



STAR ISLAND NEWSLETTER

Star Island Corporation • Spring 2009 • Volume XXXV, Issue 2

Our mission since 1916 is to hold and administer Star Island and other properties we acquire for religious, educational and kindred purposes.

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Edited & produced by Priscilla Hodgkins and Justina Maji with invaluable assistance from all contributors. Thank you!

Thomas Loughton Returns on Seacoast Day

On Sunday, June 7, 150 invited representatives of business, education, and state and local agencies in the Seacoast Region will spend the day on Star Island. The day also marks the return of the Isles of Shoals Steamship Company to transportation of visitors to and from Star Island. Seacoast Day guests will board the Thomas Loughton at Portsmouth Harbor as it makes its inaugural trip to Star Island after its four year absence.

The Loughton will offer morning and afternoon service to the island on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays from June 13 through mid-September. The boat will leave Portsmouth Harbor at 10 a.m., arrive at Star at 11 a.m. with the opportunity for a four hour stopover. It will make a second trip that departs Portsmouth at 1:15 and leaves the island at 3 p.m. A 45-minute walkabout will be offered. See the steamship company's web site islesofshoals.com for more information. *

Economic Stimulus Plan

Thanks to the generosity of a long-time Shoaler family, we are able to offer two discount options for anyone interested in attending a conference this summer. There is still time to make a reservation to take advantage of one of the discounts.

Room and Board Discount Option

We want you and others in your conference to come to Star this summer. We want those who are struggling with finances to take advantage of this option. We fervently hope this will make it possible for many to come who would not otherwise have been able to come.

Discounts for room and board from 10 to 25 percent are available to those facing tough economic times. The process is simple: fill out a Discount

Coupon on page 7 and send it to SIC Registrar Kristin Laverty, who will then make a confidential adjustment to your bill before you arrive on the Island this summer. If times improve for you and your family, you can always add the discount back in!

10/10 Bring a Friend Option

We know from years of experience that old Shoalers are the best recruiters. You say to a friend, or an interested church person, to quote Robert Frost: "I'm going. You come, too!" This is the summer to bring a new friend or an old one who has been missing for a while.

If you recruit a newcomer, or an old Shoaler who has not been to Star for a while, you will get a

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From The President

We had an excellent Annual Meeting last month in Worcester, MA. The day was summer-like but the interior of the beautiful Unitarian Universalist church was cool and adorned with daffodils imported from Star Island the day before. We managed our reports, recognitions, and business in good spirits and good time. There were several important announcements about which you have already received detailed explanations – the Stimulus Plan and the 2011 Calendar. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you can read about another special happening: the presentation of the first Bringer of Light Award.

Three additional follow-up notes from Annual Meeting. First, if you are a Corporation member and couldn't join us, I hope you can next year. Make a weekend of it. Tony Thomas joined us from California!

Second, if you're not a member, why not become one? We need all those who are committed to our special

Island to sign on as members. There are a couple of steps to doing so which are outlined on the website – and the Membership Committee is working on ways to simplify the process.

My third comment is about volunteering. The Council of Conferences regularly meets the morning of the Annual Meeting to focus on special concerns of conferences. I attended one of its workshops on Volunteering on Star and was amazed by the upset and frustration of some of the folks there. A few expressed the feeling that it was only a special clique



of folks who were allowed to come out to help open up on spring weekends. I'm very sorry we haven't been clearer on that.

We routinely extend an open invitation to volunteers for the half dozen or so weekends we run work parties. The details of how to sign up (it does take some work) are on line for all to see and use. And most folks who sign up get to come out and work (hard). There are some limitations – in the number we can house and feed at one time on the Island and in relation to jobs. We do need some skills and abilities more than others. But we

are equal opportunity users of volunteers. Get the info from our website, figure out how you can help and save a weekend or two next May on your calendar. There will be plenty to do.

Have you recruited someone to come to Star this summer? It's not too late

—Brad Greeley
Star Island Corporation

The Island Mind

In June 2007, I came back to Star Island as a volunteer to help Vicky Hardy with Seacoast Day events. My last visit had been 1957 when Rev. Arthur Greeley, minister of the Congregational Church in New Castle, brought our Pilgrim Fellowship group to the Island for the day. I quickly learned that all introductions to people on their way to Star Island begins with how long they have been coming to the Island. In a circle of Old Shoalers, a friendly contest evolved: Who had come at the earliest age? The winner was a woman who arrived "in utero." No one offered an earlier claim though there was at least one Shoaler who had a definite twinkle in her eye.

This way of identifying one's status or generation was an important lesson for

me as I have not attended a conference. I did have some sort of "island mind," having grown up in New Castle, an island of just under a square mile. All my summers were spent on the town beach from which you could see the Isles of Shoals seemingly floating above the horizon. Those islands and my island attracted summer people for whom I often felt sorry when I wasn't feeling superior; they could only visit and knew so little about anything really important – a rather dreadful side of my juvenile island mind since I was, in turn, an outsider, a newcomer to the natives, as my family did not have "five in the ground" – and they meant generations, not bodies. I returned to New Castle in 2007 after an absence of 40 years. I came back to the place that

(Continued on page 7)

Give Away Your IRA!

Estate gifts of traditional IRA's made outright to Star Island are free of both estate and income taxes. There is an unlimited federal estate tax charitable deduction: every gift from an estate to charity reduces the size of the estate and the potential income and estate tax. Traditional IRA assets left to the owner's estate or to heirs are subject to both income and estate taxes. Left through a will, an IRA can result in less than 30% for heirs. Heirs are better off if the IRA is used as a charitable gift with other assets left to them. If you make Star Island a direct beneficiary of your retirement plan, a portion or in its entirety, you are eligible for membership in The Fred and Ginny McGill Society. Please let us know so we can thank you properly. Visit starisland.org/donating/mcgill for more information.

Passages

Betty Blanchard, long-time All Star II conferee, and mother of Shoaler Cathy Cordes, died on Monday April 6th. Star Island was an important part of her life.

Helen Burgess, long-time Arts Conference conferee with her late husband Al, died March 5 at age 92. They also attended RE, IRA, and LOAS I Conferences a number of times. She is survived by daughter Joyce and her husband Jim Pickel, grandson Jeff and his wife Amy, granddaughter Laura and her husband Kenny Drew, and 5 great-grandchildren, all LOAS I conferees. She also leaves son Neil and Sue Burgess and grandsons Adam and Mark Burgess.

Edith Witherell Gimpel died February 28, 2009. She attended conferences as a youth and later was a regular at the Natural History Conference. She is survived by her son William F. Gimpel, Jr., her daughter Betsy Gimpel, eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

John Hickey and **Robin Tartaglia** were married on April 25th. Both are Shoalers

From The Director of Development

No island is an island unto itself

Since February my time has been filled with visits to the homes and offices of the Star Island family for the purpose of conducting interviews on the feasibility of a capital campaign. It shouldn't have surprised me that I would be warmly and enthusiastically received. Neither should it have surprised me that when asked "what pleases you most about your experiences on Star Island," those interviewed responded "the people I meet there" and have known for 10, 20, 30 years or more. "There I have found my closest and life-long friends." "It is my spirit's home." The Island, I'm learning, is woven into the fabric of the lives of Pels, of conferees, of all who have rocked on the front porch, dipped in chilly Gosport, or processed in

from the Lifespan Religious Education Conference, and John is a member of the Star Island Board of Directors.

Andrew James Martini was born May 6, 2008 to Jodi (Prochaska) Martini and Mark Martini. Grandparents are Janice and James Prochaska.

Burren Bridgeman Wood was born to All Star I Shoaler and former pelican John David Wood and Megan Brennan Wood on December 29, 2008.

Lucia Gaia Green-Weiskel, and **Isaac Littlejohn Eddy** were married August 23rd, 2008 at the Federated Church in Charlemont, Massachusetts. The couple met on Star when Lucia was a Kitchie and Isaac was on Maintenance in the summer of 1998. They reunited while both were living in London in 2006. Among the former pelicans who participated in the service were Candy DeRosia, Heidi Weiskel, Aaron Boynton, Mark Fowler, Mikael Kennedy and Nathan Eddy.

Toby Wood, All Star II Shoaler, was lost

at sea on February 27 while kayaking at the Isles of Shoals. He is survived by his wife Lisa Eberhart and their sons David and Brooks. Toby and his extended family have attended All Star II for the past 50 years. He embraced Star with his heart and soul. 🌹

We Apologize...

In our listing of our over 2000 supporters in the last issue of the newsletter, we missed a few fine folks:

Annual Fund Summerhouse Circle:
Brad and Catherine Greeley

2008 Pel Reunion Annual Fund Reps
Buffy Bierman-Carson and Joanne Bulley

And a special thanks to the volunteers of the ISA, UU and SIUCC who support Star, and to the conferences who held auctions on the island that raised over \$17,000.

silence to Chapel. As I ready myself to chronicle the conversations for the study report, Star Island themes are beginning to emerge and among them one that conjures a revision of the famous John Donne quote: No island is an island unto itself. Donne's point is that all humanity is interconnected. On Star Island, all of its humanity is connected. What happens to one affects all. What happens to Star Island affects all.

This is an extraordinary time in the life of this tiny island. We are blessed to be a part of something so special and at a time when taking action will really matter. In 1916 an intrepid group of Shoalers determined that they would secure Star Island for themselves and for future generations. They stepped boldly forward and

raised the funds to purchase the Island and structures, formed a non-profit corporation, and established this hotel and conference center. Today, almost 100 years later, 21st Century Shoalers have an opportunity to be just as bold in preserving and enhancing this gift that was handed down in 1916. It is possible to keep the Star shining for years to come to give this gift to future generations so that they may experience on Star an environment that frees all who come to renew spiritually, explore matters of consequence, and gain knowledge about the world as it might ideally be. And so may it be.

—Angela Matthews
Director of Development

Focus on the Conferences

Conference on the Arts

Saturday, June 13 to Saturday, June 20

Arts offers a variety of workshops including poetry, visual arts, photography, dancing and theater. throughout the week designated for beginning, intermediate, and advanced artists. Concerts and other entertainment are also enjoyed. Visit stararts.org for details.

Young Adults Conference

Saturday, June 13 to Saturday, June 17 or 20

YAC welcomes those in their first decades of adult independence when many of us find ourselves on new paths in life. As a conferee driven experience, we invite you to come together to share ideas, hobbies, and advice while also taking the time to enjoy the island on a personal level. Visit bigyacattack.com for details.

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists

Saturday, June 20 to Saturday, June 27

YRUU fosters spiritual growth and creative expression in a supportive community of empowered youth. This is an annual conference for youth ages 15-22 from widespread congregations. This youth-run, week-long conference holds workshops ranging from art to men's and women's groups to island traditions such as candlelight worship services, bonfire, Banquet night and more. Visit yruustar.org for details.

Lifespan Religious Education

Saturday, July 11 to Saturday, July 18

We offer programming to meet both the educational and personal needs of those new to and experienced in faith development for all ages. While primarily a "working" conference, this week provides ample opportunities for personal rejuvenation: a chance to model and experience the joys of religious community, time to relax in solitude, and also time to share the company of new and old friends and colleagues. Visit starweek.com for details.

Charles Darwin: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Saturday, July 25 to Saturday, August 1

2009 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin and the 150th anniversary of the *Origin of Species*. In this conference, Michael Ruse and Joe Travis will explore the lasting significance of the evolutionary ideas of Charles Darwin. Visit starisland.org/darwin for details.

Star Gathering I Family: A UCC Conference

Sunday August 2 to Sunday, August 8

Come and explore radical welcome and how it informs our lives. Explore the teachings of Jesus that inspire us to move beyond being strangers to each other and ourselves, and to move within and beyond our immediate families. Visit siucc.com for details.

Star Gathering I Youth: A UCC Conference

Sunday August 2 to Sunday, August 8

Close friendships are formed here, spiritual lives are strengthened, and we learn about God, ourselves, and the people we want to become. The conference is open to all youth who will be entering 9th grade as of 2009 through 2009 high school graduates. Visit siucc.com for details.

Star Gathering II Family: A UCC Conference

Sunday, August 8 to Saturday, August 15

Five intriguing questions from biblical stories that give opportunity to indentify key questions in our own lives will be addressed by Rev. Dr. Edward Horstman. Tom McCabe, theme speaker, will enable us to share and our stories with family and friends through journaling and other activities. Visit siucc.com for details.

Star Gathering II Youth: A UCC Conference

Sunday, August 8 to Saturday, August 15

We will explore "Our Lives at the Cross Roads: Finding Our Bliss in a World That Still Hasn't Figured Out We Exist!" The conference is open to all youth who will be entering 9th grade as of 2009 through 2009 high school graduates. Visit siucc.com for details.

Midweek I Retreat

Monday, September 7 to Friday, September 11

Step back in time for five wonderful days to a slower pace for rest, relaxation, and renewal. All adults are welcome: singles, couples, families and groups. An ordained minister gives the morning chapel. Evening chapels are led by members of the conference. Visit starisland.org/conferences/2009/midweek1 for details.

Star Women

September 16 or 18 to September 20

Star Women is a casual retreat with a mind/body/spirit focus. We create community through conversation - sharing stories, experience and wisdom in workshops, while dining, or pulling up a rocker on the front porch. Visit starisland.org/conferences/2009/starwomen for details.

Midweek II Retreat

Monday, September 14 to Friday, September 18

Ours is an adult conference for people who want to experience Star without the bells and whistles. The only planned activities are morning and evening chapel services. Our conference is ideal for a small gathering of friends or even a meditation group. Visit starisland.org/conferences/2009/midweek1 for details.

Excerpts from Vicky Hardy's 2009 Annual Meeting Remarks

I would like to briefly review the highlights of the year. First, our mission: To own and maintain Star Island and such other property as the Corporation may hold or acquire, as a center for religious and educational, and kindred purposes consistent with the principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. It is a clear statement that is very helpful to the staff as we contemplate our future and plan for the next 100 years.

Second, our vision: The Star Island Corporation's vision is to create on Star an environment that frees all who come to renew spiritually, explore matters of consequence, and gain knowledge about the world as it might ideally be. Wow! What a wonderful vision, and what's even better, you do this! In my experience, I had never seen such an inspiring array of conference programs and speakers.

Our goals for the year:

In *Finance*, in spite of many challenges, our operating budget ended in the black and we are determined to do this again in

And our Strategic Facilities Planning Committee that completed a top-to-bottom review of every single building on the island. We now have the tool to do our five year facilities plan for the capital campaign.

In *Governance*, I worked with the Board and the many committee members to truly understand and learn about the Star Island model; we put into writing a number of working policies, and established a new operating committee, Conference Services, which will begin in 2009.

In *Human Resources*, we had quite a year: hiring new and replacement year-round staff, reorganizing the facility operations staff, and generally tightening up the organization with the result that we now have only 7 fulltime and 3 part time year round staff. We also made major progress in planning for a better residential life on the island.

In *Community*, we made major progress on several fronts with our first ever Seacoast Day Open House for the region. We also successfully concluded negotiations with the Isles of Shoals Steamship Company to return the M/V Thomas Loughton to bringing day visitors to the island three days a week. And in January, we moved to city-owned offices, thereby saving us more than \$8,000 a year in base costs.

In 2014, we will celebrate these 400 years on Star Island...you are living history and... you ARE the history of our spirit home.

Thank you for the privilege of working for you,

—Vicky Hardy
Chief Executive Officer

Vicky says . . .

We hold Seacoast Day to get the word out to our neighbors in the area that Star Island is a destination for day and overnight visitors as well as the site for conferences each summer. We want to make sure our associates in hospitality and tourism who brag about what the seacoast has to offer include Star Island.

We are all excited about ISSCO's return. Most of all it is a wonderful sign that Star Island is open – we want everyone to know how easy it is to come visit us. For the people attending conferences on the island it means their guests can take the Thomas Loughton out of Portsmouth and if someone attending a conference misses their boat on Saturday morning, they can catch a ride on the Loughton on Sunday.

2009, which will really be a challenge.

In *Facilities*, the most important event was opening on time, and I want to recognize Keith Noyes, our Director of Operations and Maintenance, who was the key player in making this happen!

Other Star Island Conferences with Current Availability

All Star I Family Conference	June 27 to July 4
Life on a Star Family Conference I	August 15 to August 22
Life on a Star Family Conference II	August 22 to August 29
Pelican Reunion	September 5 to September 9
Conference of the Laity	September 5 to September 9
Natural History Conference	June 20 to June 27
Isles of Shoals Historical Research Association	June 20 to June 24
Meditation Retreat	July 11 to July 18
Star Digital Photography Workshop	August 8 to August 15
Granite State College: Courses on Star Island	September 7 to September 10
Elderhostel	August 29 to September 4
Writers in the Round	September 10 to September 13
Isles of Shoals Historical Research Association	September 11 to September 13
Innerpeach Healing Arts: Living in Beauty	September 11 to September 13
Writelines	August 31 to September 4
Dover Yoga and Pilates Retreat	September 17 to September 20
Star Island Photography Retreat	September 17 to September 20
Star Guilford Choir Conference	September 18 to September 20
Star Hampshire Traditional Music and Dance	September 18 to September 20

Personal Retreats are available for any length June 13 - September 20

Bringer of Light Award

On April 25 at the Corporation's Annual Meeting, Irene Bush was presented with the first Bringer of Light Award for her many years of service to Star Island Corporation. The Board created this special award to call attention to those who have offered conspicuously long and significant service to SIC and the Isles of Shoals. President of the Board of Trustees Brad Greeley and Board Member Sharon Kennedy presented Irene with an

engraved candle lantern and a special photograph by Bruce Parsons of Grammy's, the children's barn built in memory of her mother-in-law, Louise Bush. Irene has served Star Island many years as former board member and president and most recently as the volunteer interim Director of Development until Angela Matthews joined the staff. ✱



Confessions of a Serial Volunteer-Star Island-Style

It always starts in a relatively innocent way. "Sure, I can do that—no problem."

And we're down the slippery slope quicker than R-A-T-S! Of course, it doesn't hurt that you kind of like the place. And sometimes the people. That the needs are stunningly obvious. Best of all, there's the instant gratification of having made a tangible difference. Pretty heady stuff.

The gateway can vary. Maybe you are given an honoraria sort of job as a new shoaler and know that you can contribute more. Then you do. Next you find out that it is possible to attend more than one conference. WOW! Perhaps conference leadership is a path that opens. Or briefly participating on a Corporation committee. Volunteers are needed for Open Up? During the conference season, too? Before you know it, you're a conference Registrar and/or Treasurer, gardening Memorial Day weekend, on the Boynton Paint Crew, a Council of Conferences representative, Auction Diva times two, an Annual Fund Agent, on the Gift Shop Committee, doing a Gift Shop stint...and writing this piece. Yep, I volunteered!

There is no mystery or well-kept secret here. Star Island is the ultimate year-round volunteer opportunity. All you have to do is ask.

Want the inside scoop? Get involved with the Star Island Corporation through membership, committee participation, at the Board level, or helping in the office.

Something more religion or ideologically based? SIUCC and ISA will welcome you!

Feel more at home in your conference community? See what you can do.

Island focused? Step right up: Contact Sonya Merritt, SIC HR Director (smerritt@starisland.org or 603.430.6272). It's just that easy.

C.E.V. Jenkins volunteers that she is only marginally as disturbed as she appears. . . .

-By C.E.V. Jenkins

Volunteering Frequently Asked Questions

- ♦ **Is there any cost to volunteer?** Parking, roundtrip boat, and room & board costs are covered.
- ♦ **What kind of skills do you need?** It depends on the projects. Some are geared to willing, able-bodied folk, others require specific training.
- ♦ **How do I find out about scheduled projects?** Contact Sonya Merritt. (smerritt@starisland.org or 603.430.6272)
- ♦ **What if I have a particular skill or want to run an independent project?** It can come down to priorities, but we certainly want to talk to you. Sonya can get you connected to the right people.
- ♦ **Do I have to bring my own tools/equipment?** Most island-scheduled projects will have everything you need. If you are running an independent project, it may be necessary to bring the tools and supplies—you'll coordinate that ahead of time.
- ♦ **Is there a limit to the number of times that I can volunteer?** No, but we'd like to give everyone an opportunity.
- ♦ **Can anyone come at any time?** We only schedule the number of people we need for each volunteer session.
- ♦ **Is it true that you can volunteer during the conference season?** Yes—we do have projects and opportunities running throughout the conference season.
- ♦ **What about close up?** Again, it depends on the scheduled projects.

Island Mind (Continued from page 3) helped to explain who I was, the landscape of my dreams, the island where I first fell in love. Each person who returns to Star Island – and it seems everyone does come back – reawakens that part of themselves they discovered there. It’s a highly personal and at the same time universal feeling among Shoalers. Combine that with the island mind-set and you have a lively combination of personal attachment and passionate allegiance to an ever-changing experience.

Shoalers share the long and dynamic history of Star Island and inherit the gutsy spirit of those who came before and fought hard through the years to maintain Star Island when finances were in a critical state or when storms took big bites out of the pier. Buffy Carson and Joanne Bulley at the Pel Reunion in 2008 brought important events of island history to life by reenacting Mrs. Carl Wetherall’s 1921

portrayal of Mother Hubbard and her dog, when the island had to pay an enormous mortgage. Buffy and Joanne also brought the Gratuity Box from Vaughn Cottage and reenacted the Gosport Harbor Fire Department Bucket Brigade by passing buckets through the dining room at lunch. Their activities raised \$9,300 in one weekend.

Whether your first time on the island was in a conference with Norman Cousins in 1954 or Margaret Mead in 1969 or your first visit will be the summer Ruse and Travis and Day come to talk about Darwin, you can be sure your first time will not be your last. I am happy that I’ve returned and look forward to gathering up a slew of memories and pinning my own sense of what’s important about Star Island to the map in my mind.

-Priscilla Hodgkins
Outreach Coordinator

Economic Stimulus (Continued from page 1) 10% discount - and so will your friend (on a matching 1 to 1 basis)!

We need vibrant conferences filled with conferees on the Island. Shoalers are the best folks to make the extra effort to make this happen - and we want to thank you for doing it. (If you won’t take the 10%, we’ll give you a free massage!) In fact, if you bring more than one person, for example, you recruit ten new people, you will be showered with a free lobster dinner, coupons for free massages, and the ultimate reward, a gift certificate to the Snack Bar!

Discount and 10/10 Bring a Friend coupons are below and available on starisland.org or call the office (603-430-6272) and we’ll send one to you. *



STAR ISLAND “Economic Stimulus” Discount

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
EMAIL: _____
PHONE: _____
CONFERENCE: _____

Please adjust my bill:

- 5%
 10%
 15%
 20%
 25%

SIGNATURE: _____

Please mail to:
Kristin Laverty, Island Registrar
Star Island Corporation
Morton-Benedict House
30 Middle Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801



STAR ISLAND 10/10 Bring a Friend!

YOUR NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
EMAIL: _____
PHONE: _____
CONFERENCE: _____

Mail this form to:
Kristin Laverty, Island Registrar
Star Island Corporation
Morton-Benedict House
30 Middle Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Include the names of any new Shoaler families you’ve recruited below (include additional sheets if necessary):

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
EMAIL: _____
PHONE: _____
CONFERENCE: _____

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
EMAIL: _____
PHONE: _____
CONFERENCE: _____



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