



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

Sen. Kaminsky, Assemb. Griffin Organize Smith Pond Cleanup

TODD KAMINSKY April 13, 2019

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(Rockville Centre, New York) — Today, Senator Todd Kaminsky and Assemblywoman Judy Griffin hosted an Earth Day rally and cleanup of Smith Pond along with the Village of Rockville Centre and local community groups. Dozens of local residents cleaned the waterway and surrounding areas of the Morgan Days Park, collecting more than 50 bags of garbage.

“Smith Pond is one of the crown jewels of Rockville Centre, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure its beauty, cleanliness and ecosystem is preserved for our community to enjoy for decades to come,” said Senator Todd Kaminsky, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee. “I was pleased to have hosted this cleanup and am especially proud of our many neighbors who took time out of their busy weekend to lend a hand and preserve one of the hallmarks of our Village.”

“Through today’s efforts you can see how strong we are when our community stands together. I am proud that hosting this cleanup encouraged so many wonderful organizations to participate,” said Assemblywoman Judy Griffin, Member of the New York State Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee. “It is essential that we preserve our natural resources and keep our waterways pristine -- by keeping our parks clean, beautiful, and safe,

Smith Pond will remain a place for many generations to enjoy.”

“It is a wonderful thing that our state of representatives care about our environment, the people of Rockville Centre, and our surrounding areas. We really have to take care of our environment today more than ever before and we are dedicated to making Smith Pond and all our waterways in Rockville Centre a place to enjoy. I personally want to thank Senator Kaminsky and Assemblywoman Judy Griffin for their commitment to our waterways,” said Mayor Francis X. Murray.

“We all know Long Island is on the frontlines in the fight against climate change. And at a time when the current administration is unwilling to acknowledge this existential threat, it's up to individual states, cities and local communities to take matters into their own hands,” said Congresswoman Kathleen Rice. “That's what this clean-up is all about. It's about coming together. taking action and reaffirming our commitment to protecting our environment.”

“We are in awe of how much can be done when the community comes together to protect our parks and waterways,” said George Povall, Executive Director of All Our Energy. “When good people see the damage firsthand of all the single use plastic and other pollution we create right here, due to carelessness and no clear policy, they really understand the need for and support action to stop it.”

“Community service isn't a new thing for scouts. The scouting program gives boys and girls a chance to lead and learn by doing things for themselves and each other for over 100 years. Their energy and cheerful service is contagious. I am glad that our local and state governments consider this lovely little corner of the community something worth dedicating their efforts on and I am glad they invited our local scouting programs to help change it for the better,” said Charlie Hart, Scoutmaster, BSA Troop 163.

“It’s really wonderful to see the community joining together to improve our environment. As we get closer to the Passover and Easter holidays and the season of “Spring Cleaning,” it’s really a time for celebrating our community and for doing whatever we can to make the world a better place. Central Synagogue-Beth Emeth is glad to be a part of this community effort,” said Rabbi Elliot Skiddell, Central Synagogue-Beth Emeth.

“Thank you for all the support the community has shown in helping to clean up Smith Pond. It’s uplifting when the community comes out to clean the debris hanging in trees, stuck in bushes and floating in our waterways. Every effort is appreciated!” said Marguerite Keller, Co-Director, Hispanic Brotherhood.

“Indivisible of RVC is excited to cosponsor a cleanup in our own community. The first Earth Day was an important day of civic action with the goal of protecting the environment. The volunteers and representatives who clean up the earth today will be the ones heralding landmark climate legislation tomorrow. We are proud to be counted among them! There is only one earth and we need to protect it, starting at home,” said Jaime Jordan, Co-Founder, Indivisible RVC.

“Raising Voices USA is proud to partner with Assemblywoman Judy Griffin, Congresswoman Kathleen Rice, Senator Todd Kaminsky, and other elected officials and community groups and organizations, to come together and clear the garbage out of a local pond that feeds right into the Atlantic. As well as doing some environmental good on a very basic level, we also hope to bring attention and awareness to the fact that climate change is an existential threat that we all have to work on to overcome,” said Emma Travers and Cindy Vaupel, Raising Voices USA Co-Founders.

“The Rockville Centre Chamber of Commerce is happy to participate and partner with Assemblywoman Griffin and Senator Todd Kaminsky in the Smith Pond cleanup. What a

great way to help our local community,” said Brian Croutier, President, Rockville Centre Chamber of Commerce.

“The Smith Pond Cleanup is an excellent opportunity for everyone, young and old, to help preserve this beautiful piece of nature in Rockville Centre. Smith Pond is somewhere convenient to go for some peace and quiet and we hope more people will visit Smith Pond!” said Ruthanne McCormack, Project Coordinator, RVC Coalition for Youth.

“Smith Pond is a gem! It’s wonderful to have so many people come together to take care of this beautiful natural resource in our Village. Our thanks to everyone to organized this event, and to those who will come to help,” said Kathleen Murray, RVC Conservancy.

“The Smith Street Pond clean up is a good idea. Many residents will attend the clean up, and feel good about the effects it will have on the quality of the water , and marine environment. Hopefully, this clean up will spark other projects to continue to enhance the quality of life on the West End of Rockville Centre,” said Pat Morris, RVC Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center.

“The Rockville Centre Youth Council, Inc. is very excited to continue to give back to the community by helping to clean up Smith Pond with Senator Todd Kaminsky and Assemblywoman Judy Griffin. We love collaborating with other organizations, community members, and our very supportive elected officials, to broaden our horizons in helping to make Rockville Centre the best and most beautiful place to live!” said Andrea Connolly, Chair, Rockville Centre Youth Council, Inc.

“We’re honored to have girls and boys from our Scouts BSA Troops lend a helping hand with the Smith Pond cleanup,” Boy Scouts of America Iroquois District Chair Denise Shields said. “Taking part in community service builds character among our youth members and we

thank Assemblywoman Griffin and NYS Senator Todd Kaminsky for inviting us to participate in this clean up effort,” said Denise Shields, District Chairman, Theodore Roosevelt Council

“It is important for the community to come together, to work for a common good, even as we see the results of our carelessness with our trash. Sadly, what we see is only a small fraction of what’s happening in waterways throughout our country and the world. It might seem trite to say, but change begins with the individual, with each person having respect for our environment and doing their part to keep trash where it belongs. The United Church of Christ as a denomination that works for environmental justice. We recognize that God’s earth is extremely resilient, but that it groans under the weight of the abuse that it takes at our hands. Biblically, our role is to be good stewards of the earth, living in relationship with it and all its creative potential. The key is relationship. Partnership. Not dominance or ownership. I am proud of the United Church of Christ, and specifically United Church of Rockville Centre, for co-sponsoring the cleanup. It is a small thing but small things can lead to significant change. The goal of the day is not only to remove some of the accumulated trash, but also to educate and understand the impact of our collective actions on the environment. I only wish that more people could experience the messiest of the day, to see firsthand what collects in the area around the pond. And to walk away with a better understanding that all of us need to be more diligent in protecting God’s earth,” said Rev. Scott A. Resson, Pastor, United Church of Rockville Centre.

Senator Kaminsky and Assemblywoman Griffin organized the cleanup after hearing from residents that Smith Pond and surrounding area in Morgan Days Park could use some attention. They partnered with local community organizations, including Central Synagogue — Beth Emeth, Raising Voices USA, the Rockville Centre Chamber of Commerce, the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery, the RVC Conservancy, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center of Rockville Centre, the RVC Youth Council, The Polar Bears, Hispanic Brotherhood of

Rockville Centre, All Our Energy, the Boy Scouts, Indivisible RVC and the United Church of Christ to coordinate the effort.