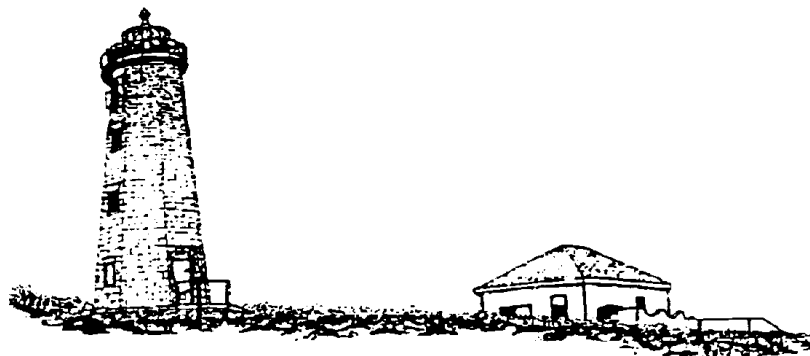


Benton Beach Beacon



May 2002

Beach Work Day

BBC Spring Work Weekend is being planned for the weekend of May 18th and 19th. Come either day, come both days.

We will start around 9 each day and will supply pizza both days about 1:00 PM. If anyone is interested in bringing a dessert to share, that would be great.

There are the usual projects to do, such as putting up the canopy, raking the beach, cleaning the beach house, and painting and repairing a couple picnic tables. Bring a pair of work gloves and a rake. All other supplies will be provided.

The big project this year is finishing the dock project (started last year) by building the T back out on the end. This is being coordinated by Joel and he will be in touch with those who could be a part of this endeavor.

Horseshoe Crab Eggs and Spring Beach Activities

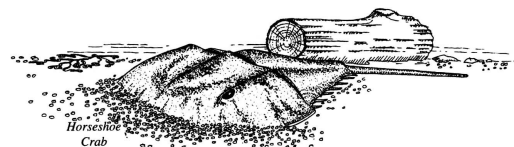
Don't Mix!

from Sound Outlook, February 2002 issue (a newsletter of CT DEP)

This spring, before your beach association or town recreation department sets out to tidy up the beach in preparation for Memorial Day, please keep in mind that horseshoe crab nests may be vulnerable to grading or raking activities.

For approximately six weeks each spring during May and June, bottom dwelling American horseshoe crabs (*Limulus polyphemus*) return to the water's edge to mate and spawn. Females seek available areas near the high-tide line,

bulldozing their bodies completely into the sand and depositing up to 20,000 eggs. The eggs are fertilized by males which gather on the beach to seek available mates, and the nests are then covered with sand by incoming waves. Unfortunately, horseshoe crab nests are usually located in the vicinity of accumulated seaweed and other flotsam where beach grading and raking are typically conducted. These activities can disturb the nests and adversely affect horseshoe crab populations.



Horseshoe crabs, which are not true crabs but more closely resemble spiders, are an essential part of the marine ecosystem. Migratory shorebirds feed on their eggs, and fish eat the juveniles and recently molted crabs. Horseshoe crabs are also important to the pharmaceutical industry, where their blood is used to test drugs for the presence of bacteria.

The DEP has made great progress in protecting horseshoe crabs from overfishing for use as bait, and these efforts will be bolstered through better-timed beach maintenance activities. In order to protect horseshoe crab nests, *beach maintenance or grading should be conducted before May 10th or after June 25th*. Please note that **any mechanical beach maintenance work or grading performed at or waterward of the high tide line also requires prior authorization from the DEP**. Please contact the Office of Long Island Sound Programs at 860-424-3034 for information on permit requirements.

Horseshoe crabs are considered to be one of the oldest surviving marine species in the world. Let's do our part to keep them around for another 350 million years!

Annual Family Gathering

It's time to mark your calendars for the annual BBC family gathering! This year will feature a lobster boil/steak fry and will be held Saturday, July 13th. More info will be coming soon.

Family Matriarch Returns

Early

Joel E. Helander

On St. Patrick's Day, Marjorie and Delman Spalding returned earlier than usual from their winter home in Florida. This was prompted by Marjorie's second hospitalization of the season for pneumonia and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. David and Lisa Ott flew down and accompanied them on their return trip aboard a Lear Jet ambulance. It cruised at an altitude of 42,000 feet, which is much higher than the commercial flights, resulting in a quick, smooth trip. At Tweed New Haven Airport, they were greeted by a host of family members and bright balloons at the edge of the runway.

Marjorie is the family matriarch. She is also Sachus Head's oldest native, which is something Grandpa Benton (Eliot H. Benton) had the honor of claiming. Happily, Marjorie is making great strides in stabilizing her medical condition. She and Delman have a wonderful live-in helper, Pauline Walker, who most recently assisted Mrs. Margaret Morse near the Town Mill Pond for eleven years. Delman has returned to his walking routine. He can often be seen along the Vineyard Point Road, somewhere between no. 365 and the Point.

Lynne, Donna, Janice, Ken and their families, the grandchildren, and extended family members have provided kind deeds and services for the Spaldings, for which Marjorie & Delman are extremely grateful. Now is the time to remember how the nineteenth century advertisements for the Sachus Head Hotel boasted about the tonics of neptune and healthy seaside living. In this warm and nurturing environment, the family matriarch can continue to rebound. God speed, Aunt Marge!

Lawn-Mowing On the Beach Premises

Once again, Carolyn Helander will be coordinating this season's lawn-mowing schedule. She may be calling you soon for one or two scheduled shifts.

The two beach mowers have been kindly refurbished by Jamie Smith and are stored in the end bay of Joel's garage. Please help yourself. A container for gasoline is also there. Please remember to use the 22-inch cut "Yard Machine" as the primary mower. The other mower is the back-up.

If you cannot mow during your assigned week, Carolyn asks that you find a substitute.

Thank you, one and all!

A Letter From Jennifer

by Jennifer Ruiz

We are all doing well. Maxwell is now nearly one year old! He is so very happy. He is crawling and of course exploring his world completely! He has brought us so much joy; we feel so very blessed.

Our visit to Connecticut last summer couldn't have been better. Lorenzo fell in love with Connecticut and all of you. I thank you all for embracing him and welcoming him into the family. He felt your love.

The baby shower was a big surprise; we really appreciated it. Thank you all and especially big thanks to Holly and Ellen.

We are now arranging our lives to move back to Connecticut by the end of summer. We look forward to it.

Love to you all - the Ruiz family (Jennifer, Lorenzo & Maxwell)

On My Bicycle Ride

Joel E. Helander

One warm spring day on my bicycle ride I heard a distinct rustling in the leaves near the trolley bridge on Vineyard Point Road. I stopped and listened more carefully. Crawling through some oak leaves was a gallon-sized Snapping Turtle! Its drab shell showed a coating of dried muck because it had just come out of its hibernating hole in the earth.

This is the same earth very few of us really know. We walk on it, build houses and skyscrapers on it, and generally take it for granted. The earth is our inheritance and we need to take care of it. The cry for our environment is now heard more than ever, especially in Connecticut where over-development has brought new growing pains practically everywhere.

There are hot issues about gas pipelines and electric cables under Long Island Sound. Citizens groups have formed. Non-profit land Conservation Trusts are alive and well. The Connecticut Farm Bureau is lobbying successfully for farmland preservation. The Connecticut Audubon Society keeps a vigilant watch over its tidal wetland preserve. The State DEP maintains a land acquisition fund. We may be a little part of the picture, but BBC's stewardship of the family land -- our unique inheritance -- is locked in step with the dawning new consciousness.

The Garden of Daily Living

PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS:

1. Peace of *mind*.
2. Peace of *heart*.
3. Peace of *soul*.

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF SQUASH:

1. Squash *gossip*.
2. Squash *grumbling*.
3. Squash *indifference*.
4. Squash *selfishness*.

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

1. Let us be *faithful*.
2. Let us be *kind*.
3. Let us be *patient*.
4. Let us really *love one another*.

NO GARDEN IS WITHOUT TURNIPS:

1. Turn up for *meetings*.
2. Turn up for *service*.
3. Turn up to *help one another*.

TO CONCLUDE OUR GARDEN WE MUST HAVE THYME:

1. Time for *each other*.
2. Time for *family*.
3. Time for *friends*.

HEY, DIDDLE DIDDLE!

Joel E. Helander

A male fiddler crab defending his burrow in the muddy shores of Long Island Sound waves one greatly enlarged claw as though playing a fiddle, but he is really sending a message to attract a female crab. These small crabs undergo daily color changes. Dark pigments disperse through the cells of the shell during the daytime, allowing the darkened crab to blend with its muddy habitat. At night, the pigment concentrates in the center of the cells, making the crab paler as it forages for food in the moonlight. Although they look fierce, fiddler crabs eat decaying plant matter.

How many fiddler crabs have you found at Benton Beach?

Our Family Celebrity

Joel E. Helander

Suzanne Kingsbury, daughter of Kasha Kingsbury Benton, has just released a Southern novel through Scribner Publishing Company. This best seller has received rave reviews, especially from Southern literary critics and Suzanne has been on a whirlwind speaking tour.

At RJ Julia Booksellers store in Madison, April 13, Suzanne spoke before a packed house, followed by a book signing. Many of her old Guilford family, friends, and associates were there to congratulate our new national celebrity and hometown hero. Suzanne is a Guilford High School graduate, class of 1987. During her relatively short writing career, she has traveled extensively, but considers Guilford "home."

Suzanne's new book, in hardcover, is titled "The Summer Fletcher Greel Loved Me." It tackles issues like racism, violence, and teenage peer pressure. In her interview with the Shore Line Times newspaper, she stated that "...ultimately, this is a coming of age story about loss of innocence...it is about rebelling against tradition in trying to individualize oneself..."

Congratulations, Suzanne! We hope to see you at Benton Beach this summer!

Notes

Newborns

Scott and Emily Falvey are now the proud parents of a baby boy!

Calendar of Events:

Please call Donna Chemacki (203-245-2998), Benton Beach Corp. secretary, for scheduling a special beach event. This is not necessary for small, spontaneous gatherings.

18-19 May 2002: Work Weekend (starts 9:00 AM)

18 June 2002: Lynne Ott with Alpha Club (supper)

21-29 June 2002: Fales/Schaeffer Campout

13 July 2002: Family Cookout (food starting at 1:00 PM; high tide at 2:15 PM)

Newsletter Content Submission

Please submit any articles or family updates to Tim Chemacki for incorporation into the next issue (*preferably by email*).

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