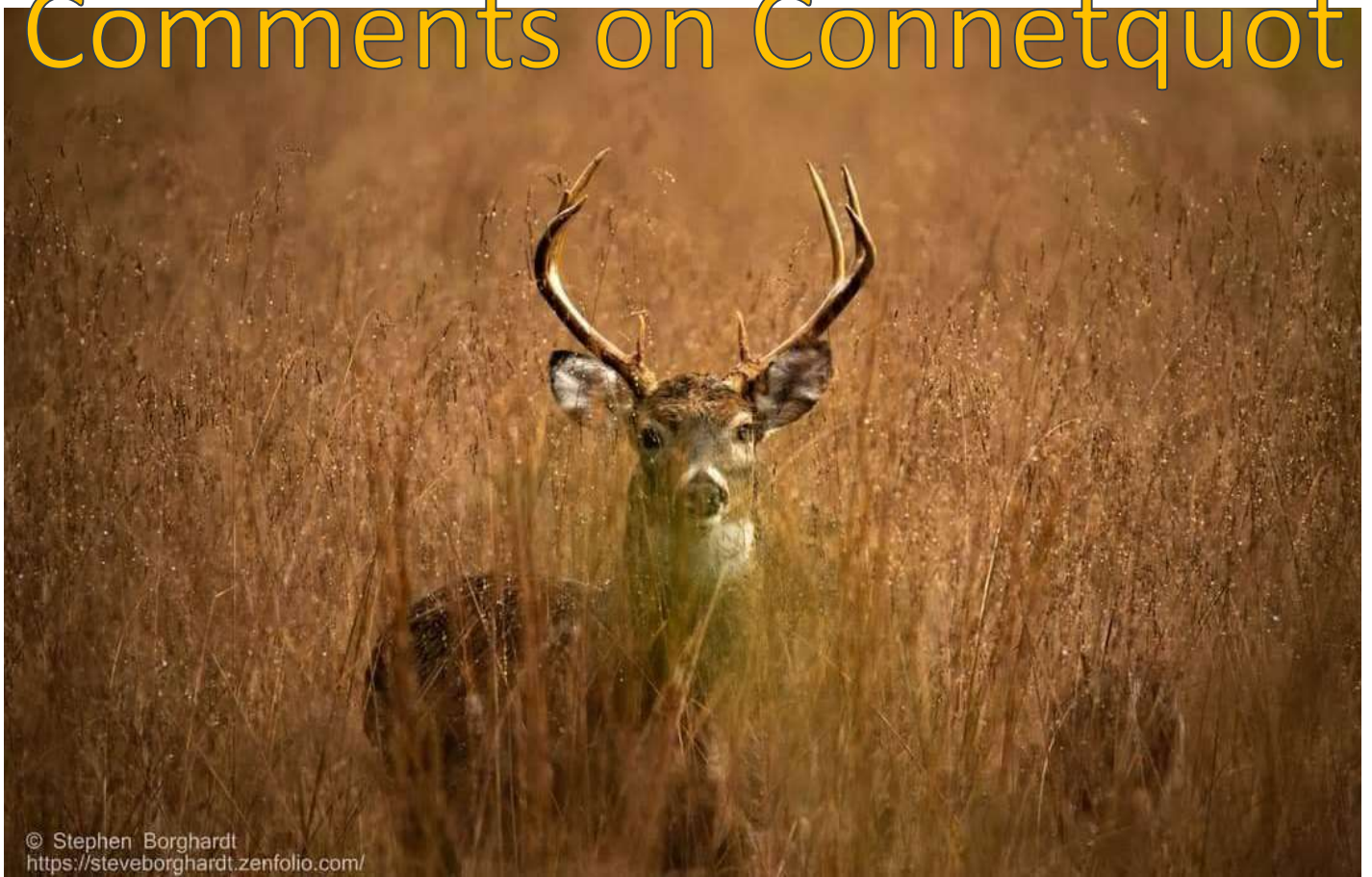


# Comments on Connetquot



Published by the Friends of Connetquot State Park Preserve

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 4 Winter 2022

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings Friends! My first letter to you as President! I will admit that the transition into this new role and its responsibilities has had a few snags, but filling the shoes of Ginny Fields isn't easy! I'm grateful she has taken a

position on our Advisory Board to help me assume this amazing role.

2021 has been another difficult year for all of us. Through all the uncertainty, Connetquot River State Park Preserve remained open for us to enjoy and reflect. *Thank you*, Park Manager Susanne Wuehler and staff for adapting to the ever-changing restrictions.

Have you noticed some changes taking place around the Preserve? We've launched our Volunteer Corps, and its work around the Preserve is already evident. In October, they planted over 1,200 daffodil bulbs around the main building grounds. Corp members teamed up with the Save the Great South Bay Creek Defenders for invasive species removal north of the hatchery. They partnered with the L.I. Greenbelt Trail Conference to do some trail work and bridge repairs in preparation of the Shore 2 Shore footrace next April at which Corp members will assist. Volunteers teamed up with Park docents and staff to host a lovely Open House Day that I hope will become an annual event. When you get this newsletter, the Clubhouse will have been decorated by the Corp for the Holiday Season.

In-person lectures have resumed, and the presentation topics are wonderful! Upcoming lecture descriptions are in this newsletter. Please come and enjoy the programs, which are free to our members.

Our prayer is that you stay healthy and sane as we adjust almost daily to the vagaries of the virus. We hope that you can make this Holiday season more joyous by engaging in acts of charity, thus furthering our efforts in preserving the beauty and history of Connetquot River State Park Preserve. However you celebrate this festive time of year, we wish you peace and joy. Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,  
Janet Soley

Photo: Stephen Borghardt

Please continue to support us!

**Trouting at the South Side Club**

Harper's Weekly, April 4, 1885

Who the first discoverer of trout on Long Island was has not been handed down to posterity, it is not on the records, and therefore it is safe to assert that it must have been a Snedecor. From early on in this century the names Snedecor and trout have been synonymous. Over fifty years ago, when Long Island first experienced the visitation of New York anglers, they found the country to the eastward of Hempstead mainly occupied by Snedecors and trout, and while the fish have put no claim to have found the Snedecors, there is proof at hand that old Liff Snedecor kept his weather eye continually on the trout in the pond near his homestead. There was no railroad in those days to land the angler at the door of his preserve, nor were the fifty miles of road between South Ferry and Liff Snedecor's, just beyond Islip, speedily traversed, but when the anglers wheeled round the old chestnut mile post—which venerable land-mark, crowned by creeping vines, still remains, and signifies the primitive survey of the island's main roadway—the tired fisherman knew they had reached a cozy haven of rest, where good living and admirable sport awaited them. Liff Snedecor's house was but a small one story building by the side of the old mill pond. Part of the old mill still remains. To the mill-flume in the spring monster trout, fresh from sumptuous shrimp dinners in the salty bay, would resort to sup on the minute crustacean found at the base of the old mill among the water-cresses which coquetted with the narrow current. Trout-preserving was unknown at the time, and the fish were in ichthyic ignorance of what chopped liver meant. But the sands of time have brought about many changes. Old Liff Snedecor and others of his line have long since been gathered to their fathers. The old mill-wheel has crumbled away and floated piece-meal to the sea, and the public can no longer whip the waters of this great natural home of the trout as of yore.

The old Snedecor farm is now the property of the South Side Sportsman's Club, and Snedecor's house is but the small parlor in the east wing of the now large and rambling edifice. The club is some quarter of a century old. Originally a small organization, it has grown to control a limited membership of one hundred gentlemen, all more or less prominent in sporting and social circles. The farm, which formerly consisted of less than two hundred acres, has been increased so that the club to-day enjoys territory of 2300 acres. Adjoining the club's property are the estates of several wealthy members. Mr. George Lorillard owns 1100 acres (including the old Maitland farm), Mr. W.K. Vanderbilt 700 acres, and Mr. C.R. Roberts 1400 acres; in all 5500 acres. All of these lands are mostly strictly preserved. To the east of the clubhouse is the main pond; it is only fished from boats. The trout are large and very vigorous, and afford excellent play. The landing on this pond is prettily illustrated in an accompanying sketch.

The property of the club is admirably adapted for both a fish and game preserve. The land is covered by a growth of scrub oak, pine, white birch, and maple, and in the season wild fowl, woodcock, ruffed grouse, and quail are quite plentiful. It is the fish department, however, which has added so much to the latter-day glory of the club which is by far the most successful fish-culture organization in America. Under the admirable management of Mr. Roland Redmond, the club's present president, not only have the ponds and streams been kept well supplied with fish, but the club has been enabled during Mr. Redmond's regime to market annually nearly \$5000 worth of fish. About a mile to the north-east of the club-house on East Brook "the Nursery" and hatching houses are located. In the main hatchery, which is a building about forty feet in length by fifteen feet in width, the fish are propagated. Of late years attention has not only been paid to the culture of the common brook trout, but to that of the Kennebec salmon, land-locked salmon, and California trout. The club's success in rearing the last-named fish has been unprecedented. In its new home the Pacific sloper has been found to attain an unusually large size, and as a fish of sport to compare favorably with the native trout. Below the hatching house the East Brook winds its way to the bay, while by its side for some distance are the tanks in which the various sizes of fish are matured, when the fish are taken to the preserve on the Connetquot River which is the feeder of the main pond. This preserve is called "The Screen" and is a model in its way of the modern system of preserving by means of a series of independent sluice-way boxes. From this point for over half a mile down-stream there is a splendid stretch of wading and fishing in the Connetquot. Bait-fishing is prohibited generally, but allowed in the stream south of the new road bridge and in the East Pond and stream below it. Altogether the South Side Club and its well-stocked waters make it the most charming spot for the lovers of sport to pass a pleasant and retired holiday from business.



BOAT-LANDING ON THE MAIN POND.



# HOOF BEATS

by Carole Scialdone



Wow! The Park is in 'FALL' color! The sun streaming through the crimson, tangerine and golden colored leaves and shimmering against the bright blue sky, paint a spectacular view for all to enjoy. Each trip into the Park reveals the brilliant beauty of the season, reminding us that Mother Nature is simply amazing. The cooler temperatures are appreciated, keeping horse and rider more comfortable than the last season. The brisk Autumn air adds a spring to the horse's stride, so we have to be prepared to hold on tight. What a gorgeous time to be enjoying Connetquot trails on horseback.

There are lots of beautiful bucks roaming the acreage, looking for love and bulking up for the colder days ahead. The songbirds in the trees and the call of the hawks soaring overhead remind us each day how privileged we are to ride our horses through this pristine Park Preserve.

Sadly, on November 10th, an oil tanker overturned on Veterans Highway, near Connetquot Ave, spilling oil into the river. We are so appreciative of the Suffolk County Police, Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services, the DEC, Islip Town's Hazmat Team and Fire Marshall as well as the Park staff who all responded quickly "working together to mitigate, contain and neutralize the spilled oil." A boom was placed at Collins Crossing to collect the oil from the surface of the river and equestrians were asked to avoid crossing that day. According to Park Management, the boom will remain for a while longer. It was moved later that same day, however, to allow horses access to cross the river into the Park. Thanks go to all the responders for their swift, thorough and effectual response.

It won't be long before we will lose all the colorful foliage, leaving the trees bare. We'll brace ourselves for the dropping temperatures and the increasing winds. Nothing stops an avid equestrian. We'll simply bundle up and head out to exercise our partners and look for joy in the next season.

*Photo: Carole Scialdone*

## *Work Well Done*

October 9 was a volunteer day at Connetquot River Park Preserve. Volunteers planted 1,200 daffodil bulbs near the Clubhouse, so come to the park next spring and enjoy the show! Pictured below are members of the FOC Volunteer Corps.

Another volunteer project on November 6 made improvements to a swampy section of the Greenbelt Trail north of Veterans Highway. Thanks to park staff, Farmingdale College Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity, FOC volunteers and Save the Great South Bay Creek Defenders, the footpath is in better shape and water now flows more freely instead of collecting where it's not wanted.

*Photo: Janet Soley*





# Budding Scientists Examine the Connetquot

by Melissa Parrott

Central Pine Barrens Commission, in partnership with Mel Morris and Aleida Perez, BNL; and Ron Gelardi, NYS Parks



On October 29, 200 students from Connetquot, Brentwood, and West Islip High Schools and Selden Middle School ventured onto the Connetquot River to learn about its ecosystem health for the tenth annual A Day in the Life of the Connetquot River. This is one of eleven such events, along with ecosystem outings on the Carmans River, Greens Creek, Gardiner County Park, Massapequa Preserve, Fire Island, Nissequogue River, Carlls River, Forge River, Peconic Estuary and the Mill River. They take place the same time every year to enable students to visit their local aquatic ecosystem, understand its complex and beautiful nature, and learn more about it.

The students and teachers partner with experts from Brookhaven National Laboratory, the Central Pine Barrens Commission, NYSDEC, NYS Parks, South Shore Estuary Reserve and Coastal Stewards at each site to help them with the natural history, biodiversity identification, data collection and accurate reporting. The students frequently connect with the experts and realize potential career opportunities in natural history and science that they hadn't known existed. A Day in the Life has become a career day of sorts.

The students visited specific sites along the Connetquot river, including Bunce's Bridge, the fish hatchery, Bayard Cutting Arboretum and Heckscher State Park, and collected physical data, including



ing tide measurement, current direction, air and water temperature, site descriptions, aquatic biological survey by seining, biodiversity survey of other plants and animals and the chemical analysis, including dissolved oxygen, pH, salinity, turbidity, phosphates, nitrates and fecal coliform: a holistic snapshot of that small piece of the river that can be compared to the other sites, headwaters to mouth. The goal is for this one-day synoptic event to be a project they work on throughout the year. By creating research projects, posters, documentaries and lesson plans, there is so much to learn from the data and experiences that these student scientists collected.

Every year, we witness trepidation that turns into excitement, student leaders who step in to help, and quieter students that use the hands-on, interactive techniques to learn and share with their fellow students. We hear laughter, screams, incredible discussions, and students helping each other. We see amazing teacher leaders, whose own enthusiasms empower their students. We see experts and partners, coming together to do more, help more and inspire more. We are already looking forward to next season. It's our favorite part of the year!

Left: Connetquot H.S. students seine the river. Right top: West Islip H.S. students with water quality samples. *Photos: Melissa Parrott*



FOC Volunteers, the families and Scouts from Troop 4 and park staff decked the Clubhouse for the holidays. Take a tour and enjoy the season's greetings!

*Photos: Janet Soley*

## Friends of Connetquot Lecture Series at Connetquot River State Park Preserve Clubhouse

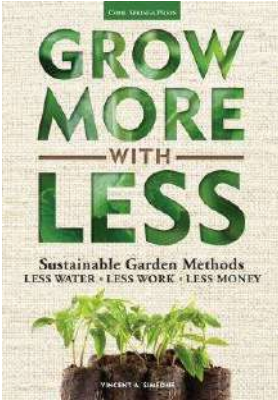
*Grow More with Less:*

*Sustainable Garden Methods: Less Water - Less Work - Less Money*

*Presented by Vincent Simeone*

*Director, Planting Fields Arboretum*

*Saturday, February 26, 2022 2:00 PM*



Horticultural expert Vincent Simeone will discuss how you can plan your green garden. With detailed, strategic timelines for both short-term and long-term gardening techniques, you will learn the steps to creating an efficient, sustainable home landscape. Mr. Simeone will explain why we should plant for the long-term, how to make the best plant selections possible, how to manage invasive species, how to make the most of your lawn, how to conserve water with proper irrigation, installing rain barrels and cisterns, and more. With his effective, time-proven recommendations, field-tested in a large botanical garden and adapted for home use, this lecture will give you a complete step-by-step personal roadmap for green gardening. Mr. Simeone will have books on site for sale and autographs!

For the past 23 years Vincent Simeone has worked in public horticulture at Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park in New York where he is the Director. He has specialized expertise in woody plant ID, culture, use and selection of superior varieties. He has spoken to many groups nationwide and has appeared on garden shows including Martha Stewart Living and HGTV. He has written and contributed to various gardening articles for magazines and newspapers including the Long Island based newspaper, *Newsday*. Since 2005 he has published six books: In 2010, Vincent was named Man

of the Year by the Long Island Nursery and Landscape Association. In 2014 Vincent was awarded the centurion award by Farmingdale State College as the top 100 alumni over the past century. In 2015, was awarded the distinguished arborists award from the NYS Arborists-ISA chapter.

## *Women's History Month Celebration*

*Mary L. Booth: The Story of an Extraordinary 19<sup>th</sup> Century Woman*

*Presented by Tricia Foley*

*Sunday, March 13, 2022, 1:00 PM*

Tricia Foley will present an overview of her book on the life of Mary L. Booth (1831-1889), author, historian, editor, suffragist, and abolitionist. Booth, born in Yaphank, L.I., wrote the first *History of the City of New York* in 1859, became the founding editor of *Harper's Bazaar* in 1867 and was editor for 22 years. Throughout her lifetime, she translated 47 books in 7 languages, was active in the women's rights movement, friends with Susan B. Anthony; and worked for the Union during the Civil War, receiving personal thanks from Abraham Lincoln for her editing and writing efforts for the cause. She knew everyone who was anyone in the publishing and cultural worlds and halls of government in this country and in Europe and was also instrumental in bringing the Statue of Liberty to America.

Tricia Foley, author of 12 lifestyle/design books, a designer and architectural restoration consultant, recently published the illustrated biography, *Mary L. Booth: The Story of an Extraordinary 19<sup>th</sup> Century Woman*, which is available on Amazon. Foley grew up on Long Island, studied art history at SUNY Fredonia and interior design at Parsons in NYC. She was a magazine editor for over 25 years for *House Beautiful*, *Victoria*, *Country Home* and contributed stories on many 19<sup>th</sup> Century inspirational women and house museums around the country. Her new book, *A Summer Place: Living by the Sea*, published by Rizzoli, features the homes of many of Bellport's and Brookhaven's creative community, where she now lives and is Director of the Bellport-Brookhaven Historical Society. She is also a Trustee of the Yaphank Historical Society, and honorary curator of the Mary L. Booth House Museum in Yaphank.



Lectures are free for members of Friends of Connetquot. Non-members pay \$5/person.  
Please consider becoming a member and enjoy our programming all year long. Seasonal parking rates apply.  
To register or to become a member, please visit [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org).



## Friends of Connetquot Lecture Series at Connetquot River State Park Preserve Clubhouse

### *Studebaker: 115 Years of Wagons and Automobiles* Presented by Robert Muller Saturday, April 9, 2022, 1:00 PM



*Studebaker: 115 Years of Wagons and Automobiles* covers the history of the only American wagon manufacturer to successfully transition to a car company. Presenter Bob Muller will discuss this history, including the Studebaker family's 1736 arrival in colonial America, the sale of their first covered wagon in 1852, wartime military contracts, their many popular and innovative automobiles, the end of their automobile manufacturing in 1966, and the continuing interest in restoring and collecting all things Studebaker.

Mr. Muller, best known for his work on Long Island lighthouse history and preservation, grew up in a family of automobile enthusiasts. As a child, he spent much time in the garage of his brother Henry, who owned and restored many Studebakers. He is currently working on a book of Studebaker history and restoring a 1962 Studebaker Lark Regal convertible.

Lectures are free for members of Friends of Connetquot. Non-members pay \$5/person. Please consider becoming a member and enjoy our programming all year long. Seasonal parking rates apply. To register or to become a member, please visit [www.friendsofconnetquot.org](http://www.friendsofconnetquot.org).

### *Dodging a Bullet*

On November 10 an oil tanker overturned on Veterans Highway between Connetquot Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, threatening the Connetquot River. A quick response by authorities contained the spill, and the state DEC removed oil-soaked soil.

We would feel better if the state addressed the potential for other spills by installing containment sumps or other measures on the roadsides near the river. The pristine Connetquot needs strict protection.

In the photo at right, the white booms were precautionary measures, fortunately not needed to contain a spill. *Photo: Carole Scialdone*



Left: FOC Vice President David Reisfield frequently runs in Connetquot Park—in this case with a flock of pacesetters.

Right: Stephen Borghardt looks skyward and finds a treat. Bald eagles occasionally visit Connetquot at this time of year.



## *A Thank You*

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, The Friends hosted their first Members Only Open House. With so many upgrades made throughout the Preserve over the last year, we wanted our members to have some time to experience and enjoy them all. Thanks to Park Staff and Docents for helping to orchestrate the event and provide tours of the Clubhouse and Grist Mill!

Your supporting memberships are vital to the work of FOC. Thank you! *Photos: Carole Scialdone*



### **Board of Trustees**

#### **Executive Board**

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 David Reisfield, Vice President  
 Robert Ploetz, Treasurer  
 Tom Casey, Recording Secretary  
 Janet Soley, Corresponding Secretary

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 Carole Scialdone      Keith Snedecor

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#### **Mission Statement**

The Friends of Connetquot is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation, conservation and history of the 3,473-acre Connetquot River State Park Preserve. We work to help management protect a pristine environment and historic buildings and artifacts. We also support educational programs, fishing facilities and hiking and equestrian trails.

The records of the Friends of Connetquot can be viewed in our room at the Preserve. The New York State Office of Charities Registration holds copies of the annual charities reports required by law.

PLEASE NOTE: Automatic defibrillators are available in the administration office, the BOCES room, the main building and at the hatchery. Preserve staff is trained in their use.

For Emergencies in the Preserve: Call the New York Park Police at 631-669-2500.  
 Also notify the Entrance Booth at 631-581-1005.

### **BECOME A FRIEND OF CONNETQUOT**

Fill out the membership form below and mail to: **Friends of Connetquot, Box 472, Oakdale, NY 11769.**

Already a member? Give the gift of membership to a friend.

Membership dues include our newsletter, Comments on Connetquot, free interesting programs, special events, and the satisfaction of supporting a beautiful Preserve that is a historical and ecological treasure. Special Contributors receive all the privileges of membership plus a listing on the Donors Plaque. Patrons and Benefactors also receive lifetime membership.

#### **Annual Membership Dues:**

(Check the category that applies.) **Special Contributor:**

Senior Citizen (\$20) _____	Donor (\$500) _____
Individual (\$25) _____	Patron (\$1000)* _____
Family (\$30) _____	Guardian (\$2500)* _____
Supporting (\$50) _____	Benefactor (\$5000)* _____
Sponsor (\$100) _____	(*) Life Membership _____

New Membership  Gift Membership  Renewal

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to:

**Friends of Connetquot, Inc.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(Gift membership only) Please send a gift card that reads:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
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Please renew your membership if it has expired. Together you and the Friends of Connetquot can have a powerful impact on revitalizing the Connetquot Preserve for future generations.

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Mary L. Booth  
March 13

Grow More  
with Less  
February 26

115 Years of  
Studebakers  
April 9



FRIENDS OF CONNETQUOT  
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COME JOIN THE FRIENDS

## Give Us Your Best Shot

Share your photos of the Preserve with us! Send us up to four photos in .jpeg or .png digital format, and for each issue we'll pick a winner. Photos must be current (within a year of submission) and shot within the park. Please give the approximate location of the scene whenever possible.

DEADLINE for next issue: March 1, 2022. Send your files to Tom Casey at:

[2caseys@optonline.net](mailto:2caseys@optonline.net).

This issue's winner is Amanda Borella-Revy, who receives a year's subscription to the FOC newsletter for this shot of an autumn excursion in the park.

Entries will be judged by the Friends of Connetquot, Inc., and their decision is final. Each image submitted must be the original and unpublished work of the participant, who must also be its copyright owner. The participant shall retain copyright to the image entered for the competition. By submitting an image for the competition, the participant will be regarded as having granted the organizer the right to use the image in print, broadcast and/or electronic media without any fee payment, for the purposes of promoting the competition or promoting the Friends of Connetquot, Inc. Where any image is so used by the organizer, the participant will be credited accordingly.

