

## **CRWC Events Sub-Committee Board Report Through May 4, 2012**

**Venue-** The Wilder Center, located in Wilder VT, has been chosen for the event location. The former church underwent a full renovation in 2010. [www.wildercenter.com](http://www.wildercenter.com)

**Speaker-** Al Braden (photographer) will be our main attraction and will take us on a photographic tour of the CT River from headwaters to the sea. Al will display some beautiful photos via a 20-30 minute slide show presentation and highlight places that may be new river treasures to us. The general theme will be “It’s in everyone’s back yard” highlighting both conservation & recreation of the river. He has also graciously offered 8-10 printed photographs for the silent auction. [www.albradenphoto.com/connecticut\\_river\\_book.php](http://www.albradenphoto.com/connecticut_river_book.php)

**Guest Speaker-** VT Governor Shumlin will be our “bonus” speaker since it is possible that he may not be able to attend or not sure what time due to having a complex schedule. If/when he shows, he will be given floor space to grace us with a few words and meet and greet after wards.

**Caterer-** Christine is working hard to convince VT Culinary Institute to host our event. However, Ron has worked very hard at gaining us some donations for light refreshment fair (ice cream, cheese, coffee). We are still working on this area and need to put our thoughts together on whether this is enough or if we should look for more donations/ budget for additional food. Each guest will also receive a gift bag with Green Mtn coffe & King Arthur pancake mix.

**Question on admission-** After careful consideration to Mark’s input and looking at past meeting rates, we agreed that the fee should be waived and instead strongly encourage a suggested donation. Part of the donation would include being eligible to win a gift basket with names drawn at the end of the meeting.

**Additional local activities-** There will be a kayak and canoe tour for folks that are interested prior to the meeting, launching from the nearby Killowatt Park North. Canoes will be available to rent for \$15 from Wilderness Trails, a local outfitter, and Ron will lead the paddle.

**Table Hosts/increasing new memberships and donors-** We discussed having table hosts made up of current board members to act as a personal connection and advocate at each table to talk with new members about the amazing work of the CRWC is doing. In addition, we discussed potentially bringing a challenge to the rest of the board in that each board member is encouraged to bring at least two guests to the meeting as potential new members.

**Silent Auction-** Ron has done a great job of working his local connections to receive wonderful donations for a silent auction. To date, we have secured the following auction items:

- Men’s & women’s shak shirts from IBEX
- Granite State Fly Fishing – ½ day guided fishing trip on the Sugar River, NH
- Al Karg Guide Service – ½ day guided fishing trip on the upper CT River
- River Excitement, Hartland VT – 5-6 hr scenic float for 2 down the CT River for eagle/bird watching, includes a gourmet lunch
- Guided paddle with John Sinton, co-author of the Connecticut River Boating Guide
- Lightly used collapsible kayak, donated to CRWC
- 8-10 Al Braden CT River printed photographs
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**Save the Date/Invitations-** Save the date postcards were sent in late April to approximately 1,400 recipients. All board members are encouraged to take a stack of postcards with them to distribute as they see fit. Invitations are currently being designed and will be sent, with RSVPs, in mid-June, six weeks prior to the event. RSVP deadline July 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Sponsors-** We are still working on obtaining sponsors for the annual meeting. Please alert Caprice or Chelsea if you have ideas.

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### **Notes from Major Donors Subcommittee Meeting March 22, 2012**

Fundraising targets:

The Source to Sea Cleanup goal is ~\$50,000 and the annual donation of members is ~\$180,000 and we should target for higher funding. Chelsea distributed a copy of the 2012 Source to Sea Cleanup sponsor benefits package.

1. The subcommittee recommends that a CRWC membership should include a card to identify the member.
2. The subcommittee recommends that levels of donors should be identified in annual reports at \$100, 250, 500, 1000, etc., with an effort to encourage members to raise the donation to a higher level. Names for each defined level will be needed. Astrid recommended the name of *Watershed Steward* for the highest level.
3. The focus of the Major Donors Subcommittee will be individual and corporate support. Foundation and project grant support remains a staff function with the committee helping as may be necessary such as the request to support the CT MDC's outreach need for a 2012 referendum for continued project financing.
4. Chelsea will provide the "gift range calculator" to committee members with names of major donors that may fit into the funding levels of the pyramid. Members of the committee will try to identify additional target donors to fill in the various levels.
5. Chelsea will prepare a single sheet to describe the CRWC, its mission, programs and benefits of membership to the individual or business and the benefit to the Connecticut River.
6. The committee will recommend a recognition system to offer to major donors based on the donor's level of funding and desire for public acknowledgment. A gift for the highest levels should be considered.
7. Bob will continue to pursue meetings with environmental consulting firms for support of CRWC related to the various clean water projects, nitrogen and CSO projects going on in the watershed.

8. All committee members will identify individual members of corporations, insurance and law firms to pursue membership and donations using the benefits document to aid in their requests. Will investigate pursuing a future Board member from a corporation which targets conservation funding.
9. The Subcommittee recommends that CRWC holds an annual “meet the River Steward” event for each steward to get more exposure and use for a small fund raising event.
10. The Subcommittee recommends that CRWC holds an annual dinner for the highest donors (“*Watershed Stewards*”).
11. Chelsea to oversee CRWC staff in development of a cruise in coordination with the CT River Museum.
12. The Subcommittee will look for ways to support Jacqueline’s summer solstice paddle with the museum.
13. The Subcommittee discussed board members calling donors who made a contribution to thank them. Astrid made the point that while some board members may not be comfortable calling and asking members for money, most would probably be willing to call donors to thank them for a gift.
14. Astrid suggested gathering donor information and including that information in our member database so that CRWC can issue alerts by interest area. Bob shared with the group that another organization he knows asks its donors: would you like a portion of your donation to go toward [categories] which gives the organization valuable information. The only caution he gave is to be careful in the wording so that it does not become a restricted gift.
15. Raul said that he would be willing to include personalized notes to individuals he knows on the mailing list when CRWC materials are mailed. Other board members may also be willing to do this.
16. The Subcommittee will make the appropriate recommendations to the full committee and subsequently to the full Board.
17. Make recommendations to the Events Subcommittee for a speaker for the annual meeting.