Letter from the Editor

Dear readers,

Welcome to the 13th issue of *Wrack Lines*. With all the depressing news you are bombarded with daily about the economy, war, and terrorism, we (the Editorial Board) hope our photo essay of the Connecticut River and other upbeat feature articles and photos will give you a colorful welcome break. We also invite you to enter our “Connections” photo contest, and despite wintry weather, show us in pictures how you personally connect to Long Island Sound.

We felt moved to commemorate the 70th anniversary of New England’s biggest weather disaster, the 1938 Hurricane, and we trust you will find the reminiscences of the old timers who still remember it fascinating. They still love to talk about it. The photos of the damage wrought by that event were taken by my father when he was a young freelance reporter covering the Stonington, Connecticut beat for *The Day* newspaper. I wasn’t around then, but my older brother Russ was in pre-kindergarten during the famous event. He recalls crouching behind an armchair with his mom and seeing Dad looking out the window as the tidal surge approached. The last thing he remembers about it was Dad shouting, “Here it comes!” When others were attending to their own homes and families afterward, he had to beat feet with his camera and notebook to document the great storm’s aftermath. I found the prints and negatives still preserved in a dusty cardboard box when I cleaned out a closet at home, and couldn’t resist sharing them with you. There are many lessons learned and positive things you and your community can do to be better prepared for a possible catastrophic weather event today. We’ve tried to point you in the right direction with some tips and web sites to help you prepare for next year’s hurricane season, so we trust you will find this useful.

It’s past hurricane season as we go to press and the holiday season is upon us. If you’re not a vegetarian, celebrate by cooking the fabulous oyster stuffing recipe we’ve provided.

Winter is a great time to observe the variety of seaweeds washed ashore into the wrack line, especially after a storm, provided you bundle up well. Many thrive in cold weather, including the one that recurs on our cover title banner, rockweed. You may know it as an essential ingredient for the traditional New England clambake.

Since I occasionally get questions from readers, I want to take this opportunity to explain what our title, *Wrack Lines*, is all about. The wrack line is the assorted “stuff” that the tide leaves behind when it ebbs. Amongst the flotsam and jetsam there may be treasures offered up for the taking. The name derives from an ancient term that meant “driven by the sea,” and that really describes our mission perfectly. The magazine offers you articles related to Long Island Sound, that estuarine arm of the sea, and beyond, with a marine flavor.

As always, comments, article submissions, and suggestions for future stories are welcome. I can be reached at my email address, peg.vanpatten@uconn.edu. That is also the address to use if you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to the magazine. It’s free to Connecticut residents. You may also download our articles online at the magazine’s web site, http://www.seagrant.uconn.edu, where past issues are archived.

Your editor,

*Peg Van Patten*

Our cover photo of the Connecticut River in winter was taken by Syma Ebbin in Haddam, Connecticut.