

WATERWAYS

FRIENDS OF CHATHAM WATERWAYS

DECEMBER 2017

Mary's Pond Photo by Barbara Cotnam

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

2018 will mark our 35th year of incorporation. It is a time to celebrate our accomplishments but also a time to think about future projects that promote healthier waterways in Chatham. In order to adjust to changing environmental conditions, a new focus is needed to help solve current fresh water quality and quantity issues. FCW is known for its valuable salt water testing program *Chatham Water Watchers* and our new *Pond Study Group* is developing programs that are designed to increase the health of our fresh water ponds.

At our Annual Meeting a new sentence was added to our Bylaws under *PURPOSE*. The sentence (in quotes below) clarifies the fact, that we are not only watchdogs of salt waterbodies but of all of our water resources, "...we are stewards of our ponds, streams, tidal estuaries, wetlands, harbors and groundwater aquifer."

We live on a fragile peninsula and as members of FCW we should promote a different way of thinking about our landscapes to our friends and neighbors. Do we see our neighbors use their irrigation systems too frequently? We have had a voluntary water restriction in place for several years. Our consumption of water overall has been increasing every year. Chatham is asking the MA DEP to raise Chatham's yearly allotment. Lightening up on both watering and fertilizer use would benefit our waterways.

For residents who live on a pond FCW promotes a 30' to 50' buffer zone of native plants that don't need fertilizer or watering.

It is a fact that over fertilizing is a major cause of algal blooms in fresh water and is causing declining health and a lack of biodiversity. A local fertilizer regulation that FCW Directors wrote - consulting with town staff - states: Maintain a 100' fertilizer-free zone around waterbodies and wetlands. The FCW *Pond Study Group* is looking at ways to work with the Town testing pond water for potential toxic cyanobacteria algal blooms. We should be aware that toxic blooms have been identified in Harwich and Brewster, triggering an immediate closure of the ponds. Late summer when pond water is warmest is when these toxic algal blooms may occur. The Town is doing a good job of upgrading and cleaning our storm water drains. However, it is up to those who live on private roads to clean their storm drains and mitigate road runoff so that it is not polluting a nearby waterbody.

A heartfelt thank you for being a member of FCW, and for being dedicated to protecting and preserving our natural resources! You know we live in a beautiful fragile environment. It is important for all who enjoy our town to not take our water resources for granted. How do we get the word out to everyone who uses our water supply to realize that it needs to be protected and used with a measured restraint? We can all have an active role in protecting our resources for our use and for the future.

Barbara Cotnam, President

Annual Meeting Keynote Address

Andrew Gottlieb, the Executive Director of the Association to Preserve Cape Cod, (APCC) spoke at the FCW August 14 Annual Meeting. Andrew's life work in Massachusetts locally and statewide has been protecting the environment and clean water. He worked at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for 16 years where he developed an estuaries preservation program and a funding source for watershed protection. Most recently he spent 10 years as executive director of the Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative. He stressed getting involved with town government and the politics of water quality. A Mashpee resident, he is serving his fourth term as a Selectmen. He commended Chatham as being ahead of the curve with a Waste Water Treatment Facility. Gottlieb said: "Having pristine waterways, healthy aquifers and good drinking water is an economic imperative since it forms the basis of the seasonal economy and the real estate sector on the Cape....It's all predicated on water quality. And if we let that go, we have nothing."



Andrew Gottlieb, Annual Meeting 2017
Keynote Speaker
Photo by Rebecca Arnold

2017 CAPTAIN'S AWARD RECIPIENT

Martha Stone was awarded the prestigious Captain's Award. She was one of the original founders of Friends of Stage Harbor. A determined mover and shaker she was responsible for correcting storm water runoff from entering Stage Harbor. She also oversaw the writing of a Stage Harbor Management Plan approved by the Town and State. The plan became a model for many other waterfront communities. She and other Directors identified water related problems throughout town that needed fixing and their name was changed to Friends of Chatham Waterways. She then made waves spearheading the Chatham Water Watchers program, a 19 year continuing project that will remain an important source of data to the Town for years to come. All members applaud you for your leadership and we will miss you Martha!



Martha Stone at
Annual Meeting 2017
Photo by Rebecca Arnold

The Pond Study Group

Formed in 2012 to study and look for ways to improve the health of Chatham's freshwater ponds, FCW's Pond Study Group uses protocols developed for the Cape Cod Commission's PALS program. Dr. Duncanson, Chatham's Director of Natural Resources, provides the training and equipment for collecting data on dissolved oxygen, water temperature, and clarity in six ponds. Every summer dedicated volunteers put oars to the water and collect data six to eight times per season. These data will be helpful in identifying trends and determining what might be done should degradation worsen. Looking forward, FCW plans to expand testing in three ponds (Schoolhouse, Goose, White) by sampling for cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) which manifests itself as algal blooms. Toxic blooms are a serious health issue that has already appeared in some local ponds. Working with the town and the Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC), FCW volunteers will take water samples weekly to be analyzed for bacteria as well as levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. Pond levels will also be monitored. Volunteers are needed for the new testing, if you are interested please email DeeDee Holt at DeeDee633@comcast.net.

COASTSWEEP SEPTEMBER 2017

In September, sixty volunteers participated in the 30th annual Coastsweep cleanup along Chatham's shoreline, collecting more than thirty large bags of trash totaling about 340 pounds. Coastsweep, run locally by FCW, is part of the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) annual Massachusetts Coastal Cleanup in conjunction with the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup. FCW provides gloves, grabbers, trash bags and Ocean Conservancy supplies data cards for recording site findings. Data from the cleanup will be analyzed by the Ocean Conservancy and used to develop programs to help reduce marine debris worldwide. This effort brings an awareness of the abundance of trash on the town's beaches and of the need for people to be responsible about a carry in, carry out policy on our beaches. Some volunteers sweep beaches often during the year because they love being out walking on our beautiful beaches and want to help keep them clean. To volunteer for Coastsweep September 2018, contact Betsy Mosser at betsymosser@aol.com.

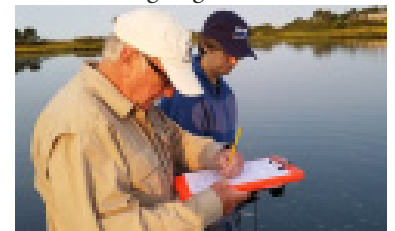
CHATHAM WATERWATCHERS

FCW provides volunteers for the Town's *Coastal Water Nutrient Monitoring Program*. 2018 will be the 20th year of the Chatham Water Watchers Program. Directors, Frank Messina, Bob Samuelson and Betsy Mosser recruit a cadre of volunteers who are trained for this important work. On five separate mornings this past summer, forty-four FCW volunteers participated in this year's monitoring program.



Using scientific instruments they measured water depths, clarity, temperature and dissolved oxygen levels and took water samples at varying depths at their station. The data and water samples were then analyzed at the University of Massachusetts School of Marine Science and Technology lab in Dartmouth. Chatham's

Department of Natural Resources Director, Dr. Robert Duncanson and his assistant Dr. Sarah Griscom provided the volunteer training and overall coordination. Important data is collected every year on general water quality conditions and changing trends in nitrogen loading. This data played an important role in the development of the town's comprehensive wastewater management plan. Continuing monitoring will help determine the effects of ongoing wastewater treatment in town. Interested in becoming a Chatham Water Watcher please contact: Betsy Mosser (betsymosser@aol.com) for the Stage Harbor estuaries; Frank Messina (franksmalabar@gmail.com) for the South Coastal Embayments; or Bob Samuelson (rjsamuelson@mac.com) for Pleasant Bay.



Don Phinney & Sherrie Burson @
Bucks Creek
Photos by Frank Messina

BARBARA STREIBERT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANTS

This program began in 2010 to honor Barbara's environmental work throughout her twelve years as a FCW Director. These grants are given annually to teachers in the Monomoy Regional School District. For the 2016-2017 academic year grants were awarded to the following: to Jackie Bicknell a 4th grade teacher for an educational trip to the Cape Cod National Seashore to study erosion and earth processes taught by staff scientists; to Melinda Forest a middle school science teacher for purchase of materials needed to enhance two vernal pools in a living Lab/Outdoor Classroom located in back of the school; and to Michael Newby an 8th grade STEM teacher for purchase of a Triggerfish ROV Underwater remote controlled vehicle to be built and used by his students. A total of \$2,383 was awarded during the year. Director Betsy Mosser heads up this program which helps instill students' appreciation of our unique Cape Cod environment.



LEWIS E. KIMBALL ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIPS

This successful scholarship program was awarded a generous \$4000 grant from the Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation Inc., September, 2017. This grant will allow FCW to award one more scholarship in 2018. If you know of someone who is a graduate student or an upper level undergraduate student, has gone to school on the Cape and Islands and is enrolled in an environmentally related discipline spread the word of our \$3000 scholarship. Download an application from our web site www.chathamwaterways.com and send in your application by March 15, 2018. This year the recipients were:

Lela S. Larned, will complete her clinical year in 2018 at Murdoch University in Australia. She will receive her DVM degree in Conservation Medicine from St. George's University School of Veterinary Medicine upon successful completion of her studies. She plans to practice medicine on Cape Cod, specializing in wildlife health, conservation, and habitat restoration for native aquatic and terrestrial animals.

Matthew Cappucci, is attending Harvard majoring in a special concentration individualized accredited Atmospheric Sciences Program. He spoke at FCW's 2017 Annual Meeting to thank FCW for the scholarship. Mr. Cappucci's goal at completion is to add to the science of predicting weather patterns. He wrote on his application: "I want to integrate environmental stewardship and protection to the message I hope to advance someday through my dual role on television and as a scientist."



Bill Coleman with Matthew Cappucci
Photo by Rebecca Arnold

FCW Membership Renewal Form

Return to FCW, Box 472, Chatham MA 02633

\$25 individual \$40 family Additional donation \$ _____

Name/s: _____

Street/P.O. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____

Email* _____

*Your email will help us save money by communicating via ConstantContact

Cape Residence _____

Please make checks payable to FCW.

Contact me about becoming a volunteer

Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. FCW is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization

Thank you for your support.

FCW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FCW welcomes new Director Mike Page

At our November 13th Board meeting, Mike Page was unanimously approved to be a new FCW Director. Mike has a B.A. degree in Computer Science from SUNY Oswego. He is a computer programmer with experience developing software for neuroscience laboratories in New York and Pennsylvania. He founded Great Island Software in 2003 and is principal of the custom software and IT services company. He will begin his FCW term in February 2018. Mike is a water monitor for Emery Pond and is shown below taking data with his wife Jackie and pet poodle.



Photo by Barbara Cotnam

In Remembrance of FCW Director John Payson

John passed away on September 5, 2017 at the age of 94. He was among the first to volunteer as a Chatham Water Watcher, monitoring Bucks Creek for nearly a decade. He was appointed to the Citizens Advisory Committee for Waste Water Management where he played a significant role in documenting the accuracy of nitrogen loading estimates for Chatham's watersheds. A FCW Director for only several years, at meetings he was the go to person when data was needed for a project. He was a caretaker of Chatham's water resources and dedicated to improving water quality; he will be missed.

Kristin Andres, Secretary

Ron Bergstrom

Bill Coleman

Barbara Cotnam, President

Debby Ecker

Dean Ervin

Deedee Holt

Paul Kelley

Tom King, Vice President

Frank Messina, Vice President

Bob Montbach

Betsy Mosser

Michael Page

Bob Samuelson, Treasurer

Martha Stone

Emeritus:

Walter Butler

Kurt Hellfach

George Olmsted