



# LONG ISLAND SOUTH SHORE ESTUARY NEWS

The Newsletter of the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council

Volume 11

Winter/Spring 2006

## News from the SSER Office

### Dear Friends of the South Shore Estuary:

I am very pleased to introduce some talented individuals who have recently joined the Reserve Office. Their positions will enhance our ability to assist partners throughout the estuary and to coordinate and monitor Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) implementation activities in the future. The new positions will be focused on establishing and facilitating partnerships to promote appreciation and stewardship of the Reserve's maritime character and identity, improve estuary water quality and living resource habitat, and coordinate scientific information needs and educational outreach efforts.

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View of salt marshes in the Lido Beach Conservation Area in the Town of Hempstead. See [Along the Bayway](#) for more information about this Bayway Destination.

Program Implementation Specialist **Kimberly Rancourt** is working with local governments, non-profit organizations and stakeholder groups to advance development of watershed action plans and other projects. Her efforts will focus on restoring and improving water quality and living resource habitat in priority estuary watersheds and tributary corridors throughout the Reserve.

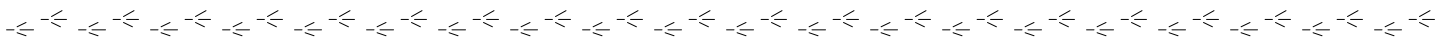
Program Implementation Specialist **Michelle Pluzynski** is working with South Shore Bayway partners to identify and establish a network of destinations and connectors. These locations will form a framework for education, interpretation and exploration of the Reserve's diverse natural, recreational and cultural resources, and public appreciation of its rich maritime heritage and water related economy.

Reserve Science Coordinator **Lou Siegel** is using his extensive experience as a long time marine science educator on Long Island to assist and monitor the efforts of Reserve partners who are engaged in research and education programs to promote coordination and sharing of scientific information among the Reserve's academic institutions, government agencies and non-profit conservation organizations. Lou will be helping to promote the application of sound science when developing and implementing management strategies to restore and protect the estuary.



SSER Office Staff, from left to right: Program Implementation Specialist Michelle Pluzynski, Science Coordinator Lou Siegel, SCA Estuary Steward Clare O'Reilly, Director Jeffrey Fullmer, Program Implementation Specialist Kimberly Rancourt

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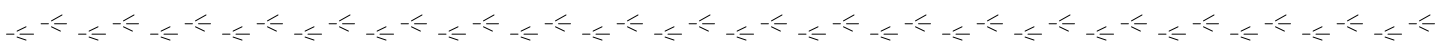


## SSER Office Update (continued from page 1)

Finally, we have also been very fortunate to have an effective partnership with the **Student Conservation Association (SCA)**. The SCA is a national service organization that provides internships to qualified individuals who are interested in gaining “hands on” experience in natural resource stewardship. Since its establishment, the Reserve Office has hosted a number of excellent SCA estuary stewards who have greatly assisted our efforts to advance implementation of the Reserve CMP. Currently, SCA Steward *Clare O'Reilly* is assisting Reserve partners with development of strategies to restore and protect habitat for diadromous fish, as well as assisting with SSER education and outreach programs.

I encourage the readers of *Estuary News* to welcome the new members of our team, and am confident that our enhanced ability to work in partnership with estuary stakeholders will result in many additional successes towards implementing the Reserve CMP as we go into the future.

**Jeffrey D. Fullmer**  
**Reserve Office Director**



## Citizens Advisory Committee Spotlight

The South Shore Estuary Reserve Council Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) elected new leaders at its November 15, 2005 meeting. CAC member Maureen Dolan of the Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE) was unanimously elected as Chair to serve a three year term beginning in January 2006. Ms. Dolan will replace long time CAC member Joseph Kayal, who completed a very successful term as Chair beginning in 2003. The CAC also unanimously re-elected Vice-Chair Allan Aronoff to serve a second term through 2009.



*New Leadership at Helm of CAC: Former Chair Joseph Kayal (left) with new chair Maureen Dolan (center) and re-elected vice chair Allan Aronoff (right).*

During his tenure as Chair, Mr. Kayal was responsible for leading the CAC through a variety of successful initiatives aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the CAC as an advisor to the Reserve Council and promoting Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) implementation. These included development and adoption of a revised charter to guide CAC policy and operation well into the future, and to focus on promoting education and outreach implementation activities recommended in the CMP through increasing public awareness and appreciation of Reserve resources. Mr. Kayal also initiated and facilitated a successful CAC project to establish an annual Reserve Council stewardship award program, featured in our Reserve Partners at Work section. Under Mr. Kayal’s leadership, CAC membership was significantly expanded to increase representation from diverse estuary stakeholder organizations.

“Working with the members of the CAC was a truly wonderful experience. None of the committee's achievements would have been possible without the dedication, good judgment and hard work of all its members,” stated Kayal.

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## Along the Bayway

### Bayway Destinations and Connectors Recognized in 2005

- William Floyd Estate, Fire Island National Seashore
- Long Island Maritime Museum, West Sayville
- Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society, Bellport
- Gardiner County Park and Sagtikos Manor, West Bay Shore
- Timber Point Country Club, Great River
- Green Creek County Park, West Sayville
- Southaven County Park, Brookhaven
- Smith Point County Park and the Shirley Marina, Shirley
- Shinnecock East County Park, Southampton
- Captree State Park, East End Ocean Parkway
- Robert Moses State Park, West End Fire Island
- Sailors Haven/Sunken Forest, Fire Island National Seashore
- Ferry route from Sayville to Sailors Haven/Sunken Forest

The SSER Office is pleased to announce that the Council has recognized **twelve new destinations and one new connector** to the Bayway in 2005. These additions to the Bayway are representative of the Bayway themes maritime heritage, protecting the coast, and enjoying the estuary. In total, the Bayway has recognized 38 destinations and two connectors.

The Bayway will be promoted through a series of coordinated, interpretive kiosks and waysides. The **interpretive signage** will highlight the cultural and natural resources of the bay. The first kiosk was erected in the South Shore Estuary Reserve in the Village of Freeport along the Nautical Mile in the spring of 2005. The Town of Islip currently has a kiosk in production, which will be installed at the Bayshore Marina in 2006.



*Bayway kiosk along the Nautical Mile, Freeport.*

The Bayway was also promoted during the **2005 New York State Community & Waterfront Revitalization conference, Heritage Centers and Corridors: Looking Back for the Future**. The Bayway was highlighted as one of Long Island's resources that directs users to SSER's maritime centers and natural resources.

Two previously recognized Bayway destinations were in the news this year. **Lido Beach Marine Conservation Area** opened to the public this summer. The passive nature area is located on the bay side Long Beach Island, in the Town of Hempstead. The nature area provides new opportunities for bird watching, and scenic views of the salt marshes of the estuary's western bays. The new Marine Conservation Area is the product of partnerships between Town of Hempstead, New York State, non-profit organizations, and community groups.



*Photo courtesy of the Town of Hempstead*

*Partners celebrate the public opening of the new Lido Beach Marine Conservation Area.*

Work is now underway to build the new Town of Babylon **Oak Beach Park**. The park is located on the eastern end of Jones Island, at Fire Island Inlet. Phase I will include 500 feet of walkways, creation of the beach space, refurbishment of the existing pier, and landscaping along the shoreline. The new park is result of partnerships between the Town of Babylon, New York State, Suffolk County, non-profit organizations, and the efforts of community groups.



*Partners break ground on Oak Beach Park.*

In 2006 look for the upcoming expanded **Virtual Bayway** to learn more about all the Bayway Destinations and Connectors. If you would like to nominate a Bayway destination or connector please email Michelle Pluzynski at [mpluz@dos.state.ny.us](mailto:mpluz@dos.state.ny.us) for more information.

## Reserve Partners at Work



*Reserve Council members and implementation partners were able to enjoy the scenery and discuss their efforts on the tour*

The *Partners for Progress Day on the Bay* annual boat tour was held on September 15 aboard Reserve Council member Captain Mike Eagan's vessel, the *Lauren Kristy*. This informal work session provided a chance for South Shore Estuary Reserve partners to meet and discuss the successes and challenges of implementing the Comprehensive Management Plan. The program consisted of interpretive presentations by Reserve Partners on several recognized Bayway destinations along the Great South Bay, including the Fire Island Lighthouse, Captree and Robert Moses State Parks, and Oak Beach Park. Two awards were also presented at this event: a plaque of recognition to the Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee, Joseph Kayal, and the Reserve's first Stewardship Award, presented to South Shore bayman Bill Hamilton.

The **Stewardship Award** program was developed to promote stewardship of the Reserve by recognizing organizations or individuals who have demonstrated initiative or innovation in improving the South Shore Estuary. The award will focus on public participation and grassroots stewardship activities like cleanups, restoration and education, and will build public awareness of the Reserve.

Visit the Reserve Council website to learn more about the Stewardship Award and how to nominate organizations or individuals that should be recognized for their outstanding stewardship efforts.

This year's recipient, **Bill Hamilton**, is a member of the Brookhaven Baymen's Association and has been part of The Nature Conservancy's Bluepoints Bottomlands Project to restore Great South Bay. Mr. Hamilton has been an instrumental member of the Bluepoints Bottomlands Council. He tirelessly volunteered his time to aid in restoration efforts, and convinced other baymen to participate in this process. Mr. Hamilton's commitment has significantly contributed to the success of the Bluepoints Bottomlands Project.



*Bill Hamilton (left) with Carl LoBue of The Nature Conservancy (right). Mr. Hamilton was presented with piece of original artwork by local artist and fellow bayman Harry Saarinen, in recognition of Mr. Hamilton's stewardship efforts.*



Learn more about the Bluepoint Bottomlands Council on the Living Resources page of the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council website

*Left: Fred Anders, representing New York State Department of State and the Reserve Council Chair, presents Joseph Kayal with a certificate in recognition of his work as Citizens Advisory Committee Chair. See Citizens Advisory Committee Spotlight on page 2 for more information about the CAC leadership transition.*

## Reserve Partners at Work

SSER partner organization **Operation SPLASH** (Stop Polluting Littering and Save Harbors) organized several projects in 2005 to advance recommendations of the Comprehensive Management Plan. On June 23, SPLASH volunteers collected trash and debris along Freeport Creek, with help from America the Beautiful, The Freeport Fire Department Dive Squad, and the Town of Hempstead. Some unusual items found included a cash register, a hot water heater, tires and auto parts. More common items included plastic "floatables," such as bottles and food wrappers.

SPLASH developed two projects to address plastic floatables and other debris that enters local waters from storm drains. Several storm drains empty into Freeport Creek, and debris collects at Mill Basin in Freeport. SPLASH partnered with the



*An Operation SPLASH volunteer collects debris from the floating dock debris trap at Mill Basin in Freeport.*

Town of Hempstead, the Village of Freeport and a private land owner to install three floating docks at Mill Basin to trap floating debris. The trap has been efficient at stopping plastic floatables as well as cigarette butts and tires from entering the bays. As of November, SPLASH has collected 138 barrels of garbage from the trap.

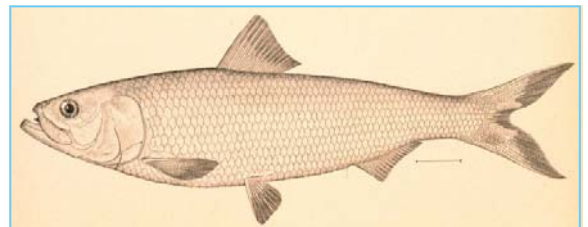
SPLASH is also working with the Village of Freeport on a public information campaign to educate Freeport residents about where storm drains empty. Blue and white disks that say "No Dumping Drains to Bay" will be attached to storm drains in Freeport. These disks will help raise awareness that trash which is not properly disposed of and enters storm drains will eventually enter into the bay. "We believe the local waterways can return to a pristine condition," SPLASH President Robert Weltner stated. "If it doesn't come from the sea, it doesn't belong in the sea."



*Operation SPLASH worked with the Village of Freeport to place disks like the one seen above to educate Freeport residents about where storm water goes.*

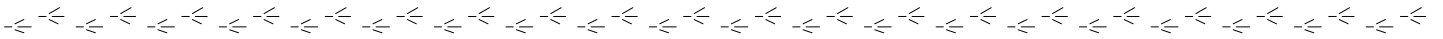
Learn more about Operation SPLASH at their website <http://www.operationsplash.net>

The Diadromous Fish Work Group is preparing a **Spring 2006 volunteer alewife monitoring survey**. The purpose of the survey is to document the presence or absence of alewives in the tributaries of the SSER. Alewives are an important food source for other estuarine species, and little is known about where they spawn in the SSER. Monitoring will take place during alewife spawning season from March to mid-May. Efforts will be focused on the following tributaries: Connetquot River, Carmans River, Swan River, Mud Creek, Quantuck Creek, Carlls River, Massapequa Creek, and Patchogue River. Any individuals or groups interested in volunteer monitoring should contact Clare O'Reilly at [coreilly@dos.state.ny.us](mailto:coreilly@dos.state.ny.us).



*Alewives (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) are the focus of a spring monitoring survey.*

Learn more about the importance of alewives from SSER partner organization Environmental Defense at <http://www.oceansalive.org/explore.cfm?subnav=article&contentID=4447>



## Improving Water Quality

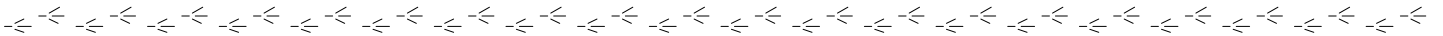


Photo courtesy of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Commissioner Denise Sheehan announces Bond Act awards.

On November 3, 2005, Governor George E. Pataki announced **\$6.6 million in grants to South Shore Estuary Reserve municipalities** that will be used to advance implementation of the Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan. The grants are being funded through the New York State Clean Air/Clean Water Bond Act and Environmental Protection Fund, and will be used for 21 projects to:

- **Improve water quality in Reserve bays and tributaries**, through capital projects to reduce stormwater runoff, control nonpoint source pollution, and mitigate flooding;
- **Protect and restore Reserve habitats**, through installation of fish ladders in tributaries to allow fish passage over dams, removal of dredge spoil and invasive plants, and reestablishment of wetland ecosystems; and,
- **Improve quality of wastewater discharges in the Reserve**, through sewage treatment plant upgrades to enhance pollution removal capabilities.



## Citizens Advisory Committee Spotlight (continued from page 2)

Ms. Dolan will be taking the helm of the CAC at a time when Reserve CMP implementation activities are moving forward at an increasing rate and the active participation of estuary stakeholders and increased public awareness will be essential for success.

“It is an honor to work with such a diverse group of dedicated stakeholders, with a strong commitment to protecting and restoring this precious waterbody. I look forward to continuing the progress that the Citizens Advisory Committee has made and advancing the goals of the Comprehensive Management Plan.” stated Dolan.

“Under Maureen Dolan's direction, I know the committee will continue to fulfill its mission in as effective and professional a manner as possible,” added Kayal.



View the latest issue at  
[www.estuary.cog.ny.us](http://www.estuary.cog.ny.us)

### Long Island South Shore *Estuary News*

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We've gone electronic!

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The Long Island South Shore *Estuary News* will now be distributed electronically.

To begin receiving *Estuary News* and other Reserve updates, please send an email to [staff@estuary.cog.ny.us](mailto:staff@estuary.cog.ny.us) with *Estuary News* as the subject and your name and/or organizational affiliation in the body of the email.

## Education and Research



Photo courtesy of Lou Siegel

*Horseshoe crabs, like the two seen mating above, are the subject of two studies currently being conducted in the Reserve. The studies are focusing on population characteristics to evaluate harvesting impacts.*

For the third year, **The Long Island Horseshoe Crab Network** collected data on horseshoe crab populations in the SSER. Directed by Dr. John T. Tanacredi, Chairman of the Department of Earth and Marine Sciences at Dowling College, Oakdale, and staffed by Russell Ainbinder, Robert Noyce Scholar, the network attempts to assess the present population of these living fossils.

"Over the last 10 years there has been considerable controversy as to the extent to which horseshoe crab harvesting has impacted the species' existence," explained Dr. Tanacredi. "It is general knowledge that horseshoe crab habitat extends from the coast of Maine to Florida, with Long Island historically having a robust population of crabs. Anecdotal information from

'coast-wise' people have recently expressed concerns that once large numbers of horseshoe crabs observed each year, are today a mere skeletal population."

Horseshoe crabs are collected along the Atlantic coast to provide limulus lysate (LAL), a substance found in horseshoe crab blood that is used to test for contamination of all human injectable drugs. Harvested crabs are then returned to the water alive. Fishermen who trap whelk, crabs and eels use horseshoe crabs for bait. Migrating shore birds including the red knot and the ruddy turnstones depend on the availability of horseshoe crab eggs which they utilize as a critical food source.

54 sites, including 28 in the SSER, have been logged by the Horseshoe Crab Network at least once in the last three years. Long Islanders are asked to report horseshoe crab sightings online (see link below) or by calling (631) 244-3394.

In a separate study conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension and the NYSDEC, five sites on Long Island, including two in the SSER, were monitored. Some preliminary observations for the Spring of 2005 include: evidence for a delayed spawning due to storms, peak spawning was in mid-June, the highest counts were in the surf-zone at south shore beaches, and the sex ratio of the crabs measured was approximately 3 to 1, males to females.

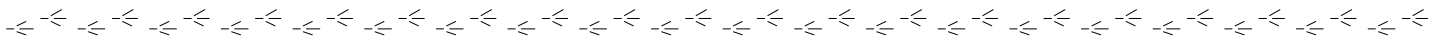
More information from The Long Island Horseshoe Crab Network can be found at <http://www.dowling.edu/school-arts-science/earthmarine/horseshoe.shtm>

Learn more about these interesting "living fossils" at <http://www.horseshoecrab.org>



Photo courtesy of Lou Siegel

*Horseshoe crab eggs are an important food source for migratory birds.*



## Maritime Heritage

John Remsen Sr. and his son John of Freeport have been awarded an apprenticeship grant from the NY State Council on the Arts to spend 14-weeks perfecting the tradition of garvey building, a traditional flat-bottom work boat used by south shore baymen to navigate the shallow bay waters, harvesting killies, crabs, eels and other species. Long Island Traditions is sponsoring the apprenticeship on their behalf. The boat is one used most commonly by local baymen. John Remsen Sr. is one of a select few on Long Island who continues to make the boats for area baymen. The apprenticeship will focus on traditional materials and techniques, the advantages of new processes, and the boat design.

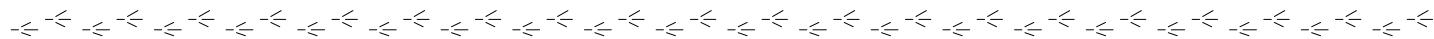


Photo courtesy of Long Island Traditions

*John Remsen Sr. with one of his own garveys, a flat bottom work boat traditionally used by baymen.*

John has passed his skills and knowledge to his son John Remsen Jr. who works on the bay part-time trapping killeys for local bait shops. Both father and son participate in LI Traditions maritime education programs and festivals, hosting visitors at their family's bay house. John and his wife Grace are also active in supporting the preservation of maritime culture in Freeport, volunteering for Splash, a local environmental organization, and the "Seaport at Freeport." Where there once were many boat builders on the south shore, dominated by commercial fishermen, today there are few others who build this traditional baymen's boat. Increasingly John Sr. must work "around the clock" despite his age of 72 years. John Remsen Jr. is fully committed to continuing this tradition and teaching others the advantages of this traditional boat type. The two have instructed hundreds of school students and festival visitors on the principles of garvey design.

To learn more about John Remsen, go to <http://www.longislandtraditions.org/artistprofiles/maritime/remsensr.html>.



**South Shore Estuary Reserve Council:** ♦ NYS Secretary of State, Chair ♦ Steve Levy, Suffolk County Executive ♦ Thomas Suozzi, Nassau County Executive ♦ John J. Laffey, City Manager, City of Long Beach ♦ Kate Murray, Supervisor, Town of Hempstead ♦ John Venditto, Supervisor, Town of Oyster Bay ♦ Steven Bellone, Supervisor, Town of Babylon ♦ Peter McGowan, Supervisor, Town of Islip ♦ Brian X. Foley, Supervisor, Town of Brookhaven ♦ Patrick A. Heaney, Supervisor, Town of Southampton ♦ William Glacken, Mayor, Village of Freeport/NYS Conference of Mayors ♦ Maureen Dolan, Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee ♦ Corneila Schlenk, NY Sea Grant/TAC ♦ Robert Grover, Great South Bay Audubon Society ♦ Carl LoBue, Long Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy ♦ David Conover, Dean and Director, Marine Sciences Research Center, SUNY at Stony Brook ♦ NY Sportfishing Federation ♦ Mitch Pally, Long Island Association ♦ Robert Wieboldt, Long Island Builders Institute, Inc. ♦ Christopher Squeri, NY Marine Trades Association ♦ Gregory LoVece, Brookhaven Bayman's Association ♦ Michael Eagan, Captree Boatman's Association ♦ Denise M. Sheehan, Commissioner, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation ♦ Bernadette Castro, Commissioner, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation ♦ Thomas J. Madison, Acting Commissioner, NYS Dept. of Transportation

**South Shore Estuary Reserve Office:** Jeffrey D. Fullmer, Director

The NYS Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources and Waterfront Revitalization provides support to the Council. George R. Stafford, Director

The *Long Island South Shore Estuary News* is a publication of the South Shore Estuary Council, established pursuant to the Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve Act of 1993. The Department of State provides funds for this newsletter from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

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