

Upcoming

350th tea tickets on sale

The Quononoquott Garden Club will commemorate the 350th Anniversary of the purchase of Conanicut Island from the Narragansett Indians with "Tea and Delicacies," at the community center on August 13, from 2 to 4 p.m. Tickets are on sale for \$3.50 at Baker's Pharmacy and the Secret Garden. There are only 100 available, so plan to get them early.

Club member Sharon Hay met with her committee for the past several months planning the event, which also includes a program by former Rhode Island Federation of

Garden Clubs' president and well-known floral designer, Candace Morgenstern. Her floral creations will be auctioned off after the event.

Garden club president, Gloria Westlake, and her members will bake and then serve the delicacies at the tea and they promise a lovely two hours at a nominal cost. Iced tea and lemonade will be served, but for those traditionalists, hot tea with lemon or cream will be poured from china teapots. Contact Gloria at 789-1685 or haythere93@hotmail.com for information or reservations.

Visit butterflies in Mexico

As part of their mission to provide educational opportunities, Norman Bird Sanctuary will embark on a new program of environmental travel.

This fall, individuals may visit the Norman Bird Sanctuary during the Monarch butterfly migration in early October to observe monarchs and participate in tagging the butterflies. Later this winter, individuals are invited to join sanctuary naturalists on a visit to the butter-

fly sanctuaries in the highlands of Mexico where butterflies are found clustered by the thousands.

The 10-day expedition will cost \$2,900, excluding airfare to central Mexico, and will take place Feb. 24 to 29, 2008. NBS is holding 12 places for NBS members - to become a member, join on line.

For more information, contact Tammis Coffin, director of education, www.normanbirdsantuary.org or 846-2577 x 15.

Water

Continued from page 1

Urish also says that, "In terms of aquifer delineation and the fate of the precipitation, Conanicut Island is divided into three components, each with unique characteristics. Each is bounded by the bay shoreline and separated by a significant fault line manifested by a low topographic feature and salt marsh." Again he clarified the document by saying, "In other words, there are three aquifers on Conanicut Island."

The three aquifers were defined by Urish in the document as:

The northern aquifer in the area north of "Great Creek" is generally composed of old sedimentary rocks of predominately shale overlain by glacial till. Residents primarily obtain water from private wells and have individual septic systems effectively recycling water in localized areas.

The southern aquifer in the area south of the slough that originally joined Potter Cove and Dutch Island Harbor is composed of ancient metamorphosed and granite rocks overlain by a very thin glacial till mantle. While some wells might be successful for limited quantities of water, the primary source is the Jamestown public water supply system, with a public sewage collection system.

The southwest aquifer stretches from Beaverhead to Beavertail. This is the region separated by a narrow sand spit from the rest of the island. It has a very thin overburden and is composed of highly metamorphosed old rock, which may provide limited water to private wells. Water is returned in the ground through individual sewage disposal systems.

The document went on to say that in all zones, most of the avail-

able groundwater is obtained from fractures in the rock. Some older wells in the northern aquifer may be shallow, wide diameter dug wells in the till overburden, especially in the low topographic areas where the overburden is thicker and the water table less deep.

Urish said that individual deeper bedrock wells in the northern aquifer can typically produce three- to five- gallons per minute, a sufficient amount for a private household if an excess is not used for lawn watering or other non-essential purposes. The most promising areas for large quantity groundwater development are from major fracture zones that cross the island. Some of the more recently drilled town deep bedrock wells in recognized fracture zones are capable of producing 50 gallons per minute or more. Those wells are only used seasonally, during the summer months if the surface water run-off is not adequate to supply the reservoirs.

Surface water and groundwater are linked together in the hydrologic process. Surface water becomes soil moisture and groundwater as it seeps into the ground. But in other instances groundwater becomes surface water as it seeps out of the ground into low-lying

wetlands. In the summer, much of the water in the ground returns to the atmosphere through the transpiration process in plants and trees, while surface water experiences direct evaporation, as much as three- inches per month.

Urish said that the replacement of groundwater, or the water that we drink, is a never-ending cycle. Probably the only water that has ever left the earth was in a few spaceships. However, we can, and do, contaminate the water that is available with pollutants and by overbuilding, which overtaxes the natural ability of any aquifer to recover and replenish itself.

Urish pointed out that contained in a separate document published by the United States Environmental Protection Agency titled "Sole Source Aquifer," the agency emphasizes that, "The Sole Source Aquifer program is not intended to be used to inhibit or stop development of landfills, publicly-owned treatment works or public facilities financed by non-Federal funds. Furthermore, the SSA program is not linked to other Federal environmental regulatory or remedial programs, except where Federal financial assistance is committed in a designated sole source aquifer area."

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