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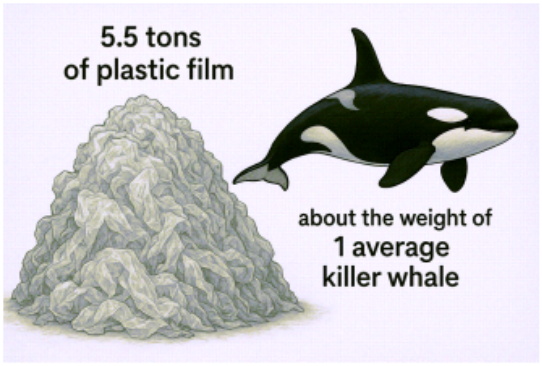
Springfield Rotary Donates Thirteenth Bench to Community

By Martin Cohn, Springfield Rotary Club



The Springfield Rotary Club has once again demonstrated its commitment to environmental stewardship and community service by donating a Trex recycled bench to Springfield Parks & Recreation. The bench was installed inside the Community Center following the successful collection of 1,000 pounds of thin film plastics by residents as part of the Trex Thin Film Plastics Challenge.

This marks the thirteenth bench awarded to Springfield through the Trex Recycling Program. The latest collection effort included contributions from several local sources: 44% from the Springfield Town Library, 16% from Magee Office Products, 13% from the Springfield Food Co-op, 13% from Bibens Ace Hardware, and the remainder from Springfield Hospital, Casey CDJR, Waterbury's Factotum Design, and Springfield GMC. Since February 2023, the Springfield Rotary has collected more than 11,147 pounds (over 5.5 tons) of plastic film—the approximate weight of one killer whale.

The Trex Challenge encourages the recycling of materials like grocery and produce bags, bubble wrap, cereal bags, and similar plastics. Once a group collects 1,000 pounds, Trex awards a 48" Yacht Club Bench, made from recycled materials such as milk jugs and water bottles. The collected plastics are upcycled into Trex decking, supporting a circular economy.

Plastic pollution poses serious risks to the environment and wildlife, and thin plastics often can't be processed through standard curbside recycling due to their tendency to damage sorting equipment. The Trex Challenge offers a creative and impactful alternative.

This latest bench joins others already placed at The Common, Park Street School, North Springfield Bog Trailhead, Main Street, the Springfield Town Library, Elm Street School, the Springfield Community Players Theater, and the pollinator habitat hillside at Springfield Hospital by the Springfield Conservation Committee.

Volunteers from the Rotary Club and the Springfield Town Library manage the collection, weighing, and delivery of the plastic to Shaw's Supermarket, Trex's nearest participating drop-off location. The Trex collection bin will remain at the Town Library.

Looking ahead, the Rotary Club has already begun work toward earning its next bench, which will be donated to Springfield Hospital in honor of long standing member Lori Muse-Gurney and in celebration of the Springfield Rotary's 95th anniversary.

Founded in 1927, the Rotary Club of Springfield is a vibrant organization of more than 30 members dedicated to service at both the local and global levels. Learn more at springfieldvtrotary.org.