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Continuing the Tradition ~ Preserving Our History

bvhsri.org • 1873 Old Louisquisset Pike (Rte 246) • PO Box 125, Lincoln RI, 02865

The Great Blackstone River Revival

Raymond Kelley kicks off ZAP 50 at BVHS



Fifty years ago, on September 9, 1972, 10,000 people came out and spent a day cleaning up the Blackstone River, removing tons of trash, appliances, cars and even a school bus from its banks. It was called "Operation ZAP." By 1972, the Blackstone, which had powered over 100 mills along its length from Worcester to Pawtucket Falls, was one of the most polluted rivers in America. The volunteer effort that day started the revival of the Blackstone River, which has begun to be a home again for wildlife. It is now used recreationally for canoeing and kayaking, and thousands enjoy the view along the Blackstone River Bikeway.

Raymond Kelley, whose grandfather was a leader in the original "Operation ZAP" effort, is coming to BVHS on August 14 to help kick off "ZAP 50," the 50-year anniversary cleanup, with a talk about the original ZAP in 1972. Using images, a video and memories from "ZAPsters"



The Blackstone River runs past Ashton Mills

recounting their experiences, he will show how so many helped save the Blackstone. If anyone would like to share their memories of that day, Kelley would love to hear them, either at this talk, or on the ZAP the Blackstone website, where there is a form to use to send them in.

ZAP 50 will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on August 27. Kelley hopes that it will be as big as the original ZAP in 1972. A valley-wide watershed cleanup is planned for that day, with cleanups, green-ups, and improvement projects across the entire Blackstone Valley.

There is a project list on the website, with projects rated from easier to harder, so volunteers can choose.

Come and learn about one of the most incredible days in Blackstone Valley history, a landmark environmental event, and the plans for this year's 50th anniversary reprise. There will be a signup sheet at the talk as well for anyone who wants to volunteer.

For more information about ZAP 50, see www.zaptheblackstone.com.

**Raymond
Kelley
"ZAP the
Blackstone"
2:00 p.m. Sunday,
August 14
BVHS**

Zap Events:

July 26: 4:00 p.m. The Museum of Work and Culture will be showing a movie about ZAP the Blackstone.

August 27: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.. ZAP 50! Cleanup Day.

September 3: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Dragon Boat Festival, Festival Pier, 50 Tim Healy Way, Pawtucket, RI.

September 10: 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.. ZAP 50 Celebration at Slater Mill, 67 Roosevelt Avenue, Pawtucket.

Great Road Day at BVHS

11:00 am– 4:00 pm Saturday, September 24: Open House at Northgate and the Arnold's Lonsdale Bakery.