



Friends of the OSWEGATCHIE HILLS NATURE PRESERVE

Newsletter – 2nd Quarter 2022

A Message from the President

Late spring was a rather hectic time for the volunteers of the Friends – what with the annual meeting, dedication of the Greg Decker Pitch Pine Park, trail run and silent auction, and finally CT Trails Day. Add to all that the ongoing work of maintaining trails. We have folks who make a daily sweep of the preserve, picking up debris and reporting anything that warrants further attention. I am very grateful for all these volunteers, including members of the Board and the Stewardship Committee, who step up and make things happen. Without them the Hills would not be the place that it is – a place to take a relaxing (or challenging) hike, to learn about the environment and conservation, or simply to enjoy nature.

In a column in *Niantic Neighbors*, Sandy Gignac puts it this way. “There are so many beautiful things about [the preserve], but my favorite part of hiking [there] is from the moment I step on the trail, I feel a million miles away.” Thank you, Sandy. Your tribute to the Hills and its hard-working volunteers is deeply appreciated. Discover for yourself what Sandy is talking about – and perhaps leave a word of thanks on the comment sheet in the kiosk. Happy hiking!

Kris Lambert

CT Trails Day



Many fortunate hikers were able to participate in one of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserves guided hikes on June 3rd celebrating CT Trails Day. Special thanks to our guides who shared their knowledge and passion for this special place. The birding hike was led by Bruce and Andy Dasinger, a three mile hike by stewards Paul Parulis and Ralph Bates, a leisurely hike by naturalist Al Burchsted, and a short hike by Greg Decker.



Photos courtesy of Paul Parulis who led a three mile hike along with steward Ralph Bates

Run for the Hills

The Run for the Hills Trail Run and Silent Auction on May 22nd was a huge success! A total of 120 runners participated ranging in age from 8 to 74! In addition to the board members who helped in many ways, we want to thank and recognize Julie Clements-Reagan, who did our amazing graphic arts designs, and our volunteers Sarah Mooradian, Spencer Grams, Jim Paganetti, Janine Orman, Martin Cuddy, Sarina McCollum, John and Becky Starrett and Barb Whitehouse.

We were so fortunate to have some amazing photographers at the Run, including Steve McLaughlin and Alice Bishop. Check out over 200 photos and videos online at the OswHills.org along with links to our sponsors, race results, winners list and more.

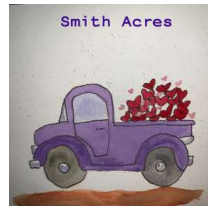


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Annual Meeting 2022

This year's annual meeting was held outside in the Greg Decker Pitch Pine Park. Mike Sheehan presented the nominations and oversaw the election of Officers and Directors for two year terms. They included:

Officers: Kris Lambert, President and Jane Templeton, Treasurer

Directors: Rich Gallagher, Paul Whitehouse, Mike Sheehan, Tara Borden and Bruce Kolowsky



In addition, we are happy to welcome Kathy Doherty as a newly elected director. Kathy is a long-time local resident and avid outdoor enthusiast. She has been hiking the hills for about 15 years and was a girl scout leader in East Lyme. She states, "OH is truly a remarkable place and I always feel lucky to have this gem so near". She currently works full-time as a Sr Program Manager for an engineering company out of Middletown, RI. We look forward to working with Kathy and welcome her to the team

After updates from FOHNP board members, we heard from Roger Reynolds, Save the Sound senior legal counsel, and Suzanne Thompson, Save Oswegatchie Hills Coalition coordinator. Also speaking were First Selectman Kevin Seery, Representative Holly Cheeseman and Senator Paul Formica, who we presented with a walking stick.



Roger Reynolds from Save the Sound



Senator Paul Formica addressing the annual meeting at the Greg Decker Pitch Pine Park



First Selectman Kevin Seery & Paul Formica

Greg Decker Pitch Pine Park Dedication

With the educational placards in place and the pitch pines nursery established, it was time to dedicate the park and recognize the individuals and organizations that made this place possible!



President Kris Lambert recognizing Greg Decker and presenting the plaque.



Greg Decker showing a pitch pine seedling grown from a pinecone in the hills.



Thanks to all who made the park possible!