

Greenwich High School Wreadin Writin n Wreminiscin

Weekly Wreader

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Volunteers Reshape Calf Island

By Hoa Nguyen - Staff Writer – The Greenwich Time
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There's something about a camping tradition Tom Clark began a dozen years ago that to this day draws him back to this island, where he has been devoting hours of volunteer time each month.

He helped install a dock at Calf Island, made repairs on it following a storm, removed trash and is pushing for restoration of the restrooms.

"I like to build things with my hands," said the Greenwich resident and Merrill Lynch first vice president of investments.

Clark, 49, also is vice president of the Calf Island Conservancy, a nonprofit group of

20 volunteers that officially formed about six months ago to help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in its management of Calf Island, an island at the mouth of Byram Harbor.

"There's a lot to be done," Clark said. "We can use more help. We can use more volunteers."

Clark and other volunteers hope more residents will become as passionate as they are about the upkeep of Calf Island, which, after years of legal wrangling, was sold to the federal government in 2003 and became part of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

Years after the sale, some residents still oppose federal ownership and vow to continue their litigation. But Clark, who was sorry to see the former owner, the YMCA of Greenwich, sell the island, isn't one of those residents. He and others in the conservancy would rather put their energy toward the upkeep of the island.

They formed the conservancy and modeled it after "friends" groups, which affiliate with a refuge property and voluntarily assist federal wildlife officials with its upkeep.

"Personally, I don't care who wins or loses the litigation," said David DeWahl Jr., 40, the treasurer of the Calf Island Conservancy. "We're just interested in the island; we're not interested in the politics of it."

Among the tasks that need doing is trash removal, which has inspired the conservancy to organize several weekend cleanup sessions.

In addition to items that wash ashore or were left as litter, there are larger items, such as discarded piles of plywood, which volunteers cut into smaller pieces with chainsaws, said Cindy Coughenour, assistant refuge manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The conservancy also is painting the island's restrooms, and installing new fixtures, Coughenour said.

Volunteers and refuge officials will install signs detailing the island's history as a privately owned island that became home to a YMCA camp, its geology and the wildlife that call it home.

For now, conservancy members said their most important accomplishment is the installation of floating docks and a ramp that allows a boat to tie up and for its occupants to walk ashore.

In the past boaters could only anchor offshore or use the docks to drop off and pick up passengers, as is the case with Island Beach and other islands off Greenwich shores. Providing a public dock and ramp encourages the public to visit, Clark said

At the same time, the island is a refuge for wildlife. Environmentally sensitive areas such as the south side are closed to people to better attract colonies of egrets and herons.

"It's good to have the habitat available to them," Coughenour said.

Visitors who want to camp overnight must first apply for permits, which require that they have the necessary insurance. It also requires them to use portable toilets until the restrooms are available.

So far, one group headed by Clark has camped overnight. Another group is seeking a permit and a third group, SoundWaters, an environmental educational organization, will likely not camp there until next summer, Coughenour said. Because the island is a refuge, groups who want to camp overnight also must show that setting up camp on what seems like a remote island -- yet only a short boat ride from Greenwich -- is appealing, Clark said.

"It's a magical and enchanting place," he said. "One of the attractions to it is its pretty much in its natural state."

Conservancy members also are exploring the possibility of having the town drop off and pick up passengers at Calf Island using its ferries.

Fred Walters, marine superintendent for the Greenwich parks and recreation department, said providing such a service would be troublesome considering the town's insurance doesn't cover public ferries to Calf Island and the island and its docks are not town-maintained. In the past, when the YMCA owned Calf Island, the town had two five-year contracts to ferry children to the camp on the island, but even then there were concerns about whether the docks were being well maintained, Walters said.

"There really would be a lot of questions," he said.

New Kid on the Block



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To answer your question, I am the CEO of the 32 AOS, which means that I am the facilities and operations specialist for the 32nd Air Operations Squadron, we control all U.S. Air Force and Allied Air Assets from the East coast of the US, to the west coast of Asia, and pole to pole, that includes all planes, Missiles, satellites, etc. We have as part of our group the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps; we select the targets they go after and determine what they will use to do it, providing that it goes into the air. When the president or a U.S. government official flies this direction we are responsible for his safety in the air and partly

his safety on the ground when he gets where he is going, we protected the Americans at the Olympics in Greece, etc.

Evelin and I are getting to sightsee a lot also, our home is just 6-8 hours drive from Paris and we have taken advantage of this central location by going to Switzerland 5 times, England 4, France 5-6, the Netherlands and Belgium 6-8, Austria 3 and all over Germany, so we are getting to see a lot that you would not see on a vacation trip.

We have 21 months left to my tour over here then its back to Utah and the U.S. There is plenty of secrecy, but everything I've written herein is printable. We are one of five Falconer Weapon Systems in the Air Force, and the only certified system in the world, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force as well as the Secretary of Defense have named the Falconer system, the nations most valuable asset in the war on terrorism

What is a Falconer AOC?

"Falconer" AOCs are those with the mission of planning, executing, and assessing the full range of air and space combat operations and are the primary C2 centers for a designated JFACC. (As for its naming convention, while a "falconer" directs his bird of prey, the "Falconer" AOC directs air and space operations for a particular theater.)

Falconer AOCs support geographic combatant commanders and are capable of planning and directing a full spectrum of air and space operations from strategy to execution. When supporting combat operations, Falconer AOCs typically utilize a persistent 72-hour cycle to plan and execute air and space operations

Falconer AOCs include core divisions of Combat Operations, Combat Plans, Strategy, ISR, and Air Mobility and incorporate joint liaison elements.

Primary strategy, planning, and execution products of the Falconer AOC are the Air Operations Directive (AOD, i.e. guidance from the JFACC), Joint



Integrated Prioritized Target List, a synchronized Master Air Attack Plan (MAAP), and Air Tasking Order (ATO, i.e. the primary tasking and execution order for air and space assets). On the other hand, "Functional" AOCs have tailored capabilities, may be global versus regional, and may provide specialized services and products for Falconer AOCs.

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The Party Continues

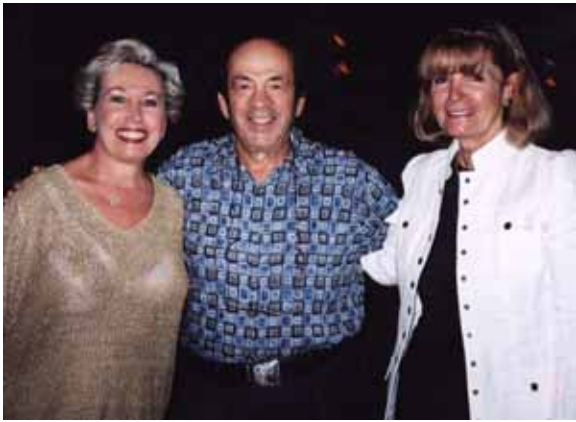




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