# SHORE KIMMER

**VOLUME 30, NUMBER 4 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY** 

DEC. 1999 & JAN. 2000

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jonathan Staller

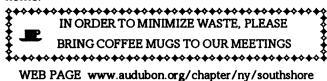
By the time you read this, there will be less than 40 days left in the year, this decade, this century! What does the year 2000, Y2K, mean?

To the birds it means colder days but shorter nights. Other than that, January 1st is just another day. For the human species, however, one might think it's the end of the world if computers shut down and electrical power plants turn off.

Let's take a quick look at the history and future of the Earth. The dinosaurs and Adam & Eve had tropical rain forests and Gardens of Eden. There were wetlands that supported all different types of life. Then Homo sapiens started to multiply and multiply until they were the only species left in the Animal Kingdom. Why, they asked; what happened to all the birds and other animals? The senators and governors would shrug and say "we thought the Earth was ours and we could use it and abuse it."

What I'm trying to say is that we have to convince our Congressmen and legislators that control is desperately needed for the sake of the environment or else we're going to keep on cutting down trees, fish all the living organisms out of the oceans, drain all the wetlands, and keep pumping all the wonderful carbon monoxide and toxic fumes into the atmosphere.

Let's take a stand and make the new millennium the time man did something good for the environment. Hopefully, there's still time to reverse the damage that we've caused on our special planet Earth, a place we call home.



AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

#### **NEXT MEETINGS**

Tom Torma

DATE: Tuesdau, December 14, 1999

TIME: 8:00 P.M. ②
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

144 W. Merrick Rd. (at 5. Ocean Ave.)

SPEAKER: Tom Damiani TOPIC: Birdspeak

Birding by ear is probably one of the most important aspects of bird-watching. Often the only clue to a bird's presence is the sound that it makes. When trees are in full bloom, it is often impossible to see the birds that we hear. The only choice we have is to become proficient at birding by ear.

Tom Damiani, founder of Birdworks Inc., will present a slide program that will help the audience recognize and remember some of the songs and calls of our local birds.

Birdworks Inc. released its first product, "Birdsongs with Tom Damiani," in November 1998. Copies have been sold not only on Long Island, but all over the United States and around the world as well. Join us.

*Please note:* Because Tom needs to catch the last ferry to Shelter Island, his program will precede most announcements and the coffee break.

DATE: Tuesday, January 11, 2000

TIME: 8:00 P.M. ②

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)

TOPIC: Member Participation Night

Hosted as usual by Freeport/Meadowbrook Camera Club president John Brokos, our annual members' night is your chance to find out where your fellow members have been and what they've seen. Please bring up to ten of your slides and share them with us. Last year we were treated to slides of birds, flowers, thorns, dragonfly, prairie dog, rabbit, zebra, spider and web, frog, toad, bee, grasshopper, damselfly, beetle, mushroom, fall foliage, thunderhead, sunset, scenery, and more at such places as Jamaica Bay

Wildlife Refuge, Massapequa Preserve, Jones Beach, Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area, Planting Fields Arboretum, Tackapausha, Tanglewood, Fahnestock State Park, Rhinebeck, Hawk Mountain, Chincoteague, Corkscrew Swamp, Everglades, Sanibel Island, St. Augustine, Audubon Camp in Wyoming, Glacier National Park, Washington, and the Bahamas.

#### BIRDSEED & BROOKSIDE

<del>^^^^^</del>

Michael Sperling

I'd like to thank everyone who helped out at our birdseed sale on Halloween and at our fall cleanup at Brookside Preserve seven days later. The birdseed volunteers who joined me and 26,500 pounds of seed were Joan & Paul Butkereit, Joe Grupp, Mike Higgiston, Therese Lucas, Chris Schmitt, and Betty Borowsky.

There were more Brookside volunteers in and above Milburn Creek than I could count. Here's a partial list:

From SSAS: Bill Boccio; Betty Borowsky; Susan Brychcy; Joan & Paul Butkereit; Michael Goldsmith with daughter Alexandra; Betsy Gulotta; Judy Hoyer; Joan & Rod Kincaid; Jenny Krivanek & Dan Marsh with daughter Hannah; Therese Lucas; Ruthe McKeown; Scott Oglesby; Marianne & George Peters (who brought lunch, some of it donated by Freeport's Dunkin' Donuts, and guest Allen Marshall from PA); Vince Puglisi; Jackie Richichi; Dolores Rogers; Chris Schmitt; Alvira Serdock; Jonathan Staller; Sue & Maurice Tobey; Tom Torma; Karen Wheeler; John Zarudsky; and maybe more

From Citizens' Campaign for the Environment: George Kiesel

From the Community: Marie Brown; Sharifa Small; Mike Staton, Sr. and son Michael II (who posted signs publicizing the cleanup); Audrean & Tiffani Williams; and quite a few others

From Trout Unlimited: Cliff Dies, John Fischer, Sol Harz, Julie Hecht, Brian Nazinitsky, Boyd Shockley, and Brian Stamm

Apologies to those whose names I failed to jot down; please let me know who you are and I'll write a sequel.

SSAS Mission Statement — The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education, and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

SSAS Post Office Statement — South Shore Skimmer is published monthly from September through December and February through May by South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

#### **★★ WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ★★**

Jackie Richichi

SSAS welcomes this month's new members. We hope that you'll become active members of our very active chapter — join us at a meeting, weekly bird walk, or special event.

[To receive an application for membership in National Audubon Society and SSAS, please call our Membership Chairperson, Jackie Richichi, at 691-1855, or send e-mail to Jacee13@aol.com. Introductory membership is \$20; \$15 for students and senior citizens.]

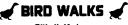
Baldwin Gloria Antonson, James Hauser,
Emil E. Hoefler
Bellmore William Boccio, Ken Gobright
East Meadow David Balaban
Freeport John Hancock, Jr.; Dolores
Sperling
Hempstead Beverly Batroni
Hewlett Fran Stempler
Hicksville Laura Bodnar, Janice Pilla
Island Park Scott Albin
Levittown Hilda Hare, Spiro Vardoulias
Long Beach Diane L. Glickman, Vicki L. Ilardi,
Peter Kerrigan, Sandra
Mackston
Malverne Gilbert Leib
Massapequa Barbara M. DeVincent,
Michael Haberlack
Massapequa Park Donald F. Johnson
Merrick William Corrigan, Lawrence
Hornstein, Flossie Kusnick
Oceanside Dorothy Bertolini
Plainview Caroline Sheridan
Rockville Centre Allen Lanner, Marshall L.
Rosenberg
Valley Stream Henry E. Boesch, Jr.; Mrs. Ease
Wantagh Edna Bronzino
West Hempstead Carmen Alvarez
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#### **DUCK SURVEY HELPERS WANTED**

Since February of 1989, SSAS Duck Survey Chairperson Joe Grupp has spent one Saturday every wintertime month counting ducks in 28 locations from Valley Stream to Massapequa Park, with Paul Butkereit doing the same at 10 locations in southwestern Nassau. The data being collected provides essential and unprecedented information about the popula-

edented information about the populations of every duck species wintering on our lakes and ponds.

Joe is looking for volunteers willing to spend a half day or full day viewing and learning about our waterfowl. If you're interested, please call him at 481-4208. The first count will be held on **Saturday**, **December 11th**, rain or shine.



Ellialt Kulner

All walks start at 9:30 A.M. except for Pelham Bay; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667.

Pelham Bay for Owls (pull over to street				
on extreme right after going through				
Throgs Neck Bridge toll; meet at 9 A.M.)				
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge				
Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)				
Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner				
Season's Greetings — No Walk				
Happy New Century — No Walk				
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge				
Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)				
Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner				
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge				
Pelham Bay for Owls (pull over to street				
on extreme right after going through				
Throgs Neck Bridge toll; meet at 9 A.M.)				
Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner				
Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)				
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge				
Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner				
<b>*********************************</b>				

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070



Explore the coast with the

## AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

NEW YEAR'S DAY BEACH WALKS (Jan. 1). Start the new millennium with a brisk hike. Meet 11 A.M. at Jones Beach (West End 2 parking lot). Leader: Jeff Gottlieb (516) 423-2169. Or meet 11 A.M. at Bldg. 1, Ft. Tilden (Rockaway, Queens). Leader: Don Riepe. Free champagne! MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND (Jan. 7-9, 2000). Enjoy quiet beaches and dunes during peak winter waterfowl time. See seals, loons, mergansers, scoters, eiders, razorbills, maybe a bald eagle. Cost: \$260 includes 2 nights at luxurious Manor House, 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, free LIRR pickup. Visit bluffs overlooking ocean, "Walking" & Napeague Dunes, Hither Woods, and "Seal Haulout" site. FIRE ISLAND HIKE (Jan. 16), Meet 10 A.M. at Smith Point Ranger Station for 5-mile wilderness hike. See fox, snow buntings, maybe a snowy owl. Call (718) 318-8827. Fee: \$5. FLORIDA EVERGLADES (March 10-18, 2000). Explore the East and West coasts and visit Ding Darling Refuge, Loxahatchee Refuge, Shark River, Corkscrew Swamp, Anhinga Trail, Key Largo, and other birding hotspots. Cost: \$1595 includes Rt airfare to Miami, van rental, 8 nights motel (double occupancy), park entrance fees, everglades boat tour, admission to Butterfly World and Fairchild Gardens, guides.

For information and free field trip brochure, call/write Don Riepe, (718) 634-6467, 28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693

#### **CDASTAL CLEANUP ON NOVEMBER 27TH**

Annie McIntyre

If you're reading this before the 27th, we need your help! South Shore Audubon Society is participating in the National Marine Debris Monitoring Program, conducted by the Center for Marine Conservation (CMC).

Many of you have participated in the annual beach cleanup. This is different. We will be cleaning the same section of beach once a month (with the full moon). We will then record our "findings" and send the records to the CMC in Washington, DC. The intent is to assess:

① whether the marine debris on our coastlines is increasing or decreasing;

2 what are the sources of that debris.

Garbage bags, record sheets, gloves, and pick-up sticks will be provided.

When: November 27th, 9:30 A.M.

Where: Jones Beach West End 1 parking lot (yes, West End 1)

*RSVP*: If you're interested in participating, please contact me at 679-7254 (day). We need to know how many volunteers will be coming, so please call ahead.

# THE IST ANNUAL SSAS FALL BIRD FESTIVAL MIGRATES THROUGH

Jonathan Staller

South Shore Audubon Society's first annual Fall Bird Festival came and went like a bang. Just as much as it was anticipated, it was a great success. After months of long, hard planning and getting everything coordinated, including the weather (70 degrees), everything was great and I would like to thank all the volunteers who worked so hard for this day to become a success.

The day started at Tackapausha Museum at 8:30. Coffee and bagels were served as volunteers and early bird walkers got ready for their first event. The photo workshop at Cow Meadow was hosted by our famous photographer Tom Torma. Field trips were led by Elliott Kutner at Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area, Betsy Gulotta at Brookside Preserve, Bill Hollweg and Mike Higgiston at Massapequa Preserve, Joanne Tow at Tackapausha Preserve, and Jim Remsen at Jones Beach. Jim, Bill, and Mike saw more birds than people; Jim saw a rare Clay-colored Sparrow and also a Peregrine Falcon.

At Tackapausha Museum, programs were run every hour. Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary's Karine Jean-Pierre put on an excellent live Birds of Prey show with the six birds she brought. Other programs were about birds on Long Island and backyard bird feeding.

Once again, I would like to thank *all* the volunteers for a job well done. Because of you, everybody who attended the festival (including a reporter from *Newsday*) had a wonderful time.

#### JAMAICA BAY BIKE PATH UPDATE

Editor's note: The May 1998 Skimmer contained a call to arms regarding plans to build a 16-foot-wide bicycle path parallel to Cross Bay Boulevard that would penetrate as much as 50 feet into the northern and southern ends of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. The following update was sent to me by Carol Capobianco and was written by her successor, Joe O'Connell, president of Hudson River Audubon Society of Westchester (HRASW).

There is some good news as a result of a meeting with Mr. Billy Garrett, Superintendent of the Jamaica Bay Unit, on Friday, October 8th. The meeting was headed up by board members of New York City Audubon Society and SOS [Save Our Sanctuary, a coalition including SSAS]. Mr. Garrett said that the National Park Service (NPS) was going to issue a report to the people who attended the workshop (that's the workshop that we and others were excluded

from attending). The report is going to suggest that most of the bike path be built on the existing sidewalk outside the preserve [Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge] with only minor intrusion into the preserve "at a few points."

Garrett did not define what he considered as minor intrusion. Garrett was told in no uncertain terms that any intrusion into the preserve, even minor intrusion, was not acceptable. There was no compromise on this issue.

Secondly, Mr. Garrett is going to ask those who receive the report to comment on the new proposal. Up till now, only those who attended the workshop were going to get the initial report and be allowed to comment. However, the NPS decided to send copies to all those who requested to attend the workshop and were denied access. That means HRASW, South Shore Audubon Society, Queens Bird Club, NYS Federation of Birders, Sierra Club, and others who requested to attend and were rejected will now have a voice in the new proposals.

This report is due to be sent out approximately 2 to 4 weeks from now [still to come as of mid-November]. About two months later, the revised Environmental Assessment will be published and there will be one public meeting for comment. Their plan is therefore to have the EA out in December. However, it is probably going to take longer.

Thirdly, it was suggested that a "Friends of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge" be established. Garrett said there was already a "Friends of Gateway" [Gateway National Recreation Area, which includes JBWR]. He was reminded that they were only interested in recreation activities (like the bike path) and not conservation and protection of the refuge. He then said it would be considered.

There is nothing anyone has to do at this time. We have to wait until the EA is published and then we need to get people to attend the public meeting or write in. [Interested SSAS members can e-mail their newsletter editor at mssperling@compuserve.com or call me, after 7:30 P.M., at 541-0805.]

To add a little pressure, at the meeting Mr. Garrett was told some things that hopefully will get back to the people in Broad Channel who want to build the bike path. He was told that the SOS people were aware that the town of Broad Channel built their ball park light-tower on Jamaica Bay preserve land without permission or a permit. Mr. Garrett was told that the SOS people were aware that the town of Broad Channel was in violation of wetland laws when it illegally built two berms to keep high tide waters from flooding its two ball fields. He was told that these issues would be investigated vigorously if they persisted in building the bike path through the preserve.

Lastly, a letter has been sent to Attorney General Eliot Spitzer asking him to investigate the misuse of ISTEA [the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act] and Jamaica Bay Damage Account funds [from a pollution lawsuit] to build a bike path.

Things are slowly changing....we can't feel comfortable yet nor can we trust the intentions of the NPS. Only time will tell.

#### 

Michael Sperling

On November 7th, SSAS suddenly lost Dr. George Popkin, who joined our chapter with wife Sally in 1984 and whose name had appeared on the back page of the *Skimmer* since April 1991. At first, George served as co-chairperson of the Binoculars/Book Sales committee. Seven months later, he began a four-year stint as our very conscientious Treasurer, after which he remained on the board as Financial Advisor until succumbing to an aneurysm.

George did even more than the above, though, some of which I can remember: He arranged for the design and production of the bookplates that now appear in all the natural history books financed by SSAS's donations to the Freeport and Merrick libraries (where we hold our general, board, and committee meetings). He picked up *Skimmers* from our printer in Island Park. He helped children string popcorn at our annual Holiday Party for Wildlife (bringing daughter Annie along when she was in New York for a visit). He always made sure

that I had a ride home from board meetings. He and Sally donated prizes for our Birdathons. And he was always kind, wise, and soft-spoken despite some incredibly difficult final years, coping with the loss of two daughters to breast cancer (one this past summer after a nine-year struggle) and with his own back pains and prostate cancer (all of which, characteristically, he never spoke about). We will miss you, George; it was a pleasure knowing you and SSAS

#### A STORY ABOUT LAWNS

The following was handed to your editor by SSAS member Jeanne May; it entered the wonderful world of email from somewhere in the U.S. Midwest. In a few general meetings, we'll have a program about how to attract birds to your garden; here's an appetizer that I think you'll enjoy, whatever your religion:

"Winterize your lawn," the big sign outside the garden store commanded. I've fed it, watered it, mowed it, raked it, and watched a lot of it die anyway. Now I'm supposed to winterize it? I hope it's too late. Grass lawns have to be the stupidest thing we've come up with outside of thong swimsuits! We constantly battle dandelions, Queen Anne's lace, thistle, violets, chicory, and clover that thrive naturally, so we can grow grass that must be nursed through an annual four-step chemical dependency.

Imagine the conversation the Creator might have with St. Francis about this:

"Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in the Midwest? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle, and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought, and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the longlasting blossoms attracted butterflies, honeybees, and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles."

"It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great extent to kill them and replace them with grass."

"Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds, and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?"

"Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn."

"The spring rains and cool weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy."

"Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it — sometimes twice a week."

"They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?"

"Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags."

"They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?"
"No, sir. Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away."

"Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?"

"Yes, sir."

"These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That

surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work."

"You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it."

"What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn, they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life."

"You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and have them hauled away."

"No! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and keep the soil moist and loose?"

"After throwing away your leaves, they go out and buy something they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves."

"And where do they get this mulch?"

"They cut down trees and grind them up."

"Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. Saint Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?"

#### **HOLIDAY WILDLIFE PARTY**

Doreen Remsen

It's time to put all those pinecones you have been gathering and bringing to our meetings & bird walks to good use! We hope you will join us on **Saturday**, **De-**

Tackapausha Museum on Washington Avenue in Seaford for our annual Holiday Party for Wildlife. We will make pinecone bird feeders, have drawings for coloring and information on Long Island's winter bird populations, share refreshments, and, if we're especially good.

perhaps that jolly old elf, Saint Nick, will personally deliver that extra peanut butter we asked for along with some treats for all our bird feeder builders! So mark your calendars and round up those children of all ages! See you there!

South Shore Auduboners: We are in need of volunteers to assist with the refreshments, peanut butter, crayons, etc! If you have an hour or two to spare, please join us at twelve noon to help set up and "man" the tables. Thank you!!

[Editor's note: The preceding article was recycled from last December's *Skimmer*, when Doreen was SSAS prez. As an extra treat, National Audubon's Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary will present live animal programs this year.]

#### **HELP SAVE BROOKSIDE PRESERVE!**

Joan Bulkereit

The South Shore Audubon Society's Board of Directors is appalled over Nassau County's decision to grant a permanent right-of-way over Brookside Preserve.

The Issue: Gary Melius (Water Works Realty Corp.), owner of the Brooklyn Water Works property adjacent to Brookside Preserve in Freeport and Baldwin, has asked Nassau County to grant him a 20-foot wide by 400-foot deep easement for fire emergencies on Nassau

County open space land known as Brookside Preserve. The reason he wants the easement is because he wants to construct a 246-bed nursing home whose plans call for the building to be built right up to



the property line bordering the Preserve, leaving no room on his own property for the necessary fire access. Question: Why can't he pull back 20 feet from his property line and not use Brookside Preserve as his setback?

Mr. Melius' plans call for large parking areas on either side of the stream, Milburn Creek, that runs through the Preserve. To provide adequate parking for this size nursing home, up to 70 trees must be taken down near the stream, which will impact on the wetland habitat. Question: Why won't he even discuss scaling down the size of the project?

The Nassau County Legislature is voting on the issue within the next few weeks. SSAS is opposed to the granting of the right-of-way as well as the size and scope of the project due to its impact on the quality of the Preserve for its intended purpose: to protect wetlands and adjacent land as defined by law, and to provide a place for education and enjoyment for the public, as well as a place for wildlife to thrive.

Our Fear: SSAS's requests for a review of this issue have been ignored. Mr. Melius is a very large contributor to political campaign fund-raisers, even using his Oheka Castle for such events. Is this government by checkbook and cocktails? Mr. Melius may be powerfully influential, but we at South Shore Audubon want to get a fair hearing from our elected officials.

History: SSAS has managed Brookside Preserve since 1988, when we helped protect the 20-acre freshwater wetland habitat from development and it became the first Nassau County open space preserve to be put into the perpetual preservation program. Since 1988, we have developed an extensive environmental education program at the Preserve, free to the public. Volunteers give school programs and lead tours for local schools, scouts, and other community groups. We have facilitated Eagle Scout projects to enhance the Preserve; a special Freeport school program, "Learn & Serve America"; and a project with Trout Unlimited to restock native brook trout into Milburn Creek. Audubon members are conducting an extensive field project to reintroduce native grasses and wildflowers

onto our field habitat. It is through the middle of this field that the proposed right-of-way would be granted.

What You Can Do: Write, call, and pester your County Legislators, Thomas S. Gulotta, and the Town of Hempstead Department of Conservation and Waterways (addresses are listed below). It is wrong for a private developer to use public land for his own monetary gain. The multistory building will come right up to the property line, shading the wildflower field and intruding visually. The size of the project as it is currently proposed will affect the wetlands and adjacent protected land. We object to the removal of 70 trees along Milburn Creek for a parking lot. And, finally, we feel that the granting of this right-of-way sets a terrible precedent for all Nassau County Preserves which could be chipped away by similar requests. Only 3% of Nassau County land remains in protected open space and we cannot afford to lose any of it.

#### Sample Letter #1

Dear Mr. Gulotta:

I write this letter to voice my concerns regarding the County's Bureau of Real Estate's decision to grant a right-of-way over a portion of the Brookside Preserve to the Water Works Realty Corp. ("grantee").

First, I don't understand why, if there is a common law right for emergency vehicles to cross another person's land, the County believes it is in its best interest to present a formal, written easement agreement to the grantee. The perpetual preservation designation on our land should be sufficient to assure that the land will be available for access in case of an emergency. Quite frankly, the alienation of the Preserve via even a right-of-way seems to me a violation of the perpetual preservation designation and, therefore, a hazardous precedent to establish.

Perhaps the grantee seeks this written easement/right-ofway for reasons that exceed a belt and suspenders mentality. i.e., the true reason Water Works Realty Corp. wants this County land is to allow it to build a bigger complex, by using County land to meet its setback requirements. If that is so, this is certainly a good business decision for the grantee. Brookside Preserve was the first to receive protection under your Perpetual Preservation designation and I hope it will not be the first to be alienated. I do not believe that the granting of the right-of-way is appropriate use of Preserve land, and payment to the County of a measly \$750 for such use of its land is not even a good business deal for Nassau County. In this deal, the taxpayers and residents of Nassau County will not be adequately compensated for the significant loss of the quality of the open space within the Brookside Preserve. So just why are we doing it?

I have enjoyed working with you on various environmental and conservation projects over the past years. I trust that you will revisit this proposed alienation of a portion of the Brookside Preserve and not undo the good work that you have done in creating the Perpetual Preservation designation.

cc: Hon. [your County Legislator]
Cheryl Petri, Deputy County Executive
Peter Visconti, Deputy County Attorney
Jonathan Staller, South Shore Audubon Society

Sample Letter #2 (for the Mayor of Freeport)

Dear Sir:

This is to express my dismay over the size and placement of the proposed three extensions to the Water Works Realty building adjacent to Brookside Preserve, a County natural park. The proposed new additions to the building identified as Sheffield Towers, a 246-bed nursing facility, bring the structure right up to the property line, with no setback to the north. This will require a 20-foot wide by 400-foot long rightof-way through the middle of the adjoining County Preserve. The owner of the Water Works building has never entertained the thought that he could expand and develop his property while leaving a margin of 20 feet for his own use on his own property. The idea that County Preserve land should be used for the developer's setback requirements is abhorrent. County Executive Gulotta assured me by letter that Brookside Preserve will forever remain protected and free from alteration, but neither the County's legal document granting this right-of-way, nor any reassurance from the Village of Freeport, has asserted that there will not be alteration to meet Fire Department or Village criteria. The main reason that the redesign of the proposed structure puts its overly large rear end sitting right on the property line of Brookside Preserve is because the landmark status was granted to only the front of the building. That dictates that all changes have to occur to the wetland side on the west and the Preserve side on the north. These architectural plans look fine until you see what havoc they create to the pristine stream corridor and the adjoining wildflower field.

Although we are in hopes that the Brooklyn Water Works building on Mr. Melius' property can be resurrected in spite of years of neglect, we do not want to see Brookside Preserve so heavily impacted by these proposed plans. Please inform us of any future hearings on the matter. I have enclosed a copy of a video we have produced about Freeport's Brookside Preserve. I hope you will take time to reflect on the above situation.

#### Addresses

Honorable Thomas S. Gulotta, County Executive Building, 1 West St, Mineola, NY 11501

Nassau County Legislator xxx, County Executive Building, 1 West St, Mineola, NY 11501

Honorable William Glacken, Mayor of Freeport, 46 N Ocean Ave, Freeport, NY 11520

Ron Masters, Commissioner, Town of Hempstead Dept. of Conservation and Waterways, PO Box 180, Lido Blvd, Point Lookout, NY 11569

# A FAVORITE QUOTATION

The following first appeared in the June 1994 Skimmer; your editor found it in A Dictionary of Environmental Quotations, compiled by Barbara K. Rodes and Rice Odell (published by Simon & Schuster, copyright © 1992):

"If people destroy something replaceable made by mankind, they are called vandals; if they destroy something irreplaceable made by God, they are called developers." — Joseph Wood Krutch (1893–1970), quoted in *Mother Earth News*, March–April 1990

#### **GET YOUR FREE PERMITS**

It's time once again for SSAS director Mike Higgiston's annual reminder that all of us should renew or get the free permits required for access to John F. Kennedy Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary (just east of Jones Beach) and Connetquot River State Park Preserve. This is an easy way of letting the Town of Oyster Bay and New York State know that you care about these places and wildlife habitat in general.

To obtain a JFK Sanctuary permit, write to Town of Oyster Bay Department of Parks, 977 Hicksville Road, Massapequa, NY 11758.

The Park Use Permit for Connetquot is available from the NY State Office of Parks, Long Island Region — Belmont Lake State Park, P.O. Box 247, Babylon, NY 11702-0247.

# SSAS HELPS MARINE NATURE STUDY AREA

SSAS received the following letter from Bill Overton, Supervisor of the Town of Hempstead's chronically underfunded Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area and Wildlife Sanctuary:

"On behalf of the entire staff at the Marine Nature Study Area, I want to thank your organization for your contribution. We were able to fund the purchase of several items of equipment to better house our collection of native fish.



The tanks, covers, and lights help show off these wonderful creatures to their best advantage. Thousands of visitors, both schoolchildren and families, will benefit from your generosity."

SSAS's \$400 donation also allowed the purchase of a 32-foot seining net and a reptiles & amphibians poster. Thanks to Jackie Richichi's efforts, a supply of Audubon membership applications has been maintained at the Marine Nature Study Area for the past year; we thank the staff for helping us recruit new members.



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