



CHEBACCO LAKE & WATERSHED ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*

A Quarterly Publication of the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

www.chebaccolake.org

October 2009

From the CLWA President's Chair

Greetings Lakeside Neighbors and Friends! While this was a lousy summer weather-wise, we all had plenty of excitement and lots to talk about with the production of the movie "Grown Ups". There was a lot of activity, some economic benefit to the area, and some good fun for those who participated in the production.

As we should have expected, there were some complaints and some issues arose that needed attention. Three incidents stood out that showed how important it is to have a Lake Association advocating for us all.

First, because jet skis were reported on the lake in July by CLWA Treasurer Betty Ozolins and she followed up the report, law enforcement in the Towns of Essex and Hamilton are now enforcing the PWC ban in the same way. A personal watercraft is defined as one that you sit on rather than sit in. The larger jet skis that dealers represent as boats are in fact still personal watercraft and are banned from the lake. The MA. Environmental Police defined the law for us and now the 2 Towns and the Environmental Police are on the same page.

CLWA Board Member Dave Lash responded right away when movie crews exceeded their permits for preparing the lake's island for shooting some scenes. Changes were made and the possible pollution of the lake by hazardous materials was avoided. Also the island was not stripped of all vegetation. They did get rid of most of the poison ivy, though. Dave worked closely with the Hamilton Con Com to keep the process in line.

Third, CLWA Vice President Sue McLaughlin took the lead in two areas for us when heavy rains came in August causing the lake to rise to dangerous levels. She initiated the effort to have the lake shut down to off lake boaters, and the Towns of Essex and Hamilton enforced a wake speed only regulation until the water began to recede. This helped alleviate damaging erosion to the shoreline. She also received clarification about who controls the opening and closing of the lake to traffic. It is the Towns' harbor masters, not the State. The Environmental Police can open and close the ramp, but the responsibility for boating and property protection are up to the local police.

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Boating Laws Handbook

Recently, we tried to get copies of the Boating Handbook to pass out in our "Lakeside Living" booklet but the State didn't have enough to mail out. If you want to read the boating laws, please go to the following website:

www.boat-ed.com/ma/handbook

Mark Your Calendars

Fall Lake Clean-Up

Since our October 3 clean-up was cancelled because of bad weather, it has been rescheduled for Saturday, October 31, from 9 am to 11 am. We'll gather at the old Hamilton town beach on Chebacco Road. Please bring work gloves and wear comfortable shoes! We'll provide trash bags and refreshments. Please join us – and lend a hand!

CLWA Annual Meeting

Tuesday, October 20, at 7:00 pm
American Legion Hall
School Street, Hamilton

We'd like to set goals for next year, vote in new Board members, and increase participation in the CLWA.

Robyn Kanter will give us a presentation on environmentally friendly lake-side landscaping ideas.

Come meet your neighbors and get an update on the issues that have involved the CLWA this year. We appreciate all members' opinions on how we can do things better, and how we can all work together to preserve the health of Chebacco Lake and its watershed area.

The CLWA needs your help. Please consider volunteering as a Board member. The Board meets one evening each month – it's a worthwhile, rewarding commitment.

CLWA Officers & Board of Directors for 2008-2009

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South Hamilton, MA 01982
dcksjl@comcast.net

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From the CLWA President's Chair

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In the same vein, Sue represented the CLWA in demanding that the new police chief in Hamilton be appointed as Harbormaster when the Board of Selectmen had decided to not include that role in his position. He will now be Harbormaster for the Lake. We are still working on getting a regular patrol of the lake on summer weekends.

While we hand out praise, we must include the Town of Essex Police and The Town of Hamilton Police. When high water threatened us in August, both departments responded quickly and energetically to keep boats moving at wake speed and keep more traffic from entering the Lake. We are all grateful to both Departments.

This was our best year ever for the Boat Parade with 22 boats participating. We will have photos up on our website soon. Judge Dave Lash must have had his hands full with the selection process for the prize winners. Thanks to all who participated! We all won this year.

We received lots of letters and e-mails from lake residents about many issues this summer. We are glad people are concerned about the lake and what goes on here. It is really important to all of us that we communicate with each other. If you have not sent us your e-mail address please do so right away. That way we can notify you of potential problems and upcoming events. Also Dave Lash is working on some improvements that he hopes will speed up our processes and allow individuals to control what they receive and respond to from us. But we need to know who and where you are, so send us your e-mail address. We are very protective of them.

If you have not renewed your lake Association membership, please do so right away. Your enrollment alone gives weight to our efforts to keep the lake's residents' interests in front of local boards and officials.

This year's CLWA annual meeting is October 22 at 7 PM at the Legion hall in Hamilton. We will be discussing how to use the \$5000.00 donation we received from Sony/Columbia Pictures and we will have two very informative speakers at the meeting. Also this year there are Board of Director seats opening up. Please consider joining the Board. This is a wonderful group of people to work with! You can have a real positive impact on your community.

Thanks to everyone for your help.

Sincerely,

Dave Kerr

President, Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

We would like to express our sincere condolences to the family of Robert "Bob" Breen who passed away recently. Bob was a longtime lakeside resident and a great supporter of the CLWA. He will be missed.

Designing With Nature Landscaping for a Healthy Lake

PLANTS FOR WET SITES

There are many plants that are associated with wetland systems that can also adapt to other soil conditions. One of my favorites is *Clethra anifolia*, or sweet pepperbush. This shrub has fragrant white flowers in mid summer and good fall color. It is also an excellent soil binder and will hold a bank together, as its roots travel underground and spread out quite quickly. It can stand in water on the edges of the lake or grow on a dry bank as well. A great plant with many beneficial uses! The variety "Rosea" grows upright and has pink flowers. "Sixteen Candles" is a smaller, white variety that I use quite often.

Itea virginica (Virginia sweetspire) is another plant that grows in both wet and dry soil. It has fragrant, white flowers in the spring and wonderful multi-hued fall color. Look for the variety "Henry's Garnet", which is especially brilliant. It is a great companion plant to *Clethra*, as it has a wide, arching habit. *Clethra* is more upright.

Ilex verticillata is a deciduous holly that has small, red berries and a nice, yellow fall color. It can stand in water along the edge of the lake or be planted in groups for a wonderful, natural hedge. It also works in a shrub border with other plants. The birds love this plant. Look for the red berries in the next few weeks.

You can see *Clethra* and *Ilex* along the edges of the ponds in Chebacco Woods. Fall is an especially great time to see these plants in their natural setting. It is also a great time to plant them in your yard. Many of the local nurseries are having sales, especially this year. There are bargains to be had! If you do plant in October, just make sure you give your new plantings plenty of water before the ground freezes. The three wetland plants that I have mentioned will take care of themselves once they are established.

Robyn Kanter

Water Testing

This summer the Essex Board of Health tested the water at the old Essex Town Beach and at Camp Menorah. The Town Beach was tested three times in June with e.coli results ranging from 7 to 26. Camp Menorah was tested six times between June 24 and August 11 with results ranging from 2 to 16. These are all very acceptable readings. The Town of Hamilton has not done any water testing at the lake for a long time.

The CLWA did one set of tests at three locations that are not tested by the Town of Essex. These were done on July 31, which was just after the very heavy rainfall. Many times a lot of rain can cause a high reading due to runoff of many things into the lake but the tests were 3, 16 and 18.

The CLWA would like to thank the many residents around the lake who have improved their landscaping to slow the runoff, clean up after their pets and don't feed the ducks and geese. All of these things really help to keep the water quality at good levels.

July Fourth Boat Parade

This year's parade was the largest ever! Twenty-two boats participated. Unfortunately, two of the boats had engine trouble but one of them was able to get towed around the lake.

The boat decorations were really great. Among the entries were pirates, a cow and cowboys, an alligator, Hogwarts, a huge golden Oscar, Woodstock, a milk carton, the Bee Movie, a submarine, a fire boat spouting water and lots of balloons and flags.

The Grand Prize, a canoe paddle signed by ten cast members of the "Grown-Ups" movie, went to the Breen family for the Wizard of OZ. Other prizes went to the Hickeys, the Gauthiers and the Bishops.

Everyone else who entered the parade got a gift certificate to The Farm for ice cream. We still need to find two of the entrants - a boat decorated with balloons and a Malibu boat with a flag - to give them their ice cream certificates. They left before the prizes were given out.

Mark your calendars!
CLWA Annual meeting
Tuesday, October 20, 7:00 pm
American Legion Hall, School Street, Hamilton



Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association
P.O. Box 2344
South Hamilton, MA 01982

Update on the Boat Ramp

This spring, the State repaved the ramp and put in new curbing. The CLWA made a request to have fewer parking spaces marked off than in the past since there are now more boats docked around the lake. When the ramp was first built about 35 or 40 years ago, the plan by the State was to allow a certain number of spaces so the amount of boats coming in for the day would not overwhelm the lake. Our request was not granted and there is the same number of spaces as in the past.

In the past, the State has provided two trash barrels which they dumped every week during the boating season. This year there were no barrels there. When asked, we were told that too many people were dumping household trash and things such as computer monitors so they were starting a “carry

in-carry out” policy. The workers from Bradley Palmer State Park continued to stop by at times this summer and removed trash left by boaters and others. Additionally there was also no portable toilet at the ramp this year. The State has never helped with this and the Town of Hamilton has paid for it for quite a few years. The CLWA was told in April that there was no money to pay for it this year. This is a health issue and should not happen again. We will be sending a request to the Hamilton Board of Health to include the amount in their budget for next year.

The CLWA continues to maintain the kiosk at the ramp with boating information, newsletters and membership forms.

Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

Membership Application/Renewal Form

For many years the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association has been working hard to protect our most valuable asset – Chebacco Lake and its surrounding watershed. The CLWA continues to educate the community about our lake’s history and ways in which we can preserve, protect and continue to enjoy Chebacco Lake. The CLWA conducts water quality testing, works to maintain water flow at Alewife Brook, and supports conservation efforts to protect Chebacco Lake and its watershed. We coordinate lakeside clean-ups, we sponsor our annual July 4th boat parade, and we host our website, www.chebaccolake.org, which provides up-to-date information and bulletins.

Please join the CLWA. It’s an investment in the future good health and beauty of Chebacco Lake. All memberships expire annually on January 31. We hope you’ll join us.

New **Renewal** Member \$25 Patron \$50 Sponsor \$75

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Lake Address (if different) : _____

Phone: _____

E-mail Address(s): _____

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

All memberships expire January 31.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Please send completed form and dues to:

Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

P O Box 2344

So. Hamilton, MA 01982