



CHEBACCO LAKE & WATERSHED ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*

A Quarterly Publication of the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

Spring, 2006

From the CLWA President's Chair

We are all hoping that nature is kind to us this spring: just enough rain, warm temperatures, no inchworms, and the Canada geese decide to nest somewhere else this year. Sorry, the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association (CLWA) can't promise any of that.

We can report that we are working on several fronts this year to address problems that you have brought to our attention and some that are ongoing. We have brought the issue of boating safety to Hamilton officials, and to the Massachusetts Environmental Police. Read on in this letter for ways that you can help safety problems.

We held a cleanup in the fall and removed a full truckload of trash from the beach and boat ramp. We will be holding another cleanup this spring. We will also be resuming our water testing when air and water temperatures heat up.

Once again, the burden is on all of us to protect our lake. What each of us does at our homes has a long-term effect on the lake and surrounding area. Each newsletter that we publish will have suggestions for steps and actions we can all take to maintain and preserve our properties.

All of us who own homes on the lake have benefited from the increased value of our properties, and have also been taxed accordingly. The old adage that "location, location, location" are the three laws of real estate values hold true for all of us. Whatever each of us that can positively affect the lake is beneficial to all of us. The opposite is also true. We urge everyone to consider the landscaping, gardening and construction ideas that we pass along to you. In the long run we all will be working together.

Thank You,
Dave Kerr, President, Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

Boating Safety and Water Quality Addressing Your Concerns

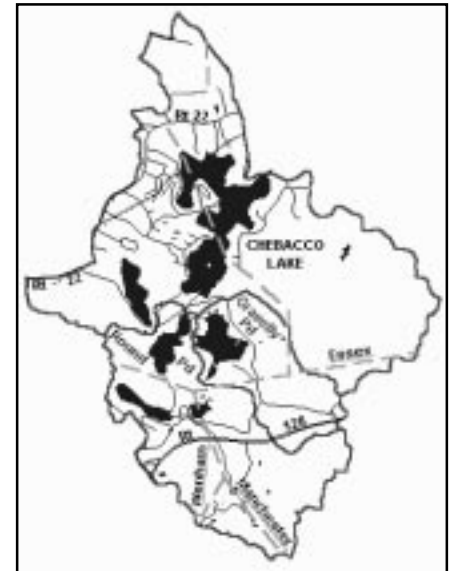
Boating safety and water quality were the chief concerns for many of you in your responses to our survey questions. We have some helpful steps to follow to alleviate the problem of boating safety. If you have not yet done so, visit the Massachusetts Environmental Police, www.state.ma.us/dfwele/dle for answers to questions about boating laws and safety. The Environmental Police want to know if there are boating issues, weed problems being created by boaters flushing their boat in our lake, unregistered or illegally registered boats and overuse of the boat

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The Chebacco Lake Watershed

Last year the name of Chebacco Lake Association was changed to Chebacco Lake and Watershed Association. This was done to increase public awareness that many activities in the entire watershed area can affect Chebacco Lake and the surrounding ponds.

The Chebacco Lake watershed is approximately 3657 acres and occupies an area containing portions of Beverly, Wenham, Manchester, Hamilton and



Essex. It is part of the overall Essex River Watershed. 27% of the watershed area is the lake, surrounding ponds, Maple Swamp and smaller areas of swampland. The remainder is mostly woodlands, homes, part of Gordon College, the former Hamilton and Manchester landfills and roads. 190 acres that include Gravelly Pond and the surrounding land is used as part of the water supply for Manchester.

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Addressing Your Concerns

ramp. Call 617-727-8760. We have copies of the MA boating handbook "Boat Massachusetts" available. E-mail at the CLWA website.

If you see safety violations by neighbors on the lake, we suggest you approach them first and remind them of their obligation to the rest of us. If you see violations by off-lake boaters do not hesitate to call your local police at the non-emergency numbers. We have been assured that Hamilton police will follow-up either by watching for the boaters from the ramp or from another vantage point, and will deal with the problems. You will need to give them a good description of the boat and its operators. They will also alert the on-lake harbormaster. It is important that we report the violations, not only for safety, but also if we wish to have more presence on the lake by a harbormaster.

There were a number of incidents of younger boaters water-skiing and wakeboarding after dusk last summer. These actions are just plain foolhardy, and violate the state boating regulations which prohibit the towing of water-skiers, wakeboard riders or other towing devices between sunset and sunrise. It is also illegal to operate a boat within 75 feet of a designated swim area, and within 150 feet of floats on the lake at greater than headway speed. Please report such violations to the local authorities if they are by off-lake boaters, or if you don't wish to confront a fellow lake resident. The CLWA has no authority in these matters and can only urge you to take control of the situation by doing what you think is best.

We ask all boaters to be considerate of their neighbors when boating, especially in the cove areas. Echo Cove, Coral Hill, and the cove on the south side of Gregory Island suffer the effects of repeated use by boats creating large wakes, and traveling close to the shoreline. We have some long stretches of water to use and we should all be considerate of our neighbors in the areas where there is heavy boat traffic.

By Dave Kerr

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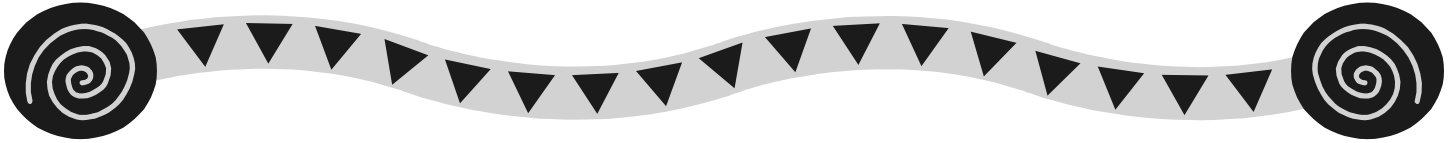
The Chebacco Lake Watershed

Over 150 million gallons of water are pumped from Gravelly Pond annually and taken out of the watershed.

The water going to homes in the watershed with connections to town water supplies come from the Ipswich watershed.

This probably offsets the amount removed by Manchester. Beneficial snow and rainfall can become contaminated with road salt, yard care products, automobile fluids and many other things as it makes its way to the lake. Water that is filtered through woodlands, good soils and wetlands will reach the lake in a much cleaner state than water that runs over roadways and densely populated areas. It is impossible to keep all nutrients and contaminants from entering waterways, but everyone in the watershed can do their part to protect water quality.

By Sue McLaughlin



2006 – A Year to Celebrate Our Lake

For the past few years, the CLWA board and members have been devoting a considerable amount of attention to dealing with the water level problems created by the beaver dams at Alewife Creek. However, with the success of the recently installed culvert fence, this issue will no longer require the time and energy that it has in past years. Therefore, the CLWA board members have decided to redirect that energy and renew our focus and commitment on the lake – it's natural beauty, unique characteristics, wildlife, history and the effect it has on our lives each day.

With this renewed commitment, we want to dramatically increase our efforts to preserve the natural beauty and health of our lake through education, a stronger political presence and an outreach program that will allow us to directly meet with more of our neighbors in the watershed area. So, please join us in celebrating OUR LAKE!

An easy way to get started is to try and see if you can succeed in accomplishing our “20 Ways to Help Keep Our Lake Healthy”.

20 Ways to Help Keep Our Lake Healthy

Around Your Home

1. Pump out your septic system at least every other year.
2. Replace your septic system if it is failing or too close to the lake
3. Limit the use of ice melting products on walks and drives
4. Pick up after your dog
5. Reduce phosphorous leaching by using phosphorous-free detergents (check the label)

On and Around the Lake

1. Keep docks in good repair (remove them when they are no longer useful)
2. Do not allow your boat to cause a large wake (especially in the coves and when water levels are high) – it causes shoreline erosion
3. When purchasing a boat, avoid those with deep hulls and propellers that stir sediment
4. Consider a four stroke engine to reduce pollution and noise
5. Maintain and tune-up your engine annually (or more often if needed)

In and Around Your Yard

1. Keep the shoreline natural or plant a buffer zone
2. Cut down trees only if absolutely necessary
3. If you must cut down a tree, try to plant another one somewhere else on your property
4. Plant native shrubs and trees
5. Do not plant invasive plants
6. Do not use chemical fertilizers or chemical lawn services
7. Use permeable surfaces (crushed stone, brick, fieldstone, etc.) for walks and driveways as they allow runoff to be filtered through the soil.
8. Plant a deterrent to geese. Do not feed the geese. But, please treat the wildlife with respect.

Just For You

1. Make a point to learn something new about your lake this year – plants, wildlife, history.
2. In addition, make a point to join us at an activity or function in 2006 as we **celebrate Chebacco Lake!**

By Robyn Kanter

Designing With Nature Landscaping for a Healthy Lake

Plant a Tree to Help Celebrate Our Lake

The spring planting season will soon be here and early spring is one of the best times to plant trees. As we all know by now, the roots of trees and shrubs are living filters that help eliminate sediments and pollutants from the groundwater running into our lake. *So, why not plant a tree this spring and contribute to the health of our lake!*

Proper planning and careful selection of plant material will contribute to the success of your tree planting. The first step is to decide where you would like to locate your tree. By determining the location, you will then be able to determine the size and light and soil requirements that will be necessary for your tree to thrive. Around the lake, we often have to deal with soils that are rocky, devoid of organic materials and full of roots. We also have issues with shade from larger trees. You must consider all these factors when selecting a species to plant. Choosing a tree that is native to this area will usually result in more success.

Once you have determined what you would like to plant, it is best to purchase the stock from a reputable nursery. Ask questions about the plant – expected rate of growth, size at maturity and soil requirements or amendments. We have some great nurseries in the immediate area with very knowledgeable staff that can help you select the right tree.

Finally, the most important step in your tree planting is proper planting techniques and follow-up maintenance. Digging the right size hole and making sure it drains by filling it with water before you plant the tree and then watching how fast the water drains is a step that cannot be eliminated in this area. There is lots of hidden ledge that will prevent proper draining. If all the water does not drain out at a reasonable pace you must either add sufficient drainage until it does or relocate the tree. When you have the tree placed in the hole, backfill with the soil and amendments for the tree you have chosen. After the tree has been planted, create a well around the base that will hold water. *It is best to hand water new trees very deeply 2 or 3 times a week so the roots will get established.*

Here are a few ideas for trees that will work well in our area:

Amelanchier

Shadbush, serviceberry – This native shrub also comes in a tree form. It is one of my favorites because it is so easy to maintain. White flowers in the spring are followed by dark red fruit. I personally like the bark and the branching habit of this tree. It is a great option if you are looking for a small ornamental tree.

Cornus alternifolia

Pagoda Dogwood – I have mentioned this tree before, but I am fond of it and love its versatility. It, too, has a great branching habit and white flowers. If you need help stabilizing a bank, this is a good selection. It grows very fast and will attain a height of about 15 feet. It is sometimes a little difficult to locate, but the nurseries in the area (Corliss, Wolf Hill or Chapmans) might carry them in the early spring.

Stewartia pseudocamellia

Stewartia – By far, one of the finest small trees. In midsummer white flowers emerge resembling camellias. It has great eye-catching bark and a soft layered pyramidal habit. It also takes a fair amount of shade. I have one in my yard that has adapted to the soil conditions very well.

Quercus rubra

Red Oak – For a larger specimen, why not try a red oak? A stately and quite vigorous tree that thrives in this area, it grows in all light conditions and most soil conditions (except for flood zones). Hawks like to use this tree for nesting.

Picea glauca

White Spruce – For a moderate growing evergreen, one option might be this plant. It is tolerant of exposed areas, drought and heat. It also takes a variety of light and soil conditions. I planted one of these in my yard last year and quite enjoy the branching habit, especially in the winter, and the silver-blue color.

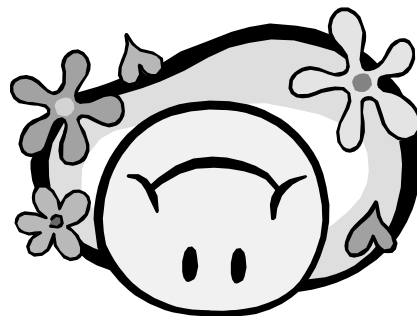
These are just a few suggestions. A tip might be to take a walk in the woods around Chebacco Lake and see which plants thrive in a natural setting. Most likely these same plants would be great for your yard. Again, ask the sales associates at good nurseries. They will usually head you in the right direction.

HAPPY PLANTING!

By Robyn Kanter

We're planning a shoreline clean-up on Sunday, May 7th from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Please join us at the old Hamilton beach.

Spring Clean-up



South Hamilton, MA 01982

P.O. Box 2344

Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

CLWA Website: Contact us and read updates on our website at www.chebaccolake.org

Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association Membership Application

If you're not yet a CLWA member, please join today! We'd really appreciate your participation. If your membership has expired, please renew your membership now. Your membership expiration date is noted on your address label.

New Renewal Choose one: Member \$25 Patron \$50 Sponsor \$75

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Lake Address (if different) _____

Telephone Number _____ E-mail Address _____

Please circle all that apply to your household: Lakeside resident / Property within 500' of lake /
Seasonal resident / Non-resident property owner / Sport or recreational user of lake area /
Recreational user of Chebacco Woods

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Please send completed form and dues to: CLWA, P. O. Box 2344, So. Hamilton, MA 01982