



Fathoms

The Newsletter of The Sebasticook Lake Association

Volume 23
Number 2

*Our association was formed in 1972 to improve and maintain
water quality and the general conditions of Sebasticook Lake*

October 2015

President's Message

Fall 2015

What a glorious summer it was!!! Not much oppressive heat until August, great water clarity, good fishing according to those who do that (not me), great sailboat weather for those who indulge in such pastimes (again, not me), and overall fabulous sunrises and sunsets. No complaints from this side of the lake.

I learned something interesting at the 16th Annual Milfoil Summit; 96% of all wild brook trout in lakes and ponds in the continental United States live in Maine; a good reason to keep our lake, feeder streams and outlet streams clean. A legislative bill LD 70 (Act to Assist Towns in Eradicating Milfoil and Other Invasive Aquatic Plants and Nuisance Species) was sponsored by Representative Kenneth Fredette, House Majority Chair. The bill provides \$225,000 to Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and \$900,000 to DEP to supplement boat sticker funds for local control of nuisance aquatic species-both plant and fish. Lastly, I learned that Maine DEP announced changes to Chapter 1000 Guidelines under the Nonconforming Structure Expansion Section, which is addressed in a different article in this newsletter.

I received a number of e-mail messages and telephone calls asking about the rationale for the early date of the lake drawdown. While the water quality was superb this summer, there was a lot of foam on my beach the Saturday before the drawdown. While not a 100% determination of high Phosphorus levels, foam can be indicative of higher-than-optimal levels of the stuff that makes the grass grow green and the algae blossom in the lake. When I laid eyes on that brown foamy scum, I took comfort in knowing that in 48 hours, action would be taken to help alleviate the burden on the lake. I believe the efforts of all lake property owners along with the winter-long drawdown and the voracious appetites of the Alewives have contributed to above average water quality during the summer of 2015. I would hope that we all would lead the charge to encourage this forward-moving continuum of clear water, better beaches and accountability for a sustainable future for Sebasticook Lake.

Have a safe winter. Muf

SEBASTICOOK LAKE ASSOCIATION MINUTES

July 11, 2015

The meeting was held at the American Legion Hall in Newport on Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Muffy said, "We have new people." Muffy asked them to introduce themselves. Diane Peierce from Camp Benson, Crystal Jarkins from Bangor and Durham Bridge Road, and the Cushing's from Maplewood. (Pat Goode's old place)

The Secretary's report was accepted as typed and written.

The Treasurer's report was read by Rick Berry. It was accepted. Rick is still receiving money for the Fireworks. The names of the people that donated will be listed at the end of the minutes. *

We will continue to support the VLMP and the Maine Lakes Society for \$250 and \$200 respectively.

Is there a need for the expense to Jack Carson for water quality testing? Jack said no money is needed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Buoy Committee - Dick Stone - This is the last year that we will have a buoy committee. The state has agreed to take over the buoys. We have agreed to monitor the buoys. The state is going to replace the 6" buoys with 9" buoys. Dick will send in a report every two weeks saying that we have checked them and they are okay. If anyone finds a buoy that is out of place, please let Dick or an officer of the SLA know so Dick can let the state know. They are 300# anchors so they shouldn't be moving. The pontoon boat is at the boat launch and up for sale. It was custom made for Dick Bubar so if someone wants a heavy duty boat, this is it. It runs good. Is anyone interested in it or have questions? Larry Ferrell said it would be good for a house boat. Is there a minimum bid? No. Who is going to take the buoys out? They aren't going to be taken out. The state is going to leave them in. The boat will be delivered to whoever buys it but the trailer needs to go back to Earl Peters. Larry said the engine alone is worth \$3000-\$4000 alone. Larry would like to make a recommendation that it goes for at least blue book value; at least for the engine. It was mentioned that the Huff's might be able to come buy it from us and then they could re-sell it. It was asked how old the engine was. Dick said it was old. Dick Stone said that the deck has been completely stripped and it is no longer a cruising boat. We have a bid in an envelope. Muffy opened it and it is for \$800. It was voted that this was too low. We are going to call the person back and ask him to make a counter offer. We will give it two weeks to check out the counter offer and contact Huff's. If nothing by then, we will sell it. Tom Breitweig offered to put it up on his lot on Route 7 to try and sell it. We will do that and drop the boat there off the trailer. We will also advertise in *Uncle Henry's* and *Craigslit*. (NOTE: Later in the summer, the boat sold for \$2200)

BBQ Committee - Barb Cloutier-- No boats for sale but hoping to sell you on the idea of staying for the BBQ after the meeting. The purpose of the BBQ is to hopefully have more people attend the meeting. And, it seems to work. Being a member is certainly worth it with the BBQ and two newsletters a year. We have two super chefs. Barb thanked everyone for bringing in salads and desserts. Barb asked McDonalds to furnish the coffee and they did. Last year we had Tim Horton's.

Fireworks - Mike Vining - The field is all mowed. Dana Hartford mowed the field for us. We are going to have to look for a new spot as the property has been sold. It was suggested that we save the barge and set the fireworks off from it.

Membership Committee - Allan Fernald - 204 paid. We have 115 people that didn't pay. Some people think that we are just a club. They just don't understand what we do. Camp Benson and Maplewood are the two worst areas for not paying. Those two areas alone are over 40% that don't pay. We do have eleven new members this year. Mrs. Goode told the Cushing's about the lake association. Allan says that he gets a list from the town about the property owners. One person asked about whom he signs up with and how much do they pay? Allan explained that dues are just \$10. Maybe next year we could have an informational booth by setting up at Bear's One Stop or at the library?

Newsletter Committee - Debbie Ferrell - Our members are still Rick, Muffy, Chris, Leone, Barb, Thelma and myself. Rick Perlmutter puts it into *Microsoft Publisher* for us. Does anyone want to join the newsletter committee? We only have about three meetings an issue. If you don't want to be on the committee, maybe you could send us information to be in it.

Water Quality - Debbie Ferrell - passed around a couple of things. Debbie wants people to mark off their opinions about the water quality. She also passed around a graph showing the water quality from past years up to the current year. Debbie isn't showing if dropping the water had a positive effect on the water quality. There is equipment over on the table for anyone that is new or wants to know what is gone through for water quality testing. If anyone has questions Debbie will be happy to answer them after the meeting.

See *Minutes*, page 4

(Minutes from page 3)

Debbie explained what they go through for each testing. They test for oxygen and phosphorus. If you see the fish swimming higher in the water later in the summer, that is because there isn't enough oxygen further down. The phosphorus is higher this year so far. And, we test twice a month. It seems like every other year we are a little higher. What is the best secchi disk reading that we have had? 3.5 meters in early June. This means how far down we can see. Three of the four years are in line but one reading that was 2.2 at the end of June. That was unusually bad. It all depends on the weather.

Jack Carson is doing our water quality testing this year. Debbie is keeping the data. Jack is very convenient to that spot and does a great job. Does anyone have any questions? The Cushing's asked about the draining and is that why it is done? Because we have had so much rain, is that a reason as to why the water quality might not be as good? Yes. The rain can wash particulates into the water causing more phosphorus. If there are lawns right up to the water, we suggest that people put a buffer on their shore. We have about 1.5 flushes per year so we are lucky as it washes a lot of the phosphorus out of the lake. Debbie asked everyone to please be careful about putting gas in your boats and using soap near the lake. Anything that goes into the lake prohibits us from continuing our progress with keeping the lake clean.

Water Regulation - Debbie Ferrell - There should be a meeting in a couple of weeks to decide when the lake will be drawn down. Sometimes it is right after Labor Day if it isn't doing so well. Tom suggested to leave the water later if possible and to not go as low or as fast. Larry explained that the thermal inversion happens in November and that is when the water inverts meaning that the bottom layer moves to the top and the top goes to the bottom. One person said, this is the first time in six years that he has been able to walk out on his lawn. With all of the snow, if the lake level had been left higher there would have been a lot of damage from the ice.

Anyone find anything weird on their beach? Someone saw some mink, a raccoon. If anyone sees fish with teeth please let someone know. Mr. Lawrence has seen a lot of turtles around. Mr. Carson has had a march of the turtles on his property.

Water level - Is it a concern with everyone? No concerns.

New Business -

Fireworks - Is noise interrupting the nesting habits of loons? Loons are very timid and fragile and if they are frightened off their nest, then we won't have baby loons. We might have to find a new site for the fireworks. Someone identified a new spot that is high. That is up for discussion. Mr. McLaughlin contacted the state wildlife folks to see if it has any impact on the loons and other wildlife on the lake. Alexa Ortiz (guest speaker) weighed in. She isn't really sure how it affects their stress level. It depends on the pair and the territory. It increases the likelihood of abandonment. All of the wildlife is affected by it and the best case would be to not have fireworks. Loons could still be on their nests at this time of year.

Camera at the dam - Is anyone interested in having one? Muffy said there is one in Burnham and you can see them going through the fish ladder on it so it will just be a couple weeks before they come up here.

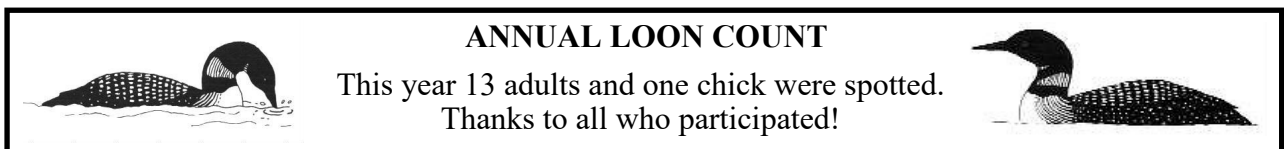
One gentleman hasn't seen any sunfish. They are off Shore Drive on Kitchen Hill. Speaking of fishing, you need to have a license. Someone last week was teaching their grandchildren how to fish. A game warden came by and told the people that they still needed to have a license. They were given a ticket. Anyone 10 years old and over needs a fishing license.

It was voted to have next year's meeting at the American Legion on July 9, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.

"Loons and Lead" presentation with Alexa Ortiz: The Maine population of loons is about 4000 birds. The adults usually lay about two eggs, sometimes one, sometimes three. It takes about 30 days for incubation and they usually hatch within 24 hours. Loons don't usually breed until they are 5-7 years old. Alexa brought some lead free tackle with her for anyone to take and also asked everyone to please turn in their lead tackle as lead sinkers are one of loons biggest threats. Muffy gave Alexa a hat to thank her for coming to our meeting and presenting.

Muffy will set up a container at the Cultural Center so anyone can drop off their lead tackle.

Motion to adjourn was at 11:54 a.m.



A Big "Thanks" To All 2014 Fireworks Sponsors!

*Mary Ellen Tardy
Michael and Tanya Giambo
Angler's Restaurant
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Ed and Susan McLaughlin
Randall Davis
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Muffy and Moe Pare
John Cole
Avis and Dana Adams
Peggy Porto
The Loconte Family*

Maine DEP : Changes to Chapter 1000 Guidelines Under the Nonconforming Structures Expansion Section

Maine lakefront property owners may have more choices due to the substantially modified provisions regarding expansions that reflect the recent changes to the state statute. The new provisions limit expansions of nonconforming structures based on footprint and height, instead of floor area and volume. The change intends to be simpler and more aligned with the purposes of shore land zoning. Depending on the circumstances of specific lots and structures, this change could be viewed as being more restrictive in some cases or less restrictive in other case for landowners.

While there is no deadline currently, municipalities are encouraged to amend local ordinances to the footprint and height limitations, in order to remain consistent with the state statute and Guidelines. Also, municipalities are allowed to have more restrictive ordinances; although, it is recommended that such ordinances are further supported by a comprehensive plan. Omitting any or all of the exceptions provided in the Guidelines would be more restrictive on landowners, but would provide municipal officials fewer standards to administer and enforce.

Municipal officials have choices with regard to the new provisions. The provisions limit footprint by square footage or percent, whichever allows more expansion. Including both limitations would provide landowner with the choice to decide which limitation to apply to their property. Municipal officials may instead choose to include only one of the limitations, either square footage or percent. This would be more restrictive on the landowner, but would be simpler for municipal officials to administer and enforce.

(From *Shoreland Zoning News Spring 2015*. Reprinted from Maine DEP)

COOKS CORNER



Scottish Oat Bannocks

Delicious Oat Biscuits Perfect for Breakfast, Dessert, or with Fresh Berries and Whipped Cream

1 1/2 cups All Purpose Flour
1 cup Quick Oats
2 Tbs Sugar
1 pinch Salt
1 Tbs Double-Acting Baking Powder
3 Tbs Butter or Margarine, cut into small pieces
1/2 cup Milk

PREHEAT OVEN TO 425 degrees.

1. Mix dry ingredients. Cut margarine bits into dry ingredients thoroughly with pastry cutter.
2. Add enough milk to make a stiff dough. Roll out dough on floured board 1/2" thick and cut in 2 1/2" circles.
3. Bake about 12-15 minutes, until lightly browned. Serve slathered with butter and your favorite preserves.

TIP: For desserts, sprinkle a bit of sugar on tops before baking.

Water Quality and Monitoring 2015 By Deborah Ferrell

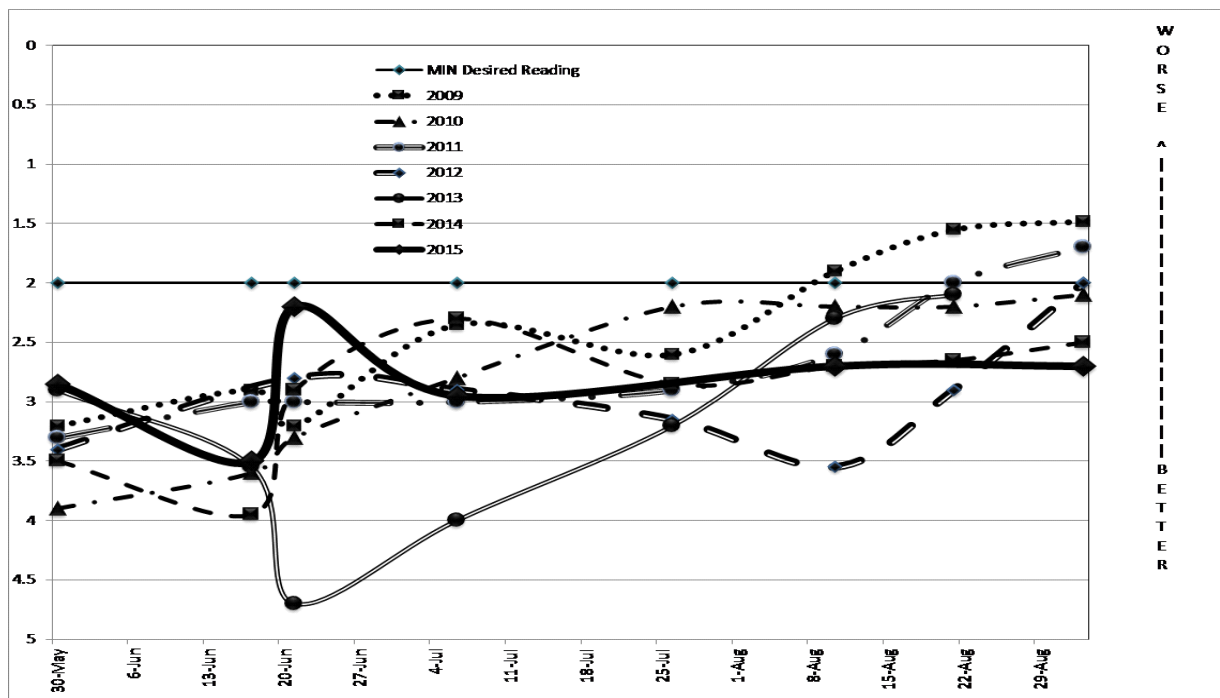
This year the water quality monitoring was shared between myself and Jack Carson, with Jack taking most of the physical readings. Water quality monitoring is an important activity which provides data to help us determine if our lake's water quality is continuing to improve or if it's slipping backward.

Water quality monitors test lake water approximately every two weeks monitoring for clarity and dissolved oxygen. Each year the monitor is tested to ensure that they and their equipment meet standards set by the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) and the DEP. Water clarity is a visual test that is performed by extending a black and white disk into the lake and, using a scope, measuring the depth at which the disk disappears from view. Dissolved oxygen is measured using a digital monitor that measures the water temperature and dissolved oxygen content at one meter increments. Testing is done at the deepest point on the lake for consistency. The results are reported to the VLMP for inclusion on their database. This information is used to compare to previous years' data and to other Maine lakes. The DEP also uses this information to monitor our lake and to develop programs to improve our lake's water quality.

In addition to the above tests a DEP representative attends our testing monthly and samples the lake for phosphorous (P). Studies have shown that an increased phosphorous level is the determining factor in algal blooms. This test is done by taking water samples at two meter increments throughout the water column. These samples are taken to a laboratory and tested. Some summers phytoplankton and zooplankton samples are also taken. A discussion of the results and their meaning will be in the spring newsletter. Results of the water clarity are shown on the graph below.

As you can see from the chart below this year's readings are quite different from most previous years. In late June the reading was not very good, but most of the remainder of the summer clarity readings were about average. By the end of summer, the readings were better than previous years with only 2009 coming close. Any Secchi dish reading below 2 meters is technically considered an algal bloom. We did not see a reading 2 meters or less this past summer. This change from the past may be due to weather conditions this year or perhaps due to the change in keeping the lake level low all winter, it's just too early to tell. Again this winter the lake level will be kept low. I'm looking forward to seeing next summer's readings.

Secchi Disk Readings



Just Sayin' by Susan McLaughlin

Fourth of July--fireworks--"bombs bursting in air"--part of our heritage. But NOT symbiotic with our wildlife.

I love the fireworks on the fourth, period - on the fourth! I get goose bumps hearing them, and thinking about our wonderful country. Now, here comes the "but" . . . I love the wildlife too, particularly the loons. I hear them during the day while they claim their territory, and when they call for a mate. I also hear their distress call in the evening when the fireworks begin, or when a predator nears.

When we moved to the lake, fireworks were few and far between and illegal. And loons were plentiful. When I read in the 2014 issue of "Fathoms" that the loon count was 8, I couldn't believe my eyes. I searched through my previous issues of "Fathoms" and discovered that 8 was truly a pathetic number. In 2013 the number was an impressive 21 adults. The law which allows for the purchase and use of fireworks was passed in 2012. Do you see a coincidence here? Just sayin'

While Newport restricts fireworks after 10 p.m., it's worth noting that there are 39 municipalities that prohibit the use and sale of fireworks, and 32 that restrict them in some form. I would be very happy if our fireworks were far more restricted in Newport, particularly around our lake. It has been published that the noise from fireworks impacts nesting shorebirds in the form of injury from debris, abandonment of eggs and nests (*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1997*). If loons respond similarly, they may leave their eggs or chicks and which may become vulnerable to predators. Not only are the loons frightened, I would suspect also that the noise upsets our bald Eagles that have nests around the lake. And, owls, blue herons, and possibly others, are not immune to the noise either. When we consider that pyrotechnics and gas exploders are used to disperse wildlife in an effort to prevent bird strikes at airports, and to keep crops from being decimated, it only makes sense that our wildlife would disperse as well. Do we really want our wildlife around our lake to disappear? Just sayin'!

In addition to the noise which affects our wildlife, the remnants from fireworks falling into our lake can pollute and negate all our hard work to get the water quality to a level we can now enjoy. Do we really want to undo all our efforts? Perchlorate salts are common in fireworks and they are regulated as pollutants of water (*Dean et al., 2004, "Development of freshwater water-quality criteria for perchlorate. Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry 23:1441-1451*). "Fireworks displays dramatically increase the concentration of perchlorate in surface water. . . . Perchlorate levels rose 24 to 1,028 times above background levels" (*Wilkin et al., 2007, "Perchlorate behavior in a municipal lake following fireworks displays." Environmental Science & Technology 41:3966-3971*).

In addition to perchlorate salts, other chemicals in fireworks can include lead, strontium, barium, zinc, copper, antimony, and potassium (some which are used to produce colors in the fireworks). I'm no chemist, but this can't be good for water quality or wildlife living in and around our lake. Just sayin'!

I'm concerned, and if you have similar concerns about our wildlife around and in our lake, and you are also concerned about our water quality, please don't hesitate to voice your concerns. You can contact Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (287-5216), or the Department of Environmental Protection (287-7688). Perhaps it's time to revisit restrictions for fireworks in our town, particularly around our lake. Just sayin'!



New Around Town

Construction of the new, \$3 million public safety facility is well under way and is expected to be completed in February of 2016. See photo to left. It will house both the Newport Police and Fire Departments.

Also new to our area is *4 Seasons Floral & Gifts*, located on Route 7 behind Emery's Meats & Produce.

The *Dollar Tree Store*, a discount general merchandise retailer located across Route 2 from WalMart, opened in mid-October.



Sebasticook Lake Association

www.sebasticooklakeassociation.org

Membership Form

Name _____

Address (Summer) _____

Address (Winter) _____

Telephone (Summer / Winter) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Please check if this is an address change

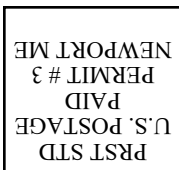
Dues for July 2016—July 2017:
Regular \$10.00 Associate \$8.00

Make Checks Payable To:
Sebasticook Lake Association
c/o Rick Berry
3332 Kindle Ave
The Villages FL 32163

Want your ID card mailed to you instead of
picking it up at next summer's meeting?
Please include a self-addressed, stamped
envelope with your membership check.

FALL 2015 ISSUE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



22 Loon Drive
NEWPORT, ME 04953