



SHORELINE GREENWAY TRAIL

ANNUAL REPORT - MAY 2015

"Sun on the Greenway Trail" oil painting by Beverly Schirmeier from SGT First Saturday 'En Plein Air' Art Stroll with Madison Art Society

A year of accomplishments with a major goal in sight

At least one section of trail in every town to be completed within a year

Shoreline Greenway Trail has been very active since last summer, making major progress in developing the trail and providing access to it. We've continued to work with our four towns, land trusts and other interests to design and develop beautiful, ecologically sensitive trail sections and boardwalks, and we expect to have at least one section complete in every town by next year. Nearly half of the trail is completed, under construction, or established, and we're excited about the challenge of connecting the sections into a safe, magnificent trail connecting the Shoreline's main urban hub with one of the state's most spectacular beach parks.

Our First Saturday programs over the past year offered not only peaceful walks through beautiful land but also exposure to art-making and a lesson in tree planting. Our town teams have been busy promoting the trail and gaining community as well as financial support for its

completion with parades, house tours, bike safety rodeos, public presentations and other activities. We've continued to encourage children to get outside and enjoy our green space by taking school groups on nature hikes. See inside to learn more about the strides we've taken toward our goal of making the Shoreline Greenway Trail a reality!



Hikers enjoying a First Saturday Walk along Trail in East Haven

Message from Our Chair

Dear Friends,

As you will see as you look through this Annual Report, the Shoreline Greenway Trail continues to make great progress toward our dream of a continuous bicycling and walking trail from Lighthouse Point in New Haven all the way to Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison.



We've been working on this important project for more than thirteen years, and a lot has been accomplished. Many extraordinary volunteers have served on the Board of Directors during that time, each bringing his or her own strengths, allowing the Board to mature and broaden in many different ways. As much as I have loved chairing this Board for so many years, and as proud as I am of its achievements, I have seen how helpful new perspectives can be to the organization, and I have decided to hand over the leadership. Judy Miller has been elected to succeed me. Judy is exceptionally well qualified, having provided strong leadership in Branford as town chair and having served as vice chair of the Board for the last year. She is our graceful diplomat, and she will serve us well.

One thing as chair that I never did get done was identify and appoint a fundraising chair, so in punishment, the Board has asked me to stay on and take on that role. They are giving me a fancy title, Founding Chair, but don't let it fool you; we need money, and I intend to be asking for it!

My thanks to you and to the Board for granting me the privilege of serving as your chair. The organization is stronger than ever and well positioned to flourish under Judy's stewardship.

Chip Angle

SAVE THE DATE: Monday, May 18, 7PM in Guilford - Annual Celebration with CT Senator Ted Kennedy Jr. at the Nathanael B.

Green Community Center. Celebrate our achievements this past year, learn from Senator Kennedy about the CT State Committees that impact Shoreline Greenway Trail.

See pg. 12 for details.

The Many Ways to Support the Trail

In the years since we incorporated in 2003, we have raised more than \$1.3 million from members and other trail supporters like you. 87 percent of that money has gone directly to construction of the trail and activities promoting its use and only 13% for fundraising and administration. In addition, we have received \$3.3 million from Federal and State grants, a major boost for our trail-building.

Much of our support has come through donations made via our website or in response to our fundraising mailers, but there are many other ways you can support Shoreline Greenway Trail. They include taking advantage of an employer's matching-gifts program, making Shoreline Greenway Trail a beneficiary of a bequest or planned gift, signing up for monthly giving via credit card or PayPal, or donating appreciated stock. Several supporters have dedicated benches along the trail to loved ones.

Taking part in a fundraising event like New Haven's Rock to Rock bicycle ride is a great way to support us, as is contributing to us through the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven's Great Give Program. A portion of sales benefits Shoreline Greenway Trail when you purchase SGT t-shirts, hats, mugs and other swag at CafePress.com or use the AmazonSmile program to buy goods online. If you'd like more information on how to financially support us, contact Chip Angle, founding chair, at chipangle1@gmail.com or (203) 453-6065. Here are links to some of the online resources mentioned above:

Shoreline Greenway Trail website: click "Donate" or "Join" on www.shorelinegreenwaytrail.org

The Great Give: givegreater.guidestar.org. Enter "Shoreline Greenway Trail" in "Find an Organization" and click "Donate Now."

Café Press: to see all available SGT products, click on www.cafepress.com.

AmazonSmile: smile.amazon.com. Enter "Shoreline Greenway Trail" in the "Pick a Charitable Organization" field and click "Select" to designate us.



Hide and seek on the Trail

Our Town Teams at Work

Madison – Starting work on the final leg

Ginny Raff, Madison Chair

It was a busy and productive year for the Madison SGT team. In the spring, we opened the new parking lot at the eastern trailhead adjacent to the main entrance to Hammonasset Beach State Park, and it's proved to be a tremendously popular facility. It has 61 parking spaces (including three ADA and three RV spots) and, thanks to Eagle Scout Tom O'Sullivan, a seating area and a bicycle rack. The parking lot provides easy and free access to the Hammonasset section of the trail, whose high usage has been encouraging—as have the enthusiastic comments we've heard from many who have walked or ridden it.

We continued to expand the trail itself, constructing trail and a retaining wall between the parking-lot walkway and the Hammonasset toll booths, and we began work on the final leg that will connect the park with Madison town roads at Liberty Street. We're now designing that trail section, a retaining wall and a water crossing in advance of applying for an encroachment permit from the state Department of Transportation; we're also clarifying other permits and raising funds to complete the job.



En Plein Air artists on the Trail at Hammonasset

Our well-attended First Saturday walk in September featured 15 en plein air painters from the Madison Art Society, who later exhibited their works at the Scranton Library. Many of the works created that day are for sale, with a portion of the sales from the proceeds benefiting the trail. Contact the society at madisonartsociety.blogspot.com if you're interested. Additionally, we hosted a tree-planting workshop led by landscape architect Barbara Yeager. It was instructive for professionals and amateurs alike while yielding two trees, the first plantings for our rain garden, which is a focal point of the trailhead landscaping. Finally, geocaching has become a

popular activity along the Hammonasset trail. Keep your eyes open: you might find someone's cache—but for sure, you'll discover exciting things happening all along the trail!

Guilford – First section to be complete next year

Pam Simonds & Milt Charlton, Guilford Co-Chairs

Our newly revitalized Guilford team is organizing new outreach events and progressing with plans for the first section of trail in town, an almost one-mile section completely off road along the south side of Route One, from East River bridge to Boston Street. We are grateful to Guilford Town Engineer Jim Portley and his department, who designed the section and are shepherding the design approval process with the State through each stage. At a public meeting in August, we received overwhelming support from all 75 Guilford citizens attending, including homeowners along the proposed route.



Marchers at the Guilford Fair Parade

Our Team made a big splash at the Guilford Fair Parade in September, with twenty-one SGT members marching and riding bikes behind our banner, trailed by our “caboose” – a young family's new Jeep decorated with Shoreline Greenway Trail signs, posters, and their four children riding on top! One of our SGT walkers, wearing a “Nature on the Trail” sign with a huge spider on her shirt, her hat covered with leaves, was interviewed on Channel 8 news that night.

We held our first Guilford fundraiser on Halloween weekend, courtesy of a homeowner who designated Shoreline Greenway Trail as one of two beneficiaries of the Homes of Distinction Zero-Energy House Tour. Eleven volunteers served as hosts and parked cars by Breakfast Woodworks. Attended by more than 500 people, the event gave us great exposure and raised almost \$3,000 for the trail.

Dennis Dostert of Guilford Community Television interviewed the Guilford Team co-chairs for a future airing. In December Pam Simonds and Chip Angle spoke at a Guilford Rotary Club luncheon attended by c. 100 members; we provided our bike safety bookmarks for their stocking stuffers. Later they invited us to apply for a grant.

An informal Volunteer Open House at the community Center on a December afternoon brought us several new volunteers, including Kristen d'Souza who jumped in to organize our first Kids Bike Safety Rodeo, finding six volunteers to help! They have partnered with Guilford Park and Rec Department, Guilford Police and Zane's Cycles to put on this fun event on Saturday, May 2, from 9am to 11am at Cox Elementary School. Kids 5 to 10 learn how to bike safely, road signs, have helmet fittings, and ride a fun obstacle course. The public was invited to bring any used bikes – kids and adults - to the event to donate to the Bikes for Kids program.

Branford – New trail added; lots of outreach conducted

Judy Miller, Branford Co-Chair

While the Branford team continued to add new trail in town, some of its greatest accomplishments in 2014 were in outreach. We held our first annual Branford Town Meeting in March, drawing about 30 people and signing up new volunteers. We had many visitors to our table at Zane's Cycles' Big Wheel event in April, and that same month, about 50 children attended a bicycle safety rodeo we co-sponsored with the Branford Recreation Center, Branford Early Childhood Collaborative, the Branford police and fire departments, and Zane's Cycles.

Shoreline Greenway Trail volunteers led groups of schoolchildren on several trail walks throughout the spring, and in June, we collaborated with the East Haven team and the Shoreline Trolley Museum to sponsor our second annual Connecticut Trails Day walk; Leo Cristofar and Peg Stamp led a group of more than 100 walkers. Trails Day was soon followed by the annual Branford Festival, where our booth attracted many visitors. Just after Christmas, about 80 walkers attended our third annual Get the Children Outside Walk on an unusually warm December day.

As for the trail itself, under Jack Wood's supervision, we completed the 8/10-mile-long Tilcon section leading from the Stony Creek Trolley Trail. Guilford Boy Scout Charles Slate earned his Eagle Scout badge by clearing

the Outdoor Classroom on the Pine Orchard Birch Road section. We were very pleased in October when the Branford Board of Selectmen voted to apply funds from a federal grant to the design and construction of one mile of new trail, from Pine Orchard Road to Meadow Street across the Tabor property.

The completion of that

section will bring us close to our goal of having a safe, off-road bicycle/pedestrian trail connecting the town center, railroad station and Stony Creek section of town. We also established a monthly trail maintenance schedule to keep the sections we've already built in tip-top shape.

The Birch Road Trail reminds us that a greenway trail is not just a path. It's a way of connecting people with nature in all sorts of wonderful ways, of showing people that nature matters and that they have a role to play in its protection. This section of trail is rich with opportunity, as four different nature experiences lie within a half-mile of one another: the Shoreline Greenway Trail, the Outdoor Classroom, Nature's Garden and the Community Garden. The SGT Branford team is fortunate to have a hand in developing and maintaining these spaces, and we're pleased to see them used frequently for walking, jogging, biking or just plain sitting and staring at nature at one of the two benches designed by member Pete Peterson.

East Haven – Activities underway at Farm River State Park and Bradford Preserve

Barbara Brow, East Haven Chair

Trail design, permitting, clearing and construction continued on several fronts in the past year. Our town team partnered with Boy Scout Troop 401 to clear a half-mile trail through Farm River State Park. Clearing the trail helped raise public awareness of this lovely, peaceful and pristine park that is rich with small wildlife, osprey nests, caves and spectacular water views. The East Haven town team recently received permission from Connecticut DEEP to build on the existing trail. We plan to apply for grant funds and seek donations to build the Farm River State Park Trail.



Trail pioneer Chet Blomquist leads a winter walk in Branford

One of Troop 401's scouts, Joseph Capozzo, chose Shoreline Greenway Trail for his Eagle Scout service project and created an interpretive brochure to educate users about the nature findings along the D.C. Moore School section of trail. The brochure, which is available at the trailhead kiosk, has been popular with educators and students who often use the trail on field trips.



Children planting along the DC Moore School Trail section

As 2015 gets underway, we are working with Mayor Maturo and his administration, the Town Council, engineers and state agencies to apply federal and state grant funds to the design and permit phase for a section of trail in the beautiful Bradford Preserve—thanks to the great support of the East Haven Land Trust, which allowed us to route the trail through their property. Once that phase of the project is complete, we will begin construction of a half-mile, ecologically sensitive boardwalk through the preserve and build a 720-foot cleared trail at Moore School. The finished segment will connect East Haven's beach area and Splash Pad Park to the granite-topped trail at the school, onto the trailhead and to the parking area at Mansfield Grove Road.

We continue to collaborate with the Branford team on a way to cross the Farm River and link our trails, and we are working with Branford and the Shoreline Trolley Museum on the annual Connecticut Trails Day celebration in June. Participants will take a scenic trip aboard a restored trolley and disembark for a walk along the proposed route to the Farm River. On the return trip, a museum volunteer will lead us on a tour of vintage trolleys. Come out and see the great progress we're making!

Youth on the March for Shoreline Greenway Trail

If you ask active members of the Shoreline Greenway Trail team why they devote hours of volunteer time to the trail, most will include in their answer something to this effect: "to leave a legacy of access to healthy exercise and nature for our children." It is fitting, then, that our towns' young people increasingly play a role in supporting, maintaining or just being on the trail.

Scouts: Sometimes their connection to the trail comes from their work at school or involvement with another organization such as the Boy Scouts. The many examples include the Scouts in East Haven who helped to build the Farm River Park trail section, the Guilford Scout who cleaned up Branford's Outdoor Classroom and the numerous high school students throughout our towns who have worked on the Shoreline Greenway Trail as part of their schools' community service or capstone requirements.

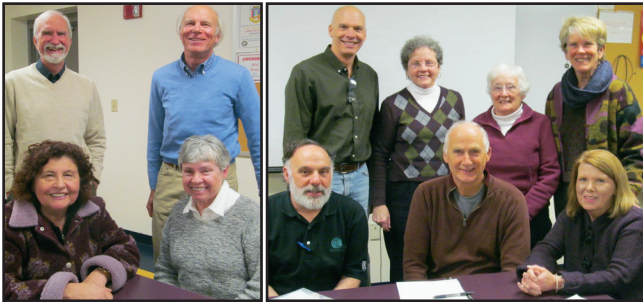
At other times, kids' participation is serendipitous, such as when three young men from Branford happened to come along when an SGT trail maintenance team was working on the Tabor property. On a lark, the boys pitched in, even going back home to get tools and water to share with the rest of the crew. What a great day!

School Walks: School-led walks are an important part of Shoreline Greenway Trail's outreach. The trail can be a living laboratory for any town's science or environmental education curriculum, and it can be particularly valuable in helping kids understand the role that open space plays in a region's ecology. When elementary-age students walk the trail with their teachers, they tell us they enjoy spotting wildlife such as osprey and they're deeply affected by the trash they sometimes see irresponsibly discarded. They send us the most wonderful, colorful thank-you notes you can imagine! The participation of schools in the trail effort emphasizes the importance of Access for All, as we celebrate the fact that our trails at their best will accommodate people in wheelchairs and with other limitations to mobility.

Family Fun: But perhaps the best participation of all from our children starts with the parents who take them out onto the trail or bring them on our First Saturday walks and bike rides. Whether walking or cycling, parents play an important role, exposing their children to the beauty of the great outdoors, building interest in physical activity, spreading awareness of the Shoreline Greenway Trail and carrying the trail's legacy to future generations. Thank you!

Your Working Board of Directors

We honor all our dedicated Board members, many of whom have served since we incorporated in 2003. Their tireless commitment of thousands of hours this past year is testament to how important the trail is to the Shoreline community.



Back: Milton Charlton, Chip Angle, - Peter Hawes, Peggy Thomas, Ginny Raff, Pam Bisbee-Simonds
Front: Barbara Brow, Judy Miller, - Mike Gambardella, Ted Braun, Mary Jane Toomey
Not present: Chet Blomquist, Glenn Gaffield, Brad Kronstat, Joe Marshall, John Paulson, Jo Zaehring

2014-15 Board of Directors

AT LARGE

- Chip Angle, 2003
- Pam Bisbee-Simonds, 2003
- Glenn Gaffield, 2009
- Peter Hawes, 2015
- Brad Kronstadt, 2013
- Joe Marshall, 2003
- Judy Miller, 2010
- John Paulson, 2011
- Peggy Thomas, 2003

RESIDENT

Branford

- Chet Blomquist, 2003
- Judy Miller, 2010
- Peg Stamp, 2015
- Jo Zaehring, 2012

East Haven

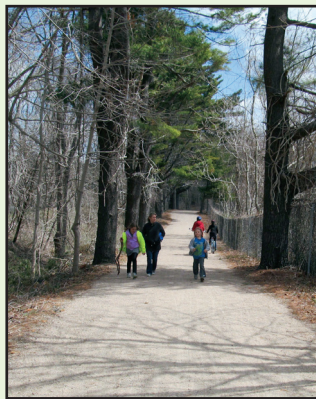
- Barbara Brow, 2003
- Mike Gambardella, 2008
- Mary Jane Toomey, 2014

Guilford

- Pam Bisbee-Simonds, 2003
- Ted Braun, 2003
- Milton Charlton, 2012

Madison

- Patty McKeon, 2015
- Virginia Raff, 2007



Shoreline Greenway Trail Inc. in Transition

As I write this, spring is approaching, with its promise of new growth. It's fitting that the Shoreline Greenway Trail is growing as well. This has been a year of great achievement in regard to the trail itself and of positive transition in our organization.



Recognizing that we are a grassroots group, we have increased the number of resident directors from each town from two to three. This has strengthened the town teams that are so crucial to our success in building the trail. They are our boots on the ground, and we now benefit from having more people contributing their ideas, energy and effort to the work of the Board of Directors as they also make things happen within their towns.

At the same time, the town teams have focused on increasing the number of active local participants. Each town team has added new members. They are working on outreach programs to schools and the community, encouraging the participation of young people through educational walks and community service projects, providing trail maintenance, holding town meetings, and generally mapping out the trail, maintaining it in good order, collaborating with local officials and ensuring that the residents of each town are aware of what we are doing and of its importance to their town.

But while the town members of the Shoreline Greenway Trail—the fingers of the hand, so to speak—are crucial, the palm of the hand, the union of the towns, also has a key role to play. Our strength lies additionally in our identity as one trail that links together our shoreline towns. The Shoreline Greenway Trail Board's all-town committees deliver this unified sense of purpose.

Building a greenway trail where no trail existed before along a desirable shoreline is a monumental task that will take the cooperation of the Shoreline Greenway Trail with local residents and landowners plus many town, state and federal agencies. As an all-volunteer organization, we will continue to dedicate thousands of hours to this task. If you are reading this Annual Report, we hope that means that you are with us!

Judy Miller
 Incoming Shoreline Greenway Trail Chair

THE TRAIL IS POPULAR ON THE INTERNET TOO! OUR WEBSITE HAD OVER 12,000 VISITORS THIS YEAR!
 And you can follow us on FACEBOOK. "Like us" though the FB link on our website: www.shorelinegreenwaytrail.org

2014 Shoreline Greenway Trail Donors

Thank you for your generosity in helping us complete your trail

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 The Community Foundation
 for Greater New Haven
 Dorr Foundation
 East Haven Democratic Town
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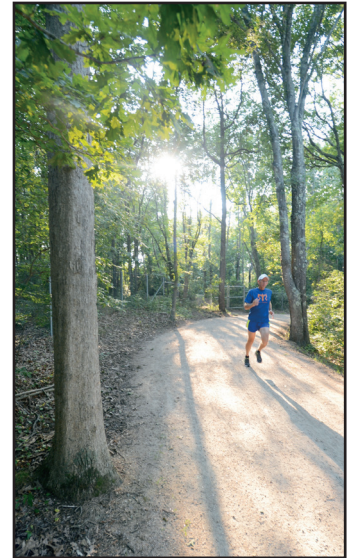


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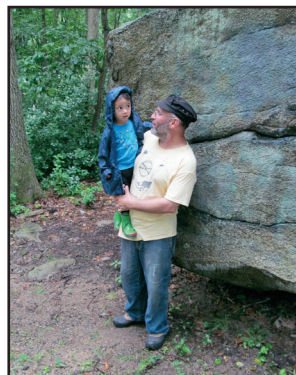
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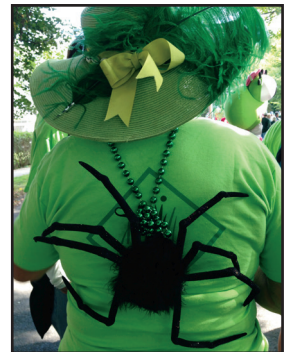
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 Dorothy Nicolai
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 Judith Young
 Nada Young
 Jennifer Zambrano
 George Zubal
 Bruce ZuWalick

In Memory of:

* In Memory of Cameron Brown
 ** In Memory of Paula Lee Schiller
 *** In Memory of Shirley Punzelt

Giving Levels

Trailblazer	\$500+
Leaders	\$100-\$499
Guide	\$50 - \$99
Other Contributors	Under \$50

Rocking and Riding for the Trail

This year Shoreline Greenway Trail was thrilled to be invited to participate in the 7th Annual Rock to Rock Earth Day Ride in New Haven on Saturday April 25, a major fundraiser which last year distributed over \$100,000 to 24 local environmental organizations. 15 riders from age 9 to 77 joined our SGT Bike Team to ride in four of the five routes, from the 8-mile Family Ride to the challenging 60-mile metric Century Ride. 8 folks volunteered at the event, and many members, families and friends cheered us on with donations. As of April 20, we topped our goal of \$4,000!!



A few of our Rock to Rock Team getting ready for the big day!

Upcoming Events

Check our website for details and for other events soon to be scheduled

MAY 18, MONDAY, 7PM - ANNUAL CELEBRATION WITH CT SENATOR TED KENNEDY JR at Nathanael B. Green Community Center in Guilford CT. Our speaker is a strong supporter of the Trail, a graduate of Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and UConn Law School. Senator Kennedy has become a passionate advocate of environmental issues of many kinds. Hear what he has to say about his role in the State legislature as the Majority Whip, Chair of the Environment Committee, and member of Transportation and Public Health Committees. And learn about the latest developments in our effort to complete the Trail. Share your thoughts and ideas with us while enjoying light refreshments. A brief annual Board election will be held.



JUNE 24, WEDNESDAY, 5:30 p.m., NEW HAVEN: *Join us for a bike ride in conjunction with the International Festival of Arts and Ideas*—a 15-day extravaganza of performing arts, lectures and activities that takes place throughout the New Haven area every June. SGT will participate in a ride that leaves the New Haven Green, heads to Lighthouse Point and our East Haven Trail, then proceeds to Cosy Beach for ice cream at the Sandpiper in East Haven and then returns to New Haven.



Kids love to bike our trail at Hammonasset

“First Saturday” Hikes and Bike Rides

Join Shoreline Greenway Trail leaders for our monthly First Saturday walks and bike rides and check our website for new bike rides this summer.

JUNE 6, SATURDAY, 10 a.m., EAST HAVEN: *Celebrate Connecticut Trails Day with us at the Shoreline Trolley Museum.* Enjoy a free ride on restored trolley cars, followed by a walk along the cleared proposed Shoreline Greenway Trail section to the former Farm River bridge crossing.

JULY 4, SATURDAY, 10 a.m., BRANFORD: *Independence Day Hike with us!* Wear your red, white and blue, and bring the children. We will hand out flags to wave as we parade along the new Tilcon trail section, up Totoket Road to Blackstone Avenue, through Young’s Pond park and along the Birch Road section of the Greenway Trail, ending at Pine Orchard Road.

AUGUST 7, SATURDAY, 9:00 a.m., GUILFORD: *Hike with Your Dog.* Put a leash on your best four-legged friend and join us for a hike through the East River Preserve, a 583-acre conservation area purchased by the Town of Guilford in 2009.

Visit our web site for details of each event and to learn about new events as they’re scheduled!

