

Dear Fellow Board Members,

The Coalition has been a part of my history since a group of like-minded concerned residents committed themselves to keep our community safe.

In 1986, when a *NY Times* article stated that Hempstead Harbor had more toxic sites than anywhere on Long Island, a number of residents actually fled, frightened for their families' health. Others decided to stay and fix what was fixable, determined to right what we could.

It started with the toxic sites and specifically active polluters. We brought noise, publicity, and pressure. At the July 1987 bankruptcy hearing for Mattiace Petrochemical, the judge asked "Where is the Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor?" We were in court, in attendance, and Gigi Martorella rose and addressed the judge: "Your honor, we are not a party to this action, we are here to witness." It was a powerful moment, a marker. We had been an organization for one year.

The Coalition has quite a track record—pressure on active and dangerous polluters, pursuing the remediation of abandoned sites, challenging and limiting inappropriate development, closing an incinerator, preventing the building of another, creating programs to improve water quality, to name just a few. Federal and state agencies and health departments knew our name. The Coalition's reputation is as truth seekers, not adversaries—although we could be. Our lack of drama gave us credence and credibility. By and large we worked with, not against, the "powers that be" and fought those who would not. The Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor has evolved and expanded with every new challenge and achievement. Its reputation is stellar.

My personal activity waxed and waned by circumstance, but long-time CSHH friends would not let me go. I am grateful. There is such satisfaction in having made a difference. There's no greater legacy than having left something in better condition than it was in when you took up the challenge to fix it rather than walk away. I will treasure having worked with so many wonderful and remarkable people.

I'm sad and tearful to say goodbye, which is why *au revoir* suits much better. The Coalition will continue to grow as issues arise. It truly is the steward of the harbor, the voice of the residents, and an organization in extraordinary hands.

With great respect,

Corin