

POMPERAUG RIVER WATERSHED COALITION, INC.
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10th Anniversary Year — Calendar of Events

April 18 - 24: **Earth Week.** Celebrate Earth Day Everyday! For example, on Sunday April 18 starting at 1:30 P.M., join the folks from Audubon at the Bent of the River, Flanders Nature Center, and Southbury Land Trust for a nature hike along Transylvania Brook as it flows through Audubon's Tappe Pasture. For details about this and other Earth Week events, log onto www.earthweekCT.org.



April 24: **Earth Day Festival** at New Morning Naturals, Woodbury, 11 A.M. – 4 P.M. We'll be there. Be sure to stop by and say hi!

April 24: **Earth Day Charity Ball** hosted by Good News Café in Woodbury, 7 P.M. - Midnight. Join us for Earth Week's grand finale by helping Carole Peck and Benard Jarrier, owners of Good News Café, give back to the community at their 9th Annual Charity Dinner. This year's proceeds will benefit the PRWC and Woodbury Community Services. Tickets for the evening are \$90 each and are available at Good News Café and at 203-266-4663. More information online at www.good-news-cafe.com.

April 30: **Photo Contest Deadline** for photos to be considered for the exhibit at Good New Café (see below).

May 2 – 8: **National Drinking Water Week** reminding us that "Only Tap Water Delivers."

May 11 - July: **10th Anniversary Photo Contest Exhibition**, Good News Café. Opening reception on May 16. Don't forget to submit your photos! Contest details and entry forms online at www.pomperaug.org/photo_contest.htm.

May 31: **Photo Contest FINAL Deadline.** Download an entry form at www.pomperaug.org/photo_contest.htm and submit your images to Ritz Camera Store located in Southbury Plaza. Winning images will be displayed at the Mill House on June 19.

June 19: **10th Anniversary Celebration**, Mill House Antiques, Woodbury, 5 - 8 P.M. Spend the afternoon enjoying Art on the River with Honorary Chairs and special guests in the arts, sciences, and public life. Enjoy art exhibitions and delightful entertainment while savoring delicious refreshments and bidding on items in the Silent Auction. **Details on Pages 1 and 3.**

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POMPERAUG RIVER WATERSHED COALITION

WATERSHED NEWS

Finding ways to keep our water pure and plentiful

Serving the Community Since 1999

Spring 2010

Join Us as We Celebrate the Coalition's 10th Year! by Eileen Denver

Ten years ago a group of Southbury and Woodbury residents came together to discuss their concerns about possible water diversions from the Pomperaug River and about the effect of future land development on the quality of the water in the aquifer. How could their communities work together to ensure the health and vibrancy of the watershed? They were led by Woodbury First Selectman and geology professor Larry Pond and Dr. Marc Taylor, a riparian landowner and a committed volunteer with the Southbury Land Trust, who subsequently met with Dick Leavenworth of Woodbury's Conservation Commission. Leavenworth later said: "We knew we had this huge resource, and we knew most residents didn't really understand how water, flood plains, and aquifers work together."



They convened a larger meeting that quickly recognized the need for the watershed towns to work together most essential natural resource—water. So began the PRWC, a coalition of area residents who had the passion, and the scientific expertise, to begin to study the watershed and to reach out to local officials and neighbors with its findings. An early PRWC publication said: "Two things are critical to a healthy watershed. One is understanding the dynamics of the watershed and its ecosystems, grounded in solid science. The other is community involvement."

Ten years later, the Coalition has become widely known as a model of scientific research and cooperative effort, conducting important studies of the river and its habitat and holding community events to build awareness of the role the watershed plays in the life of our towns. The unique partnership it has created—among local governments, businesses, residents, and environmental groups; as well as regional, state, and federal agencies—has set a standard for similar watershed groups across the state and the country.

The Coalition is marking this watershed year in its regular outreach activities, such as community seminars and workshops; in ongoing volunteer-based study and research; in the special anniversary photo contest "Four Seasons on the Pomperaug"; and in a few special gatherings of members and supporters.

This spring, the Coalition is being honored by Woodbury's famous Good News Café! Owners Carole Peck and Bernard Jarrier are holding their 9th annual "Earth Day Charity Ball" on Saturday April 24 at 7 P.M., as a grand finale for Woodbury's Earth Day celebrations. As in previous years, the proceeds from the dinner dance will go to two nonprofit groups—this year, PRWC and Woodbury Community Services. Tickets for the evening, with its fine food and wines, festive music, and silent auction, are \$90 each. Reservations and tickets are available at Good News Café and at 203-266-4663.

Mark Saturday, June 19th on your calendar for **A Very Special Event at Woodbury's Mill House Antiques**. As our 10th year comes to a close, the well-known Mill House, with its riverside location and beautiful gardens, will welcome guests from throughout the watershed and beyond. Co-chairs of the committee working on the celebration are William Hildreth, owner of the Mill House; Karen Hughes, owner of Woodbury's Abrash Galleries; and Carole Winer, owner of Country Loft Antiques, also in Woodbury. The honorary Chair of the event is Faith Middleton, host and executive producer of the thought-provoking talk show heard on WNPR six days a week in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York. She will be joined by honorary co-chairs soon to be announced.

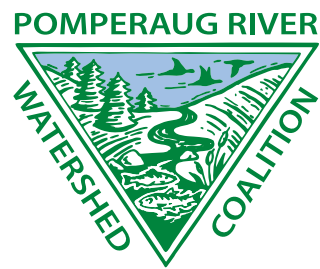
The benefit, the theme of which is "Art on the River," will be from 5 to 8 P.M. It will feature special musical and dance performances, along with delicious hors d'oeuvres and wine. A Silent Auction will entice guests with unique and useful items such as fine art, spa packages, outdoor equipment, restaurant dinners, vacation cottages, wine tastings and more. It will also feature beautifully framed photographs of the Pomperaug River, both by nationally known photographer and writer Tim Palmer and by the winners of the juried 10th Anniversary Photo Contest.

The Mill House is the only place to be on June 19! Ticket information on Page 3.

This newsletter is sponsored by Newtown Saving Bank.



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Become a fan of the Pomperaug River
using this quick link to our page:
<http://tinyurl.com/pomperaug-facebook>



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The Pomperaug Watershed



Coalition Has New Executive Director by Eileen Denver

James Belden, an environmentalist who played a primary role in forming Newtown's Pootatuck Watershed Association, came on board in January as our new Executive Director. James has spent years working in the nonprofit environmental and public service areas. As president and chair, he guided the nonprofit Pootatuck association in addressing water quality and quantity issues for the benefit of Newtown and its residents. He influenced a major aquifer study as well as planned and managed a wide array of



water-quality and stream-condition studies and several physical restoration and habitat projects. James, who lives in Newtown with his wife Margaret and their 8-year-old triplets, says that "many of the concerns, scientific work, and demographics of the Pootatuck Watershed are strikingly similar to those of the Pomperaug Watershed."

Earlier in his career, James was a manager in companies dealing with recycling and waste management. "But I grew up as an outdoorsman and an environmentalist, and when we moved to Newtown, I got involved in something I'd always been interested in—rivers and river management and protection." The startup nonprofit Pootatuck Watershed Association looked to the PRWC, with its emphasis on science-based study and educational outreach to local governments, businesses, and residents. "I admired the PRWC and regularly talked with founder Marc Taylor. I also fish the Pomperaug often. I've spent a lot of time standing in rivers and have a real love for them. When you do that you see the connection between rivers and the well-being of the people and animals and land that surround them, and you see how much needs to be done to protect the rivers."

About his new role, James says, "The Coalition has had 10 wonderful years of doing hard and relevant work in watershed protection for the benefit of the surrounding communities. It is now poised to make a whole new set of accomplishments in pursuing its mission. I'm excited and proud to be a part of that, to take the momentum that the Coalition has and run with it."

A Word from Your Director

During my first weeks as Executive Director of the PRWC, I've tried to get my arms around all that the Coalition has done during its first 10 years and to begin planning for the next 10. Focusing on the future can be challenging—the Coalition has accomplished so much, has so many vital stakeholders, and confronts such a wide range of issues. Yet, as seems to be the case for all watershed organizations, the most difficult job may be the effort to create awareness of the very real impact watershed health has on all our lives.

I thought of that as I read the following shocking paragraph in an article headlined "UN: Polluted Water Killing, Sickening Millions" by AP reporter Ronald Bera about a report from the U.N. Environment Program:

NAIROBI, Kenya – More people die from polluted water every year than from all forms of violence, including war, the U.N. said in a report Monday that highlights the need for clean drinking water. . . . {Across the globe,} an estimated 2 billion tons of waste water — including fertilizer run-off, sewage and industrial waste — is being discharged daily. That waste fuels the spread of disease and damages ecosystems.

These words acknowledge the global importance of water issues as we work locally to ensure the health of our ecosystems and communities. The PRWC plays a vital role creating the science that helps us all understand our water resources; defining and promoting solutions to problems with those resources; and advancing understanding in the community. We are unique in that we tie everything together. We include stakeholders from the largest corporation or agency down to each and every citizen, and we offer one forum where it can all come together to protect the vitality and integrity of the Pomperaug Watershed and ensure high quality water for all uses. Pure and plentiful water for people, wildlife, and commerce is our goal, and everyone is a stakeholder in that effort.

James Belden

Community, Youth, and School Programs Get Underway by Carol Haskins

For many, warm weather means spring cleaning, and for us it's no different. Every spring, we pull the Enviroscape Model and other teaching materials out of winter storage, dust them off, and pack them up to head into local classrooms, where we teach young



people about the Pomperaug Watershed using a variety of hands-on activities. Over the winter, we were able to spend a little time putting together materials for a few new lessons and programs. Now we're ready to bring our updated "road show" to your classroom or to your scout group or student club. We can also tailor our presentations for your adult community organization meeting. We're eager to help everyone living in the watershed learn more about our rivers and drinking water, and to show how everyone can work together to keep our water pure and plentiful. Our programs, which can be aligned to the CT Learning Framework, include: What is a Watershed; Incredible Journey (a look at the water cycle); Stormwater Stu (water pollution); Macroinvertebrate Mania (stream ecology); and CT Waterway Communities (history). For more information or to schedule a program with your group, call or email the office. We look forward to seeing you soon!

It's Spring: Time to Think About Your Watershed by Carol Haskins

After a fairly mild winter, spring has crept up on us rather quickly and gotten many of us thinking about our yards and gardens. It certainly has us thinking about how what we do on our own property can have a big impact—positive or negative—on our rivers, streams, wetland, and groundwater. Across the state, nearly half of the nitrogen that results in algal blooms and zero oxygen conditions in Long Island Sound come from fertilizers used on private lawns. That astonishing fact was just one that we covered in our Watershed Protection Workshop series held through the month of March. Though the workshops looked at problems that can arise from people's collective activities, it focused on the actions individuals can take in their own backyard to keep our waters clean. These include finding alternatives to pesticides and fertilizers, as well as establishing vegetative buffers along streams, planting rain gardens, and finding ways to get water to soak into the ground instead of flowing directly into streams. The workshops culminated in a field trip that gave participants a first-hand look at "river-friendly" properties (see photo). If you missed the workshops, you'll find a lot of the material in the "Protect Your Watershed" section of our website, at www.pomperaug.org/protect_watershed.htm.



PRWC Board Member, Cindy Hunt-Stowell, shows off her beautiful yard—filled with trees, not lawn. Yards with trees, shrubs, and other plants are great for soaking rainfall into the ground and preventing runoff from flowing too quickly into our streams.

Join Us at the Mill House for Our 10th Anniversary Celebration

Tickets for the June 19 special benefit *Art on the River* (see page 1) are \$50 apiece. You can buy them at our offices located at the Audubon at the Bent of the River, on our website www.pomperaug.org, and at the following places:

Woodbury:

Mill House Antiques, 1068 Main Street North
Abrash Galleries Rugs & Antiques, 40 Main St. North
Country Loft Antiques, 557 Main St. South
Klemm Real Estate, 289 Main Street South

Southbury:

Southbury Printing Centre, Union Square Plaza
Koenig Art Emporium, Southbury Plaza
Prime Publishing (*Voices News*), 55 Heritage Road

If you have any questions about the celebration, call us at our office: 203-267-1700.

Cleaning up Winter's Mess by Carol Haskins

It's time for spring cleaning, that dreaded task. Eager for the warm weather, we purge the winter coats and sweaters from our closets and put away the skis and other winter equipment to make room for warm weather wear. Well, our roads need the same attention. You'll see the road crews out sweeping up the mounds of sand along the roadsides and vacuuming it out of stormdrains so they can drain properly. All that sand kept our roads safe throughout the icy, snowy messes of the past several months. Now that sand, if not cleaned up, can easily wash into our streams and wetlands. There it can do damage, filling important habitat, and often carrying with it automobile fluids leaked onto the roadways. The town road crews do a good job of cleaning it up. In 2009, Southbury reported that in the spring it swept 242 curb miles of road and removed 2,700 tons of material from the streets. That's on top of the clean-up the crews did the previous fall of 500 tons of material—mostly leaves, twigs and litter. That's also on top of 2000 tons of material, collectively removed from stormdrains in 2008 and 2009. So, kudos to our town road crews for helping to keep our waters clean!