturally leads to abuse.

We propose remedial legislation to reform the CRMC and protect our coastline from further destructive and inappropriate development. We welcome all suggestions to improve this proposal. We ask every candidate for Governor, Lt. Governor and General Assembly to take a clear position on these proposed remedies. Never has the time been so ripe for reform.

Defects of the Enabling Act

1) The act provides for appointment of CRMC members as follows: See chart at left.

In sum, the Governor, Lt. Governor and House Speaker appoint all the members. Municipal and environmental organizations have no role in the appointment process.

The act has excellent provisions that there be staggered terms of various lengths; that no more than 2 members be from the same community; and that upon the expiry of a coastal municipal member's term, "the governor shall appoint an appointed or elected official of a coastal municipality which at the time of the governor's appointment has no appointed or ex-officio representation on said council" (46-23-12). These provisions should be retained.

2) The act fails to limit the consecutive number of years that an appointee may serve. Long-time members tend to become increasingly loyal to the organization and its past decisions, and decreasingly responsive to the needs

of coastal communities, and the general welfare.

3) The act silently permits one person to combine the powers of Chairman and Executive Director. This has long been the case. Such

concentrated power has inherent conflicts of interest and encourages abuse.

4) The act silently permits the CRMC to retain private attorneys as legal counsel. This has long been the case. Such a system breeds conflict of interest and improper influence, in appearance if not in fact. Legal costs are unnecessarily high.

Proposed Remedies

1) Amend the act to abolish all seats and create 17 new seats: See chart below.

Some gubernatorial power to appoint would be balanced by the municipal and environmental power to nominate; and the legislative power to appoint would be distributed to 4 leaders in 2 houses. The Statewide Planning Program would add expertise and judgment. The League would represent all municipalities, especially those unrepresented at any given time. The Health Department would be dropped, since DEM has assumed regulatory authority over water quality.

2) Amend the act so that "A member shall be eligible to succeed himself" shall read: "A member shall be eligible to succeed himself, but an appointed member having served for four (4) consecutive years shall be ineligible for reappointment until after a break in service of two (2) years" (46-23-2). And amend the act so that all provisions that a member shall serve "until his successor is named and qualified" shall read: "until his successor is named and qualified, or until thirty (30) days after the expiry of his term, whichever shall occur first" (46-23-2). This would prevent indefinite holdovers, which on a 17-member body pose more danger than temporary vacancies.

3) Add to the act: "No member shall serve on staff." This would properly separate administrative powers from legislative-judicial powers.

4) Add to the act: "The council shall obtain all legal counsel from attorneys employed by DEM and approved by the council." This would eliminate possible conflict of interest and reduce legal costs. The CRMC, which already uses DEM's administrative staff, could use DEM's legal staff if augmented.

Only thorough and timely reform of the CRMC will save Rhode Island's 420-mile coastline from further destruction and degradation. The four basic reforms proposed here would create checks and balances needed to curb excessive power and its inevitable abuse. We endorse these proposed reforms, and we call on every candidate for Governor, Lt. Governor and General Assembly to take a clear position on them.

EDUCATION



Save the Bay

Volume 9, Issue 3

December 1979



Save The Bay Juniors

The editors would like to include a column on the efforts of youngsters around R.I. to help save Narragansett Bay. Please mail your stories to Save The Bay, 154 Francis St., Providence, R.I. 02903.

"Daddy, Can We Go For a Swim"
By MICHAEL GERHARDT

"Daddy, can we anchor the boat and go for a swim?" 8-year-old Geoffrey Gerhardt pleaded.

That question led to a family discussion on pollution from Providence and health hazards in upper Narragansett Bay. But, if adults feel frustrated in dealing with such a huge problem, what could Geoff do about it? At the time, newspapers were full of stories about the Providence sewage plant, the deadlines which were being missed and possible legal action.

Geoffrey thought the "good guys" in this battle could use a little support, and decided to circulate a petition among his fellow campers at Moses Brown's Camp Rise in Providence.

In his own words and with secretarial service from his parents Geoff wrote:

"We, the members of Camp Rise (Lower Camp) would like to see Narragansett Bay clean so that we can swim and play in it. We would like the people of Providence who are polluting the Bay to stop immediately. So thank you for trying to make the people understand how important the Bay is to us."

On Monday, Geoff was a little nervous about how his project would be received, but counselors welcomed a specific issue on which to focus discussion. The petition was posted and in the end, 20 of the 25 children in the lower camp signed. The remaining children weren't against what Geoff was trying to do; they just weren't sure it would do any good. Geoff tried to explain that every little bit of effort helped in its own way.

Modern-day Save The Bay Juniors

Central Fall Students Discover the Bay in Their Own Backyard



BY KATY DORCHIES,
MARKETING &
GRAPHICS SPECIALIST

The site of a former drive-in movie theatre might not look like an educational experience at first glance, but for nine Central Falls High School students, the reclaimed Lonsdale Drive-In is their Save The Bay field studies "classroom."

While Save The Bay used to rely on the stories and experiences of our community's youth, like the one told in the clipping to the left, our educators and education programs now steer the community's youth to those experiences.

For the students in Central Falls High School's AP Environmental Science class, the journey to connecting with their local environment involves hiking past a once-paved parking lot, away from a lightly-trafficked bike path, and into the seven acres of restored meadow and wetland that is now known as Lonsdale Marsh.

These students participate in the Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program with Save The Bay. During monthly visits over the course of the school year, they are participating in a diverse curriculum—including topics from food chains, biodiversity and habitat loss, to pollution, hazardous waste and

water quality—that help them answer the question, "How healthy is your local ecosystem?"

Lonsdale Marsh is a key wildlife habitat area nestled along the Blackstone River, a major tributary to Narragansett Bay. The marsh is home to a tremendous variety of plants and other life, making it the perfect field studies location.

It is also conveniently located a mere two miles from Central Falls High School.

"Despite its proximity to the school, most of the students didn't even know that the marsh was there when we started working with them," said Save The Bay education specialist, Meghan Kelly, who leads the B-WET program at Central Falls High School alongside fellow education specialist, Jeannine Louro.

Kelly and Louro are making the most of the site, not only by introducing students to it for the first time, but also by taking a new approach in the way they present the B-WET program curriculum.



"Rather than trying to teach students to identify every individual plant, which can be overwhelming, we're teaching them to observe their field site using a holistic approach," explained Louro.

"The students are learning to assess the health of the marsh in its entirety," said Kelly. "They're recognizing the overcrowding of plants at the upper marsh, the lack of biodiversity in the middle marsh, and the quantity of invasive plants taking over the site."

This approach allows the students to take what they've learned in their daily science classes and apply it to how they observe an entire local habitat. They begin to understand how everything from biodiversity to human population impacts the balance and health of a local ecosystem.

"It's one thing to learn from the book," said Laura Stanish, the class's science teacher, "It's another thing to go out, make your own observations, see how the habitat works, and learn how to collect samples and take measurements. First-hand observations and hands-on experiences are impactful in their own right, but are even more so in this case because they are taking place locally. The experience makes the science all the more realistic."

The classroom-to-backyard connection that takes place during experiential



Central Falls High School students participating in the B-WET program in nearby Lonsdale Marsh get a firsthand look at the local marine life (above) and pull the highly invasive mugwort plant from the path (left).

programs like B-WET is a powerful one. It brings the theoretical into the personal; a personal connection is the backbone of a future Bay steward's environmental advocacy—another topic at the forefront of the B-WET program.

"It's just as important to understand *how* to advocate for the environment as it is to understand *why* to advocate for the environment," said Save The Bay's Director of Education, Bridget Prescott. "We want to make sure these students have educational experiences that inspire and a road map for putting that inspiration into action."

Jumping into action hasn't been a problem for the nine Central Falls High School students. While studying human population impacts, they participated in a mock land-use auction, learning about the complex negotiations that surround matters of development and environmental conservation. During a water resources lesson, they took to the streets on foot in order to mark storm drains. And, in late spring, they'll dig their hands into the dirt at the now-familiar, "backyard" Lonsdale Marsh in an attempt to free future visitors from the highly-invasive and non-native mugwort along the path they've walked with Save The Bay educators all year long. ■

The B-WET program is funded by a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant.

More Modern-day Save The Bay Juniors

Save The Bay's educational programs have been inspiring community youth for years—and the students' advocacy efforts are improving every year! Just take a look at these other recent student advocacy achievements:

Mt. Hope High School

Members of the Mt. Hope High School Environmental Club exceeded all expectations when they undertook a campaign to replace plastic utensils in their cafeteria with reusable metal utensils. The students presented an intricate cost estimate for their proposal to their school's budget/facilities subcommittee and then the Bristol Town Council. Ultimately, the Town Council voted to rid plastic, single-use utensils at, not only the high school, but also at several district schools.

360 High School

After learning about the damaging effects of microplastics on marine life through Save The Bay's B-WET program, students at 360 High School in Providence decided their single-use water bottle buying habits needed to change. In 2018, they developed surveys, prepared a petition, collected signatures and earned a grant to fund a water refilling station at their school. The station, funded by the Greenlove Foundation, a Rhode Island-based nonprofit with a focus on providing filling stations to parks and schools, was installed in early 2019.



The Long Battle Against Litter



BY JULY LEWIS, VOLUNTEER
AND INTERNSHIP MANAGER

In 1970, Save The Bay was formed to tackle immense threats to our water quality and our quality of life. Threats such as power plants, raw sewage discharges, loss of wetlands and more. One common, everyday

into the murky water, preparatory to shoving the boat free. To their surprise and chagrin, the boys found they were standing on discarded beer bottles and trash of all kinds. We had, in truth, rammed the boat hard and fast on a large underwater pile of rubbish."

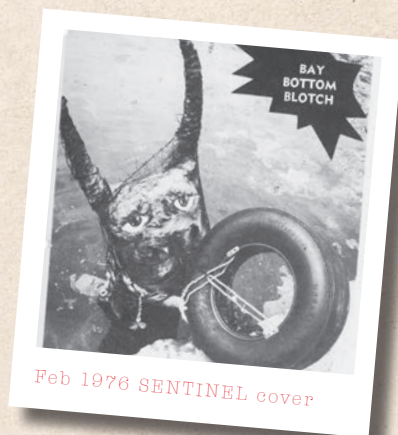
In cooperation with the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association and the Providence Chamber of Commerce, Save The Bay in 1973 launched an Anti-Littering Committee. Its goals were education and prevention, cleanup, and long-range planning. The committee explored a "Clean the Bay Day" (noted as a very large undertaking and not feasible) and sought solutions with industries whose products ended up as trash along our shorelines.

The Committee found great cooperation from the media. Television, radio and newspaper coverage promoted the anti-littering message

nuisance was so rampant that it was included among the seemingly more difficult challenges of the day. That nuisance was litter.

Even in our first decade, Save The Bay staff and members were so frustrated with litter that it was the topic of a story in almost every issue of the Save The Bay SENTINEL, as it was called then. A February 1976 editorial proclaimed, "Narragansett Bay should not be plagued by bottles, cans, tires, containers, toys, paper glasses, rags, or any one of a thousand objects foreign to the environmental health of this precious, fragile body of water."

In our April 1973 SENTINEL, Marston W. Keeler told the tale of grounding his sailboat at Gaspee Point in an overnight race from Edgewood Yacht Club to Newport. "My crew...gingerly lowered themselves



Feb 1976 SENTINEL cover

and the work being done on the issue. Events like "Dunk for Gunk" had divers bringing trash up into the light to demonstrate that an out of sight, out of mind attitude was turning our precious Bay into an underwater junk yard. In one of its signature projects, the committee produced and distributed over 100,000 litter bags, to spread the anti-littering message and encourage proper disposal.

Our early articles make it clear that the Anti-Littering Committee believed its efforts were making a difference. "Exposure of the campaign has been constant and widespread. The effort has had great impact and is producing measurable results. Boaters in great numbers have been using the bags and returning them for proper disposal. Attitudes about littering appear to be better. Comments made to committee members are all favorable. Awareness of the problem has been heightened and hopefully people are learning that everybody must help. This should result in the development of better habits, particularly among yachtsmen, fishermen, swimmers and divers."



SENTINEL

APRIL VOL. 8 NO. 1 1973

April 1973

"BAY LITTER" TO GET SAVE THE BAY ATTENTION

SAVE THE BAY in cooperation with the R. I. Marine Trades Assn. and the Providence Chamber of Commerce will attempt to handle the "litter-mess" which plagues the scenic waters of Narragansett Bay and nearby coastal areas.

It is hoped that through the widespread distribution of anti-litter bags to marinas, beach areas, to fishing clubs and to great hordes of summertime picnic goers, and the like, we will be able to cut down on the careless litter and keep the bay beautiful.

Dr. Anthony Migliaccio will head the SAVE THE BAY committee comprised of Ineke Van Dongen, Preston Gladding, Dr. Anthony Chatowsky, Charlie Dickerson, Robert Read. Heading the list for the R. I. Marine Trades Association will be Neal Ross and George Hawkins. The Prov. C of C will be represented by Paul Holland.

The effort has been pledged a lot of publicity help from the media.

Those who feel they would like to assist the basic committees in getting the job done are more than welcome.

If you have the desire to see a "litter-free", really clean bay this year call the SAVE THE BAY office at 884-7887 and get on the team.

This is the time for meaningful action. Call today.



FAR LEFT: Photograph of litter collected at a 1970s beach cleanup. ABOVE: Volunteers collected 289 pounds of trash from Oakland Beach during the 2018 International Coastal Cleanup.

As a community, we have blocked power plants, solved sewage problems, and reduced industrial pollution. But individual human behavior is notoriously hard to change and impossible to legislate. Progress lies in teaching people about the effects of littering and spreading the idea that we must take responsibility for our own trash. Happily, we have had major successes in this fight.

Progress Achieved

Keep America Beautiful data indicate that visible litter on U.S. roadways was down 61% from 1969 to 2009. That Clean The Bay Day that seemed too big a project to take on in 1973 is now a reality in the form of the International Coastal Cleanup. Save The Bay is Rhode Island's coordinator for this global event, recruiting more than 2,500 volunteers every September to clean local shorelines and record and report what we find.

We now have a thriving education program that engages K-12 students in cleanups and watershed programs that teach the impact of litter and how it reaches the Bay. In 2018, we produced anti-littering public service announcements in partnership with WPRI that were viewed by more than 455,000 households.

A New Litter Threat

Modern times, however, have introduced a new challenge in our ongoing battle against litter. Barely a blip on the Anti-Litter Committee's radar in the early 1970s, one litter issue has emerged to become a global environmental epidemic that threatens decades of litter improvements. Plastics.

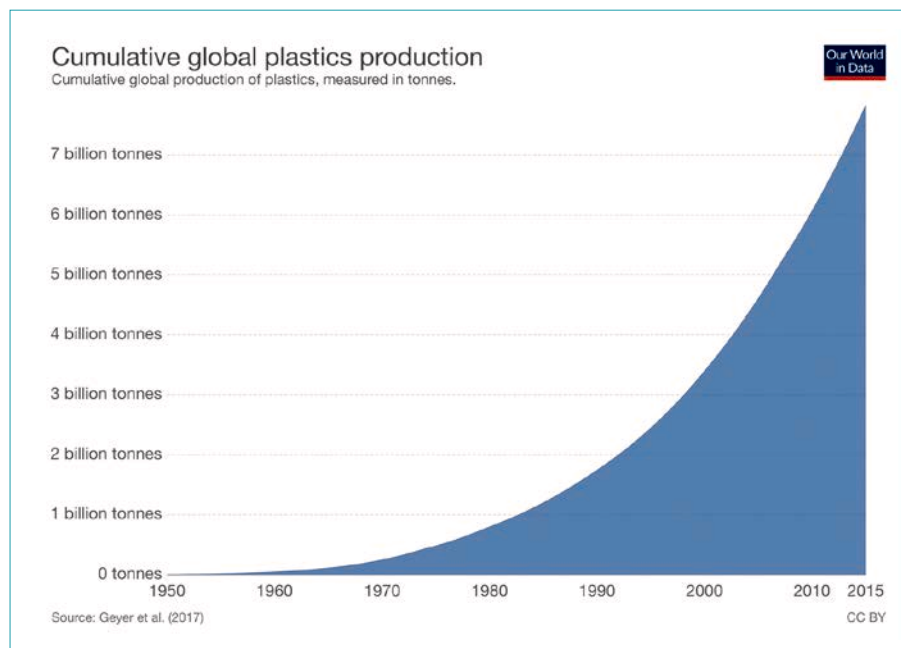
At Save The Bay's inception, plastics were only just beginning to be widely used in packaging. In fact, in all those early articles on litter, plastic was not even mentioned.

In 1970, 35 million metric tons of plastic were produced globally, compared to 381 million metric tons in 2015. A cumulative 7.82 billion tons of plastic have been

So significant is the danger of plastics in our environment that we can no longer limit our efforts to individual behavior change. Today's arsenal against plastic litter includes research and advocacy for local ordinances to limit availability of these products.

Save The Bay sits on the Rhode Island Plastics Task Force, which is recommending a statewide ban of single-use plastic bags. This legislative session, we are supporting a bill that would ban release of balloons, which often end up in our oceans. Our Waterkeepers have begun trawling local waters to measure the prevalence of microplastics in our waterways. This spring, we will begin work to identify which companies' products are most commonly found polluting our shores.

Marston Keeler issued a call to action in 1973: "For the sake of our grandchildren and succeeding generations, we can, and we must, return our Bay to its pre-Gaspee status. And what can you, as a private citizen, do to further the cleanup? Become an active, participating member of Save The Bay. Do it now!" Today, we also ask you to join a cleanup, skip the straw, choose reus-



produced over time. When plastic breaks down, it does not decompose. Rather, it breaks into tiny bits of plastic. Plastics are now found in the gills and stomachs of marine species all over the world.

able, and spread the word that it's not OK to trash the Bay! In 50 years, our children and grandchildren may be thanking us. ■

An Energy Hub or a Bay for Everyone?

THE ONGOING DEFENSE OF OUR FOUNDERS' VISION FOR NARRAGANSETT BAY



BY TOPHER HAMBLETT, DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY;
MIKE JARBEAU, BAYKEEPER; AND
KATE MCPHERSON, RIVERKEEPER

Narragansett Bay in 1970 was at a crossroads. An energy boom confronted the people of Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. At stake was the future of Narragansett Bay itself. Would the Bay become a hub of energy production, like neighboring states? Would the people of this region embrace a vision of petroleum refineries, liquid natural gas terminals, and nuclear plants? Or would they create and fight for a different vision, of a Bay that supported a wide range of both recreational and commercial uses?

Pioneering Vision

One proposal—for a Northeast Petroleum oil refinery along the shores of Tiverton—initially drew overwhelming support amidst promises of good jobs and other community benefits. But a few forward-thinking residents disagreed. They mobilized as “Save Our Community” and, in 1970, defeated the refinery by a single Tiverton Town Council vote. On the heels of a similar fight

in Jamestown a decade earlier, and this one in Tiverton, these pioneers saw other big-energy proposals looming Bay-wide. They founded Save The Bay to be the loud, relentless citizens’ voice for a clean, healthy Narragansett Bay that supported a wide range of uses, in balance.

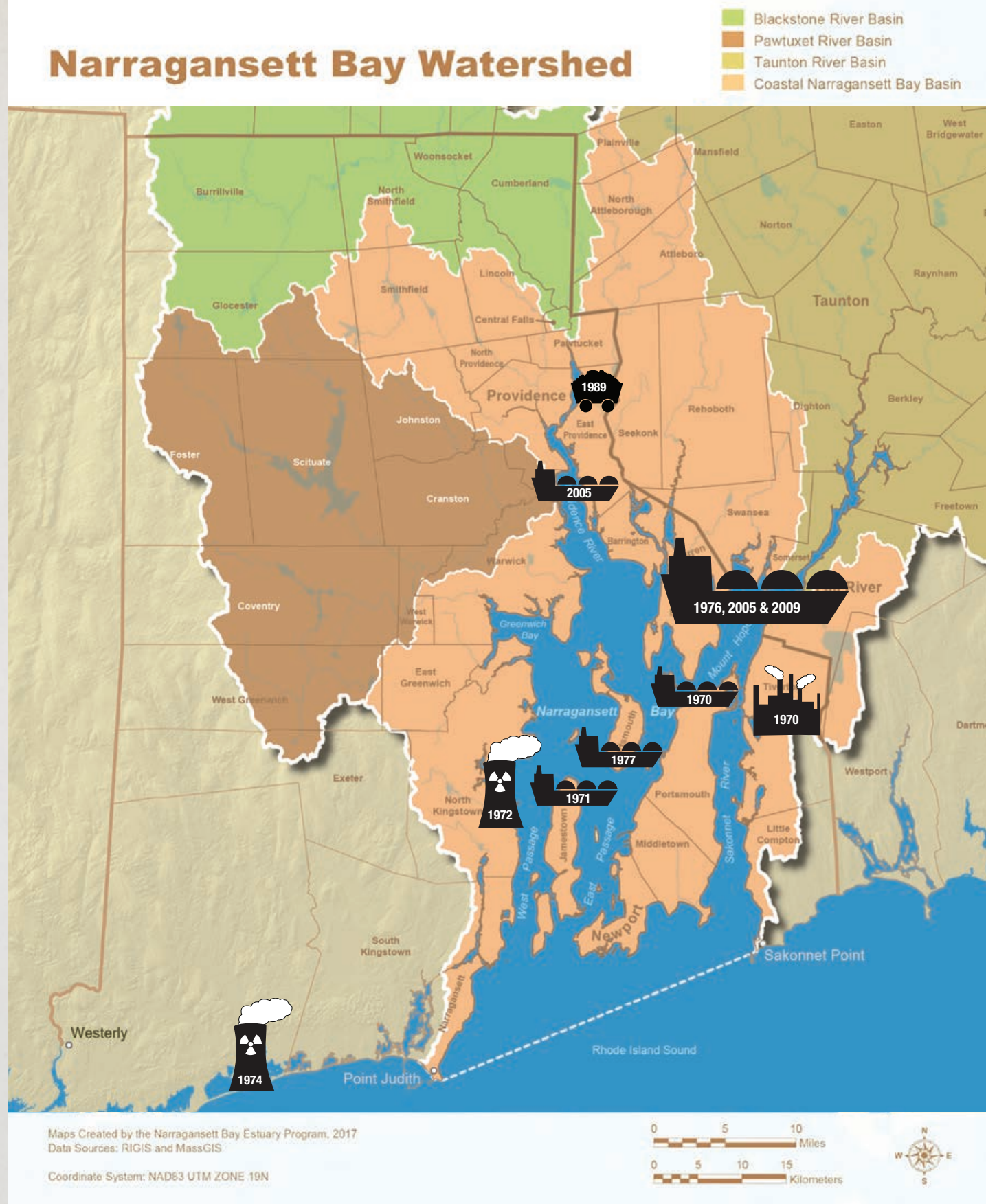
The advocacy of Save The Bay’s founders was visionary and incredibly effective. They built an organization that has successfully fought for the cleanup of Narragansett Bay and transformed the



1976

TOP: An oil refinery along the Delaware River illustrates a Narragansett Bay waterfront that might have been, if not for the vision of Save The Bay’s founders. Photo: Doc Searls, Flickr Creative Commons. ABOVE: Save The Bay’s first executive director John Scanlon, far right, and others release our report “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Energy” at a forum with the Rhode Island Council on the Humanities. RIGHT: A Narragansett Bay watershed map showing the power plant proposals successfully defeated by Save The Bay and our supporters.

Narragansett Bay Watershed



Energy Successes

1970: Save Our Community defeated the Northeast Petroleum Oil Refinery proposed for the shores of Tiverton.

1970: Defeated Algonquin Gas LNG proposal for Portsmouth.

1971: Defeated Tenneco’s proposed liquefied natural gas storage facility on Jamestown.

1972: Defeated Narragansett Electric proposal for nuclear power plant at Rome Point, in North Kingstown, at what is now the John H. Chafee Nature Preserve.

1974: Advocated against the New England Electric System’s proposed 900 megawatt nuclear reactors in Charlestown, at what is now Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge.

1976: Defeated New England LNG plan for Fall River.

1977: Defeated Federal Power Commission and Tenneco LNG terminal for Prudence Island.



1989: Launched a successful campaign to defeat NewBay Corporation’s proposal for a coal-fired power plant on the Seekonk River in East Providence.

2005: Defeated KeySpan LNG proposal to expand LNG operation at Fields Point in Providence.

2005: Defeated Weaver’s Cove Energy proposal for LNG terminal in Fall River.

2009: Defeated Hess LNG proposal for a massive Liquefied Natural Gas terminal on the Taunton River in Fall River.

Bay into one of the most defining characteristics of the region's identity and culture. Over the decades, the big-energy proposals have kept coming, though the nature of the proposals has changed with time and technology. One thing that has, from the beginning, been constant in Save The Bay's advocacy against these proposals; the potential effects on the health of Narragansett Bay and its marine life, public health, and importantly, the people's (R.I.) constitutional right to use the Bay.

Protecting the Waters

The oil refinery proposals of the 1950s, 60s and 70s included hundreds of storage tanks, towering infrastructure, and countless tanker ships transporting and offloading millions of gallons of oil, not only in Tiverton, but on Prudence Island, in Jamestown, at Quonset Point, and in the Melville area of Aquidneck Island. Save The Bay's founders were driven by concerns about harmful emissions, odors, spills and leaks into Narragansett Bay.

In 1975, executive director John Scanlon visited Louisiana to gain a better understanding of how the oil industry might affect Narragansett Bay. Save The Bay believed that, at most, Narragansett Bay could handle a limited number of support facilities at existing industrial locations like Quonset Point. But Scanlon saw a level of industrial development that he knew was incompatible with our vision for Narragansett Bay. We questioned economic benefit models and warned Rhode Islanders that large oil spills were not a possibility, but an inevitability.

A year later, the M/V ARGO MERCHANT, bound for Boston from Venezuela, ran aground southeast of Nantucket, spilling almost 8 million gallons of oil. In 1989, the M/V WORLD PRODIGY ran aground on Brenton Reef, spilling 300,000 gallons of oil at the entrance to Narragansett Bay. And in 1996, the barge NORTH CAPE spilled 828,000 gallons of oil onto Rhode Island's



ABOVE: The M/V Argo Merchant ran aground and spilled almost 8 million gallons of oil southeast of Nantucket. Photo: NOAA Office of Response and Restoration. BOTTOM: Pennsylvania's Three Mile Island nuclear power plant experienced a partial meltdown in 1979, renewing concerns over the safety of nuclear power and effectively ending nuclear interests in Rhode Island.



© J.L. JOHNSON

south shore, killing millions of lobster, shellfish, and birds, and leading to the closure of more than 250 square miles of water to fishing and shellfishing.

Protecting Critical Habitat

The 1970s also brought two major nuclear power plant proposals, one for Rome Point in North Kingstown and one along Ninigret Pond in Charlestown.

From Save The Bay's perspective, the amount of water required for the reactors' cooling system was the heart of the nuclear power issue. More than 1 million gallons of heated seawater would be discharged from the Rome Point plant every minute, drastically raising water temperatures, as much as 20 degrees by some estimates. At Ninigret

Pond, cooling water was to be supplied by Block Island Sound, delivered to the plant by massive 14' diameter piping buried under the pond and barrier beach, before extending out another half mile south. Heated water there would be discharged further into the Sound.

"We did not strictly oppose nuclear power; but we cautioned against siting decisions that endangered the sensitive, critical features of the Bay's estuarine environment," said Save The Bay's executive director, John Scanlon, in an early issue of the SENTINEL.

A coal-fired power plant proposal for the Seekonk River in East Providence in 1989 brought the same concerns for protecting critical habitat. The company was looking at Omega Pond at the mouth of the Ten Mile River as the source of cooling water, and Save The Bay was concerned about contamination to these waters from untreated discharges.

And today, we stand in opposition to the siting of the proposed Clear River Energy Center in Burrillville. This natural gas-fired facility would be located in an important part of the Narragansett Bay watershed, destroying more than 100 acres of valuable forest and wetland and disrupting surrounding critical habitat that provide water quality protections for the Bay.

Preserving Public Access

The steady flow of liquefied natural gas facility proposals since the 1970s has brought not only pollution concerns, but also significant threats to Save The Bay's vision for a fully accessible Narragansett Bay. Proposals for Jamestown, Fall River, Prudence Island, Providence, Weaver's Cove and Mount Hope Bay would have filled the Bay and its shoreline with expansive tanker terminals for offloading product, large storage facilities, and the destruction of valuable coastal lands. The hundreds of tanker ships moving up and down Narragansett Bay every year would have required frequent closings of public access and recreational use in significant portions of the Bay.

"In each of these battles, Save The Bay has fiercely defended the public's access to Narragansett Bay. The transit of tankers with flammable, explosive material requires large portions of the Bay to be closed off to other commercial and recreational uses. Upsetting the balance of uses we've always enjoyed was, and is, unacceptable," said Save The Bay Advocacy Director Topher Hamblett.

Renewable Energy, Properly Sited

Most of the industrial energy proposals fended off by Save The Bay were to be powered by fossil fuels, which have caused rapidly changing climate conditions that today threaten the health of Narragansett Bay. One response to climate change is the birth and rapid growth of renewable energy production, powered by the wind and sun. But the siting of these new technologies pose their own challenges to Narragansett Bay and to Save The Bay. Today, we find Narragansett Bay at another crossroads: the intersection of renewable

energy that can curb greenhouse gas emissions, and the threats they can pose to critical habitat when implemented carelessly or hastily.

Even with the hope that renewable energy may someday replace fossil fuel energy altogether, Save The Bay

Harvesting offshore wind energy requires great care in the siting of wind turbines. Just as with fossil fuel energy sources, renewable energy projects must be implemented in a way that avoids and minimizes damage to the marine environment. They must also balance wildlife habitat and competing uses of the offshore waters, including commercial fishing, shipping and recreation.

When the first-in-the-nation wind energy project was proposed for the waters off the southeast corner of Block Island, Save The Bay comprehensively examined the ecological issues posed by the project. By participating in the Ocean Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) Stakeholder Group, as well as technical committees on commercial and recreational fisheries, global climate change, and statutes and regulations, Save The Bay championed protection of the marine environment and evaluated plans for energy cable siting on the coastal beach environ-



TOP: A 25-foot U.S. Coast Guard boat assigned to the Coast Guard Station Boston, Mass., provides a security escort for the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Tanker Matthew in Boston Harbor. Photo: Public domain.

ABOVE: Block Island wind farm. Photo: Ionna22 / CC-BY-SA-4.0.

remains committed, foremost, to protecting Narragansett Bay's marine and coastal habitats and marine species as well as public access to use our waters.

ments in Narragansett and on Block Island.

"After decades of battling large scale, fossil fuel energy facilities, Save The Bay was excited by the prospect of

“After decades of battling large-scale, fossil fuel energy facilities, Save The Bay was excited by the prospect of Rhode Island leading the way in renewable energy production to combat climate change.”

Rhode Island leading the way in renewable energy production to combat climate change. At the same time, our mission is to protect and improve Narragansett Bay, so we advocate for the most environmentally-sound siting of wind farms. That is why our staff actively participated in the scientific, technical and legal working groups in the siting process,” Hamblett said.



Large-scale solar farms threaten critical watershed habitat and water quality in Narragansett Bay. Photo: Brookhaven National Laboratory

A New Threat Emerges in the Era of Renewable Energy

Unfortunately, Rhode Island’s renewable energy laws—important to tackling climate change—have allowed a new energy challenge to emerge in the Narragansett Bay watershed almost overnight. Unintended consequences of these laws have made it is easier and more profitable to erect large-scale solar farms in the undeveloped,

forested areas of the watershed, than in already developed areas such as landfills, gravel pits, large rooftops, and abandoned industrial areas. As a result, last year Rhode Islanders began seeing huge swaths of rural forest areas cut down and replaced by sweeping acres of solar panels. As of early 2019, Rhode Island had 155 large-scale solar projects underway, covering about 365 acres of land, much of which was previously forested.

Ground-mounted solar may not bring the heavy tanker traffic and public use restrictions that LNG facilities would. It doesn’t pose the risks of spills and pollution that oil refineries would. And it doesn’t put marine species or the fishing industry in jeopardy, at least not directly. But ground-mounted solar energy threatens forested lands of the Narragansett Bay watershed, which are vital to the health of the Bay and the region’s ability to adapt to climate change impacts by storing carbon and maintaining cooler temperatures in rivers, streams, forests and the Bay itself.

This new era of renewable energy involves some solar developers leasing large tracts of land, often forested or undeveloped, cutting all the trees, scraping off valuable topsoil, blasting to flatten out the landscape, and then installing solar panels. These solar panels have a limited life and contain toxic materials that could pose serious environmental health threats. Little thought has been given to the decommissioning and disposal process when they are no longer effective. The construction sites are also often a source of nutrient-laden runoff; a 100-acre area clear cut without proper stormwater management often results in large amounts of sediment flowing offsite into wetlands and streams. Save The Bay challenges Rhode Island to do it right: tackle climate change while protecting the ecological resources that we all depend on. We cannot sacrifice forest for solar; we need both.

Once again, or rather, still, Save The Bay finds itself battling, not energy specifically, but responsible siting of energy sources that will not put our vision for Narragansett Bay and 50 years of progress at risk.

It is difficult to imagine what Narragansett Bay would look like had some of the energy siting proposals of the past 50 years come to fruition. Save The Bay’s founders, members, supporters, leadership and staff have always believed that Narragansett Bay is best when it is protected as a valuable natural resource for the enjoyment of all. The Bay today is far healthier than it was when we were founded, but the fight for Narragansett Bay continues. ■

The Beinecke Family: Stalwart Support for Generations



BY PENNY FUJIKO WILLGERODT,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
THE PROSPECT HILL FOUNDATION

For decades, protecting the health and preserving the beauty of the southern New England coastline, with special attention to Narragansett Bay and Pleasant Bay on the Cape, have been driving forces for the philanthropy of the Beinecke family. Shortly after moving to the Ocean State in the early 1980s, Sarah Beinecke Richardson, well-known as a longtime, quiet leader in Rhode Island, was deeply dismayed by the pollution of Narragansett Bay. Looking for a way to contribute her time, energy and resources toward stopping the pollution and cleaning up the waters, she found Save The Bay, and the rest is history. Sarah became a stalwart, dedicated activist and has been a major donor to the organization ever since!

Eventually becoming the first woman president of Save The Bay, Sarah's leadership set a tone for the entire Beinecke family. Son Jesse W. Smith grew up surfing, swimming, and sailing, and became a conservation activist in neighboring Westport, Massachusetts. His wife Annice was a regular Save The Bay swimmer before their family moved to the West Coast. Nephew

Sarah, Frances, Jesse, Jake and Jake's brother Ben all comprised the Prospect Hill Foundation's Environment Program committee, whose collective love for local communities and cultures motivated several initiatives. They brought other philanthropic families together for a marine and coastal resources workshop. They engaged multiple state agencies and stakeholders to develop the Shellfish Management Plan of Rhode Island. They convened a regional conference to investigate nutrient pollution and ocean acidification in Southern New England coastal waters. This conference spotlighted Save The Bay's work engaging citizens and advocating for government reforms and policies to protect ecologically important estuaries and embayments, stop pollution of oceans and coastal waters, and encourage healthy marine habitats.

The effective advocacy work by Save The Bay has compelled the Foundation and Beinecke family members to provide consistent annual support throughout the years. Pressing aggressively for effective policies—in crisis situations when a threat looms to unanticipated opportunities when a chance presents itself to further a positive reform—Save The Bay's leadership is critically important in the State of Rhode Island and offers a national model for other coastal regions in our country.

It was a no-brainer for the directors of The Prospect Hill Foundation to agree unanimously to be one of the first to support Save The Bay's 50th Anniversary Campaign (*see story on page 22*). The directors thought the Bay Defense Fund would be the logical place to invest a \$250,000 capital gift (very major for us!) as this special fund supports Save The Bay's ability to respond nimbly to advocacy crises and opportunities when they arise. As a modestly-sized philanthropy, The Prospect Hill Foundation always enthusiastically welcomes any opportunity for leverage, so it was delighted to offer its capital grant as a matching challenge to help Save The Bay jumpstart the silent phase of the campaign. The Beinecke family is very proud to know that the Foundation's early support helped Save The Bay raise nearly \$6 million so far! ■



The Beinecke Family

Jake S. Beinecke eventually became the chair of the environment program at The Prospect Hill Foundation, the Beinecke's family foundation. Sarah's environmentalist sister, Frances Beinecke, former head of the National Resources Defense Council, delivered two keynote speeches to Save The Bay members and supporters.

DEVELOPMENT

Be a Bay Champion

SUPPORT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN
FOR THE FUTURE OF NARRAGANSETT BAY



BY CHERYL & ANDREW NATHANSON
AND KATE & AIDEN PETRIE,
CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS



Save The Bay turns 50 in 2020! For nearly five decades, Save The Bay and its supporters have been at the vanguard of the cleanup of Narragansett Bay, earning a reputation for leadership, integrity and perseverance. Save The Bay has defeated ill-conceived and damaging industrial projects.

It has battled against the dumping of raw sewage and toxic industrial waste into the Bay. It has spoken out against poor government oversight and policies. It is the only advocacy organization whose sole mission is to protect and improve Narragansett Bay. And it is uniquely equipped to mobilize diverse interests in bringing about real environmental change. Truly, we owe the Narragansett Bay we enjoy today to Save The Bay and its supporters.

Although the cleanup of Narragansett Bay over the past nearly 50 years is a national success story, three inexorable forces put this progress at risk and threaten to roll back decades of progress.

1. Climate change is having a profound effect on the health of the Bay and threatens water quality, habitats, biodiversity, and public access.
2. Population pressures are leading to suburban sprawl, coastal development, and other human impacts to the Bay's 1754-square-mile watershed. Much of this growth is driven by the economic dynamism of the Greater Boston area, which is extending into the Taunton and Blackstone watersheds.
3. State and federal environmental agencies empowered to protect the Bay through the Clean Water Act and other statutes

are increasingly starved of resources and deprived of the political support they need to do their job.

In a major way, the challenges of the past 50 years pale in comparison to the extraordinarily complex, subtle, unrelenting—and expensive—threats of today. Polluted runoff, excessive nutrients, warming sea temperatures, sea level rise, coastal development, declining marine life, overfishing—all represent grave and urgent perils that will continue to demand attention.

To strengthen Save The Bay's capacity, flexibility and financial foundation to persevere in its efforts to combat these emerging environmental threats and sustain its commitment to the Bay for the next generation, the board of directors is proud to announce Save The Bay's 50th Anniversary Campaign. **The campaign is a major fundraising initiative to raise \$8 million to help Save The Bay in four critical areas:**

1. **A BAY DEFENSE FUND** for rapid response to unanticipated threats,
2. **CAPACITY INVESTMENTS** to strengthen the organization's ability to meet future challenges,
3. **AN ENDOWMENT FUND** to strengthen Save The Bay's financial sustainability, and
4. **ENHANCE PUBLIC ACCESS**, boating, fishing and kayaking at Field's Point through construction of a pier, which is fully funded as we write.

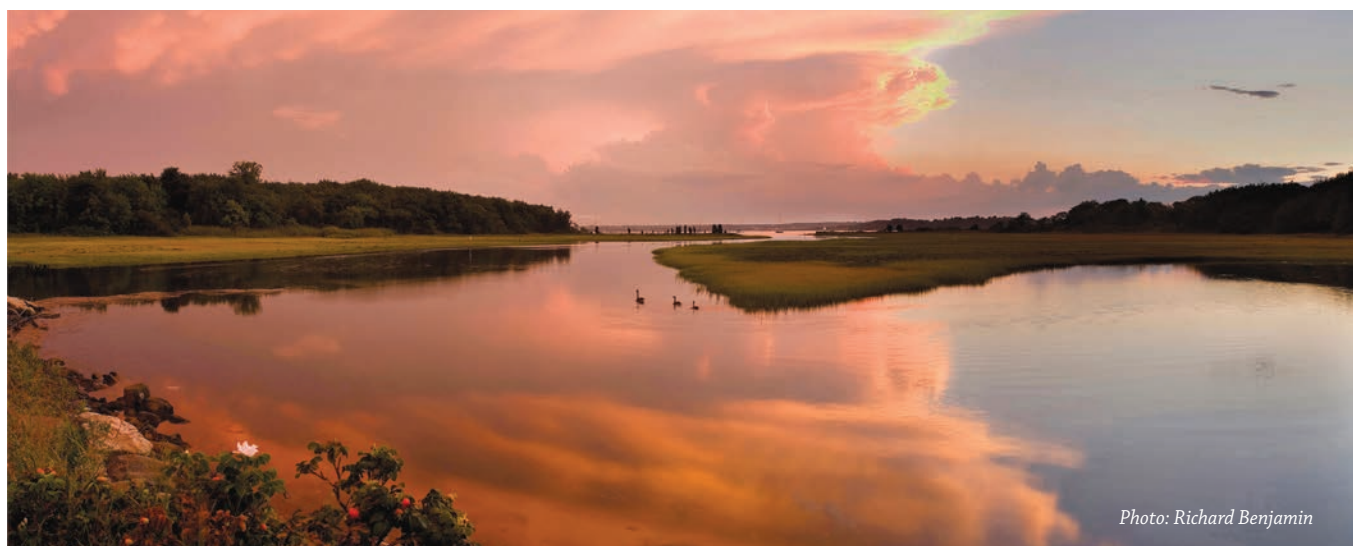


Photo: Richard Benjamin



We are pleased to announce that, to date, the campaign has raised nearly \$6 million, or 75%, of the total campaign goal, from generous campaign leadership gifts and 100 percent of Save The Bay's board and staff. As we head into the home stretch, we ask you to consider a gift to the campaign. As we have emphasized with all of our generous contributors, the most

important financial commitment you can make to Save The Bay is to support our annual fund. But given the extraordinary nature of this 50th Anniversary Campaign, we do ask you to consider an additional investment in the future of the organization as we approach this remarkable milestone. ■

Be a Bay

CHAMPION

Your gift to our 50th Anniversary Campaign has a lasting impact. By enhancing Save The Bay's capacity and organizational flexibility, you ensure that we are equipped to:

- Promote environmental progress
- Prevent the undoing of decades of achievement
- Defend against new threats
- Inspire each generation to care for the Bay

Join us!

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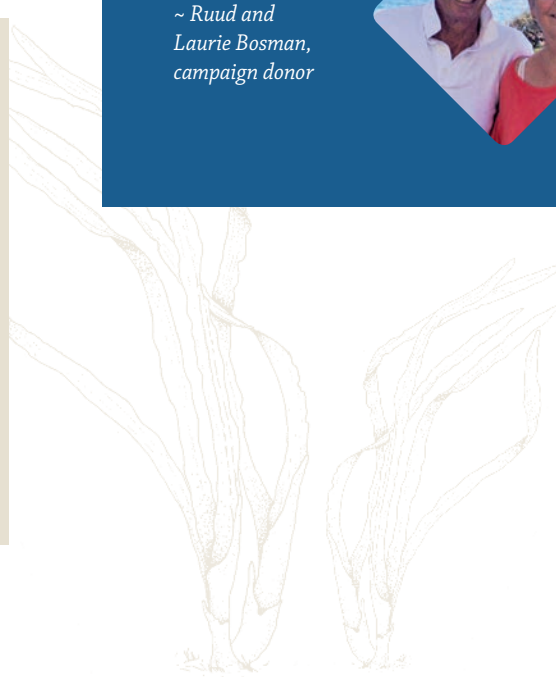
As a native Rhode Islander, I have grown up appreciating the Bay and have always considered it the state's most important asset. Save The Bay started as a protector, restorer, and educator of the Bay I love. I feel a responsibility to participate in maintaining Save The Bay's financial viability to allow it to continue its work.

*~ Alan Nathan,
board member,
campaign donor,
Seagrass Society
member*



We would like our children and grandchildren to live in a place where the air is clean, the water sparkles and nature thrives. It seems to us most of the world would agree with that desire. However, few have the motivation and perseverance to strive for that to happen. Save The Bay does! That is why they are so worthy of our support.

*~ Ruud and
Laurie Bosman,
campaign donor*



ADVOCACY

50 WAYS WE'VE SAVED THE BAY: Rerouting Oil Transportation



BY CHRIS CASSADAY,
COMMUNICATIONS INTERN

Fifty years ago, a group of Rhode Island residents concerned about the risks of oil spills in Narragansett Bay fought hard to stop the proposed construction of an oil refinery in Tiverton and eventually founded Save The Bay. Their victory wasn't enough to stop a deluge of oil from making its way into our water years later. But our efforts surrounding three devastating oil spills in 1989, 1996 and 2000, led to the alteration of the oil transportation industry that diminishes the likelihood of another catastrophic oil spill. Our advocacy brought GPS technology to large ships and reinforced the hull strength of oil tankers making business in Rhode Island waters. These changes are now felt globally and have brought about a much-needed reformation to the industrial sector.

Putting GPS on Tanker Ships

The nearly-300,000-gallon fuel oil spill by *World Prodigy* in 1989 was the first of the



ABOVE: *M/V World Prodigy* ashore on *Brenton Reef* (1989). BELOW: *North Cape* and tug *Scandia* marooned on *Moonstone Beach* (1996).

help prevent ships like *World Prodigy* from inadvertently veering off course and causing preventable disasters, Save The Bay's then-Executive Director Trudy Coxe led the charge. Coxe issued a proposal during a special hearing at Salve Regina University, urging the government to implement what was then an experimental state-of-the-art tracking system in ships and military satellites. This "Differential Global Positioning System" would allow the Coast Guard to keep track of ships within the Bay and notify their captains when a ship was running off course.

By the end of the year, advocating for GPS integration in large vessels, Save The Bay had begun a campaign before the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. In July 1990, Congress passed a series of oil spill prevention laws and nominated Narragansett Bay to be the first testing ground of the GPS.

Strengthening Ship Construction

On January 19, 1996, *North Cape* ran aground off Moonstone Beach in Washington County, spilling close to a million gallons of home heating oil and, as a result, killing millions of animals throughout 250 square miles. Many Rhode Islanders still remember the stench of oil and decaying marine life that perished during this event.



spills that caused Save The Bay to challenge federal laws and regulations. Recognizing that integrated GPS technology would

After the devastating spill, Save The Bay denounced the oil industry's tanker parameters, as most ships at the time were only outfitted with a single hull. Single-hulled ships contain their cargo just beyond the watertight hull; if the hull is breached, the contents can immediately leak into the water. Double-hulled ships, on the other hand, contain two separate watertight hulls, with the cargo located within the secondary, interior hull. If a ship suffers a collision, the chance of a spill is much smaller.

We teamed up with then-R.I. State Senator Charles Fogarty and then-U.S. Senator John Chafee. As a result of our advocacy, effective June 1, 1997, the Oil Spill Prevention and Control Act required all large vessels transporting oil or hazardous materials to have double-hulls or escort tugs. The subsequent Federal Oil Pollution Act

required the phase-out of all single-hulled tank vessels by 2010—a monumental victory for Save The Bay.

Four years later, in 2000, an estimated 9,700-14,600 gallons of oil spilled in the East Passage off Middletown. Penn Maritime Inc. from Stamford, Conn. claimed responsibility. While the earlier *North Cape* spill pushed Save The Bay to advocate for double-hulled barges, *Penn Maritime*—though small—furthered our agenda. Had both of these vessels been equipped with double hulls, these spills could have been avoided.



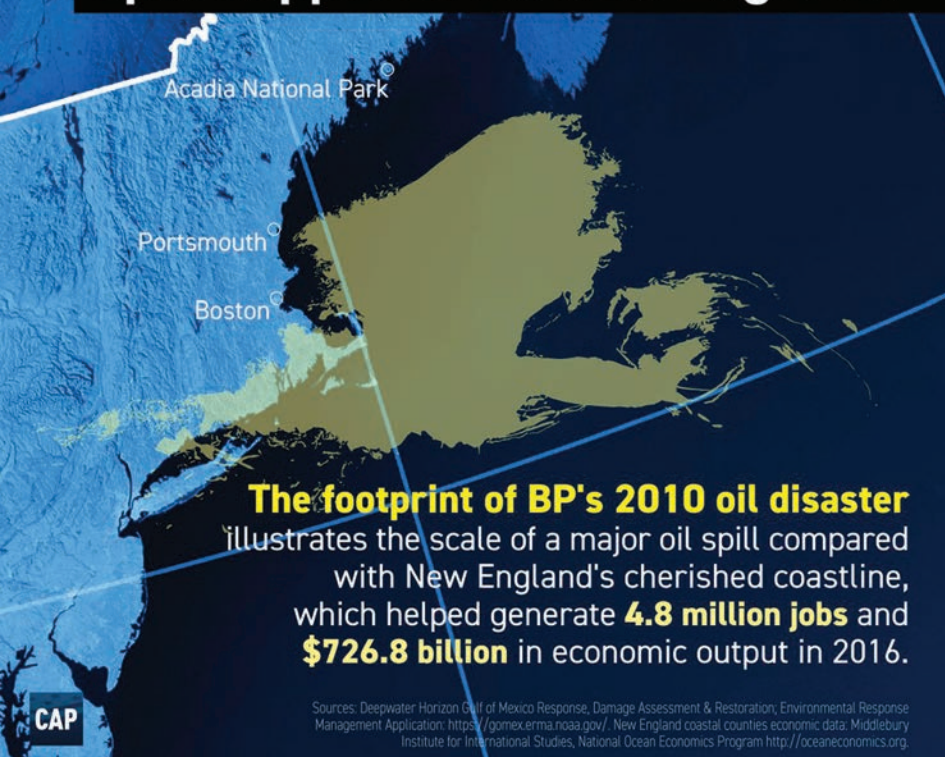
Presidential Recognition

Over the course of these three disasters, Save The Bay fielded over 4,000 calls and prepared an estimated 1,500 volunteers in coastal cleanup and marine bird rescue training to assist with state and federal agencies. We lost hundreds of birds to these spills, but were it not for the volunteer force, the number would have been

much higher. Our role in the *North Cape* spill led to the Rhode Island Coast Guard designating Save The Bay as the official oil spill volunteer coordination center. Rhode Island's citizens stood against the threats with everything they had. After the spill of '89, President George H. W. Bush recognized Save The Bay's efforts and named us as the 76th of a "Thousand Points of Light" on February 26, 1990, an immense honor for a small nonprofit based in the smallest state of the country.

2019 marks the 30th anniversary of the *World Prodigy* disaster, the 23rd of *North Cape* and the 19th of *Penn Maritime*. We at Save The Bay strive to ensure that our waters stay clean and safe for the millions of people who live within the watershed; when disaster strikes, we are ready to take the call. ■

What if the Deepwater Horizon spill happened off New England?



The January 1996 grounding of the North Cape spilled nearly a million gallons of home heating oil off Moonstone Beach in southern Rhode Island.

Where Have All the Fishes Gone? Concerns About Fisheries Management Are as Old as Save The Bay



BY MIKE JARBEAU, NARRAGANSETT BAYKEEPER

We've been talking about fish for a long time at Save The Bay. After all, a "fully fishable" Narragansett Bay is woven within our vision statement. Recently, a number of news stories have drawn attention to concern among the local fishing community that the Bay is losing some of its economically important species. A look back at our first decade of SENTINEL newsletters suggests that even then, there was widespread concern about fish populations in Narragansett Bay. Thus began a generation of Save The Bay advocacy for improved fisheries management that continues today.

Commercial Fishing Concerns

Fifty years ago, foreign fishing vessels were a frequent sight off New England waters, where they harvested massive amounts of fish, to the dismay of local fishing interests. In addition, fishing boats from Massachusetts, New Jersey, and other states were commonplace in Narragansett Bay. An April 1975 SENTINEL article questioned whether such large-scale commercial fishing was affecting the abundance of Atlantic menhaden in the Bay and their ability to recover from poor spawning years. Two years later, in May 1977, Save The Bay cited fishermen's concerns about diminished striped bass populations along northeast shorelines. And in September of that year, a SENTINEL article expressed con-

cern about the big boats from neighboring states stripping our Bay of menhaden, thereby reducing food for stripers and other species. Estimates at the time were that commercial boats were taking as much as 80 percent of menhaden populations from Narragansett Bay.

Atlantic menhaden were, and are, known for their important role at the bot-

National Fisheries Management Introduced

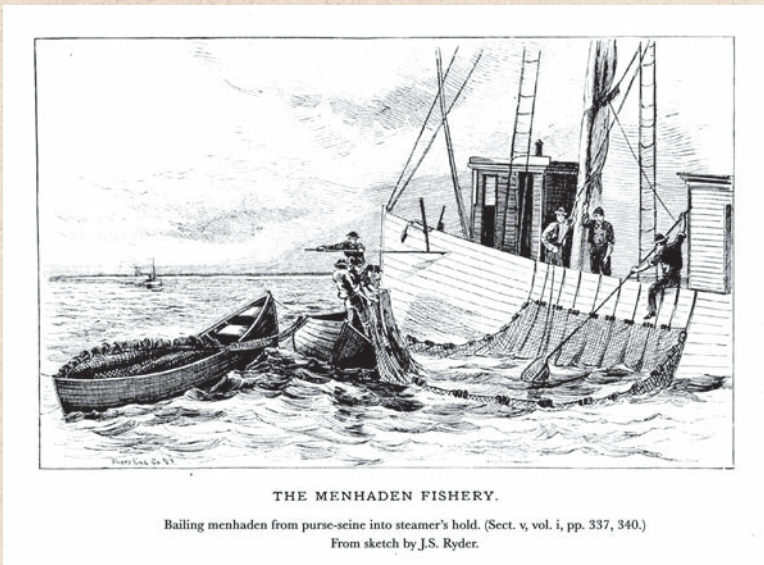
In the 1970s, while Save The Bay was gaining our footing, major changes were taking place that would affect the organization's ability to advocate for better fisheries management at the local and national levels. One of those changes was the 1976 Magnuson-Stevens Fish-

ery Conservation and Management Act, which established the nation's fisheries conservation and management structure.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act provided a venue for states, the fishing industry, and others like Save The Bay to participate in the federal management process. Another important development was the establishment of the Exclusive Economic Zone, which gave nations control of their natural resources out to 200 nautical miles—and meant the end of the foreign

fleets. The future of domestic fisheries, and how the new regional management plans required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act would be implemented, were uncertain.

We argued in our 1970s newsletters that regulators needed to account for menhaden's importance within the ecosystem and to the other species. We still argue this today for all marine species. The Narragansett Bay ecosystem is a complex community of living organisms, habitat, and other elements that depend on and interact with each other.



tom of the marine food chain. They are filter feeders that eat plankton and serve as a food source for striped bass, bluefish, osprey and other key species. While not typically consumed by humans, menhaden are prized as bait by recreational and commercial fishermen and harvested in massive numbers to be processed into fertilizer, animal feed, and other commodities. Back then, a strong belief was that commercial fishing of menhaden kept important game fish like striped bass and bluefish from entering the Bay in search of sustenance.



When one part of the system is removed or altered, the effect on the rest of the ecosystem must be considered and taken into account. Save The Bay's advocacy is directly centered upon the principles of ecosystem-based management.

Progress

Finally, in 2017, more than 40 years after we began expressing concerns about fisheries management, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission considered menhaden management measures that would take ecosystem considerations into account.

Save The Bay worked closely with other environmental advocates along the east coast to support the measures, which would have set an exciting precedent for responsible fisheries management in the United States. Unfortunately, despite the growing wealth of knowledge about the menhaden's importance and a comprehensive outreach campaign to regulators, the measure failed to pass.

On the bright side, Rhode Island leadership and fisheries managers have demonstrated a commitment to ecosystem-based management principles. The players may change, but Save The Bay continues its mission! It is often the case that some of the biggest victories take the longest to win.

On the bright side, Rhode Island leadership and fisheries managers have demonstrated a commitment to ecosystem-based management principles. The players may change, but Save The Bay continues its mission! It is often the case that some of the biggest victories take the longest to win.

Beyond Menhaden

Since our first foray into fisheries management issues in the 1970s, Save The Bay has

remained engaged on many fronts. We've maintained our early partnerships with commercial and recreational fishing advocates and participated in state and federal management, including the New England Fishery Management Council. We fight to protect horseshoe crabs from overharvesting for biomedical purposes and have expanded our efforts into habitat restoration, adaptation and protection. Last year, Save The Bay participated in a successful effort to encourage the New England Council to pass measures that will protect another important forage species, Atlantic herring.



As we look ahead to the next 50 years, we expect many of the same issues to persist. Ecosystem-based fisheries considerations remain critically important, and Save The Bay hopes to see them adopted in all management plans. Narragansett Bay is experiencing an increase in aquaculture operations alongside improvements in water quality and technology, which will require close examination of Bay uses and potential conflict. At the same time, climate change will continue to have major implications for the future of Bay fisheries. Water temperature changes alter Bay dynamics, and sea level rise affects coastal habitat. Climate change adds to the urgency for ecosystem-based management. Needless to say, Save The Bay will be here to serve as an advocate for Narragansett Bay and its resources. ■



TOP: Atlantic menhaden provide food for many marine species, including tuna, bluefish, whales, and ospreys. Photo: Pew/Gene Helfman. RIGHT: Save The Bay advocates for stricter limits on horseshoe crab harvesting, as the Rhode Island population has been on a dramatic decline since the 1970s. Photo: Asturnut (talk) via CC by-SA 3.0. ABOVE: Fishing RI Sound. Photo: Chris Goldberg.

VOLUNTEERS

Our Power is Still Our People



BY CINDY M. SABATO,
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Save the Bay

SENTINEL

VOL. 4, No. 4

Organized to ensure the proper economic use, development, improvement and protection of the Narragansett Bay area consistent with its natural resources.

DECEMBER, 1974

Volunteer involvement, the key for '75 success

Involvement in the daily affairs of Save The Bay organizational happenings on the part of the membership is being re-emphasized by President Anthony J. Migliaccio, M.D. in his plans for 1975.

"The time has come," Migliaccio said, "to open up, to the interested members of the organization, a way to directly participate in the work of the organization."

I'm happy to report that an increase in involvement has already begun. With the publication of this issue of the Sentinel we see the work of two recently activated members - Trudy Cox and Gayle Berry.

We have also been reasonably successful in attracting a few members to participate as auditors at public hearings on environmental issues. We need more and we want more Rhode Islanders to take an active part in the

research, the decisions and the communications of Save The Bay.

"It is an organization designed to get citizen input into official decision-making. Consequently, we have expanded the executive committee and would very much like to get citizens more deeply involved in the environmental happenings in their own cities and towns."

The staff and the executive committee cannot do it alone. It isn't proper for them to do it nor is it in keeping with the organizing objectives of the group.

People - people interested enough to support the work financially and actively is what will keep us strong and make our actions meaningful.

I am committed to setting 1975 as a year of greater member involvement. I hope the membership will respond.

In an April 1979 Save The Bay SENTINEL article about the power of volunteers, author Mary Grady wrote, "We'd be lost without the energetic contributions of Save The Bay members."

That statement is as true today as it has been since Save The Bay's founding in 1970. Our efforts and victories would not be possible without the help of nearly 4,500 volunteers who work with us each year. Save The Bay victories are their victories for Narragansett Bay.

Our volunteer needs have changed since President Migliaccio's call for volunteers in 1975 (see clipping at left). But our need for volunteers has not.

Shaun Higgins A-One-Man-Gang For SAVE-THE-BAY



SHAUN HIGGINS

Give them a cause they can believe in and the youth of our world perform in whirlwind fashion.

One such dynamo is Shaun Higgins of Fall River who conceived of the idea of helping SAVE THE BAY by running a membership enrollment program at a local supermarket.

Armed with his imagination and a stream of energy, Shaun created his own signs, slogans and sales pitch. Throughout the day he manned the booth until he had collected \$22.00.

Since that time Shaun has delved into many aspects of pollution and is now a bona fide pollution fighter.

Volunteers Assist Save The Bay

Obviously an organization such as Save The Bay could not function properly if "people" didn't take the time to help. The office force in particular has been helped by Marion Baxter and Priscilla Kimball who have spent many hours addressing envelopes, stamping circulars and stuffing the many mailings which leave the Save The Bay office.

Mrs. Carol Hartung, a commercial artist, has spent many hours designing and labeling a speaker's aid charts, soon to be put to good use by our very active speaker's bureau.

This is our first opportunity to publicly thank the gals for their much needed and much appreciated support.

WHO SAVES THE BAY? VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Today's Save The Bay volunteers plant salt marsh grasses, count harbor seals, greet guests at our Exploration Center and Aquarium, and lead beach cleanups. They do water quality testing, legal research, data entry and on-line calendaring. They take pictures, help us run events like the Save The Bay Swim, and more. And, as members of our board of directors and leadership committees, volunteers have guided the direction of Save The Bay since the beginning.

One of those board volunteers is Rhode Island-born Alan Nathan, who first joined Save The Bay's executive board in 1974 and is a board member today. In the years between, he has been on and off the board as board terms allowed, served on our policy and development committees, and supported various fundraising efforts along the way.



"For a very long time, I have been upset over human activity as it relates to polluting the ocean and waters in general. In my life, it started with Long Island Sound being a cesspool, people disregarding the quality of the water, sewage treatment plants that were ineffective, and industry dumping chemicals in the water," said Alan, who lived in Larchmont, New York with his family for many years as a child.

"Moving back to Rhode Island, I saw the same thing. Sewage treatment plants were unfunded and not working very well. There were no controls over what industry could and couldn't dump into our waters," he said. In those years, the seeds of his passion for water quality issues began to take root.



July 1974

New Executive Board members appointed

Alan Nathan

Vito Scola, Jr.

Two men prominent in their fields of business have been appointed to serve on the executive board of SAVE THE BAY. Alan Nathan of Barrington is the President of Elmwood Sensors, a manufacturer of electro-mechanical controls for industry. He is active in community service as illustrated by his involvement as President of the Barrington Jaycees and as the chairman of the Barrington ZAP program. Vito A. Scola, Jr. of Moshassuck Square, Providence is currently sales and marketing executive of Vargas Manufacturing Company with prior advertising positions in Boston and Los Angeles. He is a sailing, scuba diving and fishing enthusiast as well as keenly interested in ecology and environmental conservation.

By the time Alan joined Save The Bay's board, he'd already been serving on a state task force to tackle the problem of raw sewage spilling into the Bay every time storm-water runoff from streets went into the sewer system—an effect called combined sewer overflows.

"Save The Bay systematically went after those treatment plants, to clean up their acts and improve their facilities. Building awareness around this issue and fighting for these improvements were two of the most important things Save The Bay did to improve water quality in the Bay," Alan said.

Pressure from Save The Bay was a significant force behind the creation of the Narragansett Bay Commission, which took over operations of the Providence Sewer Treatment Authority at Field's Point and the Bucklin Point Wastewater Treatment Facility in East Providence. In 2005, Alan became a commissioner on the Narragansett Bay Commission.

"I felt that my responsibility was to increase the communication between Save The Bay and the Bay Commission, as these two organizations are by far the most instrumental in the cleanup of the

Bay. The first tunnel built by the Bay Commission has improved the water quality immensely by reducing combined sewer overflows and preventing bacteria from fecal matter from entering the water. Under continuing EPA and DEM pressure, construction of a second tunnel under the Blackstone River will commence in a few years," Alan said.

Alan believes Save The Bay has survived for almost 50 years because "it started out finely focused on cleaning the Bay and has never veered from that focus. Other environmental groups have emerged with wider or different missions, but our membership and the public at large know exactly what we do," Alan said.

Maintaining that fine focus hasn't always been easy, since Save The Bay staff tend to be "very green in their thought pattern," Alan said. He said the board, which is comprised of people from various industries, has responsibility for steering the organization back to its focus on Narragansett Bay when it begins to stray. "That's very important, because we only have so much energy and money," he said.

As for the future of Save The Bay, Alan says "our work is never going to end. There are always things that need to be improved. Trouble just comes. People can rely on Save The Bay as the protector of the Bay. We don't give up; we keep moving forward.

"I wish more people, even former Rhode Island residents who now live in other states, would consider including Save The Bay in their will. Such donations would serve as a legacy to help maintain Save The Bay's financial viability for the next 50 years and to help protect Rhode Island's most precious asset for generations to come." ■

OPPOSITE PAGE: Volunteers have always been an important part of our work at Save The Bay, as evidenced by these archival articles in early issues of the Save The Bay Sentinel. TOP: a 1974 Sentinel article introduces Alan Nathan to Save The Bay's executive board. LEFT: Board member Alan Nathan today.



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SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting & Taste of the Bay

Thursday, June 13, 2019 • 5:30 – 9:00 p.m.
 Save The Bay Center, Providence
savebay.org/taste

43rd Annual Save The Bay Swim

Saturday, July 27, 2019 • 8:55 a.m.
 Start: Naval War College, Newport
 Finish: Potter Cove, Jamestown
savebay.org/swim

**International Coastal Cleanup**

Saturday, September 14, 2019
 Locations all over Rhode Island, times vary
savebay.org/ICC

Artists for the Bay Show & Sale

Opening reception: Thursday, December 5, 2019
 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
 Save The Bay Center, Providence
savebay.org/art

Connect with Us



Save The Bay is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WordPress. Follow along, share your stories and pictures, plan a visit and spread the word about the importance of a healthy Narragansett Bay.

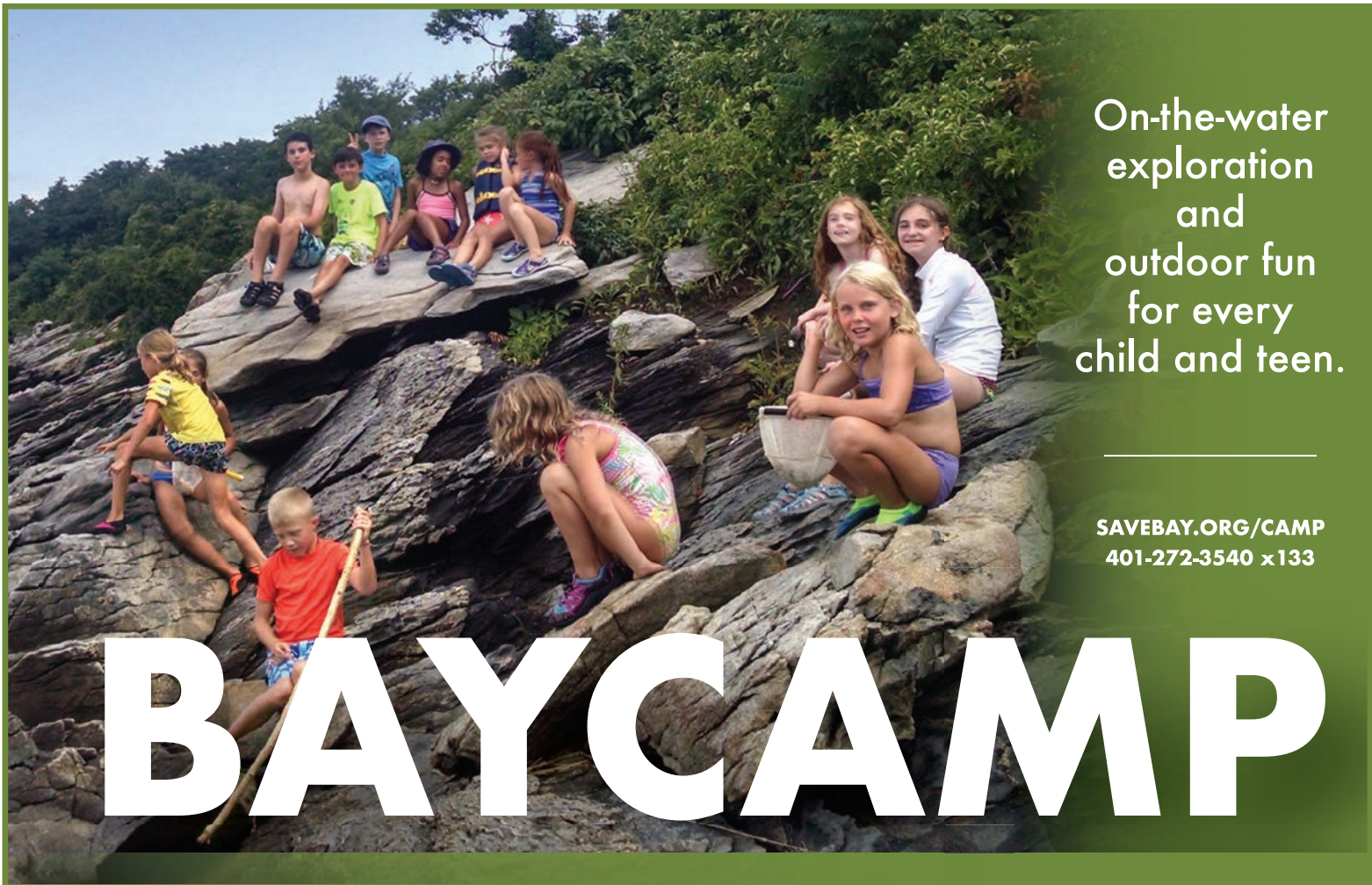
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