



THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION N·E·W·S·L·E·T·T·E·R

PUBLISHED BY THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2017~2018

CRSA 42ND Annual Dinner & Auction!

Saturday, January 13, 2018

USS Chowder Pot IV —165 Brainard Road, Hartford CT

Live and Silent Auction, Bucket Raffles and more!



Grand Cascapedia – 46” Male Salmon – Created by Guest Artist Gene Bahr – Master Fish Carver.

Social hour, live music, auction previews: 5-6 pm

Live Auction begins at 6:00 pm, followed by dinner at \$50 a person

Check our website for a reservation form and auction preview: ctriversalsalmon.org

The Board of Director's Mystery Wine Auction is back! Buy a mystery bottle of wine – it just may be worth \$100! New this year! All young conservationists and anglers 16 and under will receive a CRSA fly box with six salmon flies!

*** 2018 President's Award: The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association, honoring 50 years of dedicated stewardship of the sport of fly fishing and conservation.**

[See pages 6 and 7 for pictures and donors from 2017.]

2018 Guest Sporting Artist Gene Bahr



The CRSA's guest sporting artist for 2018 is Gene Bahr. Gene is a master carver who recreates angling experiences through his lifelike creations. "From just a photo and a few measurements," he said, "I know I can recreate the fish for the angler. And the fish can go free."

Born in Alabama, Gene came to Maine during his time in the Navy. He began mounting fish using taxidermy in 1976, and started carving fish in 1984. By 2000 Gene had switched entirely to "Catch and Release" wood carving. His extensive collection of fish profiles, measurements and photographs and his study of fish anatomy and color, has enabled him to produce long lasting and valuable representations of living fish.

In addition to being a highly regarded artist, Gene is a musician, song writer and log cabin builder. He lives in his cabin in Maine. Weather permitting, Gene hopes to be our guest at the 2018 dinner. His creations can be seen at: <http://www.genebahr.com/>

Special Sessions on Hatchery Research, International Year of the Salmon Highlight NASCO's 2017 Meeting in Sweden

By Stephen Gephard, US Commissioner to NASCO

The annual meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) was held from June 6-9 in Varberg Sweden, attended by most of the North Atlantic nations that have wild salmon stocks.

Greenland reported a 2016 fishery harvest of twenty-seven tons, lower than the already reduced quota of thirty-two tons of fish. The US position remains that any

harvesting of endangered salmon stocks in the United States should be minimized, and the reduced catch total was viewed as a step in the right direction. However, the Greenland catch quota for 2017 remains forty-five tons.

The conference held two special sessions. The first examined the risks to wild salmon populations of hatchery salmon stockings. Views were mixed, but many of those attending felt that many of the hatcheries were unnecessary and had a negative effect on wild salmon stocks. A cited exception was the two conservation hatcheries in Maine which support the local salmon recovery programs. The second session addressed the upcoming Year of the Salmon in 2019, which will include both Atlantic and Pacific salmon and involve events and meetings in several countries.

The US delegation was led by Commissioner Daniel Morris, the deputy regional administrator of the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office. Eight National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), State department and Marine Aquaculture Association members provided invaluable support. I served as a US commissioner and chaired the North Atlantic Commission.

Departures and arrivals: This year's meeting was the last for NASCO secretary Dr. Peter Hutchinson, who had been with NASCO since its inception. Dr. Emma Hatfield has succeeded Dr. Hutchinson. We look forward to working with Emma, but Peter will be greatly missed. Steinar Hermansen of Norway completed his term as president. This was the last NASCO meet-



US Commissioner to NASCO Steve Gephard for Daniel Morris, who has retired from NOAA. Dan effectively led US Atlantic salmon conservation, and will also be missed.

The 2018 annual meeting of NASCO will be held in Portland, Maine, from June 12-16, providing an opportunity for more US conservationists to attend. This challenging meeting will tackle new regulations for the Greenland fishery, advanced plans for the International Year of the Salmon, and working with the new appointees. However, NASCO retains great continuity, and I am confident we can handle the coming challenges. ♦



Atlantic Salmon returning to the Farmington River at Rainbow Dam on June 13, 2017 [Photo: Tim Wildman / DEEP]

THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION

The Connecticut River Salmon Association (CRSA) is a nonstock, nonprofit Connecticut corporation. Our mission is to support Atlantic salmon in the Connecticut River basin.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Edward Ahern, Fairfield, CT
Rudolph Besier, Old Lyme, CT
James Carroll, West Hartford, CT
Deborah Costolnick, East Hartford, CT
Gerald A. Feinberg, North Haven, CT
James T. Glista, Enfield, CT
Harold V. Gorman, Farmington, CT
Robert A. Jones, South Windsor, CT
Elizabeth Kendall, North Granby, CT
Roger Plourde, Plainville, CT
Vincent P. Ringrose, Kensington, CT

OFFICERS

Thomas D. Chrosniak, III, President
West Hartford, CT
Richard G. Bell, Vice President
Hamden, CT
Lawrence N. Rappaport, Treasurer
Avon, CT
David Egan, Secretary
Guilford, CT

EDITOR

Edward Ahern

MANAGING EDITOR

Martha R. Sherman
Sherman Communications

Funding for The Connecticut River Salmon Association is received from membership dues, donations, grants, and special events. Membership dues, comments, and letters to the editor may be mailed to:

CRSA
16 Forest Rd, West Hartford CT 06119
(860) 729-5064
email: info@ctriversalmon.org
www.ctriversalmon.org

Low Water Techniques for Broodstock Atlantic Salmon

By Ben Bilello

Since fall 2013, we have been in a downward spiral of water levels. That fall, one of my Naugatuck friends remarked, "I've never seen the river so low before." Unfortunately, he has repeated that every fall since 2013. With traditional low water techniques, the conditions in 2013-2015 were somewhat manageable. The fall of 2016 was what I would consider "ultra-low water." The salmon behaved differently than in previous low water seasons and different techniques needed to be employed to hook and land salmon.

Before I get into the "ultra-low water techniques," I will review some of the basics of low water salmon fishing.

Especially in the warm water at the beginning of the season, salmon need highly oxygenated water. Fortunately for them, this water also provides good cover, since the water at the heads of pools is usually broken. There are many places where a salmon can find fast moving, well oxygenated water with enough depth to make them feel comfortable. The fish tend to concentrate in this water and days with multiple salmon hooked are common. These areas are easily fished with a single handed rod and a wet fly. Since the water is low, the runs will be a fraction of their normal length, so it doesn't take long to fish them. I take no more than three quick passes before I move on to the next low water spot.

When fishing at typical fall water levels, I don't worry too much about my leader length or tippet size. My default leader length might be 8'-9' with an 8-12 lb. test tippet. From early October through most of November, flies from sizes 2-8 are standard. When the water gets low, it can be beneficial to lengthen the leader to 11'-12', downsize the tippet to 6 lb. test, and to use smaller flies. Flies tied on size 8-12 hooks become the new standard. The salmon will often take larger flies in low water, however, I have noticed that I catch more fish when take a less invasive approach. There are other reasons why a small fly can be a better choice, which I will address later.

The most exciting opportunity that arises in low water years is the chance to catch salmon on dry flies. I am not interested in matching a hatch, I just want to get a salmon's attention. I mainly use Bomber or Wulff type dry flies in sizes 4-8. Whereas Canadian salmon respond best to a dead drifted dry fly, Connecticut broodstock salmon seem to prefer a dry fly with some action. I fish the dry fly down stream, let it skate, and give it a tug now and then. Overall, wet flies are much more effective in our waters, but the excitement of a surface take makes dry fly fishing a fun alternative.

As stated above, fall of 2016 wasn't an ordinary low water season, it was an ultra-low water season. The water was so low, many of us doubted there would be a salmon season at all. The salmon were stocked later than normal and I noticed they behaved differently than during the last three low water



A nice Naugatuck River fall salmon. [Photo: Ben Bilello]

seasons. Finding adequate depth trumped all else. If a run had broken water and adequate depth to make the fish feel safe, they held in their normal places. However, many of these runs were too shallow and the salmon moved into any deep pocket they could find. Often times, I would find more than one fish in a deep depression in the river bed.

The salmon were more skittish than normal. This was the first season in many that I could not coax a salmon to come up to even look at a dry fly. That doesn't mean that none were caught on dries but, from what I saw, they were less interested in dry flies than they had been in the last few seasons.

Another thing I noticed was that many anglers had trouble keeping salmon on the hook long enough to land them. I watched a buddy of mine lose a nice salmon that he had hooked on a size 4 wet fly. I realized that the river wasn't pushing hard enough (and the salmon weren't grabbing aggressively enough) to make a heavy wire hook penetrate their bony jaws. I wasn't having a problem holding fish on my size 10 wet flies. However, as the season progressed and the water kept falling, it became necessary to use smaller flies, tied on lighter wire hooks. At the lowest point of the season, my clients were hooking, and consistently landing, salmon on size 12 and 14 Mickey Finns, tied on 3XL-4XL, light wire trout hooks. The fine wire hooks had no problem penetrating a salmon's jaw. Sometimes the hooks would come back all bent up but, as long as the fly landed a fish, I was okay with using a fly only one time.

More than anyone, I would love to have another normal-to-high water salmon season. It would open up spots I haven't fished much since 2011. It spreads out both anglers and salmon. Until that happens, I feel confident hooking and landing salmon in low water conditions using these techniques on both the Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers. ♦

The CRSA “Salmon-in-Schools” Program

Dick Bell to Retire after 21 Years as Chairman of Salmon-in-Schools Program

By Dick Bell, CRSA Vice President and Education Chair

Richard (Dick) Bell, 85, is stepping down as chairman of the CRSA Salmon in Schools program but will remain on the committee to provide advice and counsel. Dick has served this cornerstone program for twenty-one years, watching it grow from one school in 1995-1996 to a peak of seventy-seven schools in 2008-2009.

Dick has mothered the program with enthusiasm and great care, tending to its development and nursing it through broken chillers and sick eggs. He, along with Jim Carroll, have been the go-to persons for the CRSA in this project. An Education Committee will take over his work.

A classic school program that Dick recalls was Lyme Consolidated under Polly Richter. The entire school participated in the program. On stocking day state police closed Rte 156 so students carrying banners and papier Mache salmon could march down to the town park on Eight Mile river, pushing the fry along in a shopping cart.



CRSA Vice President and Education Chairman Dick Bell

A graduate of both Yale University and the Harvard Law School, Dick is married to Anne (Williams) Bell and father to Richard Jr. and Bruce Bell and Allison Bell. Between Yale and Harvard, Dick served as a US Naval officer. He joined the law firm of Tyler, Cooper and Alcorn in 1960 and rose to managing partner.

Dick has found time to serve as president and/or chairman of the board on seven other organizations, including Yale-New Haven Hospital and the United Way of Greater New Haven. An avid angler, he belongs to several local fishing organizations.

Always willing to praise the work of others, Dick mentioned the efforts of Steve Gephard of the DEEP, who in earlier years would wade in clutching the whole cooler of fry and in a sweeping gesture swish them into the river, and who continues to provide invaluable support for the Salmon in Schools program.

Dick also praised the liaison representatives, unique to the CRSA, who act as first responders and egg delivers to the schools. The CRSA greatly thanks Dick for his decades-long service, and looks forward to receiving his advice for years to come. ♦



The fifteenth Salmon in Schools Teacher Orientation was held on October 19 at the Eversource offices in Berlin, CT. The talks covered every aspect of rearing salmon in a school environment, from receiving the eggs to putting the fry in local rivers. Presenters included Steve Gephard, Gary Bogli, Tom Chrosniak, Dick Bell, Deb Costolnick and Elizabeth Kendall. Special thanks to participants, presenters and the Eversource corporation which once again provided its facilities.

Stocking Day 2017 for Catherine M. McGee Middle School 7th Graders!

Seventh graders from Catherine M. McGee Middle School at Stock Out Day at the Salmon River Recreation Area on April 28, 2017.



Photos by
Kevin Cormack

Deb Costolnick Elected CRSA Director

Deborah M. Costolnick was elected a CRSA director by the membership at CRSA's January 2017 Annual Meeting. Deb and her family are residents of East Hartland, CT.

Deb graduated Magna Cum Laude from State University of New York at Oneonta with a BS degree in geology. She earned a MS degree in Geology from Pennsylvania State University with a concentration in hydrogeology. After working for 15 years as an environmental consultant and environmental risk manager, she became a secondary science teacher with certifications in earth science, chemistry and general science.

She has taught science at The Watkinson School in Hartford, Northwest Community College in Winsted, and currently teaches middle school science to grades 6, 7 and 8 at the Hartland School in East Hartland.



In 2012 the Hartland Land Trust and Deb introduced Salmon-in-Schools to the Hartland School 6th grade classroom. The Hartland Board of Education approved funds for the initial tank set up. A second tank for a 3rd grade classroom was funded by a grant from the Farmington River Coordinating Committee in 2014. The Hartland Land Trust has provided annual supply monies for running both tanks every year since.

Deb uses the Salmon-in-Schools program in her classroom as a means to educate students about the connection between human impacts on watersheds and estuaries and the importance of protecting Long Island Sound and its resources.

CRSA 2017 DINNER DONORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Without the support of the following organizations and individuals, our fund raising dinner and many of our activities would not be possible. Our thanks to each for their contribution and their support of Atlantic salmon restoration.

A. Joseph Breneman
Albin J. Sonski Jr.
Angler Sport Group (www.anglersportgroup.com)
Avon Prime Meats
Ben Bilello (www.benbilello.com/salmonflies)
Black Brook Salmon Club (www.blackbrooksc.com)
Bill Elliott – Guest Artist
Bob Hoffman
Bob Wolter
Charles McCaughtry (www.cmccaughtryart.com)
Chowder Pot IV Restaurant (www.chowderpot.com)
Chota Outdoor Gear (www.chotaoutdoorgear.com)
Cortland Line (www.cortlandline.com)
Daly's Corner Package Store, West Hartford (860-232-1771)
David Egan
Dolgin Family
Drift Smith Outfitters (www.driftsmithoutfitters.com)
Dr. Lawrence Rappaport
Dr. Slick Company (www.drslick.com)
Dr. Vincent P. Ringrose
Edward Ahern
Edgar M. Cullman, Jr. (Culbro, LLC)
Elizabeth Kendall
Eric Swope
Fishpond Inc (www.fishpondusa.com)
Frank Windish & Kyle Frink
Frontier Anglers (www.frontieranglers.com)
Gary Bogli
Gerry & Barbara Feinberg
Hal & Donna Gorman
Hartford Distributors Inc.
High Hook Vineyards
Infinity Music Hall (www.infinityhall.com)
JT's Fly Shop (www.jtsflyshop.com)
Jackie Jones

James J. Carroll
James Glista - The Glista Camp
Jason Jones
Joseph N. Ravita
Karol Opticians/Maui Jim (www.karolopticians.com)
Lake Wood Camps (www.lakewoodcamps.com)
Luther K. Hall Sporting Art (www.lutherhall.com)
Mark Lewchik-Fly Tier Rivers End Tackle
(mark@riversendtackle.com)
Mattabsett Canoe Club Restaurant on the CT River,
Middletown (www.mattabsettcanoeclub.com)
Michael F. Motyl Custom Tied Flies (860-749-4963)
Mrs. Donal C. O'Brien Jr.
NIXS Kitchen/Cocktails, Front St, Hartford
(www.nixshartford.com)
Patagonia Westport (www.patagonia.com)
Patricia Cheney
REC Components (www.rec.com)
Richard Bell
Richard Heffernan
Richard H. Lee, Jr.
Robert Jones
Roger Plourde, Cedar House Picture Framing (860-747-3324)
Roma Ristorante, Watertown, CT (860-274-2558)
Roxanne Stachelek
Royal Wulff Products (www.royalwulff.com)
Scott Fly Rods (www.scottflyrod.com)
Ted's Montana Grill – Front St. Hartford
The Compleat Angler Fly Shop (www.compleatangler.com)
The Thomas & Thomas Rod Co (www.thomasandthomas.com)
Thomas D. Chrosniak, III
Truro Vineyards
UNI Products (www.uniproducs.com)
UpCountry Sport Fishing (www.farmingtonriver.com)
Upper Oxbow Adventures (www.upperoxbow.com)
William Grant & Sons

Highlights from CRSA's 2017 Dinner and Auction ~ January 14, 2017

NEW for 2018! 'Build a Basket'

Too busy to solicit a donation but want to support the CRSA? Try our "Build a Basket" option. Donate a cash amount and we will put it towards building a basket with a value of \$50-\$100 to be used in the silent auction or the bucket raffle. The more donations, the more baskets! Donate part or all of the cost. We do the all the shopping and packaging.

Thanks for your support!



CRSA President's Award winner Al Sonski (center) with William A. Hyatt, Chief, DEEP Bureau of Natural Resources (left) and Peter J. Aarrestad, Director, DEEP Fisheries Division (right). [Photo: Alycia Chrosniak #cteatsout]



On the right, CRSA Board Member Roger Plourde, winner of the 2017 Black Brook Salmon Club Trip with one of three fish caught using his 9' - 8wt - Loomis GLX rod, WF 8 wt Floating line, 9' 8lb leader with a Labatt's Blue Bomber.



15 Years Service Awards: Left to right Lauren Malicki accepting for Elizabeth Green School; Virginia Atkins, teacher; CRSA Education Chair Dick Bell; Patricia Martin accepting for St. Gabriel School; and Meg Rosa, teacher. Center School was also awarded for long service. [Photo: Alycia Chrosniak #cteatsout]

In Memoriam

FORMER BOARD MEMBER AND LONG TIME SUPPORTER
JOHN E.(JACK) KINNEAR

LONG SERVING BOARD MEMBER AND DINNER CHAIRMAN (16 YEARS)
EDWARD H. RUESTOW

OLD FRIEND, GUEST, SPEAKER, AWARD WINNER AND
NORTH ATLANTIC SALMON FUND FOUNDER
ORRI VIGFUSSON

We thank them for their many years of friendship and service to CRSA.

Support our friends! Partner fishery organizations have these upcoming events:

- **Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association:** February 3, 2018, at Maneely's Banquet, South Windsor, CT. Tickets at ctflyfish.org. For more information, contact Phil Apruzzese at (860) 489-4319.
- **Farmington River Anglers' Association:** March 3, 2018, at Chatterlys in Torrington. Call (860) 309-5510 for information.
- **Farmington Valley Trout Unlimited:** March 23, 2018, Chowder Pot, Hartford, CT. Contact Don Lachance at (860) 666 3447 for tickets.

Application for CRSA Membership

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

SEND NEWSLETTER TO MY EMAIL AT: _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "CRSA" AND MAIL THEM TO:

CRSA • 16 FOREST ROAD, WEST HARTFORD, CT 06119 (860) 729-5064 • EMAIL: INFO@CTRIVERSALMON.ORG

PATRON: \$500

LIFE: \$250

BUSINESS: \$125

SUSTAINING: \$100

SPONSORING \$50

CONTRIBUTING: \$25

FAMILY: \$25

INDIVIDUAL: \$20

STUDENT: \$10

THE CONNECTICUT RIVER SALMON ASSOCIATION

16 Forest Road
West Hartford, CT 06119

Visit us at www.ctriversalmon.org