



2010 Calendar of Events

MAY 15 (SAT)* 10AM SPRINGS SPRING CLEANING
MEET AT SPRINGS GENERAL STORE FOR ASSIGNMENTS, RETURN FOR FREE LUNCH! BRING FRIENDS & FAMILY!!

MAY 21 (FRI) 7 - 9 PM FORUM AT THE SPRINGS FIREHOUSE:
IS LOUSE POINT LOST? HOW WILL COASTAL EROSION AND SEA LEVEL RISE IMPACT ACCABONAC...and you?

AUGUST 14 (SAT) 10AM-3PM FISHERMAN'S FAIR ASHAWAGH HALL
Test your "Creek IQ" at our booth!

SEPTEMBER 12 (SUN) 3-5PM OUR 25th ANNIVERSARY PARTY! AT CILE'S

SEPTEMBER 25 (SAT)* 10AM INTERNATIONAL BEACH CLEAN-UP LOUSE POINT AND GERARD POINT

- * Raindates for all clean-ups will be the following day
- Monthly meetings are usually held at 9am the first Monday of each month. Check papers or call us for locations: **324-2435**

email: apc11937@yahoo.com



956 Springs Fireplace Road
East Hampton, NY 11937
324-2435



ACCABONAC PROTECTION COMMITTEE



Newsletter • Volume 20

Spring 2010

Editor • Jorie Latham

A QUARTER CENTURY OF APC!!!

Hard to believe, but true! Twenty-five years have passed since a stalwart group of neighbors banded together in an effort to defend Accabonac Creek from the ever-looming threats of overdevelopment, poor planning, ignorance, greed and other forms of human folly. Armed with the formidable weapons of education, commitment, determination and most of all, love of



A spectacular day dawns over Accabonac

Julia Latham

the natural diversity and harmony and beauty of Accabonac, these few became many and slowly but surely have continued to make progress toward the protection, restoration and preservation of that creek and its surroundings that we all hold so dear.

The following list from our newsletter five years ago has been embellished to update (and brag a bit about) our history. It's a fairly complete list of APC's accomplishments since our inception in 1985. Many of these were group efforts, of course, but we played a significant, often leading, role in getting these done:

- Land Acquisitions: Weitzman, Kligman, parcels on Gerard, small lots throughout Springs **now including Dodge, Filipelli, Nivola, and Potter (see Nancy Kane's article for more on these)**
- Creating a plan, and gaining Town approval, for preservation of Louse Point and Gerard Point, including removal of asphalt and roadbed, planting to arrest erosion, installation of attractive fencing to establish appropriate foot paths, and erection of signs to identify the Points and encourage positive behavior. **We have since contributed to the creation of the Nature Preserve Management Plan for Louse Point.**
- Persuading

- Town to establish No Driving zone on Louse Point Beach
- Contributing to first Open Marsh Water Management project, giving ongoing OMWM support.
- Fighting bad Vector Control mosquito abatement policies and practices, bad development attempts, and bad behavior.

- Urging Town to offer tax incentives to facilitate replacement of old underground oil

- tanks, and similar approach for replacement of old septic systems
- Pushing to have Harbor Protection Overlay District enacted (and we continue to lobby for upgrade, to include the entire watershed)
- Producing forums to educate the public on issues of concern **such as the upcoming forum on May 21: Are We Losing Our Coastline... and Accabonac**
- Conducting water quality testing for two years under guidance of Cornell Coop Extension & EH Natural Resources Dept.
- Numerous plantings for erosion control on Gerard Point and Louse Point. Also **"unplantings" to help remove noxious invasives (See Cile Downs' article "Meet Miscanthus" and watch for her video, "Invaders in Paradise" in the LTV series "Long Live Accabonac!")**
- Among the first and longest ongoing Adopt-a-Roads (Louse Point Rd & Gerard Drive and now Landing Lane as well)
- Participation in all Great East End Clean Ups, and International Beach Clean Ups, & Co-producing "Springs Spring Cleanings" since 2004. **This year's SSC will be on May 15th — check the 2010 Schedule of Events for the others.**
- Involving local school groups, from elementary to

High School, in plantings and clean-ups.

- Participating in the 1st “A Day In Springs” festival with our Anything that Floats Regatta
- Participating in every Fisherman’s Fair (**August 14th this year**), with our ever-popular quiz game to “test your Creek IQ”.
- Supporting Community Preservation Fund and all other open space initiatives
- Supporting creation of opening on Gerard, now the Miller-Wood Culvert
- Contributing to Comp Plan, Peconic Estuary Program, and establishment of Peconic Baykeeper
- **Creating & distributing brochures on Public Water, Mosquito Spraying and How to Live Responsibly Within HPOD**
- Supporting Natural Resources and Group for the East End in Japanese Knotweed removal and replanting with beach grass at Louse Point
- Requesting Nature Preserve Committee to prevent further erosion at Pussy’s Pond by replanting grassy area and designating other parking area.
- Recommending Weitzman purchase be renamed Barbara Hale Reserve, and urging that it be maintained as meadow, a valuable and rapidly disappearing ecosystem. **The DEC permit for specified clearing has just been acquired.**
- **And just in this past year, the creation of a series of video programs titled “Long Live Accabonac!” currently airing on LTV.**

In many of these and other efforts, we have acted in coalition with other organizations such as Group for the East End, The Nature Conservancy, the EH Town Nature Preserve Committee, Southfork Groundwater Task Force, Concerned Citizens of Montauk, Springs Improvement Society, Springs Citizens Advisory Committee, EH Trails Preservation Society, Peconic Baykeeper, and Save the Peconic Bays, and LTV.

Our deep and abiding thanks to all of these groups for their ongoing hard work, and also to the EH Town Departments of Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources, Marine Patrol and the Harbor Master’s office for their partnership in keeping Accabonac vital and beautiful. Those past and present Town Board members and Trustees who have been responsive to our concerns and have taken action to help preserve and maintain this unique place have our utmost respect and gratitude.

But it is you, our members, numbering nearly a thousand, who continue to take an active interest in all of APC’s concerns, that have kept us going for these first 25 years, and we will continue to rely on your active and moral (and occasionally financial) support for the ongoing success of our mission!

MEET MISCANTHUS!

by Cile Downs

Miscanthus sinensis is not exactly new in town. Her graceful plumes, tawny winter color and ease of cultivation have made her popular far and wide, and she’s been sold at nurseries for some time. However, a realization is dawning that “Chinese silver grass” as she is also known, is a merciless take-over artist which can invade a field of native grasses or crops in short order and be very difficult to eradicate thereafter.



Miscanthus sinensis

I have just learned that Miscanthus can also move into high marsh, a dreadful thought for Accabonac protectors!

Bruce Horwith, Director of Preserves and Natural Resource Analyst at the Long Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, thinks we need legislation that will declare Miscanthus a dangerous invasive and ban its sale. “Using a scientific rating system developed by TNC and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden,” he says, “Miscanthus emerged with a very high invasiveness ranking. This and other findings on non-native invasive plants will inform future revisions of current invasive species legislation and “Do Not Sell” lists in Nassau & Suffolk counties.”

If you own a Miscanthus plant, the recommended course of action is to dig it out, root and all. If this operation must be delayed, at least lop off the seed heads. Its seeds fly around on the wind and plant progeny at amazing distances. You’ll do any neighbor who has one (or several) a favor by passing on this advice.

IT TAKES A HAMLET ...

by Nancy Kane

November 20th was a Good News Day for Springs. The Town Board held hearings on the proposed purchase of 26 acres of the Nivola property on Old Stone Highway and the one acre Potter parcel, almost hidden behind an historic house on Fireplace Road and located on Accabonac Harbor. Many supporters were in attendance. The Board decided to purchase both parcels.

Both acquisitions are important for Springs, and both are important for the health of Accabonac Harbor. People tend to concentrate on those properties that



Aerial view of the Potter Property (with proposed house and pool drawn in), The parcel was recently slated for acquisition, thanks to outstanding community effort

about the harbor and sometimes forget that other properties located within the Accabonac watershed area, like the Nivola parcel, can also have a direct effect on the waters of the harbor and the plants and living creatures that dwell within those waters.

The Accabonac Protection Committee was especially involved in the community effort that led to the purchase of the Potter property. Existing Community Preservation Funds were already allocated for other projects, and it was expected that incoming funds would be extremely limited. Architectural Review Board approval was necessary because the parcel was located in the recently created Springs Historic District, but the ARB had already passed on the proposed house that the out-of-state owners were planning to build.

The guidelines for the historic district specify that "New Buildings should be compatible with the historic buildings and with the character of the historic district." The proposed house was 5,000 square feet and very up-to-date, not at all compatible with the adjoining Pollock-Krasner House which is a designated National Historic Monument. Things definitely took a turn for the better when the ARB decided to re-open the hearing. Fourteen members of the community were in attendance, many of them from the APC, and letters came from an additional eleven individuals. The applicants suddenly realized that they might have a problem.

The proposed driveway was right up against the property line of Pollock-Krasner, and the backyard historic view-shed would never be the same. On the waterside, the Potter parcel borders several properties owned by The Nature Conservancy; and they, too, would be compromised. Furthermore, Accabonac Harbor has been designated as a Scenic Area of Statewide Significance, and the views from both water and land would be much diminished.

From the first, the push to purchase was a community effort. Helen Harrison, director of the Pollock-Krasner House, initially led the charge. When the Town Board finally agreed to pursue the purchase, it did so conditionally. The community would be required to raise half of the funding. Helen got right to work and did some fundraising of her own. The Nature Conservancy, under the direction of Marion Lindberg, raised a great deal more; and the APC helped with a donation and an appeal to its own members, and several of them gave generously as well.

Springs is usually pretty quiet, a welcome refuge from summer traffic and crowded beaches. The community has seldom been in such accord. We are all winners, and the preserved land will remain as a lasting legacy.

GRANTING APC A FIRM FOUNDATION

by Anita Wright

In May 2009, the Accabonac Protection Committee was awarded a \$5,000 grant from The Overbrook Foundation. The funding has allowed APC to broaden its endeavors to protect the harbor and its watershed by undertaking new projects in the past year. Some of these projects include an effort to inventory preserved land and easements around the harbor, as well as purchase a much-needed software upgrade for managing the mailing list for our 900-some members. The funds have also helped pay for the production of several 30 minute videos (the brainchild of APC member Cile Downs) that serve to educate the public on topics ranging from invasive plants to lawn alternatives to an up-close look at the fascinating flora and fauna that call Accabonac Harbor home. The video series, titled "Long Live Accabonac" can be seen on East Hampton Public Access Station (LTV). Go to <http://www.ltveh.org/> for a program schedule.

The Overbrook Foundation, established in 1948, is dedicated to improving the lives of humans all over the world and is deeply committed to protecting our earth's natural resources. This family foundation, located in New York City, has strong ties to Accabonac Harbor.

The Accabonac Protection Committee has received funding from The Overbrook Foundation since 2005. We are grateful for their continued interest in protecting Accabonac Harbor and its watershed.

OUR FIRST EVER ACCABONAC VIDEO FEST

This spring, on April 14, APC hosted a "video festival" at Ashawagh Hall comprised of two of the first installments in the original LTV series "Long Live Accabonac" which Cile Downs has written, produced, and directed with help in all of this from



Genie Henderson, producer and editor at LTV. A lively group gathered to watch “The Salt Marsh I” which features Drs. Pete and Judy Weiss* conducting one of their reknowned Accabonac wades. By seining, they catch and then describe various denizens of the creek. “Invaders In Paradise” was also shown, on the topic of invasive plants that threaten the health and even existence of native plants. Among the many who attended were the Weiss’s (up from NJ for the event), and David Brandenburg, the composer of the lovely theme music that enhances the introduction to each program.

Current episodes of “Long Live Accabonac!” can be seen on LTV (Ch 20) on Tuesdays @7pm, Thursdays @ 4pm and Saturdays @ 9:30am.

* (Judy’s book, *Salt Marshes, a Natural and Unnatural History* was published last year, and features Accabonac. It is the subject of another video: “The Salt Marsh II”)

DEC PERMIT FOR BARBARA HALE REFUGE

Persistence has once again paid off. The permit application to restore and maintain much of the Barbara Hale Refuge as a meadow, originally submitted to the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation in July of 2007 has, with some conditions, been approved! Clearing will be allowed above a wetland buffer, leaving mature cedars standing, but removing the invasives, the dead woodies and the weed species that hinder the return of the meadow that thrived there until mowing stopped in the mid1980’s. There is still work to be done before that work can begin—but we are very grateful to Larry Penny, director of Natural Resources for his diligence in pursuing this, and to Dawn McReynolds of the DEC for her attention to this project, and her agreement that has made it possible.

ARE WE LOSING OUR COASTLINE... AND ACCABONAC

FIND OUT AT OUR FORUM ON MAY 21 at the Springs Firehouse 7-9pm

The storms of the past winter and spring have once again dramatically shortened the spit called Louse Point. As sea level rises and these storms become more common, (as seems to be the case), what can, and should be done to deal with the impending loss of the barrier beaches that literally (and litorally) define Accabonac Harbor? We have invited two experts to address our local concerns about a looming threat to all coastal areas. They are Joseph Tanski, Coastal Processes Specialist at NY Sea Grant, and Sara Newkirk, head of the “Coastal Resilience Project” at The Nature Conservancy on Long Island.

Mr. Tanski, describing “Long Island’s Dynamic South Shore: A Primer on the Forces and Trends Shaping our Coast” a booklet he developed for NY Sea Grant, states that “Presently, there are a number of efforts being undertaken by federal, state, and local interests to develop erosion management and storm damage reduction plans for the south shore of Long Island. Decision makers, coastal stakeholders and the public are being asked to review and approve these measures which can cost tens of millions of dollars and are often controversial. These audiences require science-based information about the processes and forces shaping the shoreline and the effect of these changes on both the natural and built environment in a form understandable to the layperson.” (from Cornell College of Agricultural and Life Sciences annual faculty reporting. 8/5/08)

Ms. Newkirk’s Coastal Resilience Project includes an online interactive map-based tool “to help decision makers visualize the likely impacts of sea level rise and increased coastal hazards on both natural and human communities along the south shore of Long Island.” She will be demonstrating the use of this vivid visual modeling program specifically as it relates to Accabonac.

“Scientists tell us that sea levels will rise by as much as four feet by the end of this century,” said Ms. Newkirk, coastal team leader for The Nature Conservancy on Long Island. “Long Island’s shores have some of the most highly developed lands in the coastal zone. Rising seas will impact both people and nature, causing flooding in coastal communities, heightened storm surges, and drowning of wetlands and other natural habitats.” (from TNC: “The Nature Conservancy on Long Island Addresses Global Warming”)

Dire as these scenarios sound (and are), we need to know what to expect and what can be done now and we need to get our neighbors and officials to know as well. So be sure to attend and bring others!

ACCABONAC PROTECTION COMMITTEE



**Want More?
Visit our website
accabonac.org**





Barry Johnson led a valiant group of Brownie Scouts in cleaning up around Pussy's Pond.

Jorie Latham

**This year,
the Seventh Annual
Springs Spring Cleaning takes
place on May 15
Meet at Springs General Store
10am**



Springs School students tackled the trash at the Springs Spring Cleaning last May.

Jorie Latham

