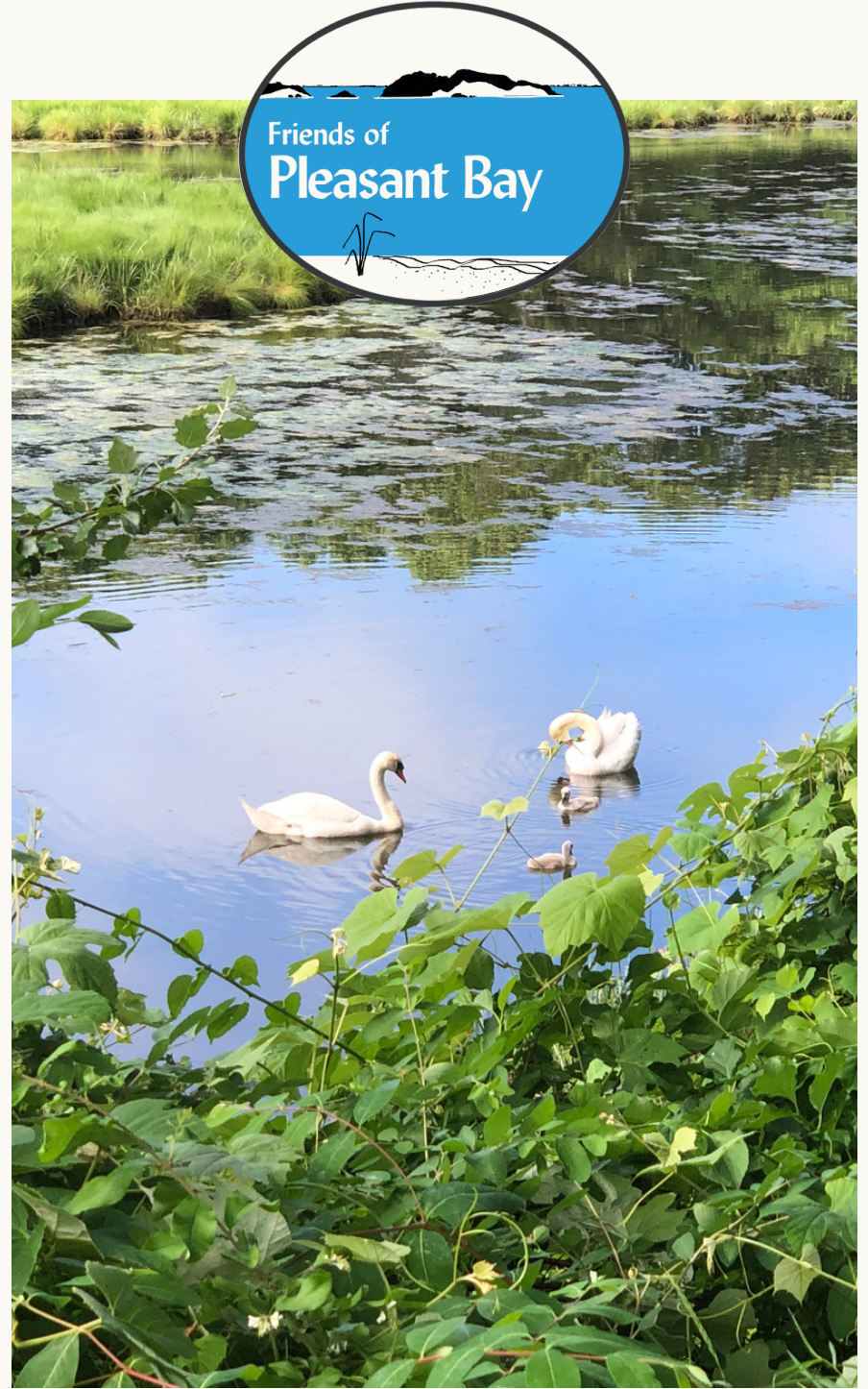


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SUMMER 2023

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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT of FoPB

Dear Friends,

As Spring settles in, with Summer fast approaching, I can already feel the pace of activity quickening around the Bay. The herring are running, the Ospreys and other migrating birds have returned and a few boats are tethered to their moorings. And Pleasant Bay dazzles in the lengthening sunlight.

While we are anticipating a busy summer, the hardworking board of Friends of Pleasant Bay has also been busy during the “off season.” A few highlights of our recent activities include the following:

Thanks to your generous contributions, we made two large grants to support legacy projects conducted by important partners:

- \$31,000 to Pleasant Bay Community Boating to assist with the costs of repowering The Friend, with new solar-powered batteries and engines.
- \$50,000 matching grant to Sipson Island Trust, to support ongoing fundraising efforts for their Removal and Renewal campaign.

The Friend is a vital resource that enlarges educational opportunities for kids and offers a platform for research for scientists. The preservation and

rewilding of Sipson Island is not only important for protecting the ecosystem of the Bay, but it is also a destination accessible through The Friend for kids and scientists. These two grants are entirely consistent with FoPB’s mission and would not have been possible without the support of FoPB’s members.

Speaking of FoPB’s mission, the board approved a new Mission Statement this spring. Our old mission statement listed seven core Purposes that did not exactly roll off the tongue! While our Purposes haven’t changed, the new Mission Statement seeks to express the Purposes in a pithier manner. Let us know what you think!

Mission of Friends of Pleasant Bay:
To preserve and advocate for the extraordinary environmental, cultural, and recreational significance of Pleasant Bay and its watershed through public education, research, and land protection.

One of FoPB’s original Purposes included recognition of the Indigenous history of the Bay. In 2020, the board created a new committee, the Native Cultural Initiative (NCI), to begin to address this aspect of our work. In so doing, we hoped to deepen our understanding of this important history, develop a relationship with our



Indigenous neighbors and develop a plan for further action.

Pleasant Bay, known as Monomoyick by the Indigenous community and their ancestors, has a centuries-long history that preceded the events of 1620. There is an abundance of evidence of that history that has been assimilated into our daily lives. Place names and street names are examples that surround the shoreline of the bay; Namequoit, Potanomicut, Wequasset, Cotchpinecote, and Pochet to name a few. Reconciling the past with the present, while painful, has also been deeply rewarding and educational for the committee. The journey ahead will continue to require perseverance and compassion as we explore how to lay the foundation of a lasting alliance with our Indigenous neighbors.

In 2022, the committee identified five areas of focus for continued work and exploration going forward.

They include:

- Facilitate Indigenous access to the watershed;
- Create educational opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children;
- Educate the general population on the Indigenous history of the Bay;
- Facilitate use of the waters by Indigenous peoples;

- Center Indigenous voices in FoPB's work and communications.

This winter and spring, we've been making progress in several of these areas and had the opportunity to explore the Indigenous history of several sites around the Bay with Devin Wixon, a descendent of the Nauset Tribe, in March. You can see photos from the walk in this newsletter. We hope to offer similar opportunities for members to learn about the Indigenous history and culture surrounding the Bay. Stay tuned for more information soon!

Lastly, we also have a new website! Check it out here:

www.friendsofpleasantbay.org.

From the website, you can also join our email list. We are working to gather emails of members so that we can communicate with you periodically about important and timely issues and events that don't necessarily align with the publication of our twice-yearly newsletter. Please help us by signing up through the website.

Thank you for your continued support of the Friends of Pleasant Bay. I hope to see you on the water soon!



Allison Coleman
President

Save the Date

Annual Meeting of the Friends of Pleasant Bay

Monday, July 17, 2023

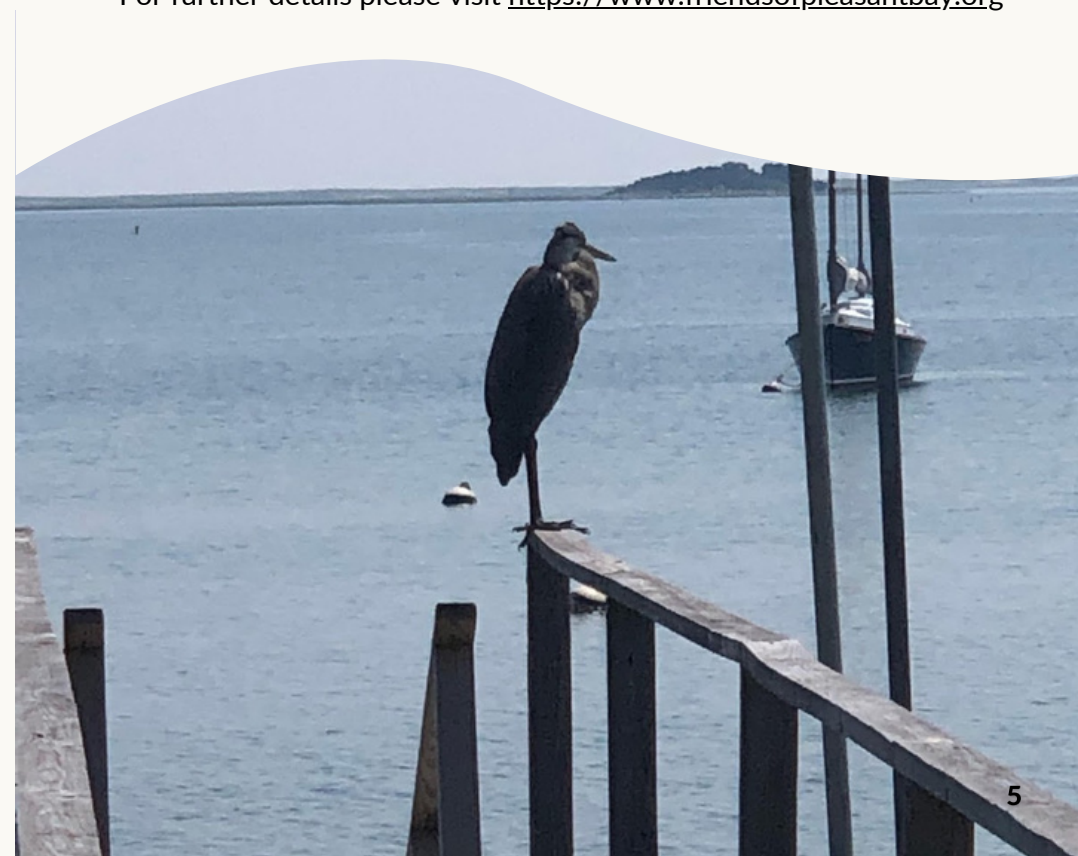
4:00 – 6:00 pm

@ the Wequasset Resort and Golf Club

Guest Speaker: Matthew Long

Matthew is a Coastal Biogeochemist and Associate Scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. He is an expert in the area of coastal ecosystem metabolism, doing cutting edge research himself and applying his knowledge of the biology of enclosed bay ecosystems to develop novel ways to monitor and prioritize actions.

For further details please visit <https://www.friendsofpleasantbay.org>



Spring Cleaning on Sipson Island

By Mon Cochran

Although Sipson Island herself reposed peacefully through the winter, the Sipson Island Trust board has been beavering away in preparation for the exciting next steps in rewilding the island: removal of three abandoned dwellings, three septic systems, and four legacy cesspools. The heavy work of transporting equipment to the island by barge, followed by demolition and debris removal, won't begin until November—but a great deal of prep work must take place in advance.

Early spring has been occupied by the clearing of deadfall and invasive shrubbery around the three buildings to facilitate access. Later in April, you may have seen a plume of smoke rising from the island. Fear not! That was a planned burn, supervised by the Orleans Fire Department, designed to get rid of big piles of accumulated brush. (Large-diameter logs will be taken off by barge in the fall.)

Another major event this spring was an archeological survey of the designated work area around the buildings, to make sure we won't be disturbing previously unknown or undocumented evidence of Indigenous presence on the island. Field investigation involved excavating test pits in the areas to be disturbed to determine whether any

potentially culturally important materials exist below ground.

In March, we distributed to eight marine contractors a request for proposals related to building removal and marine transport. Four contractors bid for the job, which involves five major elements: mobilization/demobilization (getting equipment to and from the island), marine transport, demolition of the buildings and septic systems, disposal of all debris, and partial site restoration.

After considerable discussion, we have selected Robert B. Our Marine of Harwich to do this work. Their bid came in at just under \$700,000, about \$200,000 above our estimate—an unexpectedly large expense being \$275,000 for debris disposal. We have checked out the firm locally, and they receive rave reviews. Doors and other items will be removed from the buildings and donated to Habitat for Humanity prior to demolition. Fundraising to meet these expenses is ongoing. Anyone interested in helping out, please contact Mon Cochran at mmc6@cornell.edu.



Deadfall and invasives await burning

Restoring Pleasant Bay

By Alan McLennen

Over twenty years ago we came to realize that our love for bays and estuaries like Pleasant Bay had water quality consequences. Our on-site Title 5 septic systems have done their job of removing pathogens that foul our water. Unfortunately, these systems do not treat or remove nitrogen. We all discharge nitrogen daily into our septic systems. Nitrogen passes through our septic systems and leaching fields and then moves at a rate of about 1 foot per day through the groundwater towards our estuaries where it provides food for invasives which crowd out the natural plant life.

The four towns that abut Pleasant Bay

have been working together through the Pleasant Bay Alliance on plans to restore our water quality. For Chatham, Harwich, and Orleans this has meant extensive engineering studies leading to the construction of expensive capital facilities. In the spring of 2020, Orleans commenced construction on a new sewer treatment plant and a collection system for downtown Orleans. After two and one-half years of construction at a cost of over \$58 million dollars the treatment plant and collection system are now operational. This first phase will remove just over one third of the total nitrogen that must be taken from Town Cove to meet the clean water standards.

(Cont. on next page)

On April 28th, Orleans opened bids for a proposed collection system surrounding Meetinghouse Pond, the second phase of its multi-year plan. There were four competitive bids for the project that was estimated to cost \$24 million dollars. The low bid was just over \$20 million dollars, and pending review, should be accepted. The mobilization and scheduling will take place during the summer with construction commencing after Labor Day. The project is expected to take about two years to complete. When operational, approximately 91% of the nitrogen currently entering Meetinghouse Pond from its

watershed will be collected, treated, and removed from the Pleasant Bay estuary.

In early May, Orleans voters will begin planning for Phase 3 of its wastewater plan. This project will focus on protecting Pilgrim and Crystal Lakes from phosphorus plus removing additional nitrogen from Meetinghouse Pond, and Lonnie's Pond. Construction is scheduled for 2026.

Yes, it will take time and money but restoring the health of Pleasant Bay is critical.



A Brief History of Sailing on Pleasant Bay

By Jensie Shipley

In the late 19th century there were at least 75 working catboats on Pleasant Bay. An August 1876 article in the Chatham Monitor records "between forty and fifty large boats with sails of snowy white rigged nearly alike, besides plenty of dories and other boats" on the Bay in front of a house in Harwich. A 7 mile race between 18 of those sailboats ensued. "The first prize was a silver cup inscribed Centennial Champion Cup, Pleasant Bay Fishing Club 1876." The second \$5, and the third \$2.50". Races between working sailboats continued for many years as did the cash prizes.

In 1900 the first summer camp appeared on Little Pleasant Bay, Camp Portaminicut. It was started by the Bell family who had rented Judge Brooks'

house on Pleasant Bay before renting the Fort Hill property. They had connections with Edward F. McClenen and William Chamberlain, the Marblehead boat builder of the Baybird, an 18' gaff rigged sloop. When the Chatham Yacht Club was looking for a boat to buy and race they bought 20 Baybirds. Subsequently several of the camps on Pleasant Bay also bought Baybirds and raced them on Saturday afternoons at the Chatham Yacht Club.

Today the wooden Baybird has been replaced, first by the Spaulding Dunbar designed Whistler and then by fiberglass boats. The summer camps have closed but sailing and racing continue to be part of the summer fun on the Bay.



What Else Do We Find in Pleasant Bay?

By Sarah J. Thornington | @EbbtheTide

I inadvertently became a professional beach cleaner/artist; using marine-debris as my medium. I cleaned the beach every day for a year, finding 21,000 plastic items I cleaned, sorted, saved, and make art with. So, I'm always happy to talk about things I find, and ways we can stop the flow of plastic.

As a lover of Pleasant Bay, you know that it, like most of the Cape, is clean. We keep clean beaches here, but there is always debris if you look. I have cleaned areas around Pleasant Bay before, once finding a brand-new bottle of boat cleaner. I didn't use it for art, but boat cleaning.

Recently on Pleasant Bay, in under 30 minutes, I found almost 100 pieces of debris; all what I would expect to find near a recreational body of water. Many small pieces of foam from docks and buoys, water bottles, nip bottles, glass bottles, a baseball cap, tennis ball, 4 shoes and insoles, plastic cups from a local business, numerous plastic pieces on their way to becoming microplastics, fast food cups and an undershirt.

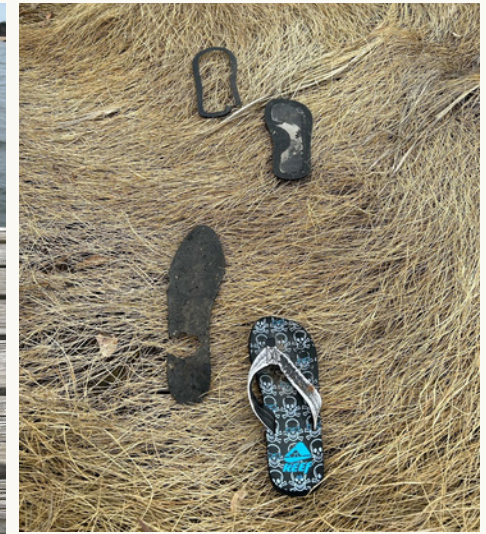
I could explain it all. The clothing items you can imagine being taken away by wind, a wave, or tide, either off a boat, or shore. These accidents are the least

concerning, though I find so many baseball caps and shoes. Dogs who aren't great at fetch create another common find.

All the plastic will break down into smaller and smaller pieces, making its way into the food chain; being eaten by fish, birds, and eventually us.

So, what's the answer? First, be a more conscious consumer; don't buy things you don't need. Packaging is 40% of single-use plastics, so consuming less is a good start. You might jump in after that shoe if it's all you have with you. Ask yourself, on a scale of 1 to this will be here for 500 years, do I really need it? And simple, skip single-use plastics; a party with plastic cups? Bring something from home. Lunch on the boat? Use reusable containers- don't risk fly-away items like zip-bags or juice boxes. And always skip the straw.

Two very important things we can do are to vote for the planet every chance we get; and find wonder in it every day. You protect what you love. The Bay, along with the planet, could use a little love.



Living Shoreline Project

By Carole Ridley

Managing shoreline erosion while preserving the natural movement of sediments is a significant challenge in Pleasant Bay. Without the erosion of coastal banks providing the primary source of sand, nearby salt marsh, beaches, dunes and barrier beaches would rapidly disappear.

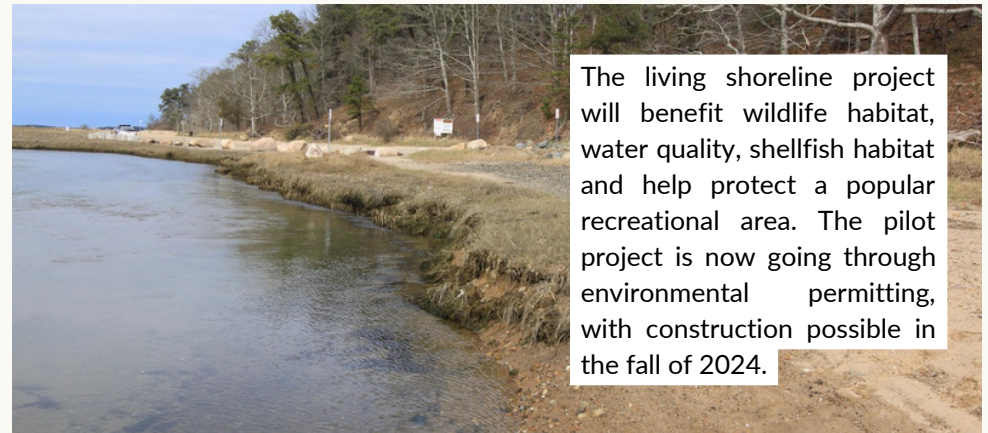
Coastal armoring is sometimes proposed to prevent shoreline erosion. However, these hard engineered structures limit natural movement of sediments and often reflect wave energy in ways that can worsen erosion on fronting beaches and down-drift properties.

New approaches are needed for managing shoreline erosion in ways that preserve natural coastal processes as much as possible. Through a series of grants from Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management, the Pleasant Bay Alliance has been working with the Town of Chatham, Barnstable Cooperative Extension, Center for Coastal Studies, Wilkinson Ecological Design and Sustainable Coastal Solutions to develop a living shoreline pilot project. Living shorelines are a form of shoreline protection that emphasizes restoration or creation of natural systems such as reefs, grasses and marshes, sometimes paired with a bioengineered structure such as coir or coconut fiber rolls. Living shorelines

have been tried in other parts of the country but are not in use in Pleasant Bay.

Following an in-depth evaluation of suitable sites in Pleasant Bay, the salt marsh that borders the tidal channel into Muddy Creek, along the accessway to Jackknife Beach was selected for the living shoreline pilot project. This portion of fringe marsh is showing stress due to natural system dynamics as well as heavy use of the adjacent town landing and beach.

The proposed living shoreline project will replace and reinforce the marsh along the landward edge of the fringing salt marsh adjoining the public accessway and parking area. Sand nourishment will be added to the area immediately landward of that marsh to elevate the intertidal area and prevent destabilization of the fringe marsh from behind. Along the channel, 12- to 18-inch coir rolls colonized with ribbed mussel will be used to stabilize the bank. The reinforced marsh and adjacent fringe marsh will be replanted with appropriate salt marsh vegetation. Physical and visual barriers and informational signage will be incorporated along the public accessway to prevent future damage to the marsh.



The living shoreline project will benefit wildlife habitat, water quality, shellfish habitat and help protect a popular recreational area. The pilot project is now going through environmental permitting, with construction possible in the fall of 2024.

Pleasant Bay Climate Adaptation Action Plan

By the end of the century, Pleasant Bay could see sea level rise by one to three feet with potential effects to the Nauset Barrier beach and Pleasant Bay shoreline. In addition to sea level rise, water temperatures in Pleasant Bay could increase by more than 2°F in the next 30 years. Without adaptation measures, the resulting effects could reduce community resilience, diminish public access to the water, limit the effectiveness of infrastructure, and diminish the ecological functioning of the estuary.

The Pleasant Bay Alliance has been awarded a Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Plan is to protect Pleasant Bay's ability to function as a healthy estuary, and to enhance the climate resilience of low-lying public access locations, as well as

water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in and around Pleasant Bay.

The project will assess climate threats to these natural and built resources, and identify creative adaptation options that maximize use of nature-based approaches. This information will be shared with stakeholders to discuss and prioritize resilience strategies and actions to include in a Climate Adaptation Action Plan.

More information about the Climate Adaptation Action Plan, including opportunities to engage, will be posted as available at <https://pleasantbay.org/programs-and-projects/climate-resilience/climate-adaptation-plan>

Next Generation Indigenous Voice

By Todd Kelley

It has been my privilege to have previously written articles for the Friends of Pleasant Bay (FoPB) newsletter attempting to express how local Indigenous perspectives toward the natural world and their mindsets and cultural values have influenced and inspired me since childhood growing up at Chatham.

Several years ago, before the creation of the Native Cultural Initiative committee (NCI), Devin Wixon (Noogaahsjun) reached out to Mon Cochran—then President of FoPB, and the principal architect of Sipson Island

purchase and preservation—with the desire to bring an authentic voice to represent the long lineages of Indigenous families rooted in this area and that still remain today.

In March, board members of Friends of Pleasant Bay and Sipson Island Trust met with Devin at the Wading Place near Muddy Creek off Route 28. Devin spoke about the history of the Wading Place, and vividly described what life would have been like for the Wampanoag and Nauset communities before the arrival of the Europeans. We moved on to Pah Wah (off

Namequoit Road) where Devin continued his history of that area. His ability to walk our small group back in time to a very different Pleasant Bay was impactful, to say the least. It was a significant step in establishing a new foundational relationship with our Indigenous neighbors.

We are most fortunate to have Noogaahsjun (Devin) join our NCI committee as a member and speak with authority on behalf of his own genealogical ancestry upon the Narrow Land specifically on the Lower Cape east of Bass River. This region was the seat of Nauset cultural power with Monomoyick territory and other smaller communities being sub-chiefdoms under Nauset cultural influence.

It is timely and appropriate for us to hear directly from Tribal members about Indigenous culture and their present-day efforts and concerns. We cannot truly comprehend the deeper meanings of Tribal knowledge otherwise. By listening and by having these conversations we may come to better understand and appreciate our shared common ground values and perhaps even develop an informed admiration for their longstanding presence and influence through all the Indigenous place names that still prevail across Cape Cod.

Please join all of us on the NCI committee in welcoming and supporting Noogaahsjun as a valued next generation Indigenous contributor to the FoPB mission.



The Friend

By Dorothy Bassett

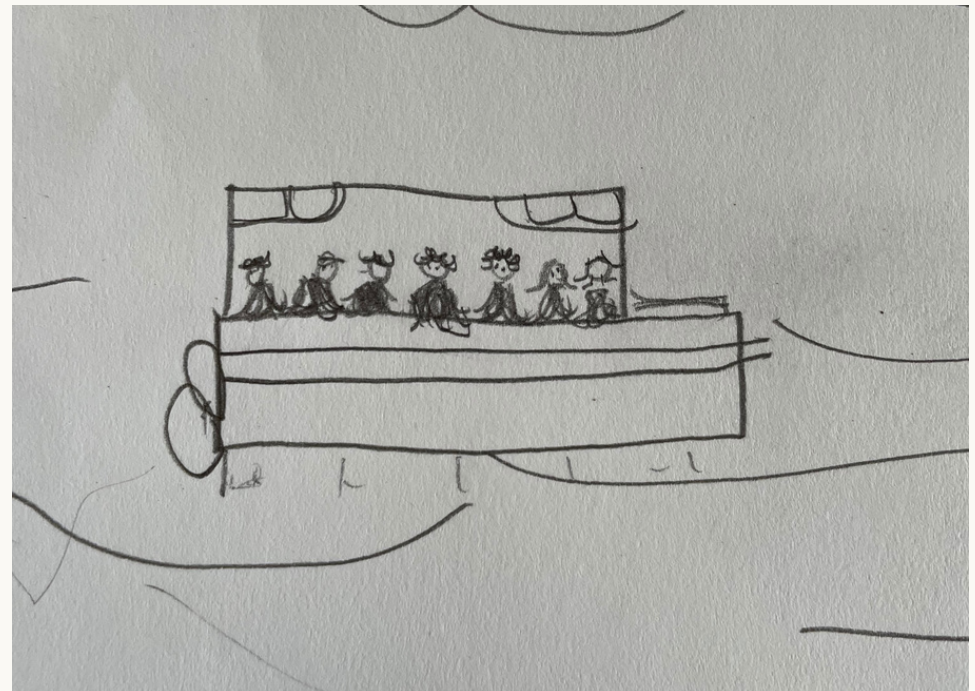
Thanks to the continued generosity of FOPB and a beautiful collaboration with Pleasant Bay Community Boating, the FCRV Friend of Pleasant Bay has been a tremendous success in helping people access and appreciate the Bay like never before. This cutting-edge solar-powered research vessel was recently outfitted with a brand-new propulsion system of twin electric Torqeedo motors, with FOPB covering 45% of the total \$55K cost. The FOPB Board strongly believes in this investment towards sustainability and is dedicated to increasing access to the Bay.

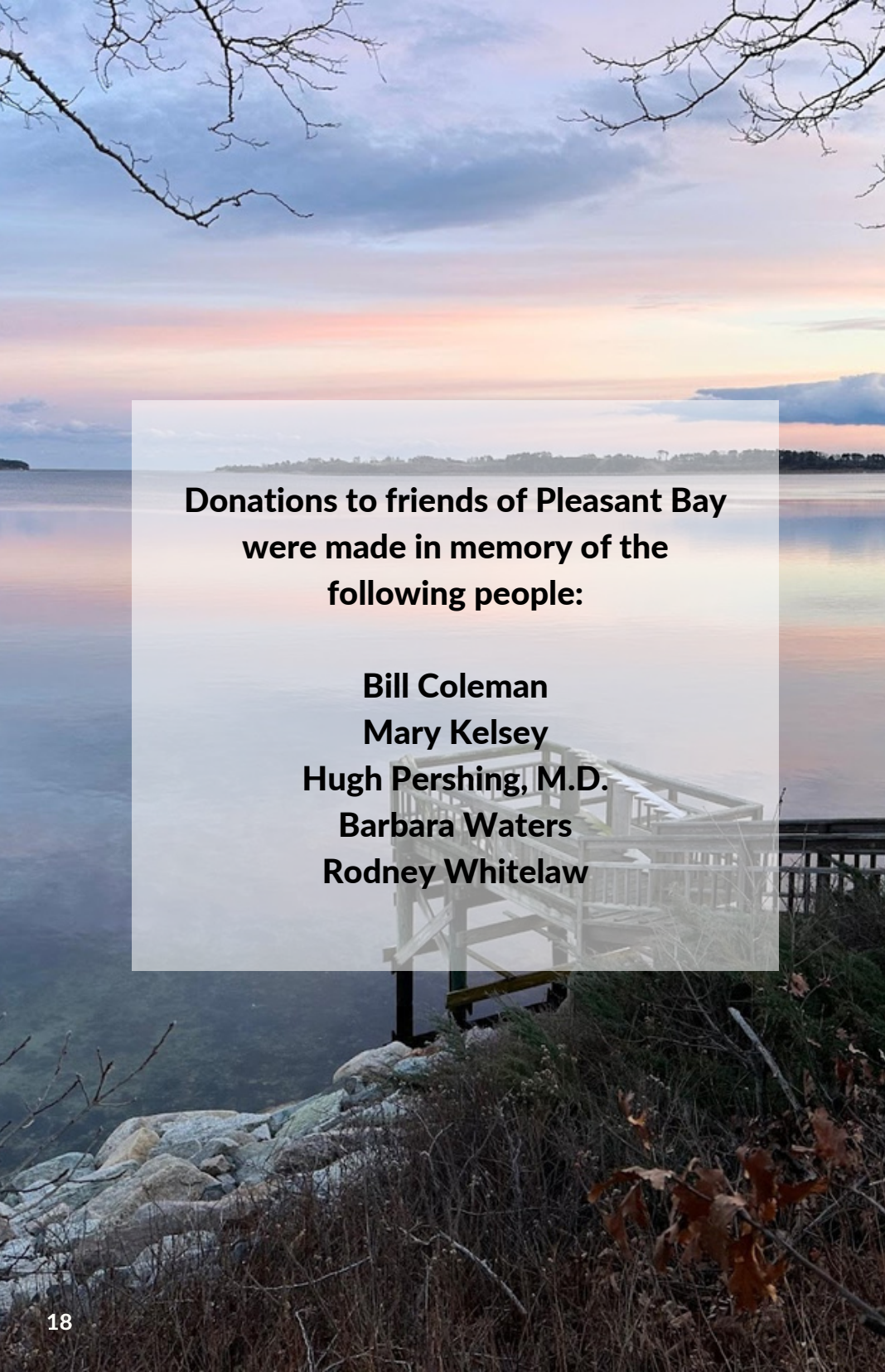
The power of the Friend is in her potential to serve and delight participants regardless of age, physical, or cognitive ability. With its stable pontoon boat design, solar panels shading the central lab table, comfortable bench seating, and near-silent electric motors, The Friend is the perfect platform for school trips, environmental research, wildlife observation, and for those who are looking for a stable and accessible way to explore and appreciate the beauty of Pleasant Bay.

Last year, the Friend served more than 600 people, ages eight to eighty-six, from the early spring through late

summer. This year, thanks to FOPB's incredible support of the Friend, PBCB has plans to reach even more people, with 700 children and adults already booked and more signing up every day. This includes Monomoy 6th graders, the Sandwich Middle High School 7th grade STEM class, the Saltwater Ecosystems class at Nauset high school, CapeAbilities participants, Community Connections, and seniors from the Councils on Aging of Chatham, Harwich, Brewster, Orleans, Eastham, and Wellfleet. In addition, PBCB plans to host monthly adaptive outreach events aboard the Friend to welcome new participants. It will also be a way to poll potential new members of the adaptive program on how best to leverage the vessel and campus to serve their unique needs, and to break barriers to enjoying the emotional and physical benefits of being on the waters of Pleasant Bay.

Thanks to the generosity of FOPB's members and donors, the Friend will continue to be a source of inspiration for sustainable boating, and a community resource for access to the Bay for years to come. For more information, please visit <https://www.friendsofpleasantbay.org/floating-classroom>





**Donations to friends of Pleasant Bay
were made in memory of the
following people:**

**Bill Coleman
Mary Kelsey
Hugh Pershing, M.D.
Barbara Waters
Rodney Whitelaw**