



Fathoms

The Newsletter of The Sebasticook Lake Association

Volume 25
Number 2

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

October 2018

President's Message

Hot, hot, hot....and humid! That is what I remember MOST about the summer; too hot for me!

Almost as dreadful as the heat was the early-in-the-season-more-dead-fish-on-our-beaches-than-most-of-us-have-seen-in-over-20-years phenomenon. The Inland Fishery and Wildlife biologist's thoughts were insightful; a perfect storm of aging alewives (average life span 6-8 years), a fish ladder that has been operational for ~ 8 years (which allows the old geezers back into the lake for one last fling), warm water with low levels of dissolved oxygen, and tuckered out fish that hadn't had a good meal in 5 weeks simply resulted in fish that kicked the bucket after spawning. No big, scary fish-kill story here, merely bad timing. Curious phenomenon; most of the folks who sent me information about the number of dead fish on their beaches averaged one fish for every 10 feet of waterfront, and a lot of those mysteriously disappeared, probably eaten by foxes, eagles, ospreys, raccoons, and skunks. While tincture of time will be the most accurate statistician, the dead alewives event may occur every summer, or may not happen again. Interesting, to say the least.

Yet another monumental event in the summer of 2018 was the week of green water July 14-19, which cleared up for a while before becoming green again for most of August. The decline in water quality prompted meetings with hydrologists and fish biologists, followed by flurries of e-mails, and teleconferences that confounded us as much they provided clarification. A perfect storm of aging alewives, warmer-than-normal temperatures, no rain, and phosphorus that was available to support algae growth resulted in the kind of decreased water clarity that we have not experienced in approximately 6-8 years. The dam gate was opened on September 10, 2018, and the phosphorus level in the water downstream from the dam is being tested each day, like it was at the inception of the drawdown so many years ago. Once the phosphorus levels drop and level off, the dam gate can be closed, although it remains to be seen if these efforts will result in better water quality next summer.

That all sounds so dismal, so I will close on a more optimistic note; SPRING is on the way!

I bid you a safe and healthy winter, and I will see you all in 2019!!

Muf



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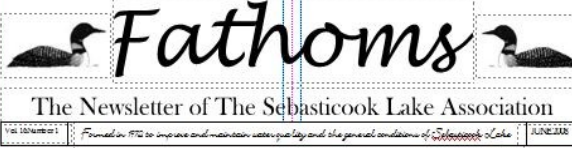
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Membership Committee – Allan Fernald 368-5492
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“Fathoms” Newsletter Staff

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Share Your Lakeside Stories

Have any interesting stories or facts about our lake. Why don't you jot them down and send them to us so we can share them with other members of the Lake Association. Send them to

Rick Perlmutter
PO Box 12
Newport, ME 04953

Or send your contribution via e-mail to:
Perlmutter@MSN.com

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Lake Association E-Mail Data Base

We are continually building an e-mail database of Sebasticook Lake Association members. There will be an e-mail sign-up sheet at this year's meeting. If you are unable to attend, please send your e-mail address to
PERLMUTTERS@MSN.COM

Of course, e-mail addressed will be used only for Lake Association business and will *never* be given out.

SEBASTICOOK LAKE ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
JULY 7, 2018

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

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

We had a moment of silence for Cliff Vining. Cliff was a very important part of the SLA and he is surely missed.

New members – Margo's sister, Jackie, that lives down Abnaki as well.

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

Treasurer's Report - The Town of Newport gives us a portion of the excise taxes. We keep money on hand in case we ever have an emergency with the lake. The excise tax should be about \$1800 this year that we receive from the town as that is about what we receive each year. We treat this as income. The treasurer's report was accepted as written.

We had ordered shirts from Berg's this year but they haven't come in yet. They should be in soon. We are donating \$250 to The Lake Stewards of Maine, which was formerly known as the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Association and another \$200 to Maine Lakes Society, as our association does every year. These organizations would be the first onsite if we had something happen to the lake. This is why we try to keep money on hand for this kind of emergency.

Jack Carson uses his own boat and gas as well as the Ferrell's for water quality testing. Last year they had waived the donation towards the gas. Again, they both waived the money offered to them for reimbursement.

Buoy Committee - Dick Stone – The state had to replace two of the buoys this year. They were pretty well beaten up. If you notice any that are in bad shape, please let Dick know. The state also goes out and checks them every two weeks.

Cookout Committee - Barb Cloutier – In past years, we have had rain and/or hot weather. We have nice weather today. Lots of hot dogs, burgers, iced tea and lemonade. We have a lot of desserts today from the lake association members. We had some sadness this year with Cliff Vining passing. Thank you to all the other members of the cookout committee. They have come together and filled in, in his absence. We hope you'll all come and enjoy the food.

Fireworks Committee - Mike Vining – We sent out a letter around town and raised about \$1000 from the local merchants. Then I go see Mr. and Mrs. Loconte and they make us whole and fill in the gap. We would like to not be so dependent on them, if we can. We would like to get more of a committee going forward to help raise more money towards this. Muffy has been doing a lot of this herself. She sends out letters in waves or if she is in local businesses, she talks about it. Mark Vining has been nominated to help Muffy. Dana Hartford has been very nice in still letting us use the Tardy field to have the fireworks from. We have been approached to change the date of the fireworks as we have always had the fireworks on the same day as the lake association meeting. We said "no" to this last year but Mike and Muffy wanted to talk about it with everyone at the association meeting. Everyone wanted to keep it the same that we have it now. We raised \$1000-\$1500 and the Laconte's give the rest which is usually around \$2500.

Membership Committee - Allan Fernald – We are doing better. We are now at a total of 325 people that are on the lake. We had 329 last year but some are continuing to buy additional properties. Last year we had 194 people that paid. This year we had 197. 40% aren't paying. Maplewood was at 26% of the nonpayers. 21% from Camp Benson and next was the Durham Bridge area. We also had 35 new members this year. Some of these are where the ownership was transferred.

Newsletter Committee - Debbie Ferrell and Rick Perlmutter - We could use more members on the committee or have some new ideas. Rick is pretty much the head of the newsletter. He does the set up in *Microsoft Publisher*. The question was raised whether or not we should send newsletters to people who don't pay their dues. Maybe we should put an article in the fall newsletter about paying your dues? If anyone has suggestions or something to put on the website or about navigating on the website, please let Debbie know. It was mentioned that a lot of people don't know about how far we have come with the water quality of the lake. If there are new people on the lake, they don't know how the condition of the lake was years ago. If someone new moves in next to you, how do they know about the lake association? Allan Fernald checks the tax list. But, if anyone knows of new people, please let Debbie know. It was mentioned to advertise in the *Rolling Thunder* about anyone donating or contributing to dues even if they don't live on the lake. For this, there is an *associate dues rate*. It was mentioned again that we really need to talk about how bad the lake was. People just don't realize how bad the lake used to be. Maybe we should put an article in the Bangor Daily News? Barb Cloutier mentioned about an article that used to be in the Fathoms newsletter. Debbie is going to look for it and possibly re-run it. There used to be a classification system of lakes of A, B C and D. We used to always be a D. heard that we are either the 2nd or 3rd cleanest lake in the state of Maine. It was also mentioned about buffers and barriers on your property to help with the runoff.

See *Minutes*, page 4

(Minutes from page 3)

Water Quality Testing - Debbie Ferrell and Jack Carson - We will put another article together for the buffers. Please go onto the website and there are links regarding buffers. Debbie mentioned septic systems. It is really important to maintain those. There are a lot of new technologies now. The most basic thing you can do is have your septic system pumped. You should have it done every three years. The next thing is fertilizers. Most properties around the lake have plenty of phosphorus. Most of the fertilizers around here now, have three numbers. The center number should be "0". Only under certain conditions should you add hot ash. Debbie passed out some graphs. The best year we have had was last year. When the gentleman was supposed to come from DEP, he wasn't able to as he had a concussion. Allan Fernald brought up the fact about not to use Round Up or weed killer around the lake. Someone mentioned about "soap suds" being seen. Debbie said it actually isn't soap suds. It is the lake being agitated and the reaction of phosphorus. Muffy asked Jack to post the updates of the water quality checks on the website. Is there anything else that people would like to see on the website? One member mentioned that her grandchildren weren't able to go in the water because of the duck itch (known also as "swimmer's itch" and actually caused by a microscopic parasite). Debbie said to make sure and spray them off with tap water right after getting out of the lake and that will reduce your chance of getting it. It happens mostly with kids because they stay in the shallow waters.

New Business - Muffy Pare - A question was raised regarding the numerous dead fish on the lakeshore. Nate Gray from the Maine Department of Marine Resources, revealed that these fish had travelled up from the ocean and that this year, the lake was about 20 degrees warmer than the water temperature had been in the past. There simply wasn't enough dissolved oxygen in the warmer, shallow water and that caused to fish to suffocate. The fish were too warm, exhausted and did not have enough oxygen. All the fish were alewives.

The River Walk Festival is on August 4th. There is also the Egg Festival coming right up. There are a lot of local things going on.

Draw down date - Usually by drawdown time, we have three or four data points. We haven't gotten that this year. We have only had one reading. We have tried, but haven't been able to because of the wind. There isn't enough data yet to see where we are at. One member said it hadn't been drawn out as far the last couple of years. The lake has silted in from where we used to. We also protect the ancient weir and keep it covered. It is also very weather dependent.

Next year's meeting Date and location - Next year's lake association meeting will be July 6, 2019 at 10:00 at the American Legion hall.

Guest Speaker - Ryan Parker - *Recycling and Composting for a Healthier Lake* Mr. Parker is on the recycling committee in town that has been newly formed as well as the Economic Development Committee. He doesn't like waste. We are throwing away a lot of money. That is, everyone that contributes to property taxes in the town of Newport. We have lots and lots of trash. The costs for trash continue to rise. In Newport in particular, the cost of tipping fees have gone up 9%, trucking fees have gone up 53% and our revenue has gone down 43%. The cost of oil has gone down. China doesn't want our plastics anymore. Cardboard revenue has gone down as well and it is going to continue. We need to do something about the costs. What's next may be "Pay as you throw." That is, residents pay for what they throw away. Ryan goes to the dump about four times a year. Waterville, Maine has gone to "pay as you throw." The amount of trash dropped 53% in about five months time.

There are a lot of misconceptions about this type of program. People think they are now paying more for trash than when it used to be free. There are special bags that can be purchased. The only thing that money would be used for would be towards the tipping fees. The tipping fees would drop because they would start recycling more. Some people say that people would throw their trash in the woods but there is no factual evidence for this. There are just the same people that have always done it. There is already a lot of illegal dumping going on. It is becoming an issue again. It is very difficult to pass a "pay as you throw" ordinance. We need to make it convenient at the transfer station. There isn't a market for glass. Currently, the transfer station crushes it up and saves it for some contractor that wants it for fill. We need to improve plastic as they only take #2 plastic. There needs to be a committee in place and we already have it. This is all about saving money. It isn't going to help the environment. The Town manager believes our tonnage would drop about 40 to 60% in the first year. 40-50% of all food is wasted in the whole country every year. Food waste in a landfill produces methane. About 23% of all methane comes from food waste. Methane also produces leaching at our landfills.

Food waste is the most expensive thing in our landfills. We pay by weight and food is very heavy. 28% of our waste in Maine is food. Over \$200,000 in tipping fees is what we pay a year. We could save about a quarter of it by implementing this program. There will be composting installed at the transfer station. Horse manure works the best and that is happening at the transfer station. This coming Wednesday at 6:00 pm there is going to be a meeting at the Public Safety Building regarding this. We need to get people to know about this as people generally want to do the right thing.

Motion to adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 1153 am.

"How We Got Here"

As Told to Muffy Pare

I recently had the opportunity to meet Barb Ladue, who lives with her husband Bob at the east end of the lake. While I was there, I had a lovely visit with Espy, their Boykin Spaniel. Espy greeted me at the door with some pretty excited barking, indicating that she was the boss and I should not even entertain the thought of coming through the front door that Barb had left unlocked for me. After 17 seconds of sniffing, Espy decided that I was okay and let me pat her for a good long time. Barb informed me that the Boykin Spaniel is officially the state dog of South Carolina, where Bob has lived for many years.

Bob is originally from Essex Junction, Vermont and after joining the Navy, has lived in many places, our lake being his favorite. "His little piece of heaven," as he calls it. Barb grew up in Van Buren, Maine, and after living in Brewer and raising two sons, she purchased her house in Newport 12 years ago. She said that she looked at the house and considered purchasing it, only to find out it had already been bought. A few months later, it was back on the market and she snapped it up, and she is happy that she did. As we chatted, we discovered that we have some things in common. Besides both loving dogs, we both work in the healthcare field, and a high school friend of hers was a college chum of mine! While Bob is 'from away', he loves Maine, and spends as much time as possible here on the lake when he is not engaged in some exciting project at work.

After living in the house year round for a few years, Bob and Barb decided that some changes needed to be made in order to make the house ship-shape, comfortable, and welcoming for their growing family, which now includes the cutest granddaughter on the planet! After much consideration and tossing around of remodeling ideas, Bob and Barb committed to a major renovation project with the help of a local contractor. They now have a warm, inviting home decorated in soothing tones of gray and white with a gleaming white kitchen where a pot of something delicious-smelling was simmering on the stove. The kitchen opens onto a deck that has a fairly panoramic view of the lake, and the lawn and swim area are open and inviting.

Bob and Barb have plans to happily grow old at the lake and look forward to many fun, family-filled summers to come.

New About Town

In the last few years, there seems to have been a steady flow of new businesses to the Newport area. This seems to me to be a good thing.

I recently made a trip to the newly-opened *Tractor Supply Company*, which is on Route 2, a bit west of WalMart. There I found a surprising assortment of clothing, hardware, garden supplies, and pet supplies. I was amazed at everything (and more) from electric power tools, boots and shoes, nice shirts, truck supplies, and of course, tractor supplies. It is definitely worth a visit if only to get an idea of what is now available in our neighborhood.

With the demise of Newport Tire in the old Aubuchons storefront, you will now find *The Pink Elephant*, an antique "mall" that features an impressive selection of antiques, curios, and items of nostalgia. There is nothing else like it in the area and it is a fun place to go and browse.

Also new to the Newport area is *Tumbleweeds*, a medicinal cannabis outlet. For those Mainers who have a prescription, a full battery of cannabis products is available. If you are just looking for something to help with aches and pains, Tumbleweeds also offers an assortment of CBD oil products. These do not contain anything that would be mood altering and many people find CBD cream a great option for treating aches and pains. Because these products do not have any substance that will get a person high, they are readily available without a prescription.

Two businesses have moved in the past few months. *Her Closet*, which has a large selection of second-hand clothes, can now be found on Route 2 west of town, where the old wood stove repair shop used to be. Also, *Technology Solutions* has now moved to the Bowman's Construction Company building on Route 7.

TIME FOR ONE YEARLY NEWSLETTER?

We of the ever-shrinking newsletter staff would like to suggest that we reduce our newsletters to a single newsletter in the Spring. In the Fall, we would post the minutes of the summer meeting on our website as well as any other pertinent information. There has been less and less to write about for the Fall edition and the lake association could save some money having only one printed addition, better utilizing the Sebasticook Lake Association website.

Visit our website at:

(www.sebasticooklakeassociation.org)

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Water Quality Report for Summer 2018

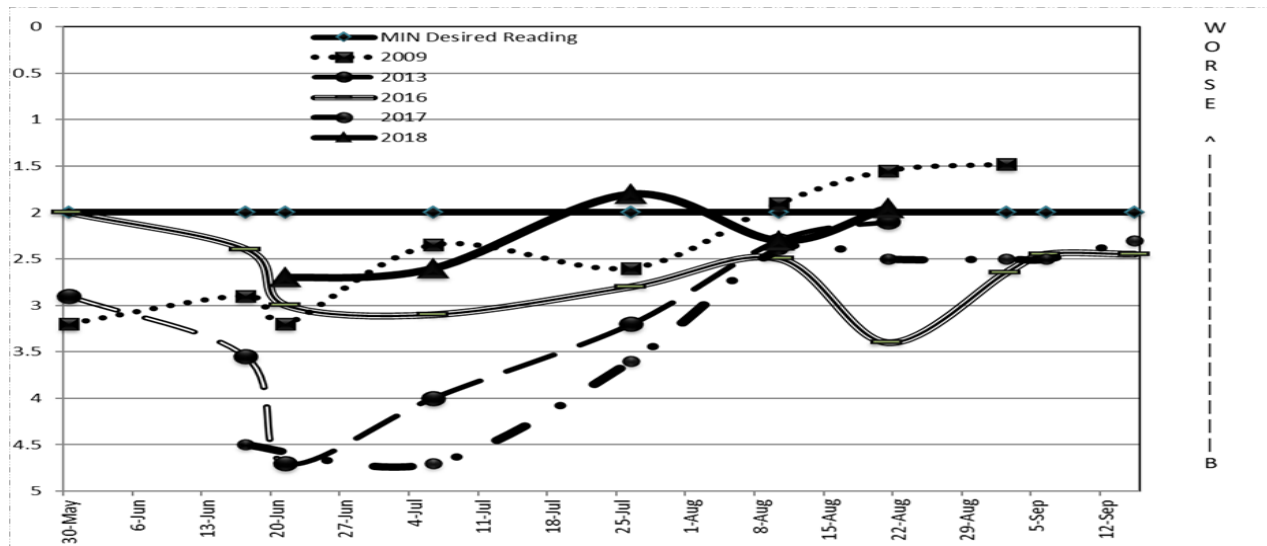
By Deborah Ferrell

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. 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. 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. This year's clarity results are quite poor compared to the previous years' results. Late August was the last testing done this year. This was an abbreviated testing year due to some boating issues. As you can see 2009 was the last year we had that we had worse readings in August. If we had readings from early September, they probably would have matched 2009 readings.

SECCHI DISK READINGS



Cooks Corner

Stovetop Macaroni and Cheese



Printed Without Permission from America's Test Kitchen

Here is an absolutely great and easy-to-make mac'n cheese recipe from my favorite cooking show. It has become my "Go To" recipe for macaroni and cheese. Make this and I promise, it will become one of your regulars, too. *Rick Perlmutter*

1 ½ cups Water
1 cup Milk
8 ounces Barilla macaroni

1 cup (4 ounces) American Cheese, grated*	½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 small pinch Cayenne Pepper	4 ounces Extra-Sharp Cheddar Cheese
½ cup Panko Bread Crumbs	1 Tablespoon Olive Oil
2 Tablespoons Grated Parmesan Cheese	Salt and Pepper to taste

** Getting the right cheese for this is critical for the success of this recipe. Go to the deli counter in your market and ask for 4 ounce chunk of pasteurized, processed American cheese (NOT sliced) and grate it yourself.*

1. Bring water and milk to boil in medium saucepan over high heat. Stir in macaroni and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring frequently, until macaroni is soft (slightly past al dente), 6 to 8 minutes. Add American cheese, mustard, and cayenne and cook, stirring constantly, until cheese is completely melted, about 1 minute. Off heat, stir in cheddar until evenly distributed but not melted. Cover saucepan and let stand for 5 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, combine panko, oil, 1/8 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper in 8-inch nonstick skillet until panko is evenly moistened. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until evenly browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Off heat, sprinkle Parmesan over panko mixture and stir to combine. Transfer panko mixture to small bowl.

3. Stir macaroni until sauce is smooth (sauce may look loose but will thicken as it cools). Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to warm serving dish and sprinkle panko mixture over top. Serve immediately.

Sebasticook Lake Drawdown 2018

By Deborah Ferrell

This year the water quality monitoring was again shared between Jack Carson and me, with Jack taking most of the physical readings approximately every two weeks and me taking out Dave Halliwell from DEP to do samples for lab testing, especially Phosphorous (P) levels. 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. And I think most of you realize that this year's water quality was poor compared to previous years.

The Water Regulation Committee chose to schedule the drawdown on September 10th this year due to the high phosphorous levels causing poor water quality. Previously our much-improved water quality allowed us to wait until fall which sometimes coincided with the fall turnover. In addition, we asked for some expert help to determine when, how, and what length to make the drawdown this year. We enlisted Dave Courtemanch, a previous DEP contact who spent many years assisting us (and Tom Hannula) with water testing and decisions about how to clean up the lake, Dr. Dave Halliwell, current DEP contact assisting us, and DEP Director, Linda Bacon.

The consulted experts agreed that we should drawdown as soon as possible and suggested that we test the outflow, measuring turbidity and phosphorous levels to determine when to end the drawdown. Our Town Manager, Jim Ricker, is checking turbidity every day, using a turbidity meter supplied by the DEP and water samples are taken each week to check the phosphorous levels in the outflow. Turbidity is the cloudiness or haziness of a fluid, think of this as like the clarity measurement using our Secchi disk. In mid-September, after a spike in phosphorous levels back to the original outflow measurement, Jim Ricker elected to check levels of the water inflows, at Durham Bridge and at County Woods bridge, into the lake to ensure that we were not importing highly P loaded water. The good news is that the readings of the inflow waters were quite low. So over time the P levels in our outflow will diminish and we will end the drawdown. The gate will be closed and the louvers above the concrete will be kept open to keep the lake level from getting too high over the winter.



Sebasticook Lake Association

www.sebasticooklakeassociation.org

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FALL 2018 ISSUE

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