

Shoreline Greenway Trail  
Fall 2020 Newsletter



*NOVEMBER 2020*



#### **LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

It's hard to believe that we are entering our 8<sup>th</sup> month of this pandemic. Our hearts go out to friends and neighbors who have experienced loss. In the face of hardships and social separation, there's never been a time that more people are taking advantage of the wonders and freedom that the Shoreline Greenway Trail provides. Every day we see scores of people out there, walking with kids, walking with dogs, running, biking, and strolling.

See you on the trail.

Aziz Dehkan



### **FIRST SATURDAY WALKS**

First Saturday walks resumed in September, and our walks in Branford and Madison attracted good crowds of walkers observing social distancing and wearing masks.





## **GUILFORD FIRST SATURDAY SENIORS BIKE RIDE**

On a surprisingly warm summer day in November, seven seniors who actively bike for recreation enjoyed a leisurely 5-mile bike ride from the Town Green, meandering along our country roads to the West Woods entrance at Route 146, and returning via Sachem's Head and Mulberry Point Road.



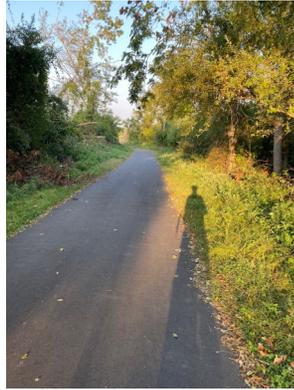
SGT members Brad Kronstat and Bruce Simonds led the group of almost 20 riders. Impressively, three bikers are in their 60's, two in their 70's, and two over 80! One Madison couple rode a tandem bike, and two riders had electric bikes. We were accompanied by a cycling policeman.



The weather was perfect, and the return even included a spontaneous brief tour of one of the rider's garden. Bike rides will resume as soon as weather permits in the spring.

## MORE FIRST SATURDAY WALKS

Guilford is hoping to hold a follow-up socially-distanced nature walk at Hammonasset this winter with local botanist Lauren Brown, to see changes in the weeds she identified in her popular March 2020 walk. Lauren Brown is the author of *Weeds in Winter*, and her newest book, written with Ted Elliman, *Grasses, Sedges, Rushes: An Identification Guide*.



Mark your calendars. You are invited to join East Haven town members for a first Saturday SGT trail walk on December 5 at 10AM. It's a great photo opportunity as we hike along the Shoreline Greenway Trail. A great time to enjoy the outdoors and the intrinsic beauty of the trail off Elliot Street and in the spectacular Farm River State Park. Meet at the Elliot Street parking lot. Masks and social distancing required.

Directions: from RT. 142 West, left onto Mansfield Grove Road to stop sign, right onto Hoop Pole Lane to second parking lot on left. From Coe Avenue, left onto Myrtle, right at stop sign, left onto Elliot Street, right to parking lot. Questions call Barbara Brow 203-469-9127.



## MEMBER PROFILE

David Knapp has been a strong supporter of the Shoreline Greenway Trail from its very beginnings, outspoken as an advocate of building greenway trail in the Town of Guilford. But his passion for the trail is just one part of an amazing life story.

Entering Wesleyan College in 1945, Dave was surrounded by World War II veterans who were there on the GI bill. At 18, he was one of the youngest in his class. At Wesleyan he delved deeply into Plato and technical studies, graduating in 1949 with a degree in History.



Arnold Gold | Credit: Journal Register Co.

During these years Dave realized that he was gay, and when a tragic event took place in CT in 1993, similar to the Matthew Shepard incident in Wyoming, he was inspired to create the Stonewall Speakers, still active, visible, and vital. In 1990 Dave started to speak about LGBTQ issues in health classes throughout CT, and in 1993, he came out as a gay man, working with other community leaders to create the PFLAG chapter in New Haven and True Colors in Hartford.

In his formative years, Dave had been very active in the Boy Scouts, and as an adult, he fought for and won the right to be a Boy Scout troop leader.

### **MEMBER PROFILE (continued)**

Even in his nineties, Dave continues to don his Boy Scout leader uniform, and marches proudly in the NYC Gay Pride parade. He has received a number of awards, including a social studies service award for curriculum from the State of CT, and a Distinguished Alumni award from Wesleyan in 2014.

During his decades of scouting, Dave developed a first-hand passion for nature and woodlands, so when the Shoreline Greenway Trail was founded in Guilford he was eager to help support the development of multiuse trails.



We are grateful to have had David Knapp's support all of these years. His dedication inspires us to continue our work. We are privileged to share our trails with him, and if you pass him on the trail, give him an enthusiastic "hello!"

## SHORELINE GREENWAY TRAIL PARTICIPATES IN CENSUS

The Hammonasset section of the Shoreline Greenway Trail is participating in the Connecticut Trail Census, a statewide effort to record the extent of public use of trails and the impact on surrounding economic activity. We have an electronic counter along the trail that records how many people pass by each hour.

The counter needs to be calibrated, however. When two people walk or bike past side by side, it may see only one, or a person walking a dog may register as two people. So, periodically one of our members sits by the trail with a clipboard, recording the actual number and type of users going past the counter. Comparing this to the electronic count gives the calibration factor. The presence of a human backup, most often board member Dan Goddard, is critical for accuracy.

The other part of the trail census is to evaluate economic impacts. You will see a census sign planted in the ground beside the kiosk near the front parking lot. Since we cannot do in-person surveys of trail users during COVID-19, we are gathering data through the internet. If you use the trail, please stop and use your cell phone to scan the QR code on the sign, which takes you to a short survey. The data gathered will help guide and hopefully encourage future trail development. During this pandemic, trail use has expanded exponentially, serving to highlight the importance of trails to an ever-increasing number of state residents and visitors.

The Connecticut Trail Census (<https://cttrailcensus.uconn.edu/>) is funded by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program; project partners include the Connecticut State Greenways Council, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, CLEAR, and the UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources.



## **MADISON**

### **TOWN TEAM CHAIR VIRGINIA RAFF**



The Madison team was awarded a grant by REI, the outdoor clothing and gear store, and with support of state park staff, a new water station was installed near the Greenway Trail parking lot at Hammonasset, and it's already in use by humans and dogs.

There was a lot of storm damage in Madison from hurricanes and wind storms, and volunteers led by Perry Rianhard did a tremendous cleanup job.

Our tile replacement project on the trail bridge near the Hammonasset entrance is almost completed.

The Madison Town Bike/Pedestrian Committee is working on a recommendation as to what to do with the federal and state grant funds allocated to Madison for building the Shoreline Greenway Trail. One proposed idea is to use it to partially fund a trail to the Surf Club which would become a link in the trail.

## **GUILFORD**

### **TOWN TEAM CHAIR PAM BISBEE-SIMONDS**

The Guilford team has been supporting the efforts of the Safe Streets task force in pursuit of extending sidewalks in town, from the Middle School along Route 77 to the police station area.

The Task Force has two vacancies on the committee, in case anyone is interested in serving. In the meanwhile, we need new, younger participants to join the Guilford Team to help plan local events to keep safe biking awareness in folks' minds.

## **BRANFORD**

### **TOWN TEAM CHAIR JUDITH MILLER**

Recent Planning and Zoning Commission discussions indicate that the Shoreline Greenway section along Indian Neck Avenue and Meadow Street is still very much a part of the town plan for its transit-oriented development.

Keep your eyes out for the new directional signs at the intersection of Montowese Street and Tabor Drive. They'll alert town visitors to the Tabor Trail section, Ecology Park, and the labyrinth.

SGT hosted a 1K virtual family walk fundraiser for Orchard House and the Community Dining Room here in Branford on the Tabor Trail. Our part of the fundraiser was to email SGT supporters to let them know about it. Thanks to Aziz Dehkan for working with Orchard House and to Dan Goddard for sending out the announcements.

The Branford Team participated in another fundraiser, "The Painted Doors of Branford," sponsored by the Branford Arts and Cultural Alliance to support an art scholarship for a Branford High School graduate. The entry fee was \$35.00, which got us a 24X75 inch primed door to paint as we wish. We created a 3-D model of the Tabor Trail on the door as a way of making passers-by on Main Street aware of the Trail.



Thanks to Chris Willems for delivering the door and taking such great photos. And thanks to Pam Bisbee Simonds of the Guilford team, and to Sue Smith and Judy Miller for their contributions. Pam painted the background for us, and Sue bought out Michaels and the Dollar Store, finding most of the cute objects you see on the door.

We'll be holding onto the door and using it at the Branford Festival.

## **EAST HAVEN**

### **TOWN TEAM CHAIR BARBARA BROW**

The public service department cleared fallen trees from SGT off Elliot Street (former site of DC Moore School). The East Haven team is performing maintenance on its trails during the month of November.



East Haven SGT is making trail progress, thanks to Mayor Carfora and his administration. Assistant Director of Administration and Management, Michelle Benivegna, working closely with DOT, interviewed several firms.

Ultimately BL Companies was selected for the design phase to extend the trail from Elliot Street to Cosey Beach Avenue. This section will utilize federal and state grant funds allocated to building the Shoreline Greenway Trail.

In addition, Mayor Carfora, per an agreement with DOT, directed East Haven Public Service Department to extend the completed trail at the former site of DC Moore School 400 feet to Elliot Street.

The town team plans to add directional signs to the trailhead at Mansfield Grove Road and to Farm River State Park. Also planned is the addition of two benches in Farm River State Park, one overlooking the Farm River and the other on the trail in the park.





We hope you enjoyed  
this edition of the  
Shoreline Greenway Trail  
Newsletter.

Watch for our next one in the Spring!





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Aziz Dehkan