

Lake Todd Times

September 2009

Annual Report of the Lake Todd Village District

June 27, 2009

The focal point of our endeavors during the past year has without question remained the dam project but I will save this subject for last as it is lengthy and deserves an explanation. Most of the LTVD activities have continued with very little change both functionally and including the people involved.

Water quality testing has continued with Norm Lehoullier and Bob Doherty, and they have graciously agreed to continue for another year. The water quality really seems to change little year to year despite climatic differences, perhaps because there is a regular flow of mountain water into and out of the lake, year by year. We have a voluminous report handed to us yearly by the State which is available if you need to know the specifics; it is about a six credit course.

Mike Beaton continues with the weed watching and once again Amy Smagula of DES will share her expertise with us in July; we are fortunate that she is so generous with her time and all are welcome.

We have settled into a routine of highway clean-ups with one in the late spring, one late summer, and one in the fall. The Beaton family forms our core group and constitutes a quorum by themselves; however, we would like to see some new faces. The concentrated effort lasts for about two hours and usually includes some scintillating conversation.

Norma Murphy continues to hold the fort with the newsletter but she could use help from any one of us on family events, wildlife sightings, new owners on the lake, fish stories – in short, all the news that is fit to print.

Margie Weiler has taken over the web site and activities, dates to remember, contacts, and officers are all up to date thanks to her.
(continued on page 4)

LAKE TODD LOONS

Previously, it was reported that our loons had found a new nesting place. This seems to have been necessary because of the change in water levels - first too low and then too high, with too much rain at that time. At any rate, they did nest late and two loon chicks were born. After a few days, first one chick disappeared, and then after another day or two, the second chick vanished. We really don't know what happened to them. I do know that one late evening, I saw and heard one visiting loon being chased from the lake. The new father loon returned alone and after the noise and that evening flight, one chick was missing the next day. It remains a mystery as to what happened on that night, but I know that maverick loons can be very destructive to a newborn chick. Turtles and other animals are not friendly either. If one of you around the lake might have more information, we'd love to hear from you. Since the disappearance of the chicks, 3 or 4 extra loons have been seen swimming comfortably on the lake. The loon biologist from Moultonborough has been here and has been most helpful in finding the new nest and checking on the loons and chicks. Perhaps next year, we will be able to once again successfully have a loon family on our lake.

Allene Hamilton

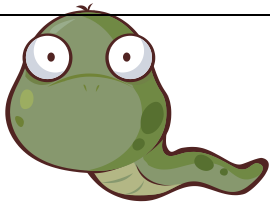
Another Wonderful Social

The Lake Todd Social was finally a done deal on the 29th after monsoonal weather forced its postponement from the weekend of the 22nd. Bill and Margie Weiler were the hosts, featuring a superb potluck and the added attraction of a tour of their home, which was recently one of the featured homes on the Newbury Center Meeting House fund raiser. The weather finally cooperated and the day was relaxing and just an enjoyable way to spend a summer afternoon conversing with friends and neighbors.

Adopt-A-Highway

We also had our adopt-a -highway cleanup on the 29th and we welcomed Sue Carl, and Steve and Cindy Snyder to our cast of regulars, who include Elaine and I, Peter Carl, Patty Dugdale, Bill Weiler, as well as Caroline, Gayle, Mike and Shane Beaton. We had a total of 13 bags — a new record.

John Warren



The Great Snake Epic

By John Warren:

This just in: a large snake has been terrorizing the shoreline in the vicinity of Ellie Daniel's house. He was most likely someone's pet who escaped, as he responds to the name "Herc" (short for Hercules) and has been described as between 12 inches to 12 feet long, weighing up to 350 pounds with a cranky disposition. He attracted a large crowd of lake volunteers, who, with the aid of a few cocktails, performed an incantation, managing to spoil his sunbathing on the shoreline. He was last seen trucking south near Digger Days. If you happen to cross paths with Herc, please give him plenty of leeway and call Tom Dugdale, who takes perverse delight in petting exotic animals.

By Tom Dugdale:

Patty called me and asked if I felt like rescuing a damsel in distress: Ellie Daniels had a big snake on her shoreline that was terrifying her. Upon my arrival, I found what was probably a common water snake sunning itself on a large rock at the water's edge. It was probably 3-4 foot long and a hefty 1 1/2 inches in diameter, which I'll admit "put me off" a bit, as I was expecting a 2-foot garter snake that I was sure was a garter snake — the only variety with which I am really familiar.

Well, I got into the water next to the rock where I could study the situation, while all the while Ellie, and by now another neighbor, Joyce, were agitatedly chattering, "Don't scare it. Catch it and put it in the pillowcase, and we'll take it down the road to the fire pond."

By now I'm wishing my son were here. I'm trying to visualize how I'm going to grab it behind the head without grabbing more rock than snake. Minutes go by as the snake enjoys the sun and I compare its markings with the picture in the book Ellie is showing me. Ellie assures me that according to the "herpetologist," putting it in a pillowcase is the proper thing to do. Joyce is muttering, "Who else can we call?? Maybe Mike Beaton. What's his number?? He might not be afraid of snakes."

"He's at work. How about John Warren??"

John turns out to be available and appears, hoe with v-shaped notch in hand — also heavy leather gloves. He apparently didn't understand the "catch it—don't scare it away because he'll just come back" edict because he poked it and it slithered into the water. Graceful little creatures as they swim, not terribly fast. I figure that now I've got a chance of getting a firm grip on him without jamming my fingers into a rock, so I'm in the water. I got one shot—left handed, but missed. It disappeared under the water and I never saw it again.

The Brick Mill House of Bradford, NH

By John Warren

(Part 4 of 4)

Today, the old Brick Mill is a unique but handsome structure. Inside is a blend of brick, exposed beams, artifacts from its historic functions, and modern conveniences, appliances, broadband, plus appointments from the extensive travels of its owners. It has a warm and comfortable feeling, but strongly maintains its connection to its 200-year life. From multiple wood stoves, which took all of three days to heat the house, it now has central heat. In the basement, the massive drive wheel holds court, as well as the 24" square beams that support the building, remarkable indicators of the talent that went into the construction so many years ago. Also extraordinary is the fact that 80% of the restoration was drawn up on that sketchpad during the all-nighter at the Bradford Inn.

The entrance door is now located on the side of the house where the shed used to stand. Ruth-Ann's plants and flowers decorate the walkway and back yard, while by the penstock intake area a small patio and table will often find them playing scrabble or having lunch, while listening to the constant music of the falls.

After all is said and done, "a loony idea"?

A Little Moose Tale

By Allene Hamilton

One late evening in mid-August, around 9:30 p.m., we were returning from New London via Lodge Hill. Suddenly, the car in front of us slammed on its brakes! We saw nothing at that point, but as we proceeded slowly down the hill, we saw a moose standing on the breakdown lane next to our front window, seemingly ready to cross in front of us. If my window had been open I could have touched his head. It was some scary experience, I can tell you! For some strange reason, he stood still until we passed by. I think the Lord was looking after us that night. A lesson learned: Moose are wonderful to see, but oh-so-dangerous in the wrong place and time.



Information Changes

Please inform the Lake Todd Village District with any of the following changes:

name, mailing address, telephone number and/or e-mail address. Also, if you are not receiving the newsletter by e-mail and are able to do so, please let us know so we may keep mailing costs down. We would appreciate your e-mailing any changes to: ltvd@iamnow.net. Thank you!

Weed Update

On July 19, several Lake Todd neighbors arrived at the Warren's house for a weed watching expedition to identify any invasive species of weeds. None were found at that time, but three vigilant lake residents asked for suspicious weeds to be checked. They were all sent to Amy Smagula and we are happy to report that all came back okay.

Lake Todd Annual Report (continued from page 1)

The Emergency Action Plan which was woefully out of date has been given a new face with a roster of all the players now up to date including addresses, phone numbers, and schematics of calling sequence. The Dam Bureau has made a concerted effort to standardize the format of this document, and that we have done.

The small claim brought against the LTVD by one of the littoral owners was dismissed in New London District Court. A number of residents appeared in support of us and we appreciate their concern and confidence.

Joyce Sinagra and Carol Tonkin not only sold flares but went door to door welcoming new folks, returnees, and year round residents alike. And the word is they will be out again this year. Our gratitude to all those volunteers mentioned in this letter, also to Jim Bruss and Bruss Construction for allowing us to use their printing facilities, and to the Community Center for our meeting place.

Back to the dam. Last year we mentioned the unexpected size and number of permits and fees we encountered, a lot of them required by the State of NH, and this year has been no different. There are four layers of engineers involved as mandated by the State, add in testing of concrete and soils and the cost is approaching \$20000 without a spade of soil turned.

The East Side of the dam saw the State increase the width of the berm at the top to six feet, which necessitated increased volume of material, and additional retaining walls because of the change in slope.

In regards to the West Side wall, the State has mandated that we raise the wall approximately 2-1/2" to meet their minimum requirements for a hundred year storm. They have also required that a retaining wall be installed, similar to the berm on the East side, to seal off any possible breach. None of this work was originally foreseen. On the West Side the location of the retaining wall drove up costs and all construction must be done at the same time rather than first the East Wall, then West Wall which we had originally envisaged. As costs for the actual construction rise so do engineering, inspection, and testing increase in lock step.

Given all this good news we gave a lot of thought as to how to minimize the impact for the owners on Todd and the best solution is to take out a loan spread over two years, at worst three at the very low rates available to municipalities (3% to 4%). This will split the tax burden over two years and allow us to complete the project this year. We feel we can pay the loan back 1/2 in January of 2010 and 1/2 in January 2011.

Why are we doing all this? In case you forgot the dam on October 9 of 2005 came dangerously close to breaching, not with a failure of the current structure but with the water running around the dam, especially through the backyard of the Brick Mill house on Main Street. We were fortunate that this storm hit when we were repairing the dam as the Lake was drawn down 2 1/2 feet and gave us the cushion that may have saved the Lake. We escaped the worst but we have also been warned and in view of two other "100" year storms within 18 months the handwriting is on the wall.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Warren