

## NEWSLETTER

# The Sippewissett Association

## Bike Path Extension Opens New Vistas

by Margaret Goud Collins

The Shining Sea Bike Path now skirts the northern end of Sippewissett Road, and stretches for more than 10 miles from the Woods Hole ferry terminal all the way to North Falmouth at Route 151. There is public access near both bridges where Palmer

Avenue crosses the bike path. The first, with limited parking, is at Carlson Lane, close to where the Falmouth Public Library was temporarily located. The other access is via a fairly steep path on the northern end of the more northerly bridge. The latter entry is only a few hundred feet from the northern end of Sippewissett Road, but requires a short traverse along Palmer Avenue where there is no path and only limited shoulder along the road.

However, the struggle to get to the new portion of the path is certainly worth the effort. Heading north from Sippewissett, the bike path crosses both Little Sippewissett Marsh and Great Sippewissett Marsh, offering views that were previously available only to those willing to undertake a lengthy slog in hip boots. The walker or biker travels through woods, over ponds, and past cranberry bogs. Side trips from



*Bikers are asked to make way for turtles on the northern extension of The Shining Sea Bike Path .*

*(Continued on page 2)*

## From the President

I have been the president of the Sippewissett Association board for three years now, and it's now time for me to wrap up my term. I will remain on the board, which helps to maintain continuity as new officers come on board.

I have enjoyed my term very much. We have had three interesting years in which there has been quite a bit of positive activity with our town officials. Because our members are resourceful and ready to be active, we are able to reach many of our goals.

Right now we have a relatively new activity which is of great use and denotes progress for Falmouth. Peter Waasdorp and I have been representing the Sippewissett Association in a group focused on noise abatement. This group is working with the Police Chief and police representatives. Loud noise, especially by groups of motorcycles, is a great

*(Continued on page 5)*

*The mission of the Sippewissett Association is to: protect and foster the mutual benefit and interests of landowners of the Sippewissett region of the Town of Falmouth, Massachusetts; to promote and encourage cooperation among such landowners in order to ensure that the future development of said region shall be in keeping with its general residential zoning restrictions and to take whatever action or actions may be necessary to this end; and to protect and prevent the misuse of public and common areas in the Sippewissett region.*

*BIKE PATH, continued from page 1*

the paths to Bourne Farm or down Chappaquoyt Road to the beach offer new possibilities for exploring Falmouth without getting into a car. Benches are placed periodically and strategically, allowing people to rest, watch birds, or sink into contemplation without snarling traffic.

To the south, the path crosses previously inaccessible woodland and marsh before reaching Carlson Lane and the familiar route to Falmouth and Woods Hole. The Bikeway runs approximately five miles both north and south

from Sippewissett. The new portion is wider than the older section, with a center line and granite mile markers.

The new path is popular, and on recent sunny weekends it has been crowded with walkers, bikers, and skaters. Because it runs quite close to back yards that were previously private, all users have been asked by the bikeways committee and Falmouth officials to be considerate of the rights and privacy of these homeowners.

## Welcome to the Jimenez Family!

*by Mary Fran Buckley*

February was an exciting month for the Jimenez family. They became first-time homeowners when they moved from their small East Falmouth apartment into a new, three-bedroom house at 88 Burnham Drive.

Their dream of home ownership was made possible by Habitat for Humanity of Cape Cod (HHCC). But this house was not a gift; the Jimenez family had to earn their home.

HHCC is an "ecumenical housing ministry that seeks to eliminate homelessness and substandard housing by making decent affordable shelter a matter of consciences and action for all people." Materials, supplies, land and services are donated, and homes are built with volunteer labor under the supervision of a qualified construction supervisor. That's where Cindy and

Danny Jimenez come in.

Applicants for a Habitat home must demonstrate that they can afford a monthly mortgage, have a serious need for decent affordable housing but be unable to afford a conventional mortgage, and be willing to contribute hundreds of hours of "sweat equity" in the building of their home. For Danny and Cindy, this meant 500 hours of volunteer work with Habitat. This they were more than willing to do, and, although their commitment to Habitat is complete, they continue to volunteer for the organization.

Cindy, a manager at the East Falmouth Dunkin Donuts, is very happy to now be a home owner. She and her husband Danny, who works in housing construction, have begun to settle into the neighborhood. Their older daughter Thalia has transferred from her East Falmouth school to Mullen Hall. On the day I met Cindy, she was enjoying Woodneck Beach with her girls—after a busy day at work, Cindy enjoys coming home to the peace and quiet of Sippewissett.

Please welcome the Jimenez family to our neighborhood!



*Cindy Jimenez with daughters Thalia (left) and Naomi, on the steps of their new home.*

## Aquaculture: Notes from Town Hall

by Arthur Gaines

Currently, there are three applications for aquaculture before the Board of Selectmen. All three propose bottom-based culture of oysters and one proposes culture of scallops as well. All proposed sites are in Buzzards Bay between West Falmouth and Quissett. All but one are quite close to the shore. The areas they would encompass range from 2 to 10 acres.

The application process appears to involve the Selectmen, the Conservation Commission (ConCom), and three divisions of the Massachusetts Office of Environmental Affairs and Energy: the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), and the Division of Fish & Wildlife (DF&W) in which resides the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP).

However, the order of addressing these bodies is not entirely clear, especially to the novice. For DEP, a proposed site must be demonstrated to be free of existing shellfish beds and eelgrass. The needed survey is typically done by the DMF at the

request of the Selectmen, although the applicant could have it done privately as well. The Selectmen will not approve an application until it has been approved by ConCom, who will not approve it until the DMF study is done. The way around this is that the Selectmen can give a conditional approval and start the DMF study, for the ConCom to use in their evaluation. Then ConCom's decision is passed along to the Selectmen, who hold licensing authority. Other town natural resource offices can comment as well.

Coonamessett Farms proposes four sites, one of which they hope to have approved. They have been asked to narrow this down to one site, but appear to have deleted only one—a 10-acre site off the Quamquissett Beach Club at Quissett. Their preferred site is a 10-acre one off Flume Pond near Gunning Point. The owner of the adjacent beach has written a letter of endorsement. Another proposed site occupies 3 acres north of Gunning Point, 140 feet offshore in shallow water. At least one homeowner objects to this site. The fourth site (7 acres) is farther offshore, 0.3 miles out in Buzzards Bay.

Seth Adams of East Falmouth proposes a 10-acre site off Saconessett Hills, just north of Woodneck Beach. And Dan Fougere, also of East Falmouth,

has applied for a 2-acre site off Black Beach, north of Great Sippewissett Marsh, 300 feet offshore in 5-15 feet of water at low tide. All of the applicants have previous experience and/or training in aquaculture.

To date, the DEP has not adversely responded to any of the applications with regard to the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act. No applicants have filed a Natural Heritage and Endangered Species review. The Falmouth harbor master has not objected to any proposal regarding conflict with mooring fields.

The applications are very similar in several ways. Each points to a beneficial effect filter feeders could have on water quality. Each talks about the unexploited asset of natural phytoplankton, on which the shellfish would feed. One of the major public concerns is storm damage to these facilities with the result that equipment would end up littering the beaches. In each case the applicant has said he would remove all equipment when warned of a significant storm.

Falmouth has approved only two shellfish culture sites in the past, lagging behind six other Cape Cod towns that collectively have approved 190.

An existing bottom-based culture facility off Gardner Road in Gansett is operated by Peter

*(Continued on page 5)*

## ANNUAL MEETING 2009

The 2009 Annual Meeting will be held at the Cape Codder on Saturday June 27<sup>th</sup>.

Light refreshments will be available at 9:30 a.m. and the meeting will start at 10:00 a.m.

- Review of minutes of Annual Meeting 2008 Susan Cohan
- Treasurer's Annual Report 2009 Michael Eder
- Membership Report Barbara Eck
- Sippewissett Association Board Elections Barbara Eck
- Summer and Winter socials (March 09 and August 09) Peter Waasdorp
- SippOwissett Homeowners Update Arthur Gaines
- Web site Update Susan Cohan
- Bike Path Activity Maggie Collins
- Baywatchers Update Maureen Conte
- Aquaculture Project Peter Waasdorp

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- Open Discussion Member Discussion and Input

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- Guest Speaker Leonard Johnson  
Chairman, The 300 Committee  
"Preserving Special Places is Personal"

# Association Updates

## Nominations for Officers and Board Members

The nominating committee and Board have chosen the following slate of Officers and Board members to be voted upon by membership at the upcoming Annual Meeting, June 27th:

|                              |                           |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Officers: (1-yr. term)       | Board Members (3-yr term) |
| President - Peter Waasdorp   | Katherine Abrams          |
| V-President - Maggie Collins | Maureen Conte             |
| Secretary - Susan Cohan      | Arthur Gaines             |
| Treasurer - ( pending)       | Nancy McDonald            |

## Membership: 152 Strong

We currently have 152 households in our membership. Renewals for the new membership year, 2009, were mailed the first week in June.

Our membership year runs from July 1 through June 30. Your renewal is now due regardless of when you renewed in the previous membership year.

Please remember to include your updated membership form

with your check. When mistakes are made in membership rolls, it is almost always because someone gave us just a check—without the form!

Membership is still only \$25 a year. This income is the sole support of our Association and all its activities. Please send yours in as soon as possible!

—Barbara Eck  
Membership

## AQUACULTURE, *continued from page 3*

Chase in 15-29 feet of water. This permit was issued in 2006 after two years of review, and included several conditions including the posting of a \$5,000 bond for removal of the facility if necessary. The project was opposed by several neighbors, citing the threat of storm damage, danger to children, and conflicts with

existing recreational uses. They also cited the “vague” and “incomplete” application.

In 2007 Mr. Chase reported a harvest of 5,800 oysters and expected larger yields in future years. Neither the Selectmen nor the ConCom has recorded any complaints about this facility since it began operation.

*(From the President,  
continued from page 1)*

aggravation to many residents. The Chief has been working hard to identify the motorcyclists who break the law because of the way their bikes are configured.

Last year was the first year that attention was paid to this problem, and a lot of progress was made in setting time and personnel aside to identify drivers violating the law. The effort very successful.

Members of the committee are continuing to work with police officers to solve this noise problem. I am sure we will see good progress again this year.

This committee is just one example of the interesting and creative work in which SA members are involved to help the environment and our community. Thanks to all for your help in the last three years.

—Katie Abrams  
Association President

At present Falmouth has no regulations specifically addressing aquaculture, but there are several towns whose experience and regulations could be instructive. For those interested, a talk on aquaculture by a Duxbury aquaculturist will be presented on June 17<sup>th</sup> at the ConCom meeting.

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## **ANNUAL MEETING - SATURDAY, JUNE 27**

The annual meeting of the Sippewissett Association will be held Saturday, June 27 from 10 – noon at the Cape Codder Clubhouse. The business meeting will be preceded by coffee and donuts at 9:30 a.m.

The business meeting will include a summary of the year's activities and election of new Board Members and Officers. Following the business meeting, there will be a presentation by Leonard Johnson, chairman of The 300 Committee.

Please park on the side of Standish Road opposite the Clubhouse if you arrive by car.

The agenda for the meeting is on page 4 of this newsletter.

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**The Sippewissett Association**  
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