

BLACKSTONE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL / FRIENDS OF THE BLACKSTONE

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SUMMER 2010

Mission: To restore, enhance, and preserve the physical, historical, and cultural integrity of the Blackstone River, its watershed and its eco-system, through public advocacy, education, recreation, stewardship and the promotion of our unique Blackstone Valley resource.

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Dear Member/Supporter:

As your new President, I would first like to thank the past president, Frank Matta, for his dedication to the Council and to the Blackstone River. Most important, some might say, is Frank's in-kind service and the use of his loader without which many of our river cleanups would not be possible. THANK YOU FRANK.

The coming year will be monumental for the Blackstone River Watershed Council / Friends of the Blackstone, We have signed easement rights with the town of Lincoln for a river access site called Sycamore Landing, the future home of the BRWC / FOB. Sycamore Landing will consist of public river access, more public parking, and the 30' x 60' Blackstone River and Bikeway Resource Facility. This facility will be used to stage river cleanups and canoe and kayak instruction, and to educate our volunteers and the public about the Blackstone River.

Sycamore Landing is going to be the gem stone of the much larger Blackstone River Safe Access and Passage Program {SAPP}. The purpose of SAPP is to provide safe river access and passage from River Island Park in Woonsocket to Slater Mill in Pawtucket. The BRWC/FOB has already completed new river access sites at the Lonsdale Drive-In, Kelly House, and below the Albion dam.

River Safety has always been a major focal point of the BRWC/FOB. This year we partnered with the R.I. Trails Committee to purchase river safety and rescue equipment and provide training to first responders and BRWC/FOB cleanup volunteers in swift water rescue. Our hard working volunteers also cleared the tree debris from the Pratt Dam and cleared a trail to the Pratt for first responders and the river rescue team. All in one day! In a 14hr marathon, the Valley Boys also removed 3.75 tons of steel that fell off the Ashton dam. A "job well done" to the Valley Boys.

If you think you want to be part of the Solution then join the Riverlution and sign-up today at www.BlackstoneRiver.org. I look forward to hearing from you.

John Marsland



RIVER SAFETY COURSE

BRWC/FOB sought and received two grants to support its work in the area of river safety, both of them Trail Grants from DEM/DOT. With one of these, the Council purchased safety equipment not only for itself but for the Valley Falls Fire Department. The latter included PFDs, tow tethers, pilot knives, Purest duffle bags, Protec Water helmets, rescue bags, a Z drag kit and a Gibbs ascender – for a total of \$1500.

Again in collaboration with local fire and rescue services, BRWC/FOB organized a Swift Water Rescue Course. On May 15th and 16th, with funding from the second of the Trail Grants, the Council held training classes designed to increase safety for our own work on the river and to help first responders for all events on the Blackstone.

The course was organized under the aegis of the American Canoe Association. Ben Lawry and Peter Casson were the instructors and the participants were 4 members of the Valley Falls Fire Department, 2 members of the Cumberland Hill Fire Department, Cumberland Rescue's Director of River Search and Rescue, and three members of BRWC/FOB. The subjects taught were: Level 1: Flatwater Kayak Safety and Rescue; Flatwater Canoe Safety and Rescue; Level 2: Essentials of River Safety and Rescue; Level 3: River Safety and Rescue; and Level 4: Swift Water Rescue. Instructions distributed to the participants prior to the two-day session were intended to prepare them mentally and physically for the arduous days that awaited them and even provided a bibliography for follow-up information. From all reports, it was a valuable experience for all those involved and will help them to better exercise their life saving responsibilities.

RINHS AT SYCAMORE LANDING

On August 22, a crew from the RI Natural History Survey (RINHS) and the Forest Health Works Project attacked the invasive species taking over Sycamore Landing. Under the direction of Deanna Levanti and Wes Shean, the ten member crew worked from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. cutting a high volume of Knotweed and clearing a 10 x 40 footpath for canoe and kayak access. In the process, they identified the following invasive species on the site, the first four on the list, the most prevalent.

1. Japanese Knotweed
2. Honeysuckle
3. Bittersweet
4. Multiflora Rose
5. Winged Euonymus (Burning Bush)
6. Autumn Olive
7. Glossy Buckthorn
8. Purple Loosestrife
9. Tree of Heaven



BRWC/FOB thanks RINHS and vows to remain diligent in controlling these species.

RIVERFEST

This year Riverfest was held as usual on the first Saturday in June but the location was different. With its beginning and ending point at the Rivers Edge Recreational Facility in Woonsocket, the new route proved to be successful enough to warrant consideration for next year as well.

The race was 4.2 miles long; 45 paddlers, in kayaks or canoes, competed in 11 categories. Race results have been posted on our website (blackstoneriver.org) Do not miss the wonderful slide show of the racers, our river safety team, and the professional river rescue team that stood by just in case. As they say, pictures often speak louder than words – a good time was obviously had by all.

PRATT DAM – AN ONGOING CHALLENGE

Should the dams that have historically impounded New England's rivers be removed to restore those rivers and their ecosystems to their natural state? Should they be retained for historical reasons or even be used to further exploit the rivers in the interest of human energy consumption? The debate rages on and has indeed intensified with recent calls for additional development of hydropower. BRWC/FOB has expressed its reservations with respect to the latter (see the article on Rule 2). It has clearly championed the cause of river restoration not only with its numerous cleanups but as the framework for the ongoing plan to install fish passages at the four lower dams. Meanwhile, as the debate plays itself out, the Watershed Council has focused its attention on another dam-related issue, literally a matter of life and death, at the Pratt Dam.

As those who have read the excellent articles in our local press in the past year ("Warning signs, buoys installed on river before Pratt Dam tubes". *Valley Breeze*, August 20, 2009, and "New buoy line at Pratt Dam aims to save lives", *Neighbors*, September 3, 2009) already know, the Pratt Dam, with the five enticing tubes that have lured two people to their death in recent years, has posed a serious challenge to public safety officials and concerned citizens alike. The Council has made this safety issue one of its highest priorities.

Efforts to determine ownership of the dam having been for naught and along with them any possibility of influencing the fate of the dam itself, BRWC/FOB was left with the option of warning river users directly. To that end, on August 15, 2009, a dozen or so of our members gathered to install a 90-foot line some 40 feet upstream from those killer tubes to anchor five large buoys that could not fail to call the attention of anyone paddling downstream toward the dam. On the banks of the river, to reinforce their message, they placed a warning sign: DANGER/Unsafe Passage at Dam/MANDATORY Takeout Before Buoys/Portage River Right. BRWC/FOB fronted the money which was then reimbursed by our partner in river safety and stewardship, Paul D'Adamo, owner of Bill's Auto Parts in Cumberland.



That this was an effective solution to the problem – and an excellent investment of \$1000 – was confirmed this spring by Valley Falls fire chief, Brian Jackvony, whose department bears the responsibility for dealing with emergencies at the site, along with the Cumberland Rescue Service. "I am happy to report," he said in a letter to the Council this spring, "that the safeguards you installed are intact and holding against the swift current and high water that we are experiencing due to the recent storms." He also thanked the Council for clearing an access path to the site. "It will greatly aid in our deployment of emergency resources to this area of the river." That the task of keeping that section of the river safe is never-ending is evident in one of our most recent river cleanups.

THE VALLEY BOYS, RIVER ACCESS, AND THE MULTI-USE FACILITY

The Council's plans to improve access to the river have progressed significantly this year. Design plans for access points at Albion, Kelly House and Lonsdale were drawn up early in 2009 and submitted to DEM for permitting. Approval was received several months later and work at the first of the sites, the Lonsdale Drive-In, was completed in early December. The others, with handsome granite steps, were finished this summer.

These access projects have been financed under an MOU with the John H. Chafee National Heritage Corridor but the work has been done, by and large, by a group of friends long known to us collectively as the Valley Boys. The Valley Boys' quiet commitment to the river and the watershed was formally recognized on at least two occasions this year.

One of these took place on May 27, 2010 with a dinner at Angelo's Restaurant in Cumberland, in recognition of the work done in that area. The second was an acknowledgment of their invaluable river stewardship at last year's Greenway Challenge award event.

The centerpiece of BRWC/FOB's river access project is the planned multi-use facility at Sycamore Landing, the old Manville Well site in Lincoln. An easement has been signed with the Town of Lincoln. Plans for the facility have been approved. When the building is completed, it will be used not only to store canoes and kayaks and rescue equipment but as a base for educational and stewardship projects focused on the river. The site has already undergone numerous cleanups and beautification projects, including one by the Rhode Island Natural History Survey described elsewhere in this newsletter. Keith Hainley and Ron Belliveau have devoted countless hours to these projects.

FISH LADDERS IN THE BLACKSTONE

The plan to install fish passages at the four lower dams in the Blackstone continues to be one of BRWC/FOB's signature programs. Design for fish ladders at the Slater Mill and the Main Street dam in Pawtucket is complete. Funding is in place, including an additional commitment of \$50,000 from CRMC this spring.

A ceremonial groundbreaking was held in the area of these first two dams in September. The event was highlighted by the participation of state and local officials and a substantial number of supporters of all ages, including a group of Native American drummers who enhanced the festivities with their ceremonial songs. Other activities, noted elsewhere in this newsletter, included the raffle of a quilt made specifically for this purpose by Judy Hadley and the filming of the event by students in Woonsocket's RiverzEdge art project.

The actual groundbreaking that was originally scheduled for the spring of 2010 is tentatively scheduled for this fall. The bidding process, now in its initial stages, will be directed by Pawtucket Redevelopment, as will the contract work. We hope to have visible progress on these long-awaited fish ladders at these first two dams in the very near future.

Frank Geary has submitted a grant proposal to Rep. Patrick Kennedy's office for funds to build canoe/kayak chutes at those same dams – an idea originally proposed by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse. If granted, the funding would be another step in making our river more “user friendly”.

GRANTS

In addition to fund-raising initiatives noted elsewhere in this newsletter – from fish ladders to duck races – BRWC/FOB has submitted a number of funded grant applications in recent months. A total of \$6500 in Trailways Grants (from DEM and DOT) was received for the river safety course and equipment. A Legislative Grant of \$2250 was awarded for water quality monitoring, cleanups, and much-needed portable hard drives. An Earth Day grant of \$500 was used to support several cleanups and \$500 grants from Harvard Pilgrim and the Greenway Challenge respectively have also funded water quality monitoring and stewardship. Most recently, BRWC/FOB has applied to the EPA for a major Technical Assistance Grant.

In addition, BRWC/FOB members have raised funds closer to home. Judy Hadley's quilt raffle raised an astounding \$1568 for the fish ladder project and an excursion to Foxwoods, organized by Bob Charpentier and John Marsland, netted another \$500.

PROTECTING HISTORIC CEMETERIES

BRWC/FOB has adopted a project not normally thought of in the context of watershed protection. Yet, it was argued, it does fit within our mission to “preserve the physical, historical, and cultural integrity of the Blackstone River, its watershed and its eco-system”. The project consists of expanding our volunteer cleanup efforts to include the area's historic cemeteries.

The man behind this initiative was Michael Scalzi. Mike's interest in this work was documented in a *Valley Breeze* interview in September:



TWO BOARD MEMBERS RECEIVE AWARDS

On March 27, 2010, during the Land and Water Summit at URI, Frank Matta was honored with the 2010 Blueways Stewardship Award. BRWC/FOB member and RI Blueways Alliance president, Keith Gonsalves, had this to say when he announced the award to BRWC members: “We were all impressed with Frank's long commitment to the Blackstone and his understanding of the important connection between paddling and conservation.” Well said and well done.

More recently, Keith Hainley received recognition in the Cabot Community Celebrity Award promotion (Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Montpelier, VT) for all that he does for his community. The award came with a \$150 donation to the charity of his choice. Needless to say, that charity was BRWC/FOB.

“The reason for my passion for the restoration and preservation of historic cemeteries is that we have preserved the farmsteads, fields, rock walls and homes that dot the landscape throughout the Blackstone Valley.

But it would be very unfortunate if we neglect the graves of those who came before us, who laid claim to the land, who lived, worked and raised their families here, and who have left to us a rich legacy that we call our past.”

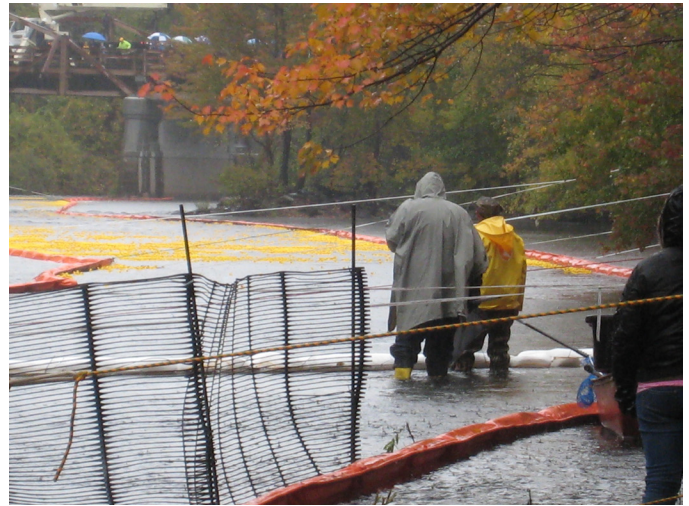
BRWC/FOB agreed. Mike Scalzi was elected to our Board of Directors in May of this year.

FIFTEEN THOUSAND DUCKS IN THE BLACKSTONE

Rubber ducks, that is.

After a Saturday of strategic placement of booms (donated by Clean Harbor Environmental) in the river in the vicinity of Hope Global, Martin Street, Cumberland, and of half a dozen men strategizing on how to keep the 15,000 rubber ducks within their confines, that October Sunday dawned cold and rainy. Would the weather keep people away? Should the race be cancelled?

BRWC/FOB had agreed to participate in the rubber duck race organized by the Boys and Girls Club of Cumberland/Lincoln. All funds raised would be shared between the Club and the other 37 organizations selling tickets – i.e., sponsoring ducks in the race. The top prize for the winning duck would be a trip to Disney World or \$2500.



The wet weather only added to the excitement. Umbrellas and raincoats notwithstanding, the race was such a success that the organizers immediately began to plan an encore for this October. A good time was had by all and BRWC/FOB ended the day with an additional \$920 in its coffers to support the stewardship that made such an event even possible in a once polluted river.

KIDS LEARN ABOUT STORMWATER

The context: Under the umbrella of the Clean Water Act, in the 1990s the EPA embarked on a long-term program designed to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff polluting the country's rivers and lakes. Phase I of the stormwater program (1990) set up a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to evaluate and issue permits for medium and large municipal storm sewer systems that discharge into U.S. waterways and to regulate, among others, construction projects disturbing 5 acres of land or more. Phase II (1999) set up a similar NPDES permit system for smaller municipal systems and construction sites. Phase II mandates public education and outreach concerning pollution prevention through "good housekeeping". RIDEM has been working towards these federally-mandated goals by developing a stormwater manual highlighting Low Impact Development (LID) site planning and design strategies. A public review draft was released in May, 2009. The State is currently exploring ways of getting the challenges of stormwater abatement into the school curriculum.

The kids: It was in the context of these State and Federal initiatives that BRWC/FOB decided to work with Cumberland's Town Wide Learning Community and set up an information table on stormwater runoff at the Back to School Celebration on August 21 at the B. F. Norton School.

On the day of the Back to School event, with hundreds of kids and parents milling around, our BRWC/FOB team distributed informational material to parents and students on how to reduce non-point pollution in the home by adopting river friendly ways of dealing with harmful runoff from roofs, lawns, driveways and other human activity and, above all, by "scooping the [their pets'] poop". But the star of our show was BRC's Peter Coffin who, with his amazing enviroscape demonstration, held the kids spellbound. It was a learning experience they will not soon forget.

AND OTHER RIVER-RELATED STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Cumberland High School's annual river trip was held as usual in May. Sponsored by the school's Physical Education Department, it drew 140 CHS seniors. As always, BRWC/FOB provided canoes and safety vests, as well as adult supervision.

Other student activities took place on land. One of these, organized by Roland Gauvin, resulted in a 3-minute video. Filmed by young people involved in the RiverzEdge Arts Project in Woonsocket, the video recorded the September 2009 fish ladder groundbreaking event in Pawtucket. This project was funded with donations from Rep. Rene Menard and Sen. Roger Picard, as well as BRWC/FOB.

An educational project of longer duration had its beginnings at Jenks Junior High School in Pawtucket this past winter: raising trout in the classroom. Inspired by the fish ladder project, a group of seventh graders under the direction of their teacher, Tammie McNaught, took on the challenge of nurturing 75 eggs in a tank until they were ready to be released into the river several months later. Frank Geary supported her project and expanded it into Cumberland (Mercymount and the two Cumberland Middle Schools). He reports that the students became so attached to their fish that they were sad when they had to release them into the river. Students will have another chance to raise fish – next time it will be shad for release once the fish ladders are in place.

With all these programs – and the bike path – the river is slowly coming alive to the young people who will hopefully become the river stewards of the future.

RULE 2: ADVOCACY

Rule 2 was enacted by the state legislature (Section 42-28-8 of the General Laws of RI) to give designated watershed councils legal standing to present testimony in all state and local proceedings that may have an impact on the quality and quantity of water in the watershed. Since our last newsletter, BRWC/FOB has had several occasions to present such testimony, both orally and in writing, in addition to the Downing Village project that had for some time been the focus of our attention.

One of these was the case of Mann Chemical, LLC, a chemical products distributor based in Warwick. This company had submitted plans to the Town of Cumberland to expand the company's operations to a new venue in close proximity to the Blackstone and to the EPA's superfund site. Speaking for BRWC/FOB, in November, Rule 2 coordinator Sandra Belliveau urged the Planning Board to deny their request for the following reasons:

- The site is a contaminated Superfund site 600 ft from an impaired waterway.
- The applicant has a history of poor management practices as evidenced by the recent EPA Notice of Violation.
- The applicant is in a business specifically excluded by the Environmental Land Use Restriction which runs with the land.
- The proposed activity is a dangerous and inappropriate activity for an already damaged environmentally sensitive area.
- Any chemical activity at this site puts the river, the watershed and citizens at risk.

The Planning Board denied the permit.

In February, Sandra spoke at a Manville Landing Recreation Area Public Meeting. She stated that BRWC/FOB is anxious to insure that the Manville Landing remain viable for public use and river access for passive boating and asked that the Council be included in any future hearings on the environmental investigation of the site.

Most recently, our Rule 2 coordinator has submitted comments concerning the Slatersville Hydroelectric Project. Noting that the Blackstone has been classified variously as an "impaired waterway" and as a National Heritage River, she raised the following questions:

- How will the project's activities affect water levels in the reservoir and flow in the rivers (i.e., the Branch and the Blackstone)?
- How will water temperature and nutrient levels be affected and managed?
- How will the project affect the fish passages currently under construction in the Blackstone?
- Will this activity in any way further degrade water quality parameters which both of these rivers are still struggling to meet?
- If the project is approved, how will water level and water quality parameters be monitored?
- How will the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor's vision of a swimmable, fishable river be impacted by this activity?

These are questions that apply equally as well to other hydro projects recently proposed for the Blackstone. As Sandra Belliveau concluded in her comments on the Slatersville project:

"While affordable, renewable energy may be good for the Blackstone Valley's citizens, it is not a viable option if it harms the very ecosystem which our citizens are striving to restore by expending millions of dollars of public and private funds. We understand that new legislation allowing "net metering" has suddenly made this type of projects financially viable and therefore attractive, but we do not feel the potential profits of any private entity outweigh the health and welfare of an entire community and its natural environment."

WATER QUALITY MONITORING – A PARTNERSHIP IN DATA COLLECTION

The Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone continues to be a sponsor of the Water Quality Testing program developed and administered by the Blackstone River Coalition. That program has in turn continued to collect and disseminate valuable information on the health, not only of the Blackstone, but of its major tributaries in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

The Water Quality report card for the 2009 testing season indicates that 78 sites were tested by 80 volunteers. The season was a wet one, thus raising the problem of increased non-point (stormwater runoff) pollution. Temperature and, above all, nutrients continue to be critical issues, with phosphorous the leading cause of concern for the year. There is an interactive water quality map on BRC's website – zaptheblackstone.org – where full details can be found.

Another cause of concern not specifically monitored by the testing program is the matter of low flows, a factor that has nonetheless been observed this year as well. Despite the near-record floods of the past spring, with the equally near-record heat of summer and a lack of substantial rain, water levels in the river have fallen rapidly. This, too, has negative implications for the health of our river and it, too, bears watching.

EXCERPTS FROM KEITH'S JOURNAL

By Keith Hainley, River Restoration Coordinator

March 20th – Cleanup with Mt. St. Charles

On the 20th of March, 50 students from Mt. St. Charles Academy joined us in cleaning at Sycamore Landing. They came at different times throughout the day for anywhere from 3 to 6 hours. With their help, we were able to clean many old areas of trash dumping at the Sycamore Landing, as well as 6 miles of the Bike Path from Kelly House to Woonsocket.

March 21st – Lonsdale Marsh

On March 21st, the Valley Boys went out into the Marsh in Lonsdale which every year sifts lots of trash from the river. For years this area was also used for dumping cars and tires so the freezing and thawing make many things rise to the surface.

April

During the month of April we and 71 volunteer partners put in 259 hours and collected 80 bags of trash, 175 tires and 1 ½ tons of steel to be recycled. One day Frank brought his loader and a number of us helped to remove a lot of historical trash from our access site in Manville. This included 2/3rds of a car body and 2 washing machines. (Historical trash is large trash that was dumped on a location when that was considered an okay thing to do.)

May

Ray Pado and Kevin Burns put in about 6 hours pulling an old safe out of the Lonsdale Marsh. Ron Belliveau and I spent a lot of time working on getting our Easement for use of the property in Manville. Ron arranged to have the property surveyed and laid out for the access and our future building. Ron also worked with Peter Bradley to get the stone and make arrangements to get the stairs built at Kelly House and Albion.

May 2, 2010 – Clark University Outing Club Outing

14 members of the Clark University Outing Club came down to Woonsocket from Worcester to enjoy their 4th outing on the Blackstone River with BRWC/FOB. In the past we have taken this Club from Plumbers Landing to River Bend Farm in Uxbridge and last year took them on a slightly aborted trip when the wind stopped us at Rivers Edge. This year we put in 8 boats at Rivers Edge and started with some instruction and a short paddle up river to the Hamlet bridge. Then we enjoyed a relaxing paddle downriver to the lagoon at the remains of the Moot Dam. After that, the group went on down to the lagoon by the treatment plant and paddled back. It was quite a lovely day and a chance for many people to visit our beautiful river.

July 1st – Neighborworks and Americorps Vista Volunteers Introduced to the Blackstone

On July 1st from 5-7, 25 new Vista volunteers and sponsors were taken out on the Blackstone to see the beauty available in Woonsocket. Will and I (he is an Americorps Vista Volunteer who worked with us for the summer) brought down both trailers with canoes and the appropriate PFDs and paddles. Richard Duncan and AJ (a paddle club leader and VP of RICKA) gave us a hand with the boats and on the river.

The outing was staged at Cold Springs Park Canoe Launch. We went upstream to the site of the old Momfort Mills and to the Bridge and rocks at Blackstone. We then paddled back and investigated the tail end of the old raceway which was originally part of the Blackstone Canal.

As we turned into this area, one of the canoes did capsize. With no injuries and on a hot day, it was more refreshing than disturbing.

One point of interest always to be observed on this trip is that along this small section of the canal there is a roost for the Turkey Vultures. On this trip one of the volunteers and I counted 23 of the large and amazing birds roosting in the trees. Since they are at the top of their food chain, our presence didn't seem to bother them at all.

We paddled back past Cold Springs and down to the Mill by the railroad trestle that Neighborworks is restoring and making viable again. It is a small mill but they are making it multiuse.

We had a great day and the volunteers got oriented to the canoes. The next day they did a large cleanup for us along the lower part of the Blackstone.



August 16th – Cleanups from Middle School Footbridge to Rivers Edge Recreation Area

Elizabeth Wheeler contacted me this summer about her son Breck Wagner. He wanted to do service on the Blackstone this summer. Liz and Breck joined with the group of students from RiverzEdge Arts Project picking up 9 boatloads of trash from between River Island and the Rivers Edge Recreation Area. They had some time and wanted to do more.

I knew there were still some bicycles and large pieces of PVC to be removed, as well as a couch which had been imbedded in the riverbank for 4 years down below the footbridge. I needed helpers who knew no limits and these people fit the bill.

We met at about 5:00 on a Monday afternoon and I said, "Here we will just push the canoe down the side". Liz said, "Where?", as there is no path or anything looking like a trail, but the canoes found their way mostly down the bank on top of the vines and then we pulled them the rest of the way along the rip rap.

The river was extremely low, so Breck pulled both boats down stream, as I gathered bikes I had already pulled above the water line to load them in. Then we went to work destroying the couch, as well as about 150 pounds of sand, into a couple of trash bags. We put this and a large thick piece of rubber matting on the bottom of my boat. As we moved down, I pulled a foam mattress from up on the bank. It topped and covered most of their canoe. We worked our way down to the Hamlet bridge and overtopped our boats with additional bicycles and two 16-17 foot long pieces of PVC.

It was an interesting paddle the rest of the way, as one wrong move and we could have tipped a whole load back into the river. Two trips up the boat access, with trash loaded on my truck and an old rusted water heater tank removed from the landing, and we called it a night.

**Blackstone River Watershed Council /
Friends of the Blackstone
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There comes a time when all things must pass.

For the past 9+ years, I have served as Co-chair, Chair and President, first of the BRWC and then of the BRWC/FOB when the Council merged with the Friends of the Blackstone founded by John Marsland 20 years ago. It has been a privilege and honor to serve such a great group of directors and members.

At our Annual Meeting (May, 2010), John Marsland became the new President. Sandra Belliveau was elected Vice-President. Sandra has been Treasurer of our organization for the past 6 years. Our new Treasurer is Joe Pailthorpe who brings over 30 years of financial experience to his new position. The position of Secretary will continue under the vigilance of Alice Clemente. This stalwart defender of our river environment brings many years of executive experience to the BRWC/FOB. The Council is fortunate to have Alice. I leave the Executive Board in very capable hands.

The mission of the BRWC/FOB is always one of challenge. To facilitate carrying out of that mission, I will continue to serve at the discretion of the Executive Board, advising where and when needed, as well as serving as Liaison to other organizations or at meetings when other Executive members are not available. My own personal challenge is that while I am attending Council meetings, I must learn to let others conduct the process. It won't be easy. But it's still very rewarding and I can have fun as well.

Frank Matta, Outgoing Past President



Thanks to Jesse Costa (layout) and to B & M Printing for their fine service.