

## OUR TOWNS

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### NASSAU COUNTY

# Educational signs aim to lure visitors to Hempstead Harbor

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Educational signs about coastal issues and historic events have been installed throughout Hempstead Harbor as part of an effort to attract visitors to the waterfront.

Eight new signs have been constructed from Roslyn to Sea Cliff, adding to five already in the waterfront areas.

One sign provides lessons about former Gold Coast poet William Cullen Bryant. It's outside his former estate, Cedarmer, now a Nassau County museum. Others are about the historic shipbuilding industry in Glenwood Landing, and waterfowl native to Hempstead Harbor.

A \$25,000 grant to help pay for the signs came from the New York Department of State, under the Environmental Protection Fund. It was matched by \$25,000 with in-kind labor from the Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee's member municipalities and citizen groups. Those include North Hempstead and Oyster Bay towns, Nassau County, the city of Glen Cove, and the villages of Flower Hill, Sea Cliff, Roslyn, Sands Point and Roslyn Harbor.

The signs, set on posts, are graffiti-proof, officials said. One at Gerry Park measures about 2 feet by 3 feet and has text, a map and images of local waterfowl.

"It's another way of getting the public down to the harbor," said Eric Swenson, executive director of the committee. "The more you can bring the people to the harbor and educate them about the environment and the history, the more likely it is they will want to become good stewards of the environment."

The first five educational signs were installed about a decade ago, Swenson said.

The plan mirrors North Hempstead Supervisor Judi Bosworth's vision for revitalizing the area around the Hempstead Harbor waterfront. The town is extending a nature trail along the Port Washington waterfront by a mile. Earlier this year, town officials said they would end contracts allowing the Manhasset school district and a Roslyn Heights day camp to park vehicles in a town beach lot bordering the harbor.

"These signs turn a walk along the water into a real learning experience," Bosworth said. "They're beautiful; it just underscores we really are surrounded by so many beautiful waterways — something that we can all take advantage of."