To promote education, research and public awareness of Pleasant Bay as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, to preserve open space and retain the visual quality of the area, to preserve the environmental integrity of the bay’s shoreline, to ensure habitat protection and retention of the rich biological diversity and productivity of the bay, to retain and enhance public access to the shoreline, to preserve natural and historic sites and to promote public awareness of historic Indian culture.
A Letter From Our President

Dear Members,

On one of the last sails of the autumn, I left the Narrows on a flood tide, slipped behind Sipson’s Island, slid between Little Sipson’s and the Great Marsh, rounded the eastern bluff of Strong Island, and ran down along the Strong Island marsh on a gentle northeast wind. There before me suddenly was an unexpected visitor, the barge being used for the dredging of the Chatham channel east of the entrance to Ryder’s Cove.

One function of your Friends Board is to keep you apprised of happenings on Pleasant Bay when you may not be able to observe them yourselves. In this fall issue, we are providing you with an update on the *dredging saga*, a story we have followed now for several years. A second feature is the latest news on the Floating Classroom, which many of our members supported generously. As you will see, the vessel is performing admirably, while we continue the permitting process.

An ambitious new possibility for the Friends is the purchase and preservation of **Sipson’s Island**, the only privately held island in the Bay. Our approach would be to match private funds with public dollars. If the project goes forward, it would be by far the largest fund-raising effort in the 33 year history of the Friends. Here we summarize the challenges involved.

Also covered is the 26th **Arey’s Pond Catboat Regatta**, which took place on August 11th in a light air. A number of boats got caught in the Narrows on the return leg without enough wind to beat the outgoing tide. Great fun was had by all, nevertheless. The Arey’s Pond Boat Yard contributes the regatta entry fees to the Friends, for which we are most grateful.

**Seals and sharks** are big news in these parts nowadays, with some stories being more accurate than others. On page 13, we provide the facts as we know them.

Perhaps the longest running Friends program involves the **education grants** we award to local teachers. This past spring we awarded more grant funds than ever before. The increase in proposals is exciting evidence of growing interest in teaching about the Bay, which has been enhanced by the availability of the Floating Classroom. In these pages we summarize the grants, both for 2017-18 and for the current academic year.

One part of the Friends’ mission is to “promote public awareness of historic Indian culture” of the Bay and its watershed. **The Wading Place**, where the Monomoy River empties into the Bay, has special significance in Native American history. We document recent recognition of that fact here.

The bios of our new, highly talented Board members are also provided. We all look forward to serving you for another year.

Mon Cochran, President
2018-2019 Friends of Pleasant Bay Committees and Officers

Standing Committees

Finance Committee: Douglas McClennen, chair

Membership: Alice Ronty, chair, Jensie Shipley, Maia Ward

Education: John Sinopoli, co-chair, Jeffery Morgan, co-chair, Bob Granger, Tasia Blough

Communications: Jeanne McNett, chair, Alice Prince, Susanne Leahy, Mon Cochran

Nominating: Matt Cannon, Alice Ronty, Andy Young, Corliss Primavera, Herb Heidt

Ad Hoc Committees

Events: Alice Ronty, chair, Jensie Shipley

Floating Classroom: Don Zeigler, chair, Eric Dicke, Liz Maloney, Robin Davis

Special Projects Fundraising: Kris Ramsey, chair, Mon Cochran, Kathy Green, Matt Cannon

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Jeffrey Morgan
Harwich

Alice Prince
Orleans

Alice Ronty
Orleans

Jensie Shipley
Chatham

Maia Ward
Harwich

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New Members

**Eric Dicke** I’ve been coming to the Cape, specifically South Orleans, since 1965 when I visited while doing marine research on Coralline algae for the Smithsonian Institution. I have sailed on Pleasant Bay since the late 1960’s and have restored several wooden boats, including a double ended surf rescue boat used by the Sea Scout Troop 72 of Orleans. A counselor and architect by training, after retiring as Director of Facilities Planning at Cornell University, I focused on designing, building, and restoring furniture in a barn overlooking the Narrows and Sipson’s Island. I really look forward to helping preserve Pleasant Bay for both the environment’s sake as well as for the enjoyment of all.

**Bob Granger** We have owned our home in South Orleans since 2009 and have lived here full time for four years. Most days involve a walk to the Portanimicut Landing or a drive by the Bay on Rt 28 and the feeling that it is a treasure. I spent 45 years in education, social policy research, and philanthropy. I hope that background will help the board in its work to preserve and promote this remarkable resource.

**Kathy Green** A summer homeowner since 1984 and full-time homeowner on Pleasant Bay in East Harwich for the last ten years, I have served on the Town of Harwich’s Real Estate & Open Space and Community Preservation Committees for the past 6 years and currently serve as Chair of REOS and Vice-Chair of CPC. I am the Director of my family’s charitable foundation. I enjoy reading, my grandchildren and seeing the sunrise on Pleasant Bay.

**Ted Lucas** I live in Chatham where I was born and raised, and have three beautiful children - Jessica, Matthew and Jason. I worked on the water my whole life as a commercial fisherman and as a research boat captain for the Center for Coastal Studies. Shell fishing in Pleasant Bay has always been a big part of my life, and keeping the bay healthy is a matter of great importance to me. I served on the Chatham Shellfish Advisory Committee for twelve years, and three years on the South Coastal Harbor Plan Committee, trying to help in maintaining the health and traditions of this great peninsula that we live on.

**Alice Prince** Long-time visitor to the cape and South Orleans home owner since 2002, I work full time as a professor at Columbia University, studying the pathogenesis of infectious diseases. Additional important activities include gardening and teaching my grandchildren to sail and respect Pleasant Bay. I hope my academic background will be helpful to the board in navigating future activities.
**Jensie Shipley**  My husband and I met sailing on Pleasant Bay in 1960. We spend many winter weekends and all summer in Chatham with our three daughters and eight grandchildren. Sailing on the Bay is our favorite activity. I volunteer in the Boston area as an Overseer at the Museum of Science, a founding member of the Friends of the MGH Cancer Center, a board member of the Boston Committee of the Garden Club of America and member of the development committee of a public school program in Brookline.

**Maia Ward**  Travelling to the Cape for my entire life, we spent summers at a family cottage in Provincetown. Raised on the water, I fell in love with the delicate ecosystem of Cape Cod and all of its natural beauty. After pursuing an education in environmental science at UMASS Boston and Harvard University, I moved to Orleans and met my husband, Thomas Dempsey. With mutual interest in preserving the health of Cape Cod’s waters and coastline, we began collaborative efforts to bring green energy and technology into the boating industry. We are now running Dempsey Marine Electronics & Electrical, while raising our two small boys on Pleasant Bay in Harwich. When we have breaks, we sail, hike, and bicycle all over the Cape. The Cape has provided a beautiful and enriching place to raise our children, and I’m eager to be part of any efforts to protect it.

**Tasia Blough** is also a new board member.

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**In Memory of:**

Charlotte Read  
Jean Nickerson Primavera, Helen Cochran Dicke, Dick Lovis

**In Honor of**  
Janet and John McGuigan  
Herb Heidt and Eliza McClennen

Photo courtesy William H. Hayes Photography, stageharobr@icloud.com
The Floating Classroom

Friend of Pleasant Bay Launching & Sea Trials

In the Spring 2018 newsletter, we expressed our hope that the Friend of Pleasant Bay would be moored in front of the Pleasant Bay Community Boating (PBCB) campus by the end of this past June. In fact, that month the Friend made her way north from South Carolina on her specially designed boat trailer, stopped only once by the police, and then only at the Bourne Bridge. Once in Orleans, she was dry-docked at Nauset Marine, where 18 solar panels and her two electric outboard engines were added, along with eight lithium ion batteries, navigational equipment, lab tables, deck railings, and other safety-related equipment.

Then came in-depth stability tests, supervised by both locally- and Washington, DC-based Coast Guard representatives. The Friend passed with flying colors and has been certified to carry 29 passengers with two crew. Decked out in her finery, she was ready for her maiden voyage.

In mid-August the Friend departed Meetinghouse Pond for the PBCB campus at Big Bay, piloted by a crew that included Herb Heidt and Mon Cochran (FOPB), Pete Conway (Arey’s Pond Boat Yard), and Tom Wineman (Clean Energy Design). The day was warm, with hazy sunshine and a light air. The vessel ran beautifully, with little wake and very little sound. Cruising at four knots, the engines drew no power from the batteries, instead running directly off the solar panels. Top speed proved to be about eight knots, and we soon found ourselves passing through the Narrows. The Friend drew curious looks and then light applause from passing motor boats along the way. Initial tests of maneuverability proved very encouraging.

On August 25th, the Friend of Pleasant Bay was formally christened along side the Pleasant Bay Community Boating pier. PBCB President Ted Baylis and FOPB President Mon Cochran poured champagne over her dual bows (pontoons) to the cheers of PBCB and FOPB
Board members and friends. PBCB Science Director Sarah Griscom dubbed the vessel “the green machine,” and all present agreed that she will be a wonderful educational platform for youth and adults alike.

September was spent taking the Friend through further sea trials, all of which she passed with flying colors, and providing her captains with experience at the helm. There has been no need to plug her into a shore-based power source, as her panels more than suffice for battery charging.

The one hurdle remaining before paying passengers can benefit from educational programming on the Friend is final Coast Guard approval. This vessel may be the first fully solar powered passenger vessel in the U.S. seeking Coast Guard certification. Her lithium ion batteries are a technology not currently certified routinely by the Coast Guard (even though every Prius relies on them). A stalwart team of FOPB Board members is working with consultants to build the strongest possible case for certification with the lithium ion configuration. If this cannot be achieved by early in 2019, we will change out the existing batteries for the old-fashioned lead acid version, but we expect that this will not be necessary.

With November storms on the horizon, the Friend will soon be pulled out of the water for the winter. The current plan is to store her at Arey’s Pond Boat Yard and arrange to connect the Yard with the boat’s solar panels so that the energy they generate over the winter can be captured and used. If you are on the Cape during the off-season, do pop into APBY and take a look!
2018-2019 Education Grants Hit Record!

Education focused on and around Pleasant Bay is on the rise! Each year The Friends of Pleasant Bay’s competitive grant program encourages innovative educational projects centered on the Bay. Open to schools in Chatham, Orleans, Harwich, Brewster, Nauset Regional District and Cape Cod Technical School, grant approval is based upon project alignment with and promotion of the FOPB mission.

The 2018-2019 school grant cycle set a record, with $40,958 awarded to local teachers and schools. This grant cycle also had four teachers to the returning competitive grant program, highlighting its importance to them as they develop innovative curricula. These grants will help over 1,500 students get on or near the Bay, discover its beauty and realize the importance of its stewardship. 723 students on 32 trips will get the opportunity to embark on the new Floating Classroom Research Vessel, *Friend of Pleasant Bay*, for an array of field trips across many grade levels, schools and districts.

The majority of the projects supported by the grant funds will be carried out this coming spring, 2019. So, when you are out on the Bay, look for:

**Catherine Kane** and 176 *Monomoy Regional Middle School* 5th graders exploring Muddy Creek, investigating its rich biodiversity and discussing the human impact on our coastal waterways. This trip will spark ideas for the students’ artwork and poetry about Pleasant Bay.

**Julia Randall** and 175 *Monomoy Regional Middle School* 6th graders aboard the *Friend*, taking water samples, identifying crabs and collecting Codium algae with a Center for Coastal Studies naturalist.

**Melinda Forist, Nancy Gifford** and 140 *Monomoy Regional Middle School* 7th Graders monitoring water quality at Muddy Creek and comparing it with data taken on the *Friend*. Data will be recorded in personal field journals and students will use them to create ocean-inspired art with Ocean Protection Advocacy Kids, Inc.

Monomoy Regional Middle School students collect data from Muddy Creek.
Marsha Dugas and 80 4th Graders from Eddy Elementary School travelling to Jackknife Cove, Kent’s Point and Meeting House Pond, using the environment as inspiration for their journaling, sketching, and photography of Pleasant Bay.

Martha Jenkins and 38 Orleans Elementary School 3rd Graders analyzing soil and water samples at Jackknife Cove. Back in the classroom, students will research fables from several sources and will then use the elements of this genre in the creation of “Pleasant Bay Folktales.” They will author stories and scripts to be performed in early spring.

Auburn Hall and the 6th, 7th and 8th Graders of Nauset Regional Middle School conducting beach clean ups and taking trips aboard the Friend as inspiration for their art show, designed to demonstrate the importance of protecting our ocean. Hall’s students will also build an augmented reality sandbox this year, combining a real sandbox and virtual topography and water, to explore earth science.

Ricardo Pollo and 250 9th Grade Physics students from Nauset Regional High School will be experimenting with vector addition by trying to move the Friend in a straight line perpendicular to the current, and seeing if they can correctly predict where they will end up after traveling forward, while drifting sideways with the current.

Rydell Welsh and 48 Vertebrate Biology students from Nauset Regional High School taking observations aboard the Friend of vertebrates living within the Pleasant Bay watershed, primarily seals, and predicting how shifting sands may impact their habitats.

Summer 2018 Grant Projects

Brandy Jackson and 60 students from the Summer Science Institute at Nauset Regional Middle School created public service announcements for how daily choices around water can protect the Bay. Jackson’s students also designed a laser cut map of Pleasant Bay in the school MakerSpace, a place for technology and hands-on learning.

Heather Kelsey and 47 students from Latham Centers Summertide Program in Brewster travelled by boat across Pleasant Bay, learning how to collect and report data in journals.

The Friends of Pleasant Bay Education Committee and Board of Directors look forward to following the evolution of these grants and thank all of the inspiring local teachers involved in the Friends’ competitive grant program for their dedication to the education of the next generation of environmental stewards.

Applications for the 2019-2020 grant cycle will be available in January on the Friends’ website. A rolling grant application for local nonprofits can also be found on the website.
Sipson’s Island: What If...

Pleasant Bay is a living sanctuary. Twice a day the waters of the ocean surge into the bay and then out again, teeming with life and coursing through the blood vessels of the estuary. Season in and season out, the ceaseless rhythm continues: a constant, the steady breathing of a living organism.

At the heart of the Bay is Sipson’s Island. Centrally located, the Orleans island overlooks its major artery, the Narrows, easily accessible also from Chatham, Harwich, and Brewster. Beyond the Island’s shores to the east, the ever-shifting shallows extend to the barrier beach, beyond which the ocean awaits. Its western bluff commands a view of Big Bay and the Cape beyond. To the north is Little Bay, with Hog and Strong Islands and the salt marsh they enclose. South across a tidal passage lies its smaller sibling, Little Sipson’s Island, proudly standing guard over the great Sipson’s Marsh.

Sipson’s Island embodies a relationship with its surroundings that was once and can again be mutually sustaining. Ten thousand years ago the island was the seasonal home of Native Americans, who lived with great respect off the natural bounty of the bay. The Island was named after John Sipson, the last sachem on the lower Cape. Today, when the sustaining capacity of the bay is under grave threat, Sipson’s stands ready to serve as a beacon, guiding us toward a more equitable relationship with the rest of nature.

Two years ago this jewel, the only private island in Pleasant Bay, went on the market for $12.5 million. Your Friends Board took notice, but dismissed the idea of acquisition as out of reach. A year ago the price dropped to $10 million, and then six months later below $8 million. That caught your Board’s attention. What if that number came down one or two more notches? What if...

Suppose the Town of Orleans would contribute open space dollars to the purchase, in return for the land preservation, public access, and green tourist destination the Island could provide. With a dock on the north end of the island, the harbormaster could monitor traffic in the Narrows more easily. We can report that the Orleans Open Space Committee is considering such a proposal.
What if a well known scientific research center on the outer Cape was interested in using the Big House on the Island and its 4 acres as an applied research and education center during the warmer weather months? From this base they could continue the studies of the Bay already under way with Friends support, perhaps harnessing the energies of local youth. Conversations are under way with the non-profit Center for Coastal Studies.

Suppose there was a solar powered floating classroom on the Bay, ready to serve as an educational platform for youth and adults eager to be involved in that marine and climate research, using Sipson’s Island, Little Sipson’s and our magnificent salt marshes as study destinations? Actually, thanks to our generous donors, that vessel is already plying our waters, eager to serve and running on nothing but electrons.

One way to buy the time needed to raise the funds needed for purchase would be to find a private backer willing to buy the Island and then sell it back to a non-profit piece by piece. To protect against development, such a person would have to place the whole island in conservation restrictions, with public access restricted to mown paths.

The purchase of Sipson’s Island is a puzzle. Your Friends Board is working hard to find the pieces and to assemble them creatively. These are some of the paths we are investigating. If a plan emerges that the Board is willing to embrace with confidence, then we will have to raise some serious money. One potential donor has stepped forward already with half a million dollars. We will need more members willing to contribute with similar levels of commitment. If you would like to discuss the project, please be in touch with President Mon Cochran or Vice President Kris Ramsay at info@friendsofpleasantbay.org.
The Dredge Report

Over this past summer, local news outlets reported on the potential dredging planned for Pleasant Bay. Ted Keon, the Director of Coastal Resources for the Town of Chatham, was able to provide us an update as of mid-October.

The North Inlet has changed remarkably since last spring’s Nor’easters redesigned our shoreline. The old inlet off Chatham Lighthouse has continued to degrade, making it difficult for the commercial fishing boats to traverse the bar, and the North Inlet has become the primary navigation route to access the Atlantic Ocean. However, access to the North Inlet from the Chatham Fish Pier has become difficult due to increased shoaling along the south side of the inlet.

The Town of Chatham developed a plan to dredge a narrow channel through a newly formed shoal, just inside the north tip of North Beach Island. This was to make navigation safer for the larger fishing boats and the US Coast Guard to enter and exit at any tide. The caveat, of course, is that Nature could and probably would have something to add to this plan over the winter. In other words, there would be no guarantees that dredging would provide a long-term solution to the North Inlet.

Dredging was scheduled to begin this past September. Emergency permits had been approved and the dredge was moved over to the island. According to Ted Keon, weather, equipment issues and safety concerns to the dredge crew conspired to cause the work to be postponed. The plan will be reviewed after the coming winter.

After the North Inlet project was postponed, the equipment was moved over to Fox Hill where work began on the two main channels: Bassing Harbor and Pleasant Bay, both located off the tricolor channel marker. There has been significant shoaling in that area over the past few years. The dredge is scheduled to then move to Round Cove once the Fox Hill area project is completed.
The Outer Beach is the most beautiful barrier, offering Pleasant Bay protection from the harsh realities of the Atlantic Ocean. The events of this past summer brought home those realities with two shark attacks, one that resulted in the death of a young surfer. Our natural human response to such a tragedy is to seek an immediate solution. It bears reminding that we humans exist in partnership with our surroundings.

Since the tragic attack in September, there have been many media reports about the shark and seal populations and what the response should be. For many years, scientists have been studying the interactions of seals, sharks, and humans and their impacts on the environment. Some of the basic facts are worth reviewing:

In Barnstable County, the human population has grown from 26,000 in 1920 to 213,500 in 2017. During the summer, estimates increase this number three-fold, to 600,000.

A Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce survey found that 77% of beachgoers do not go into the water. According to the Chamber, more visitors have come to see the seals and sharks. (Wendy Northcross, CEO, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, on WCAI The Point interview, Oct. 2, 2018).

Prior to the mass killings of seals from the late 19th century until the enactment of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (MMA), the actual seal population was not known. Without knowing what the original population was prior to nearly a century’s worth of culling, a conclusion frequently heard that the seal population is “out of control” does not seem justified. It may be reaching its natural state. Sharks are the natural predator of seals, and the MMA has helped to re-establish the ecological balance of the ocean. As more sharks are tagged, scientists are better equipped to study their behaviors and patterns.

Shark culling has proved to be ineffective in other hot spots around the world, such as Western Australia and Hawaii. Education, safety protocols, and technology offer alternatives.

See resources such as the National Seashore, the Atlantic White Shark the Northwest Atlantic Seal Research Consortium.

We need to create safety protocols for our beaches that encourage respect for these species. After all, we humans have the ability to alter our behavior to accommodate what is both challenging and captivating about the natural world.
26th Annual Cat Boat Gathering
Hosted by Arey’s Pond Boat Yard

Arey’s Pond Boat Yard hosted the 26th Annual Cat Boat Gathering on the 10th and 11th of August. The course takes the sailors from Namequoit Point in Little Pleasant Bay, through the Narrows to Big Pleasant Bay, where boats round two marks, and then back through the Narrows to the finish line in Little Pleasant Bay.

This year’s celebration of sailing on Pleasant Bay began with a warm-up race on Friday. About 30 participants sailed the course, propelled by a perfect breeze under sunny skies. Pandora, a 20’ custom catboat, one of the fastest catboats in the world, crossed the finish line first.

On Saturday, the race sequence started at 12:45 p.m. Unfortunately, the weather on Friday was not predictive of Saturday’s, overcast with a light wind, for the most part. Six boats of eighty registrants made it back to the finish line. By the time most of the fleet had reached the Narrows, the wind had dropped to 0-3 knots. When the tide turned and the current was pushing the boats back, the race was called at the Narrows.

Following the race, there was an awards ceremony at the boat yard, with refreshments and music by the Vern-Mon band. Of note, Mon Cochran, current President of Friends of Pleasant Bay, took a second place in the Marshall 18 class in Sussurros; and former president, Herb Heidt, won the Alan McClennen, Sr. award, in recognition of boat owners who best represent the traditions of sailing Pleasant Bay.

The Catboat Gathering is held as a benefit, with proceeds donated to the Friends of Pleasant Bay. Mark your calendar and hope for more wind! The 27th Annual Cat Gathering will be held on the 17th of August 2019.

Warm up race.
Thank you, Nancy Bloom.
Understanding At Askaonkton:
The Wading Place (Muddy Creek)

The Wading Place or At Askaonkton, at the mouth of what has been called Muddy Creek, is what Monomoyicks and Europeans would have called this place in earlier times. The place name includes the preposition “at,” a linguistic feature that illustrates the close connection between speaker and place. An interpretive display was installed at Askaonkton or the Wading Place by the Chatham Conservation Foundation in June, 2018. This article summarizes that display and suggests there may good reasons to consider Muddy Creek’s original name.

Askaonkton as a place holds centuries of communal memory. It tells us how people interacted with the land and water: wading to fish, shell-fish, harvest, and recreate. Recognizing the native name of this place, we are more likely to think about how people from both Native and European cultures have interacted with their local environment. The alliance of families in the area would follow the herring in spring, gathering food in and around Monomoit Bay (Pleasant Bay) throughout the summer into fall. Later in fall, the People would open up their winter wetus (long-houses), located away from the shore, in the upland forest near Atlantic white-cedar swamps. They would come together to live in one dwelling constructed of cedar saplings and covered by bark. The People were active all year round, with game hunting in winter, always living according to the seasons and elements and never wanting to live beyond natural means.

Askaonkton looks out across Monomoit Bay at Sipson’s and Little Sipson’s Islands, South Orleans. They were named after (Little) Tom Sipson with the larger island once being called Tom’s or Little Tom’s Island. John Sipson of Potanumicut prominence was his older brother. Beyond the islands is Little Pleasant Bay and the site of the Sparrow-Hawk wreck of 1626.

Because of land conservation efforts, this area has been preserved and protected. Matt Cannon, Director of the Chatham Conservation Foundation Fund, notes that “we respect and honor Todd Kelley and Marcus Hendricks for all their efforts to connect us all to place (Pleasant Bay).” Carol Odell assisted on the project.