



This painting, by Ralph Carpentier, graces the new APC poster being unveiled at our forum on April 13.

ACCABONAC PROTECTION COMMITTEE



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“WHAT HAVE WE LOST? WHAT CAN BE SAVED?”

On April 13 from 2-4pm, the Accabonac Protection Committee will present a forum at the Springs Firehouse on Ft Pond Blvd on the theme of “Accabonac: What Have We Lost? What can Be Saved?”

After a showing of the haunting video “Accabonac Harbor” by Alec Hirschfeld, a panel of experts will speak, covering a range of topics.

Arnold Leo, longtime secretary of the Baymen’s Association and current EH Town consultant on commercial fisheries, will discuss the moving of the channel back in the 1950’s. Mike Bottini, author and environmental consultant, will address ground water and public water issues. Kevin McAllister, the Peconic Baykeeper, will talk about runoff and vector control. Larry Penny, Director of EH Dept. of Natural Resources, will speak on the value of restoring the Barbara Hale Refuge to a meadow, and Marian Lindberg of the Nature Conservancy will describe the process and value of Accabonac being listed as a Scenic Area of Statewide Significance.

There will be time for questions from the audience, after which refreshments will be offered.

At this event, we are also delighted to be unveiling our handsome new poster, which features one of Ralph Carpentier’s beautiful paintings of Accabonac. There will be a drawing for 10 posters signed by the artist. Posters will be on sale after the program.

Living By the Code

by Nick Bryan

Among the many blessings of living in East Hampton is having a Town Code that contains laws that can help protect our natural resources, including the beautiful Accabonac Harbor. We should be aware of this Code and abide by it, of course, but should we observe violations of the Code, we also have an obligation to report them to the Office of Ordinance Enforcement. This is not a form of domestic spying: we do this to protect the health and well-being of all members of our

community and the delicate environment that we value so highly. It’s not possible for the police, harbor patrol or code enforcement to be everywhere. They need, and appreciate, our help (which we may need to be persistent in offering!)

Of particular interest to those who enjoy the privilege of living near Accabonac Harbor are items in the Code designed to protect the health of the waters. These include installation of proper outdoor lighting to minimize its impact on marine organisms; clearing restrictions to protect groundwater and mitigate runoff that may pollute the Harbor. The proper disposal of toxic substances is also essential to protect our groundwater and surface waters.

In addition to some of the more obvious infractions, such as illegal beach driving, illegal trash dumping and vandalism, the Code specifies violations such as shining lights into, or over, the creek; using treated wood in or near the water (CCA or ACQ); and completely enclosing property with deer fence, without leaving any wildlife corridor.

Following are general definitions of some violations common around Accabonac:

Illegal clearing: clear-cutting around a house, mowing to the marsh, or worse, MOWING THE MARSH

Illegal Beach Driving: without a sticker; within 300 feet of Louse Point; within 10 feet of vegetation.

Boating Violations: illegal mooring or storage, abandoned boats, excessive wakes, jet-ski craft in the harbor

Illegal dumping: household trash in town trashcans; trash left outside of cans, or overflowing trashcans, in Town Preserves (such as Pussy’s Pond, Louse Point and Gerard Park) Dumping paints or any other toxic substance on the ground anywhere

Domestic Animal Problems: unsupervised dog, dog waste, or dogs on the beach where or when not permitted (unleashed dogs are banned within 300 feet of paved road ends from 10 am to 6pm, between May 15 to Sept 15

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT

(631) 324-3858 • 300 Pantigo Place

For more detailed information, the East Hampton Town Code is available from the Town Clerk’s Office, and on the Web:



Set in stone: The Town Board agreed to have the Hale Refuge maintained as a meadow as stated on the bronze plaque that marks the future entrance to the

www.town.east-hampton.ny.us/code

Why a Meadow?

by Cile Downs

Almost all of Springs was once cleared for agriculture, despite the fact that glacial moraine makes poor farm land. As far as we know, it was originally all woods, which must have been a back-breaking job to clear without machines. Sooner or later, people found out they were better off grazing animals on it. Even the Indians were, some say, in the habit of burning over meadows near the water. When some of us arrived here, in the 50's, the Barbara Hale Refuge was a dairy farm, or the grazing part of one. Later, beef cattle were pastured there, then horses. All this time, the land was kept in meadow by an annual pass with the sickle-bar, in addition to the grazing. It doesn't take much to keep a meadow a meadow, but once it starts to grow up in bushes and trees, it becomes a big job.

After it was sold to the Weitzmans, who planned to develop it, a firm called Interscience advised them not to remove any vegetation, lest the D.E.C. swoop in. The 17 acres quickly became wooded. This was a tragedy for any number of species that once thrived in the grassland. Meadowlarks, kildeer, upland sandpipers, grasshopper sparrows, visiting glossy ibis, migrating canada geese, hunting kestrels, quail, pheasant and so on and on. Happily, after 15 years of effort by APC and others, the Town and County purchased the property. Several more years of lobbying by APC persuaded the Town Board to create a Nature Preserve there, name it in memory of Barbara Hale, and restore the meadow that had flourished there for generations.

Larry Penny of Natural Resources stated years ago that it would be more valuable ecologically as wet meadow than as woods, the former becoming ever

rarer and the latter ever more common. The views of the Creek that used to be visible from any of the roads around it were considered a community asset, and everyone who remembers them would like to see them restored. The clearing requires the approval of the NY State DEC, and would maintain a buffer at the edge of the wetlands. A permit application was submitted by Larry Penny, and we are hopeful that in further discussions with the DEC, a plan will be devised that will allow the meadow and its flora and fauna to return

Scenic Significance and Managing Louse Point

by Eileen Catalano

Last fall New York State held public hearings in consideration of naming certain areas in East Hampton, including Accabonac Harbor, Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance. The results were resoundingly positive and the motion was adopted by the Town of East Hampton. This will hopefully soon be followed by adoption by the State. On a local level this translates to the recognition of Accabonac Harbor's scenic significance as being part of our Town Comprehensive plan. This is extremely exciting as it sets further standards in place to protect the health and beauty of the harbor.

These two concerns are at the core of the APC mission. With that in mind we recently met with The East Hampton Town Nature Preserve Committee to propose the creation of an official management plan for Louse Point. The Nature Preserve Committee is a tremendous asset to the town as it brings together expertise from many diverse departments and committees including Natural Resources, The Town Trustees, The Trails Preservation Society, Waterfowl USA as well as an attorney who specializes in land use and a Town Board liason, Brad Lowen, who is himself a bayman. It is our hope that such a management plan will create protocols and allocate responsibility for the care and maintenance of Louse Point, which has suffered a combination of overuse, natural erosion and lack of attention.

After APC had individual discussions with departments of Parks & Recreation, Highway and Natural Resources recently, we were pleased to see asphalt removed from the beach, the fence pulled back from the new "road end", and some long-dead trees taken down, (in addition to the ongoing heroic efforts of Natural Resources and Group for the East End in fighting invasives). However, there are numerous worn out and damaged signs, a crater filled parking lot and other problems that we feel would be best handled by employment of a well-thought out (and utilized!) plan.

Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader About Runoff? (not for long...)

by Anita Wright

Springs School 5th graders in Irene Tully's class are engaged in a unique and exciting class project. The students will learn about and map stormwater runoff into Accabonac Harbor and propose remediation ideas that they plan to present to East Hampton Town officials. Students will focus on run-off from Landing Lane, Shipyard Lane and the corner of Springs Fireplace and Old Stone Highway, all in close proximity to the school.

The project, a collaboration between the school and several organizations, was spearheaded by Rameshwar Das, whose son is in Irene Tully's class.

Beginning with a visit and presentation from Peconic Baykeeper Kevin McAllister, students learned about stormwater runoff and how it impacts our local and regional waterways and the life that inhabits them. Students will get a first hand look at stormwater runoff into the Harbor during a rainy day field trip with Group for the East End Educator, Anita Wright. On this trip, students will document run-off locations using topo maps, compasses and digital photography. Back in the classroom students will map their findings by using the Green Map® System, a tool used around the world for promoting sustainable development .

Larry Penny, Director of East Hampton Town Natural Resources has agreed to speak to the students about drainage remediation.

Finally, with the help of their ever-enthusiastic teacher Irene Tully, students will create a presentation to educate the public as well as bring the attention of local government to the problem of stormwater runoff in Accabonac Harbor and possible solutions.



This year, the Springs Spring Cleaning will be held on Saturday, May 17 (raindate Sunday) at 10am. As always, the Springs General Store will provide a delicious chili lunch for participants, but for the first time this year's cleanup is being organized by the Dayton family (pictured here at a previous Springs Cleaning) and the Wiltshire family. So come, bring family, friends and gloves, it's always a great community event!

What Do You Know? (or want to know?)

If you have an idea or question for a future APC newsletter article, let us know!

info@accabonac.org

And check out our website

www.accabonac.com

Overbrook Foundation Renews Grant

In the fall of 2007, the Overbrook Foundation awarded APC a generous grant renewal of \$5,000. The grant report was prepared by Anita Wright, an educator with Group for the East End and advisor to the APC.

Support from the Overbrook Foundation has enabled APC to tackle issues related to the pressures of development and growth in the Accabonac watershed with a variety of different strategies. These new methods of outreach allow us to educate more people about the beauty and fragility of Accabonac Harbor and encourage them to take an active role in its protection.

Once again, we are thankful to the Overbrook Foundation for their support and we are working as hard as ever to protect Accabonac Harbor.