

Saving the Western Bays

• **CHRISTINE LORING**

A new plan to send treated wastewater to an ocean outfall pipe at the Cedar Creek facility in Wantagh has Nassau County officials excited about the money-saving, efficient proposal. The original idea was to build a \$450 million ocean outfall pipe at the Bay Park sewage treatment center. Bay Park nitrogen-filled sewage water of approximately 50 million gallons per day goes into the Western Bays through the Reynolds Channel. With the new project costing approximately \$200-\$300 million, the savings are substantial. The treated effluent from the Storm Sandy damaged plant in Bay Park would be sent to the Cedar Creek facility through a 10-mile aqueduct under Sunrise Highway, and then sent to the ocean through the outfall pipe. Approximately three-quarters of all the nitrogen pollution comes from the Bay Park facility. The Western Bays is a sub-region of the Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve, extending from the western boundary of the Town of Hempstead to the Nassau-Suffolk County line. The bays are home to the largest concentration of salt marshes in the South Shore Estuary Reserve. This system of bays and marshes provides critical habitat for birds and marine species, and offer abundant recreational opportunities for residents and tourists. Once productive fishing and shell-fishing grounds, the water quality and habitat of the bays has deteriorated in recent decades.

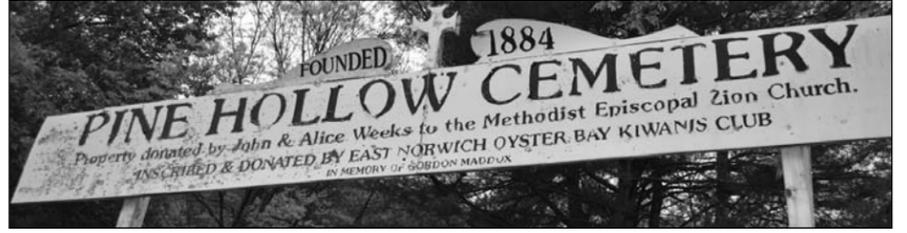
The nitrogen pollution problem was recognized many years ago. Nitrogen pollution is a serious threat to water quality, the environment and marine life, local health, the economy, and way of life. Beginning in the 1980s, harbor protection committees were established by municipal agreement on the North Shore

to deal with pollution from a variety of sources, including sewage from both onsite systems and the few small sewage treatment plants that service population centers on the North Shore. In 2014, five New York State agencies recommended financial assistance to Nassau County "to assist in addressing priority water quality problems involving sub-standard septic system 'hot-spots' in northern Nassau County." A March 8th report by the Nature Conservancy, www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/ stated: that septic systems and cesspools are the greatest contributor to the nitrogen pollution. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency warned that Long Island Sound, and four other states are in danger from the pollution, and that the proposed strategies for reducing the nitrogen in the waterways would not be enough.

This new strategy is considered by environmentalists as viable and good news in reducing nitrogen in the waterways. Once the freshwater effluent has been discharged into the saltwater environment, dilution begins. The effluent rises from the diffuser where it mixes with ocean water. The rising brew of freshwater and saltwater mixing is a mixing zone and waste-field. At some distance from the outfall, the effluent plume is undetectable because of complete mixing and dilution. The distance that a plume travels depends on many conditions in the ocean, including tides, currents, winds, and salinity.

Though, in a catch-22, the mixing zone can contain significantly high levels of toxins since statewide water quality standards and regulations do not have to be met until the water reaches the boundary of the mixing zone. This means that effluent and marine waters in the mixing zone do not necessarily meet the standards and regulations for clean water.

Sacred Site in Oyster Bay



The sign at the historical Pine Hollow Cemetery

• **PATRICIA BREXEL**

This past weekend May 21st and 22nd was New York Sacred Sites weekend. This is an event when congregations from across New York state opened their doors. The Hood African Methodist Episcopalian (A.M.E.) Zion Church on South Street, in Oyster Bay hosted a tour of the church and their cemetery.

The tour started at the church which is the oldest church in Oyster Bay. The church was erected in 1856; originally it was a wood structure then it was faced with brick in the 1930s.

The church property located on the corner of South and Summit Streets were donated by John & Alice Weeks of Oyster Bay in 1848. The Weeks family was a very wealthy family in Oyster Bay and perhaps one of the wealthiest families in all of New York State. Before the church there was a school house on the site. The Church is named after Bishop James Walker Hood. Some of the original congregants were Edward and Nancy Brown, Sarah and Plato Gall, Israel Potter, Mr. Levi, Sam Mayhew and John Davis. The church is beautiful inside with the wood floors and the stain glass windows. There are three staircases in the church, one of which is very narrow and the door is in a peculiar place. This secret staircase they believe, was used by the "underground rail road" to help slaves escape slavery.

From the church we were taken by a trolley to the church's Pine Hollow Cemetery. This cemetery was also donated by the Weeks family in 1884. Denice S. Evans-Sheppard, the chairwoman of the Pine Hollow Cemetery Committee led the tour through the Cemetery. There are 9 Civil War veterans

buried there.

They were veterans of the 20th and 26th United States Colored Infantry. There are also many veterans from all the past wars to the present buried there.



Denice S. Evans-Sheppard

The church is in the process of restoring the cemetery. They have just received a grant from Nassau County for the project, but more funds will be needed.

The tour and lecture concluded with a picnic on the grounds of the Oyster Bay Historical Society on Summit Street. Participants were treated to burgers, hot-dogs, salad, chicken, macaroni salad, ice tea and lemonade and deserts. Ella, a third grader from Oyster Bay really enjoyed the tour, and thought it would be a great field trip for other students. It was a fun way to end the tour that was so full of the history of Oyster Bay.

To make a donation to help restore the historic Pine Hollow Cemetery please send checks to the Hood A.M.E. Church Pine Hollow Cemetery Restoration, 137 South Street, Oyster Bay, NY 11771



Enjoying the picnic after the tour. Photos by Patricia Mavros Brexel

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DATE	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
Wed, May 25	2:03 am	8:34 pm	2:35 pm	8:46 pm
Thurs, May 26	2:45 am	9:17 am	2:20 pm	9:33 pm
Fri, May 27	3:33 am	10:03 am	4:09 pm	10:26 pm
Sat, May 28	4:25 am	10:55 am	5:02 pm	11:24 pm
Sun, May 29	5:22 am	11:50 am	5:59 pm	6:47 pm
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Mon, May 30	12:26 am	6:24 am	12:49 pm	6:58 pm
Tues, May 31	1:28 am	7:26 am	1:48 pm	7:57 pm



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