

# Harwich Is Still Home To Seth Doane

## CBS Correspondent Speaks At HCT Annual Meeting

by Debra Lawless

CBS news correspondent Seth Doane, a native of Harwich who now lives in Rome, told about 220 members of the Harwich Conservation Trust (HCT) at the group's 30<sup>th</sup> annual meeting Monday afternoon that by the time August rolls around he is "desperate to get here."

Doane, a 1996 graduate of Harwich High School, graduated from the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication. In 2004 he won a Peabody Award and has twice been nominated for an Emmy Award. Doane's parents, Paul and Helen Doane of Harwich, were in the audience, as was his husband, Andrea Pastorelli.

During the meeting at the Wequassett Resort overlooking Pleasant Bay, Doane thanked the non-profit land trust for its work in preserving the natural environment. Since 1988 the HCT has helped to protect over 448 acres. It is currently raising money to save an additional 15 acres on Cornelius Pond. The group is \$140,000 short of its \$850,000 goal, which it must raise by Dec. 31.

Doane said that walking along Bank Street Beach recently he observed that "what I love so much is how little has changed."

"These places that are the most special are the places that have retained the natural environment," Doane added. He also praised Tuscany, for the same reason. "Tuscans have been very good at managing their land."

In a 20-minute talk, Doane took the audience on a tour of his world travels, emphasizing the environments of each place and how the environment affects people's lives.

He shared a photo of Beijing taken from the balcony of his office. In the photo, the sky is blue. He showed a second photo, which he said was typical. The sky and the air were white with smog.

"You would base the pollution on how many buildings you could see," he said. "Pollution greeted you in the morning and affected everything you did."

Two weeks ago, Doane was called to the scene of the deadly



Harwich native and CBS News correspondent Seth Doane spoke at the annual meeting of the Harwich Conservation Trust Monday.

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wildfires in Greece that were fueled by drought conditions.

"You could see how quickly the fire had torn through this community," he said.

Last week he reported on the heat wave and drought that has settled in Europe due to climate change. A German farmer told him that he will need to alter the way he farms if these scorching, dry summers continue.

He reported from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, after an earthquake. There, he noted, one natural disaster compounds another—rainstorms that follow the earthquake create floods.

In 2010 he reported on monarch butterflies that migrate to Mexico and winter there. While 250 million butterflies were in a preserve, there used to be one billion. The butterflies winter on fir trees that are being chopped down for heating fuel.

Puglia, in Italy's boot, is known for its olive trees. Of the 60 million olive trees there, 10 to 15 million are infected by a pathogen brought in from South America. The question is how Puglia's economy will continue if the olive trees die. This speaks to "the fragility of our world," Doane said.

And he took the audience to the Global Seed Vault in Svalbard, located about halfway between Oslo, Norway and the North Pole. This seed vault—a repository of the world's seeds—is a "backup" for over 1,000 other such vaults. Here, billions of seeds are stored deep inside a mountain, including 150,000 varieties of wheat. One variety might be drought-resistant, another heat-resistant.

"It's important that we save what we have because Mother Nature may have the secrets to solving the problems," Doane said.

In response to a question from the audience, Doane said President Donald Trump's policy of calling the press "fake news" and "the enemy of the people" "makes our job tougher." While he conceded that some criticism of the press is warranted, "you're constantly on the defense. The media is a group of people that people like to blame."

During the business portion of the meeting, HCT Executive Director Michael Lach named Jake and Barbara Brown and their family the HCT 2018 Conservationists of the Year. The Brown family donated 7.2 acres with 346 feet of shoreline on Hinckley's Pond to the HCT. The land is part of an important seven-mile herring run from Nantucket Sound.

Jake Brown recalled that three years ago he was kayaking on the pond when he had an "aha moment" regarding the future of the land he owned beginning in the 1960s. "I said, 'I've got to preserve it.'" As well as the seasonal herring, the pond is home to a pair of mature bald eagles.

"The best way to preserve water quality is to preserve the surrounding lands," Lach said.

The group voted in new trustees Patti Smith, Matt Cushing, Bruce Nightingale and Jonathon Idman to serve three-year terms. HCT treasurer Edward Rubel said the group has \$16 million in assets of which \$12.5 million is land, \$2.9 million is cash and \$600,000 is buildings. The group has an annual budget of \$383,000 and no liabilities.

For more membership information, to give to the Cornelius Pond project or for information on the HCT's Aug. 11 walk "Henry Beston and The Outermost House," visit [harwich-conservationtrust.org](http://harwich-conservationtrust.org).