

Greenwich Point News



Friends of Greenwich Point - PO Box 711 - Old Greenwich, CT 06870

WINTER 2011

Safe Roads continues through April 3

In cooperation with the Town of Greenwich Parks Department, the Friends of Greenwich Point is sponsoring the SAFE ROADS Program. Through the first weekend in April, enjoy open roads on Sunday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Most traffic is restricted from driving past the main parking area, but some vehicles have special permits to pass so please be alert.

First Sunday Bird Walks February 6, March 6, April 3 9-11 a.m.

Co-sponsored by Wild Wings, Audubon Greenwich, and Bruce Museum. Free. Meet by the main (southern) concession stand. Learn about the birds of the Point. Bring binoculars.

Winter Dog Days

Dogs are permitted in Greenwich Point Park through March 31.

Please remember to keep your pet on a leash and under control at all times. Mutt mitts are available. Please help keep our Park clean and safe for all to enjoy.

Coming in March

Shellfishing Instruction and Cooking Demonstration using Greenwich Point Shellfish

Check the FoGP website for details at www.friendsofgreenwichpoint.org
OR

join our Constant Contact list for up-to-date information on events at Greenwich Point by sending a message to FoGP at info@friendsofgreenwichpoint.org.

Newsletter Editors:

Cynthia Ehlinger, Lesley Quattrone



Shellfishing at Greenwich Point

By Roger Bowgen

It's winter and you want to get the family out of the house or the children away from their iPads and computers for a couple of hours in the fresh air. What can you do that is different?

Well, why not try one of the oldest New England recreational past times ...shellfishing! It's available right at your door step at Greenwich Point. Shellfishing is an autumn /spring activity - the recreational beds open November 1st and close May 1st.

What can you find?

Oysters, hard-shell clams (little necks), soft-shell clams (steamers), mussels and razor clams (more difficult to find). By the way, lobsters and crabs are not shellfish...a common misunderstanding!

What do you need to start shellfishing?

Step one: A season permit – available at Town Hall and Sportsman's Den in Cos Cob (\$15 adults, \$5 children). With your permit you will be given a map of the shellfishing beds at Greenwich Point, a copy of the regulations that govern the taking of shellfish and a

shellfish cookbook put together by members of the Shellfish Commission.

Step two: To dig and collect shellfish, you will need a potato rake with tines not less than 1 inch apart or a long handled garden fork with flat tines also not less than 1 inch apart. (Check your garden shed or Home Depot?)

You'll also need a shellfish sizing ring and a shellfish basket, both of which can be purchased at the Sportsman's Den. In lieu of the basket a plastic bucket of not more than two-gallon capacity (or a larger one calibrated by hand to show the two-gallon level). Per the regulations, this is the daily combined limit for all shellfish with a max for oysters of 24 per permit per day.

Suitably armed with the above plus warm clothing and rubber boots (Walmart) or waders you are set to go.

Shellfishing takes place at low tide and you can check the times in the local newspaper (weather section) or purchase a tide table. It is best to shellfish an hour either side of low tide when the most beach is exposed. *(continued on page 2)*



View of the Old Greenwich Yacht Club. A new concrete wash pad is located in the boatyard area.

Photo by Cynthia Ehlinger

A Talk with Jeffrey Freidag, Superintendent, Marine & Facility Operations Division

By Cynthia Ehlinger

The Town of Greenwich has been working on a few projects near the Old Greenwich Yacht Club lately.

Jeffrey C. Freidag, CMM, who is the new Superintendent, Marine & Facility Operations Division for the Town of Greenwich Parks & Recreation, explained that a new concrete wash pad in the boat storage area is part of a recent marina upgrade project that will help the Long Island Sound environment.

“The current State of Connecticut DEP regulations for pressure washing of boat bottoms with anti-fouling paint require that no wastewater makes its way back into the watershed,” Freidag said.

Although a temporary system for reclaiming the water was used in 2010, this more permanent installation meets the requirement to have systems in place by 12/31/2010. The concrete wash pad is the base for the system that is used to wash the boat bottoms when they are hauled out of the water for the season. The wastewater is collected, recycled and reused during the process. The pad is there to make sure all the wastewater is collected.

“During operation, there will be a fence around the pad for overspray, and mats to keep the water on the pad. We have a portable wash-water recycling system that operates using its own recycled water on a continuous loop basis,” Freidag explained. “The water is filtered and reused to clean each boat as it is placed over the pad. Then the filtered product is disposed of at a local collection facility.”

Additional pads are installed at the Grass Island and Cos Cob marinas. The Town’s chosen system was approved by the State and permits were obtained. More information on the manufacturer of the wash system is available at <http://encyclon.com/>.

Another Greenwich Point project underway in the same area this winter involves the removal and replacement of the boat launch ramp. Approvals have been granted by the DEP and all other regulatory agencies and all permits are now in place. The new ramp will be approximately the same size as the old one, but will include a string of floats on one side to help with the launching and recovery of vessels using the ramp. The floats will sit on the ramps during low tide.

Shellfishing (continued from page 1)

What to look for to find the clams? Dig where you see dime-sized holes in the sand, which indicate the presence of steamers, razor clams and little necks. You will see areas where the number of holes varies from a few to dozens. Closer to the water’s edge is the best area for hard shell clams – soft-shell clams are everywhere.

For the more adventurous with waders and a shellfish raking basket, hard-shell clams can be collected by wading in the small lagoon that remains at low tide opposite the Chimes building to the left of OGYC.

Oysters attach themselves to rocks and other shells above the sand, so you will not need to dig for these. Just search the rocky areas that are normally under water at high tide.

Shellfish Wardens are on hand on the weekends and are always ready to advise and assist you in your search.

It is important to note that whenever there has been a rain event, the shellfish beds are closed if the rainfall exceeds one and a half inches. They are only opened again after water and shellfish meat samples have been tested by the State Aquaculture Laboratory in Milford and certified as in order.

This is a state mandate and is in addition to the weekly testing of the waters in our area by the Shellfish Coordinator. Water samples are taken from 31 points in Greenwich and tested to ensure that no pollution event has occurred that could affect the suitability of the shellfish for human consumption.

Signs posted at the Point (just north of the entrance booth and west of the OG Yacht Club) indicate if the beds are open or closed and there is also a Shellfish Hotline, (203) 622-7777, to call that advises their status.

When shellfishing, the family will also find all sorts of other interesting shells and marine “critters.” They can look them up on those iPads when they get back home again! Happy clamming...

Letter from the President

By Amy Burke

THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Dogs and Greenwich Point... these are a few of my favorite things. Put them together and I (and my dog) are at our happiest. Like many of you, I count down the days until December 1st when the Point opens its gates to canines and their owners.

I usually walk to the Point with my dog and he can hardly believe his good fortune when we make our way along the causeway and continue towards the beach. He tugs a little harder on the leash and steps a little livelier as we get closer to the sand and water. And once allowed onto the open beach (below the tide line, of course), I imagine that this must be a glimpse into dog heaven - dogs of all shapes, sizes and ages romping and playing together. I'm always amazed that, for the most part, the dogs all seem to get along with one another. And I am also thankful that most of the dog owners act responsibly when their dogs are on the beach – they clean up after their pets and restrain their over-eager dogs when necessary.

Unfortunately, though, I cannot say that I see the same care taken in the other, non-beach-below-the-tide-line, areas of Greenwich Point. It seems that many dog owners are allowing their pets to have free reign of the parking lots, running paths and interior areas of Greenwich Point.

On a recent day, I took my dog for a loop around the perimeter path and



Amy and Kevin Burke walk their dog Hoover at Greenwich Point.

Photo by Cynthia Ehlinger

encountered more dogs off-leash than on-leash.

This concerns me for several reasons. Dogs off-leash in these areas can be a danger and a nuisance to people, other dogs and themselves. Dogs off-leash tend to “do their business” in remote, off-the-beaten track areas and I rarely see pet owners following them to do the necessary “search and clean-up mission” (if you get my drift). Dogs off-leash often disturb the natural wildlife in these areas. And, finally, dogs-off leash are in violation of the Town ordinance (Section 7-44) which requires animals to be leashed. Over the last few weeks, there has been some public discussion regarding the possibility of increasing the access period for dogs at Greenwich Point. I get it – like I said, dogs and Greenwich Point are among my favorite things and I can understand why pet owners would want to add a few more weeks to the time when they

can enjoy the combination. But given the large number of dogs that are currently off-leash in the parking lots, on the paths and in the interior of the park, I find it hard to imagine that the Town of Greenwich would add **more** time for dogs and their owners to violate the current law. It seems to me that we, pet owners, need to respect the opportunity that we have been given with our dogs at Greenwich Point and make certain that we act responsibly. By keeping our dogs on their leashes, we will keep them safe and from being a nuisance to people, other dogs and wildlife. And, by keeping our dogs on their leashes, we will continue to enjoy the combination of “a few of my favorite things” ... dogs and Greenwich Point.

(If you would like to comment on this topic, or any other topic concerning Greenwich Point, please send a message to Friends of Greenwich Point at info@friendsofgreenwichpoint.org.)

If you have an interest or hobby to share that is in keeping with the mission of the FoGP, please contact Barbara O'Neill via info@friendsofgreenwichpoint.org. In the past, we have sponsored beach walks, bird watching, and presentations on horseshoe crabs and on the history, geology and archeology of the Point. We are especially interested in activities that involve any of the arts and foster an appreciation of the ecology of Greenwich Point.

Join the Friends of Greenwich Point

Your contributions support:

- Habitat restoration
- Traffic-free Sundays
- Nature education
- Summer concert series
- The preservation of this very special place

FoGP Goes Greener

The Friends of Greenwich Point are continuing our goal to improve communication and do it in a green way. We want to share with you our newest additions.

Constant Contact is an email notification system of upcoming events and special announcements. If you would like to receive these notifications please send your email to info@friendsofgreenwichpoint.org.

PayPal - We now accept PayPal for FoGP membership dues and donations. To use the PayPal option, please go to the membership section of our website: www.friendsofgreenwichpoint.org.

FoGP telephone: (203) 987-6712

Friends of Greenwich Point Membership Form



The Friends of Greenwich Point work hard to carry out our mission to preserve and protect Greenwich Point and promote safe recreation. Please make your tax-deductible check payable to: *Friends of Greenwich Point* and mail to PO Box 711, Old Greenwich, CT 06870.

*** Available for a contribution of \$50: FoGP T-shirts (circle size)**

Youth 2-4 6-8 10-12
Adult M L XL

**** Available for a contribution of \$100 or more:
FoGP baseball cap (Khaki)**

Annual Family memberships

- Egret \$15
- Tern \$25
- Goldeneye \$50*
- Osprey \$100**
- Eagle \$250 and up**

For membership information, please contact Membership Chairman at info@friendsofgreenwichpoint.org or by mail at PO Box 711, Old Greenwich, CT 06870

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Check here if you prefer to receive your newsletter by email.

You can also join on our website, www.friendsofgreenwichpoint.org

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