

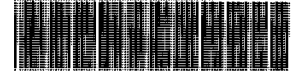
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Providence, R.I.

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Kayaking

Environmental Journal by Peter Lord: Coastal cleanup nets beer, rug, lots of cigarette butts

09/29/2002

Discarded cigarette filters were the most prevalent form of debris picked up by volunteers who took part in last weekend's 18th annual Rhode Island coastal cleanup campaign, held in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup/Bag It! program.

More than 1,500 volunteers at 66 locations along the state's rivers and coastline gathered more than six tons of refuse, according to Eugenia Marks of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island.

The most common items aside from cigarette butts were plastic bags, boating line, beach shoes and clothing.

Boy Scouts in Narragansett picked up the remains of a catered beach party that included eight large aluminum pans and a gas grill. Volunteers at East Matunuck State Beach found full bottles of beer. A large carpet was picked up elsewhere in South Kingstown.

Volunteers represented the Naval Underwater Warfare Center, Scout troops, the Feinstein Learning Center, Pawtuxet and Woonasquatucket Watershed Councils, Friends of the Blackstone, Common Fence Point Association, Tiverton Garden Club, Big Sisters and the following schools: Prout, Chariho Middle School, Roger Williams Middle School.

More than 117 countries took part in the international cleanup program. Last year, 750,000 volunteers collected more than 12.5 million pounds of trash.

The day before the Rhode Island cleanup, 80 workers from a variety of state agencies, private companies and neighbors hauled 60 cubic yards of refuse out of the Woonasquatucket River in Providence.

Another Woonasquatucket cleanup is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Button Hole golf course in Providence on Saturday, Oct. 26. Lunch will be provided and raffle prizes offered. To volunteer, call Claire Moran at 421-1664 or send e-mail to info@buttonhole.org.

Planning a cleaner Woonasquatucket

A new plan to clean up the water in the Woonasquatucket River and to restore forests and park spaces along its shores will be presented Wednesday, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., at Smithfield Town Hall.

Residents from Glocester, North Smithfield, Smithfield, North Providence, Johnston and Providence will be offered opportunities to help identify the environmental, recreational and cultural assets of the river that runs through their communities.

The planning, by consultants for the state Department of Environmental

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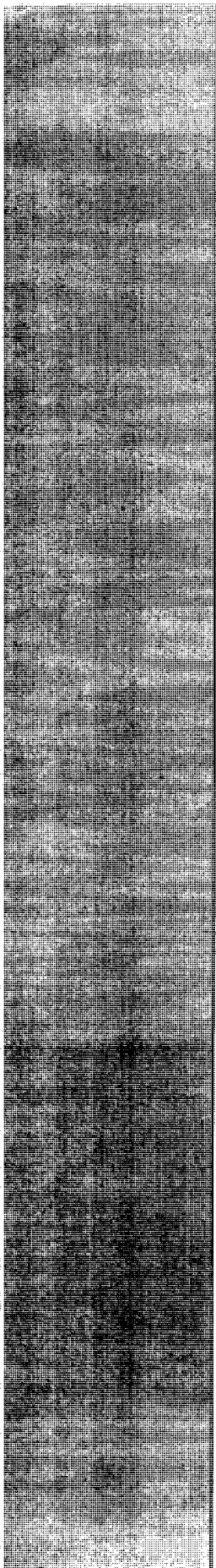
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Management, is in the early stages now; more meetings will be held later, in each affected community.

Half of the 43 miles of the river and its tributaries is considered polluted because of metal contamination from earlier industrial uses and from water running off parking lots and roads.

For more information, call Jenny Pereira at the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council at 861-9046 or Fred Presley at DEM at 222-4700, ext. 4417.

Let the sun shine for open houses

Open houses will be offered from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. across the state Oct. 5 for demonstrations of solar heating and environmentally sensitive homes and buildings.

The open houses are part of a region-wide program organized by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association. People's Power & Light, a local nonprofit promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency, is the organizer in Rhode Island.

Some of the sites this year include:

A mixed-use building in Coventry that incorporates solar hot water heating, solar electrical generation, super-efficient fireplace, and passive solar heating.

A barn and office in Charlestown that uses solar radiant floor heating and generates electricity from a solar electric system.

A residential solar electric system in Portsmouth.

A solar electric generating system incorporated into a gazebo at Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence.

For details, go to www.nesea.org or call 413-774-6051 ext. 22.

Handicapped access to boat ramp lauded

The handicapped-accessible boat ramp at Haines Memorial State Park in East Providence earned the state Department of Environmental Management a national award for accomplishments in design, engineering and construction.

The ramp was one of six handicapped-accessible boat ramps built in various locations around the state during the last seven years.

It earned DEM the 2002 Outstanding Project Award from the States Organization for Boating Access at its annual conference in Mystic, Conn., recently.

Handicapped-accessible boat launch facilities also have been built at Weaver Cove in Portsmouth, Oakland Beach in Warwick, Bold Point in East Providence, Colt State Park in Bristol and Main Street in Westerly.

Along with a new 60-foot ramp at Haines Park, DEM designed a drainage and stormwater treatment system that captures most solid materials before they can flow off the parking lot and into Bullocks Cove.

The Environmental Journal is a listing of brief news items about the actions of individuals, organizations and businesses that affect the air we breathe, the water we drink and the landscape that surrounds us.

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact environment reporter Peter B. Lord by phone at 277-8036, or by e-mail at plord@projo.com, or by writing to him, care of the Providence Journal, 75 Fountain St., Providence, R.I. 02902.