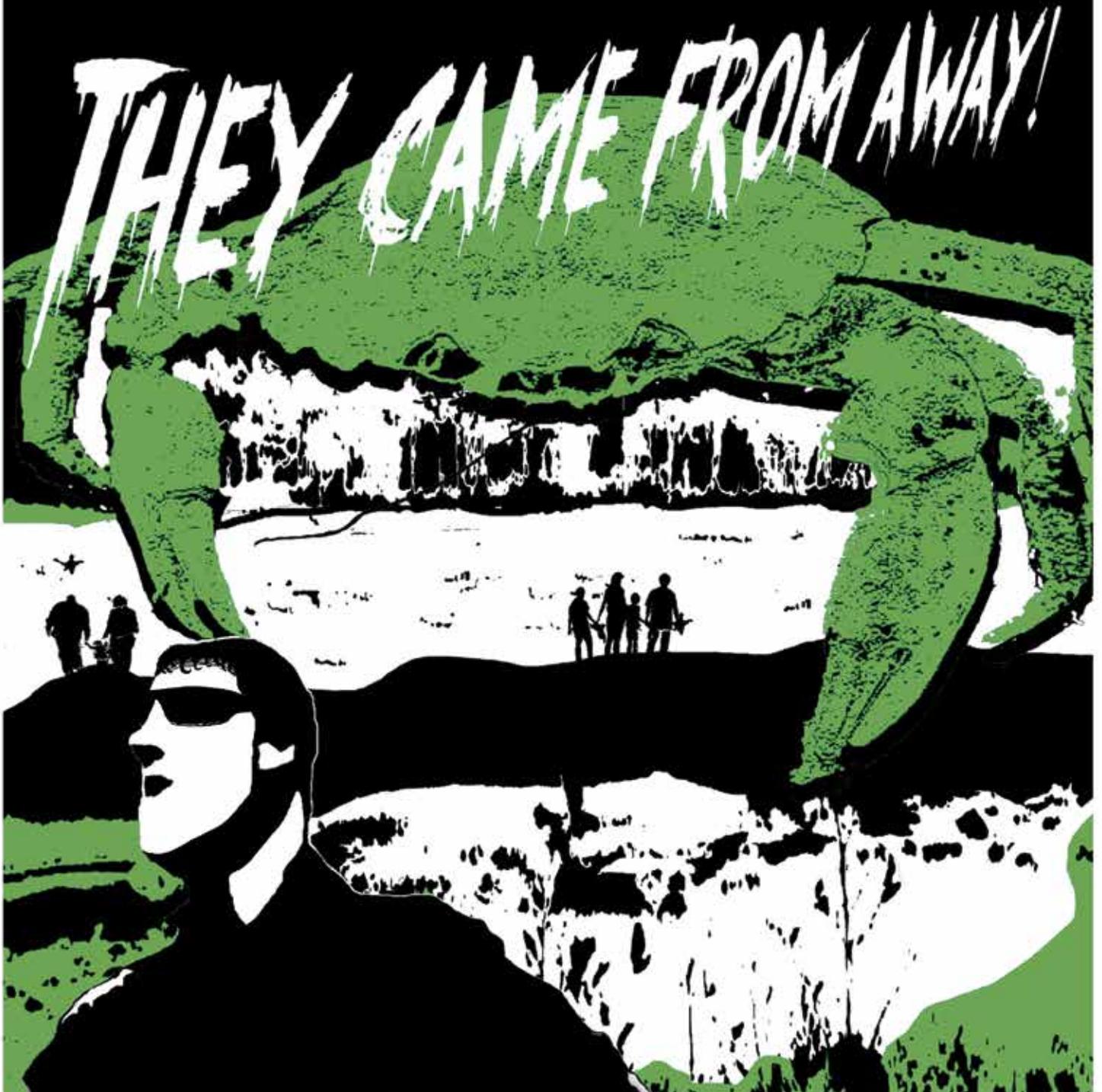


watermark

Published by Laudholm Trust in support of Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve

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watermark

A newsletter for members of
Laudholm Trust and supporters of
the Wells National Estuarine
Research Reserve

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Cover illustration by Trevor O'Donnell

upfront

People News

CTP Associate Annie Cox had her second child, Harvey Winslow Moore, in April. Ellen McCanne Labbe, former education associate, gave birth to Frederick Wallace Labbe in June. And — stop the presses — development coordinator Sarah Emerson reported the arrival of Milo Emerson Shaddox in early July.

Last year's Summer Camp Coordinator Ellen Gawarkiewicz received a Fulbright award to teach English in Nepal for eight months. Paige (Rutherford) Steele, former environmental educator, has taken an education/outreach position at the Friends of Acadia.

Propane Scare

During set-up for a recent weekend event, a pickup truck was accidentally driven into the propane tank cap outside the ecology center and auditorium, causing a gas leak. The site was evacuated and Wells fire and police responded immediately. Emergency responders from several towns were on site for hours to maintain security and accomplish repairs. Normalcy returned in the evening and the Sunday Tour de Cure bike ride went ahead with success. A new tank and cap were installed a month later, with insurance covering the cost of replacement.

Going with the Flow

After a couple of inexplicable septic system backups, a probing camera showed the pipe carrying waste to the leach field was buckled and improperly pitched. That, plus a septic pump 25 years beyond its predicted lifespan, made a system fix advisable. A new pump, piping, associated wiring, and alarm system were installed this spring. John

Speight, facility manager, calls the system "a wonder of efficiency and redundancy."

From Moody to Goose Rocks

In 1989, the Maine Supreme Court ruled that the public has very limited rights to use privately owned land in the intertidal zone (the land between high and low tide). Cases involving Moody Beach, Goose Rocks Beach, and other decisions have had a dramatic effect on residents and visitors.

The reserve is convening a lecture series through which experts will explore the customs, laws, and policies surrounding ownership and use of Maine's shoreline. Lectures are scheduled on July 23 and August 28, and a third is being planned for the fall.

Flycatcher Comes and Goes

Birder Ken Janes got a thrill when he came upon a scissor-tailed flycatcher along the Muskie Trail in early June. Oklahoma's state bird is a real rarity in Maine, but remarkably this was the second one seen at the reserve. The long-tailed beauty was enjoyed by a handful of lucky birders before apparently flying off after just a few hours.



KEN JANES

nik'snotebook: Welcome, Invaders!

Maine has historically (and, at times, comically) viewed those “from away” with great suspicion and even scorn. Rightly so, when it comes to invasive, non-native species like mouse ear snails, red algae, and European green crabs that all now impinge on our Gulf. These diabolical intruders, and many more, are a horror story for our coast, but they’re just one tale in this Summer 2014 issue of *Watermark*, your beach reading from the Wells Reserve at Laudholm.



Because while these aquatic invaders may come “from away,” so too do our annual fresh-faced summer interns, our many excellent research partners, and continual new ideas. And truly, Southern Maine’s beach towns would be ghost towns without our summer tourists. So we welcome all these new arrivals to the Wells Reserve at Laudholm and hope they take back home with them, from their visits or even just by reading this summer newsletter, a little bit of “the way life should be.” Or could be, anyway, with a little more science, education, and conservation.

Have a wonderful summer. Do come over; it’s your Reserve!



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Partners in research, education, stewardship, and preservation.



The Wells Reserve is one of 28 National Estuarine Research Reserve sites throughout the country. All reserves require local funding to match federal grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Wells Reserve is the only reserve that receives its match from a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Each year, Laudholm Trust contributes private funds and in-kind services to support Wells Reserve operations and capital improvements.

What's happening at the Wells Reserve at Laudholm? Sign up for Monthly Updates sent by email, Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and subscribe to our blog. Laudholm members can look forward to Watermark and other occasional "snail" mailings.

stewardship / conservation

Ladder Opens Branch Brook to Migrating Fish

LEFT: Research Director Dr. Kristin Wilson describes how the science team will monitor fish using the newly reconstructed ladder in Branch Brook. BELOW: The rain abated after the dedication ceremony, allowing attendees to inspect the inner workings of the fish ladder.

The concrete framework was unchanged, but internal structures were strengthened and improved.



About 30 people braved one of the wettest mornings in May to dedicate the reconstructed fish ladder behind the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District treatment plant on Route 1. The ladder gives migratory fish new access to 1½ miles of Branch Brook plus tributaries.

The original fish ladder, built in 1955, had been inoperative for much of its history. Repairing and improving it required close collaboration between the reserve and the water district, guidance and expertise from Maine Rivers, and studies of hydrology, engineering, existing fish populations, and aquatic habitat. The ladder was rebuilt at the end of 2013.

By designing the ladder for brook trout and river herring, the poorest climbers among our fishes of interest, the project team felt confident that others, like sea lamprey and rainbow smelt, would manage the climb just fine.

At the top of the ladder is a removable trap that will reveal how many fish are successfully climbing the fishway. The science team is also electronically tracking fish implanted with PIT tags (passive integrated transponders), which are like a fishy E-ZPass.

More photos and details at wellsreserve.org/branchbrook.

Thanks to the funders and partners who made the project possible: The Nature Conservancy, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, Maine Coastal Program, Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Gulf of Maine Coastal Program, Mousam and Kennebunk Rivers Alliance, Maine Rivers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Stantec (design and engineering), Linkel Construction (fabrication and construction).

From Away: Voracious Green Crabs Digging Deep in Maine Marshes

Cutting-edge Scans a First for Conservation Science in Maine

For 130 years, a small green invader has been attacking our coast. Non-native European green crabs are decimating Maine's \$56 million clam industry. They are pushing into our larger shellfishery, too, clogging lobster traps and pilfering bait.

The green marauders may also be burrowing into Maine's estuarine salt marshes and killing the grasses there.

When grasses die, the marsh erodes, fouling these vital fish nurseries. Salt marshes weakened by the crab onslaught will crumble under the stronger and more frequent storms and floods climate science predicts.

To study marsh sediments, researchers typically extract soil "cores" and dissect them. But dissection ruins green crab burrows.

Not long ago Dr. Earl Davey, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency researcher in Rhode Island, employed a novel technique to solve this problem. He used computer-aided tomography (CT) scanners, frequently used to look inside hospital patients, to inspect the innards of salt marsh soil cores *without disturbing their structure*. This year, we will use Davey's technique to look inside Maine's marshes.



Reserve scientists will use a CT scanner like this to look inside salt marsh soil cores for damage done to grass roots by burrowing green crabs.



Through a board connection to Southern Maine Health Care, and with a recent grant from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund (where our proposal was ranked #1 in the state), Wells Reserve researchers will work with Dr. Davey and UMaine geologist Dr. Dan Belknap to study green crab effects on salt marshes. They will rush core samples from marshes in York, Wells, and Damariscotta to Southern Maine Health Care's CT scanner — graciously provided — and peer inside the cores to see how badly the green crabs are attacking the marshes' roots.

From Away: Visitors from Chile and Colombia Focus on Research and Management



Nine managers from Chilean and Colombian national parks, forests, and sanctuaries visited the reserve during a study tour for promoting cooperation between protected areas in New England and the South American countries, sharing knowledge, and addressing priority management issues.

Reserve staff talked with delegates about climate change, sea level rise, habitat management, river restoration, and fish migration. Delegates also learned about the differences between national wildlife refuges, whose emphasis is on wildlife and habitat protection, and national estuarine research reserves, which focus on using protected land as a platform for science and education.

The New England study tour was organized by the U.S. Departments of State and Interior and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

*research / coastal science**The Sandy Dialogues*

Hurricane Sandy taught New Jersey some important lessons about preparing for, responding to, and rebuilding after a superstorm. What can Maine learn from that state's experience?

"Fostering Community Resilience through Stories," a Wells Reserve project, is connecting the Wells and Saco communities with people in New Jersey who had to deal with Sandy's aftermath. In partnership with the Jacques Cousteau Reserve and New Jersey decision-makers, a Maine contingent visited the state in June to learn first-hand about disaster preparation and recovery.

Later this year, we will host New Jersey officials as they visit Drakes Island and Camp Ellis to share their stories.

For more on The Sandy Dialogues, visit wellsreserve.org/sandy.

Three Ways to Look at a Landscape Feature: Streamside Buffers

Three angles of investigation into three waterways flowing through three municipalities have reached one encouraging conclusion: The Merriland River, Branch Brook, and the Little River are ecologically healthy and the people largely responsible, those living in the combined watershed, know and appreciate it.

The design for our Sustaining Coastal Landscapes and Community Benefits project, the first study of its kind, drew from the sciences of ecology, economy, and communications. Reserve staff and their colleagues from Clark University looked at streamside buffers in Sanford, Kennebunk, and Wells to find out how they affect life in the water and how members of the community value them.

Ecology: What's in the Water?

The reserve's science team studied forested and partially open streamside buffers along both the Merriland River and Branch Brook. They surveyed fish and macroinvertebrates ("bugs"), measured several water quality indicators, and evaluated habitats within the 250-foot shoreland buffer zone.



After crunching the numbers, they found the unexpected: No difference between forested and partially open areas. While initially surprising, a ready explanation is that the watershed, as a whole, remains in good condition. It is well forested, with "disturbed" sites retaining many of their environmentally positive qualities.

Economy: What's it Worth?

Economics is not just about money, says Dr. Robert Johnston of Clark University, it's about value — one's willingness to exchange one thing for another. This study aimed to reveal how people value streamside buffers.

Johnston's mail-in survey, "Choices for Our Land and Water," was painstakingly developed over 3 years to ensure its success. Survey packets were delivered



TOP: Researchers set a fyke net in Branch Brook. BOTTOM: Brook Trout caught for measurement (213 mm) and released.

to 3,472 households in Kennebunk, Wells, and Sanford last fall and nearly one third — 1,126 — were returned. That in itself means something: This topic is important to people.

Through the survey, Johnston learned “people really care about water quality” and, on average, are willing to invest in greater setbacks from waterways to maintain the benefits of a healthy watershed.

Communication: What Did You Say?

For the communications component of this project, Clark University’s Dr. Verna DeLauer pooled and parsed a series of interviews with selected community members.

DeLauer’s approach (“I study what people say”) combined research, experience, and a dose of intuition to determine what values underlie people’s water policy preferences. By identifying how people perceive issues surrounding streamside buffers, she was able to recommend ways to talk about the subject that should resonate with people

living in the watershed.

Next Steps

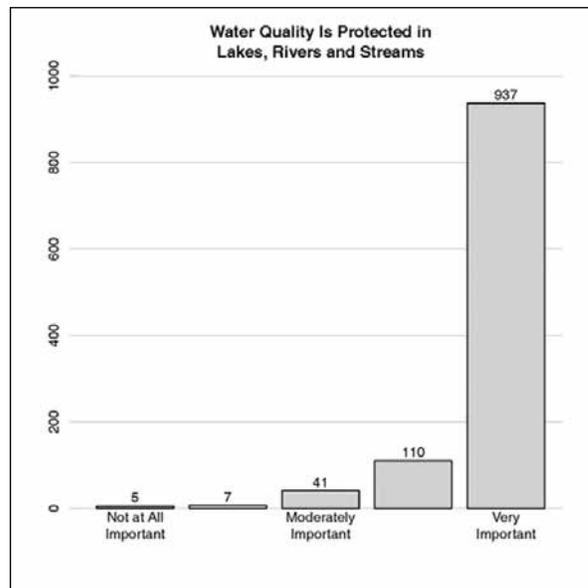
Sustaining Coastal Landscapes and Community Benefits kicked off in 2010 and wraps up this fall. The research team revealed results from each study during a workshop and presentation in June and now must integrate their findings — technically for ecologists, economists, and communicators; accessibly for survey participants and the communities at large.

While publications and outreach are still a few months off, the takeaway from this investigation of ecology, policy choice, and personal values is good news for residents and municipal officials:

- You are not alone; your values are shared.
- You and your neighbors have kept this watershed in good condition.
- You want to keep it that way and are willing to make fair tradeoffs.

We’re with you.

Protecting water quality earned universal support from respondents in a survey of nearly 3,500 households in Wells, Kennebunk, and Sanford done by Clark University last fall.



Sustainability Science Drives Saco Estuary Project



Researchers from the University of New England and the Wells Reserve have been studying the health of the Saco River, the benefits people derive from it, and how the local community can protect the estuarine ecosystem into the future. At June’s Saco Science Symposium, 10 of them detailed their investigations of salt marshes, water quality, invasive species, food webs, and other topics. After 5 years of steady work, they collectively describe the recovering estuary as “thriving,” thanks in part to an engaged community and improved water quality.

For details on this project, visit wellsreserve.org/saco.

education / environmental learning

A Sense of Wonder for Growing Head Start Program



Preschoolers and parents from Head Start centers in Biddeford and Sanford have been thrilled by our program connecting a storybook reading and craft project to a nature walk. Almost 150 people from six centers came to the reserve last fall, thanks to pilot funding from the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation.

Thanks to the Sam L. Cohen Foundation, the Community Building Grant Program at the Maine Community Foundation, Pratt & Whitney, and an anonymous funder we can keep this program growing in the coming year.

This fall, we will return to environmentally themed storytelling with puppets, creative activities, and time on the trails for kids. Participating Head Start families will receive copies of the featured book plus Rachel Carson's *A Sense of Wonder*.



James Dochtermann

Forest of the Future

Four new interpretive signs are being placed along the Yankee Woodlot Trail to explain how, with active management, a woodland can protect water while providing diverse wildlife habitat, high quality timber, and a place for people to explore and enjoy. An accompanying brochure will offer even more detail.

Each trail sign poses a question. The first is...

As you walk along this trail, picture the forest of the future. How is it different from today?

Read about our plans for this 34-acre parcel at wellsreserve.org/yankeewoodlot.

The Yankee Woodlot Project is made possible by Project Canopy (a cooperative effort of the Maine Forest Service and GrowSmart Maine), the Charles and Rebecca S. Richardson Lifelong Learning Fund, and Laudholm Trust.

Group Volunteering: Being Social on a Mission

This spring we have been truly blessed by groups who have chosen to come to the Wells Reserve at Laudholm for volunteer projects. Their work gives a much needed boost to the efforts of our fabulous weekly volunteers.

In April, a group of 10 high school students and chaperones from the Milton Vermont Youth Coalition picked the reserve for their alternative spring break. Over the week, they led Earth Day activities, read to kids here for a whale camp, did trail work, and helped us meet many needs on the campus and at the Alheim Commons.

In early May, 30 Liberty Mutual volunteers attacked stubborn invasive species growing along the fence bordering the native plant garden, making that garden even more spectacular. They also began painting doors to the Coastal Ecology Center.

Days later, a team of eight AmeriCorps/NCCC volunteers arrived for 7 weeks of whirlwind activity. No job was too daunting for the Moose 5 team. They painted and pulled invasive plants, mowed, landscaped, glazed windows, built gates and fences, fished with fyke nets, monitored soundscape microphones, and much more.

As part of the annual York County United Way Day of Caring in early June, 16 volunteers from two area businesses, Cision and Wasco, worked on the habitat restoration project benefiting the New England cottontail and other wildlife.

Finally, eight incoming students from the University of New England worked alongside our AmeriCorps volunteers for an afternoon as part of their Trailblazers orientation.

That's a busy spring! We truly appreciate how much all volunteers enrich our lives with their skill, spirit, dedication, and unique personalities. Thank you!



Members of the "Moose 5" team of AmeriCorps volunteers paint the repaired siding of the farmhouse in May.

volunteerneeds

Talk with Nancy

Call 207-646-1555 ext 118

Whatever your talent — ease with people, ability in a trade, comfort with technology, or great penmanship — we can find a place for you!

Parking Attendants

From now till Columbus Day, our friendly greeters welcome visitors, accept and record admission fees, and share information about activities.

Trail Stewards and Rangers

Wells Reserve **Trail Stewards** adopt part of a trail to maintain during the growing season. They clip back invasive plants and other foliage regularly. **Rangers** walk the trails on weekends and holidays from spring to fall, providing assistance to visitors and monitoring trails.

Maintenance Volunteers

Mowing, building, fixing, trimming, painting, good company, and good humor are in store. John Speight, facility manager, welcomes anyone willing to work 1 to 3 mornings a week.

Marketing and Fund Raising

Do you have an interest in marketing or member cultivation? Are you skilled in obtaining sponsorships? Help us tell people about this national treasure, the Wells Reserve at Laudholm, and all the great work happening here.

Special Events: Concerts, Crafts, Fiddles

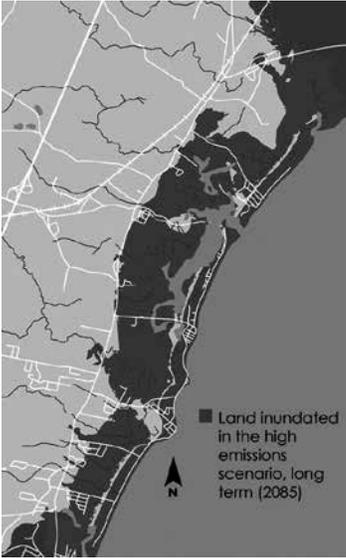
Would you like to be involved in event planning or be available to help on the day? We can find you a job you will enjoy. If you already have volunteered at any event, rest assured we will be calling you again!

Help welcome our Volunteers for Peace

In August, Volunteers for Peace will arrive from Russia, Mexico, Korea, Japan, and Italy. If you have good bicycles to donate, garden produce to share, interest in hosting a dinner, or wheels for a ride to the store, they and we would greatly appreciate your involvement. Please give Nancy a call at ext 118.

community / coastal training

Risk Assessment Will Guide Wells on Adapting to Future Climate



The Wells shoreline will be dramatically different by 2100 if the world's future economic growth depends primarily on fossil fuels and leads to atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations of 940 parts per million.

The Town of Wells can expect to be warmer, wetter, and more prone to flooding as a result of climate change, according to a risk assessment completed this spring by the New England Climate Adaptation Project (NECAP).

The risk assessment reports that more than 1,900 land parcels in Wells will be at moderate to high risk of flooding over the long term. Under the gloomier of modeled scenarios, today's 100-year coastal floods will be happening twice daily by the end of the century.

The NECAP research team came to Wells in May to share these sobering projections and to help the Town work on its plans to adapt to climate change impacts. In focused working groups, participants identified both challenges and possible solutions, setting the stage for next steps.

NECAP partners included the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Science Impact Collaborative, the Consensus Building Institute, and the Wells Reserve, and drew on expertise from the University of New Hampshire and the Town of Wells.

Solar Success: Sun to Supply All Electricity Needs

Two years ahead of schedule, our goal to obtain all our electricity from the sun is within reach! We have been awarded two grants to launch the final phase of our initiative. With \$86,898 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and \$10,000 from the Davis Conservation Foundation, we can now install another set of photovoltaic panels on the Alheim property while making energy efficiency improvements in the Visitor Center. Our dual "conserve and convert" effort puts us well on our way to becoming the first nonprofit in Maine to meet 100% of our electricity requirements using solar power.

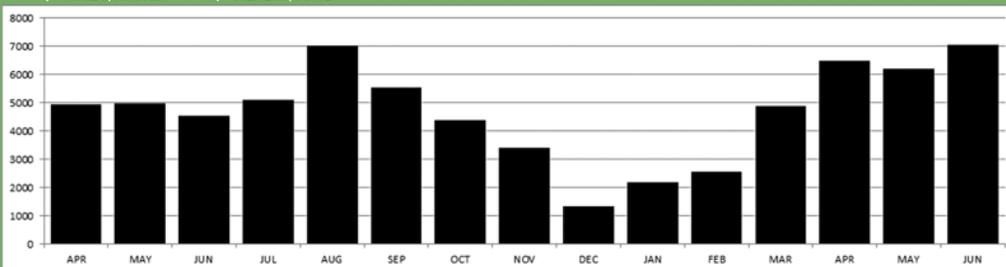


MCEC, MARCH



ALHEIM, JUNE

Energy Produced	74,425 KWh
CO₂ Avoided	96,807 lb
Savings	\$10,345



KILOWATT-HOURS OF SOLAR POWER GENERATED AT THE THE WELLS RESERVE, APRIL 2013 TO JUNE 2014

New Members

Rich Alcock
Patricia Angers
Wayne Archard
John Badenhausen
Isabella Maria Bazata
Janet Beaven
Kenneth & Rosalie Boutin
Cathleen Bryant
Susan & Bob Cashman
Rob & Jan Chapman
Helen Charov
Debra Choroszy
Robert Clark
James E. Cummings
Mark Cutler
Jim & Sandy Dean
Susan DeLeo
Markus & Karen Diebolt
Sarah Emerson & Bobby Shaddox
Roger & Diane Fontaine
Joseph Foster
Christine & Richard Gagne
Ralph & Helene Gates
Kristen Gauthier
Eagle Glasheim & Amy Vozel

Roger Gobeil
Patricia & Dan Hadley
Don Hamilton
Joan Hamlin-Chapin
Maureen Harding
Andrew Harrington
Lisa Hayes
Lois Hayner
Pam Jolivet
Jeff Kantorowski
Dave Kelley
Lynn Kinch
Justin King
Nancy Knott
Jeffrey Kugler
Laurent & Anne Lavigne
Aaron Lehoux
Meg & Eric Martinson
Paul & Susan McCarron
Jim Tovar & Kathy McKinney-Tovar
Mary Ellen Mega
Todd Miner
Elaine Mitchell
King Montgomery
Dr. Conner Moore

Diane Morency
Margaret Nelson
Sharon & John Newell
Derek & Nicole Nielsen
Beulah O'Bryant
Tatiana & Alex Olshansky
Maureen Phillips & Joseph Newpol
Richard & Robin Planco
Stephen Pollak
Kathleen & Jim Quimby
Caren Reed
Stephanie Ryan
Martin & Barbara Schwam
Sentry Inn at York Harbor
Laurie Severance
Nancy & John Snell
Janice Sterling
Robert & Eileen Stokes
Mike Stone
Jeanne Sunny
Nancy & John Tuttle
David Wells
Kathleen & Kevin Wilkinson
Renee & Greg Wilson

Memorial Gifts

Alfred Pompeo
Georgie Fisher
John David Gallagher
Robert Littlefield
Robert Stephens

thankyou

Gifts received
December 2013 through June 2014

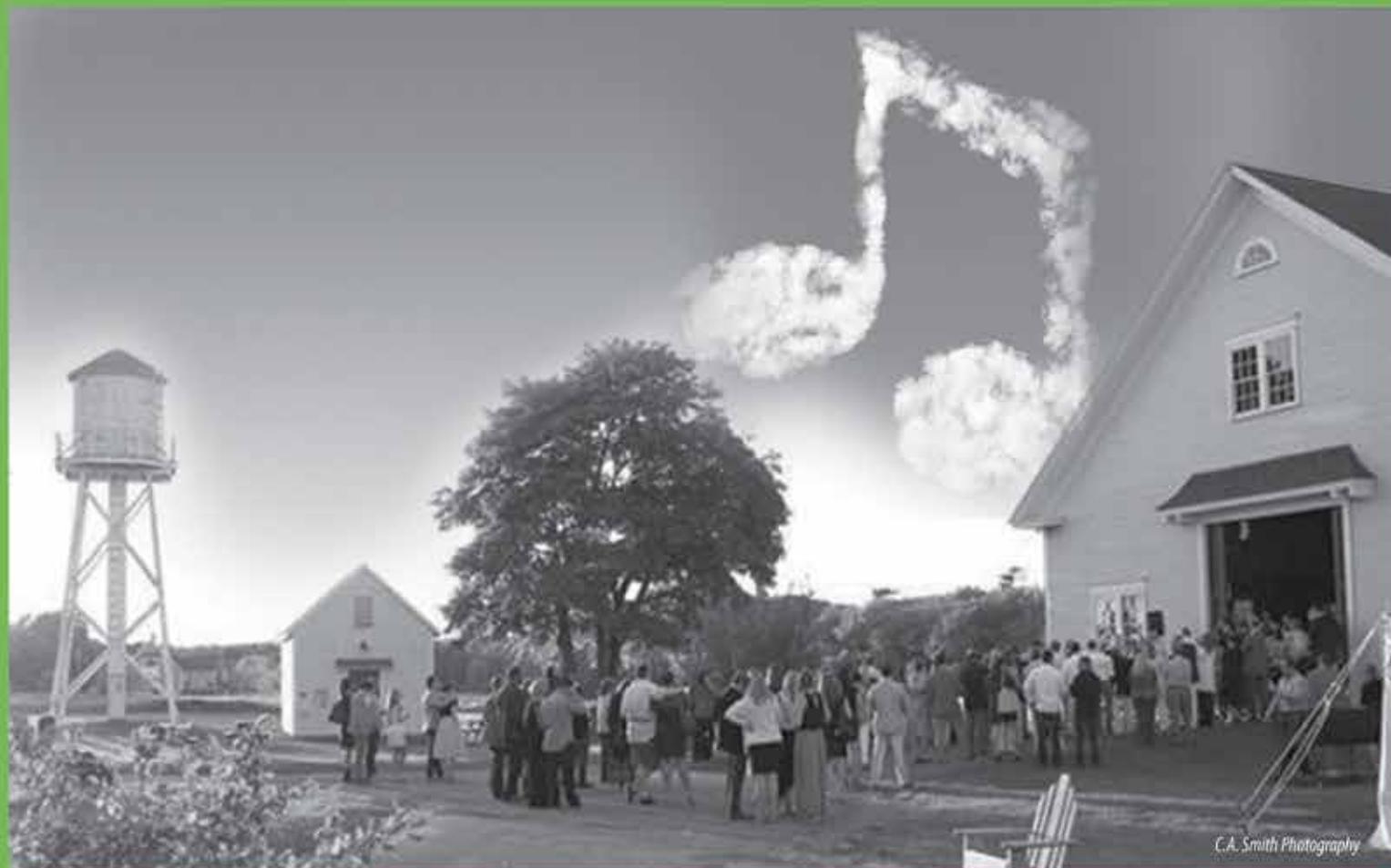
Celebratory Gifts

John White
in honor of his 80th birthday
June Ficker
in appreciation of her talk at Sentry Hill
Katia Charov
in honor of her graduation
Mary Anne Hawkins
on her birthday
Paul Wells and Sally Sommers Smith
in their honor
Paul Wells
in his honor

In-kind Contributions

Wells Beach Resort Campground
for cabinetry
Joyce & Denis Shea
for a trailer
Elizabeth Rucker
for a discount on Quickbooks help
Owen's Farmhouse
for wonderful pizzas
Tim Kay
for plumbing work





wellsreserve
at laudholm

CONCERTS FOR THE COAST 2014

Pianist Jeanne Hodurski

Thursday, July 17, 7pm

A child prodigy reappears after 40 years in this Laudholm debut

Sponsored by Tourist News

Blues with The Windmills

Thursday, July 24, 7pm

A toe-tappin' solar-powered concert in the big yellow barn

Pianist David Pihl

Thursday, July 31, 7pm

Music of nature with Prof. Pihl, recently of Carnegie Hall

Portland Symphony Orchestra's

Tune-Up Maine Quartet

Sunday, August 17, 7pm

Maine's favorite orchestra, now in its 90th year and on the road

Pianist Masanobu Ikemiya

Wednesday, August 27, 7pm

Classical and ragtime tunes from the Bar Harbor maestro

DaPonte String Quartet

Sunday, October 12, 3pm

Sounds of Autumn program by Maine's premier string quartet

TICKETS AND MORE INFO AT WELLSRESERVE.ORG/MUSIC

Wells Reserve at Laudholm, Laudholm Farm Road, Wells. Just off Route 1.