



Fathoms



The Newsletter of The Sebasticook Lake Association

Volume 26
Number 2

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

October 2019

President's Message

*“Water links us to our neighbor in a way more profound and
complex than any other.”*

John Thorson

“What the H@#*is going on?!!?!?” is what I heard over and over when I answered the phone or opened e-mail messages the first week of July. The concern, of course, was the too-early arrival of algae in the lake, just in time for the 4th of July holiday week.

The answer.....??? There are numerous phenomena contributing to algae blooms all over the world; development, heavy rain causing road/agriculture runoff, shifts in the ecosystem, dysfunctional septic systems. While this is not new information to any of us, it was alarming because the early summer water quality had been exceptionally good for the last 3-4 years. The water quality did improve for much of the summer, but overall it was not as good as it has been in the last few years (see the water quality report, page 5).

Much discussion about water quality by attendees of the annual lake association meeting resulted in an inquiry about the possibility of leaving the dam gate open all winter in hopes of assisting the lake to purge itself of impurities and reducing the risk of a 2020 early-summer-less-than-optimal-water-quality encore. The request was brought to the Water Regulation Committee meeting in August, the members of which were agreeable to a trial of leaving the dam open through the winter. Additionally, the water quality testing will be conducted continuously through the remainder of 2019 and into the 2020 new year for comparison data.

While the Summer of 2018 brought the joy of family visits, fireworks, balmy evenings on the porch with friends, and the spectacle of breathtaking sunsets, it also brought sadness and loss. B.J. Banton, who championed the cause of rescuing Sebasticook Lake from further degradation in the 70s, died recently, as did a fun-loving Grove Street resident who brightened my world and the lives of all who knew him. Both of these individuals were stalwart lake stewards and two of the earth's gems. Please raise a toast to each of them (a dry Martini with an olive, if you please) and know that each of them linked us as water-focused neighbors more profoundly than you may know.

Have a happy, safe winter.

Muf



Lake Association Officers

President – Muffy Pare 207-368-5424
Herhighnes@midmaine.com
Vice President - Deb Ferrell 368-4769
Secretary- Darcy Parlee 461-2452
dlparlee@yahoo.com
461-2452

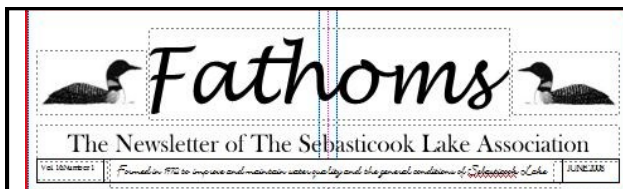
Treasurer – Rick Berry 352-203-4165
mbrb5257@me.com

Committee Chairpersons

Buoy Committee- Dick Stone 368-2272
Dam Committee – Deb Ferrell 368-4769
daferrell11@gmail.com
Membership Committee – Allan Fernald 368-5492
Social Committee – Barbara Cloutier 368-5601
sportsnanaofsix@gmail.com

“Fathoms” Newsletter Staff

Debbie Ferrell 368-4769
Muffy Pare 368-5424
Rick Perlmutter 368-2225
Barbara Cloutier 368-5601



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

**TRANSFER
STATION
HOURS**
Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, and Saturday
8 am to 4 pm
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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS

For those of You
Who Wish To Be Part of
The Sebasticook Lake Association
Yet Do Not Live on the Lake
\$8 Per Year
Includes
“The Fathoms” Newsletter

Sebasticook Lake Association
Caps and Shirts and Canvas Bags
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Show off your membership in the Lake Association
and support it at the same time!
Check them out at the annual meeting in July or
Contact Muffy 368-5424

Shirts \$20 **Caps \$10**

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 6, 2019

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

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Carol and David Hederick are new members who live over on Shady Lane. Also, Sam Van Loon, Margo Jackish's nephew, that lives on Abnaki.

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

The Treasurer's Report - Rick Berry - We have always run on a July 1st to June 30th fiscal year. The Town of Newport is now doing that too. So, we will be getting the \$1800 of excise taxes very soon to add to our account. The Treasurer's Report was accepted as written.

It was voted to continue paying the dues for the VLMA (Lake Stewards of Maine) for \$250.00 as well as the Maine Lakes Society for \$250.00.

The Carson's and Ferrell's donated the cost of the boat fuel for the water quality testing. Thank you to Diane Garnelis was given for her time to the Firework's donations. She did a great job going around and asking for donations.

Committee Reports

Buoy Committee - Dick Stone - The State has taken over the maintenance of the buoys. There were three broken ones this spring. They were broken either by ice or snowmobiles hitting them. If you ever see one missing or that has moved, please notify Dick or Muffy. We are very happy to be rid of the job of maintaining them. Dick has noticed a lot of people with skiers and tubes without a spotter. He has also seen a lot of jet skis hauling them without enough room on their boats or jet skis to put everyone on. Margo asked about a "no wake" area near her and who to call. Dick suggested she call the Game Warden service. It's making a wake on the river and it isn't good.

Cookout Committee - Barb Cloutier - Welcome to the annual meeting and BBQ. We are ready. We have lots of hamburgers, hot dogs, lots of donations. We do buy high quality and buy locally. It takes a lot of effort to put on the BBQ. People bring grills and canopies. We've done our part and your part is to come and bring an appetite.

Fireworks Committee - The weather forecast is iffy. Muffy will be in charge of calling it and making a decision due to the weather. The rain date would be next Saturday night, the 13th. Keep your fingers crossed. She won't call them unless something significant happens.

Membership committee - Allan Fernald - A lot of people say they don't want to pay our salaries. If you get a chance to talk to people. We aren't a co-op. We do serve a purpose. Our membership has declined a little bit due to a consolidation of properties. 325 to 320. 183 who have paid. that is about 60%. That leaves us with 137 who have not paid. Almost \$1400 that we are losing in dues money. The top three areas that don't pay are: Durham Bridge - about 20%, Camp Benson 18%, Maplewood at 17%. We had a new member this morning. We also have about six new members and three of them have paid. Allan has two types of dues letters that he sends out. Debbie does send out a newsletter to people trying to get them to pay. "This would be a newsletter, BUT....." - So, if you can help Allan and explain who we are and what we do to anyone that isn't paying their dues, that would greatly help.

"Minutes" Continued on page 4

("Minutes of the Meeting" from page 3)

Newsletter Committee - Rick Perlmutter - All we really have are the minutes of the meeting to put in the fall newsletter. So, Rick suggests that we have an end of summer party instead of doing the fall newsletter. We spend about \$400 on the newsletter, so we could have a BBQ instead of spending the money on the newsletter. We have the minutes of the meeting in the fall newsletter but there really aren't that many ideas coming in to put into the newsletter. When would you have it? Ted Cianchette asked if we knew the percentage of people that had email that we mail the newsletter to. We could discuss what the lake did over the summer at the BBQ. Debbie asked if anyone left before Labor Day. And, then asked if anyone left before the second week in September. No one raised their hands. Muffy said we would entertain the idea of having an end of summer party. It won't happen this year, but we will talk about where and when for the fall of 2020. Debbie gets about 10-15 returns each year of the newsletters due to people moving or changing their address.

Water Quality Testing - Debbie Ferrell - Debbie does about two tests every two weeks. The Secchi disk has depths on the tape. She uses the viewer to look through to look at the tape. As far as you can see the depth is the clarity. The other test looks at the temp and dissolved oxygen.

It is part of the DEP and that date that it is taken goes to the vmp so you can compare your records from year to year. These tests don't take a long time to do. Dave Hallowell from DEP goes with Debbie. Debbie gets tests back of phosphorus and chlorophyll levels. Dave Hallowell is retiring at the end of July and Debbie is retiring at the end of the summer. A question was asked about where the testing is done. Debbie explained that it is the same place behind Darlings' Farm. It runs about 60 feet deep there. They get down about 56 feet when the water isn't as high in the season. Right now, it has been running about 59 feet. There have been three tests done so far this year and the results haven't been good. Debbie passed out some sheets so everyone could look at the graphs. We never want to be below two meters of visibility. Our three readings are all at two meters.

It was mentioned that we had the gate open all winter before 2017 summer. The next year, we closed the dam early in the winter. The only chance would be that the lake wouldn't be full in the spring. Muffy said that it wasn't the three of us that had any control over the closing or opening of the gate. Do we want to send a petition? Does Jim, the Town Manager, see the graphs of the water quality? Yes. He does. It should be more than one person's decision of when to open and close the gate.

The major effect is Phosphorus for the algae growth. Someone asked if we could also test for nitrogen. But, since 1986 and on, it has been extensive testing and it was determined that Phosphorus was the major contributor.

How early does the testing begin? End of May early June. You want June, July, August and into September if you can. It is done every two weeks. We are going to need a new lake monitor. Would it be possible to have a meeting between the lake association and Town manager? We have done that before but we do have a Water Regulation meeting with the Town and that would be a good place to have the discussion. Ted suggested we set up a small group to meet with Jim/Town Manager.

There is a pad of paper going around for people to sign to keep the water low in the winter. Would there be any negative effects to wildlife for leaving the gate down all winter. Do we see any difference of the Alewives with the phosphorus levels? Debbie said she hasn't really noticed a lot of difference. Debbie was hoping that it helped but she feels it is fairly balanced due to them taking out phosphorus in their bodies but they also poop in the water too, so feels it's a balance.

Nate Gray is our Biologist on our lake. Someone had caught a brook trout in the winter while fishing. A retention pond was breached and it was flushed into the lake and that was how it happened. It isn't one thing that's going on. It is 50 years of stuff. There are lawns down to the lake. There aren't a lot of new people doing things. It is the same people and we collectively have to participate in keeping our lake clean. It just isn't as vigorous as it used to be 50 years ago. We are monitoring how many alewives leave and how many come in. Alewives only live six to eight years. We all need to collectively be aware.

Debbie asked if anyone would be interested in being a monitor, to please reach out to her.

Our gate now draws water from the bottom as the old gate used to draw from the top. So, this is a good thing as we should be getting more phosphorus out from the bottom. There is a spray that you can put over

"Minutes" Continued on page 5

the water that drops to the bottom. It contains the phosphorus so it doesn't rise up. It was mentioned that they thought it was used at East Pond and that is about 1/4 of the size of our lake.

Drawdown Date - Today based on the water quality as it is today. Early as possible. Usually the Tuesday after Labor Day.

Flashboards/Dam Gate Maintenance - We share the boat excise tax money with the town. We may be asked to contribute to some of the cost of the maintenance.

Miscellaneous New Business - Vic Firth was going to move away and there was going to be a new park there. There is digging and a lot of hay there now. Part of it is going to be a parking area. There is some discussion of it becoming a marina. Muffy mentioned that the Selectman's meetings are the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month except for July and August, there is just one per month. Debbie is checking on the correct permits for everything being done.

Next year's meeting would be on Saturday, July 11th, 2020 at 10:00 am.

Guest Speaker - Ryan Parker - Pay As You Throw Program at the Transfer Station There are three big arguments against it. There is a Recycling Committee. There is a good cross selection of people on the committee. They passed pay as you throw in Presque Isle but it failed. Recycling has to be convenient. You have to have a committee with a champion and decision makers have to be on board. Members of the select board are supportive and others aren't sure yet. People bring in their food waste and dump it into the compost. If you bought a bin, you get a certain amount of compost for free. Adam does multiple piles at the transfer station. One is food waste, one is leaf and grass compost. This is change. It is totally different. There are towns that have tried to cheap out on the bags, so you have to have appropriate bags. Set up a fund where we set up tipping fees and trucking fees. If there is money left over, it goes back into the account for the next year.


Motion to Adjourn was at 11:57 a.m.

Water Quality Report for the 2019 Summer *By Deborah Ferrell*

This is the second summer in a row that our water quality was poor compared to previous years. While we started the summer with 3.1-meter clarity in early June water clarity and quality deteriorated as the summer progressed. By early July we hit the technical bloom clarity measurement of 2.0 meters. The 2.0-meter limit is the DEP determined measurement at which water quality is so poor that it is considered a bloom whether you can see an algal bloom on the surface of the lake or not. The clarity continued to decrease until mid-August when it improved to 2.4 meters and remained constant into September. Why has our water quality begun to deteriorate? We are not sure yet. One major contributor is erosion. Heavy late spring rains do tend to create more erosion and therefore more phosphorous which enters the lake's watershed. Phosphorous has been determined to be a limiting element which increases algae and therefore decreases water quality. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that our properties do not add to eroding material being washed into the lake. We have had many articles over the years about how to improve your lakeshore property and camp roads. See our website for more information.

Due to the change from our past yearly improvements in water quality to the last two years of deteriorating results the Newport Water Regulation Committee decided to draw the lake down and have it remain down until just after ice-out. This is expected to allow more flushing of phosphorous laden water. Results of the water clarity are shown on the graph below with selected previous years of good result years and a poor result year (2009).

(For Clarity Reading Chart, see page 6)



**2019
ANNUAL
LOON COUNT**
23 Adults
2 Chicks

Anyone Missing Their Birds?
By Rick Perlmutter

While it was a glorious summer for weather, some of us have noticed a rather disturbing lack of wildlife. Over in our little corner of the lake, we have noticed drastically fewer birds and squirrels. OK, so I'm not so worried about a squirrel shortage, but where did all the birds go? I am wondering if it is just our small part of the lakeshore or have you also noticed many fewer birds this past summer?

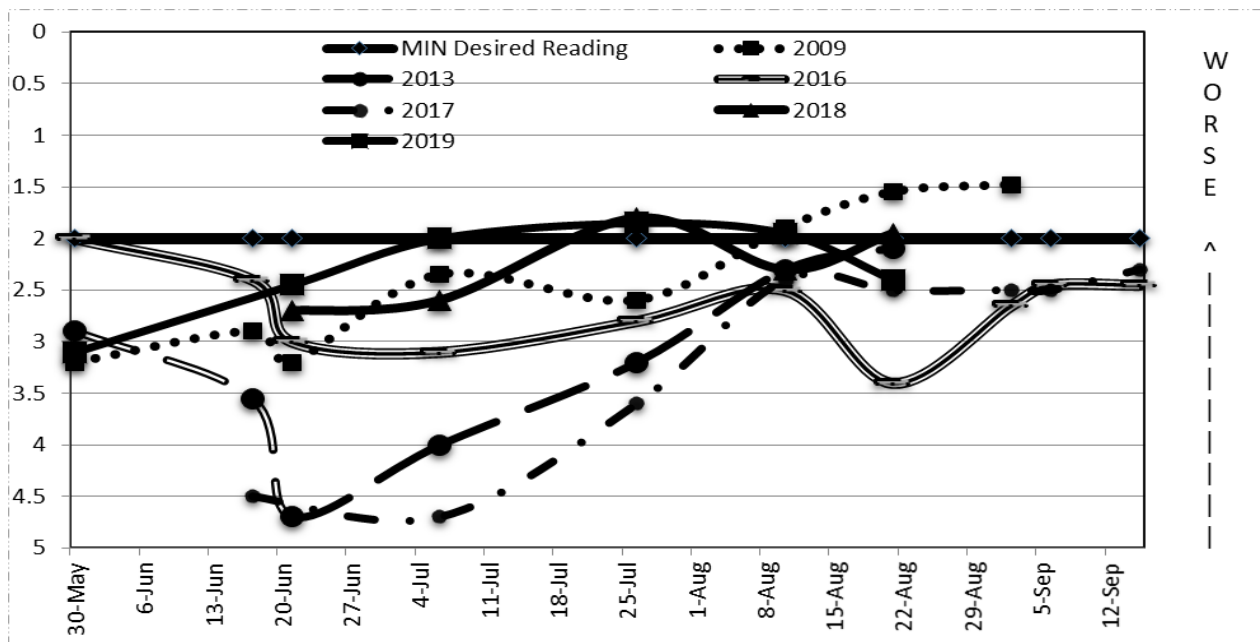
A Big "Thanks" To All 2019 Fireworks Sponsors!

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Please note that the original list of 2019 fireworks donators was lost due to a computer problem. We have reconstructed the list as best we are able but are unsure of its accuracy. Our sincerest apologies if we have somehow managed to leave anyone off of this list.

SELECTED YEARS OF SEBASTICOOK LAKE CLARITY READINGS



Water Quality Monitor Personnel Change

By Deborah Ferrell

This was my final year as your Sebasticook Lake Water Quality Monitor. At our annual meeting this summer I expressed my desire to find a replacement and Andre Cushing stepped up and volunteered to take over this position. I've spent 15 years monitoring our water quality and working with the DEP to collect water samples for testing, attending classes, and certifying on our equipment. I've enjoyed my time doing this work. The DEP representative, Dave Halliwell, who I've worked with for those 15 years also retired this year. So, this is a good time for a change in personnel. Andre Cushing and his family recently moved to the lake. Andre accompanied us on the last few trips in August and September to take water quality measurements and he assisted in taking measurements. He will be collecting and monitoring data and observations which will provide an extremely valuable resource for lake protection and a vital first-hand account of the evolving conditions of our lake. Andre will take the necessary classes to certify on equipment and methods next spring and I will assist him, if needed.

Cooks Corner



Banana Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

*From The Kitchen Of
Debbie Ferrell*

Ingredients for Cake

*3/4 cup butter, softened
2 1/8 cups white sugar*

*3 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract
3 cups white flour
1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1 1/2 cups buttermilk
2 tsp. lemon juice
1 1/2 cups mashed bananas
1/2 to 1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)*

Ingredients for Frosting

*1/2 cup butter, softened
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
3 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract*

1. Preheat oven to 275 degrees F. Grease and flour a 9x13 inch pan. In a small bowl, mix mashed bananas with lemon juice, set aside. In a medium bowl, mix flour, baking soda and salt. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, cream 3/4 cup butter and 2 1/8 cups sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then stir in 2 teaspoons vanilla. Beat in the flour mixture alternately with the buttermilk. Stir in banana mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan.
3. Bake in preheated oven for 1 hour and 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean.
4. For the frosting: In a large bowl, cream 1/2 cup butter and cream cheese until smooth. Beat in 1 teaspoon vanilla. Add confectioners' sugar and beat on low speed until combined, then on high until frosting is smooth. Spread on cooled cake.

TIME FOR ONE YEARLY NEWSLETTER AND AN END-OF-SUMMER PARTY?

We of the ever-shrinking newsletter staff would like to suggest that we reduce our newsletters to a single newsletter in the Spring. Instead of the newsletter, we could have a "wrap party" for the end of summer, giving us all a chance to get together again and reflect upon our summer on the lake. Perhaps a covered dish dinner or something like that would be desirable.

In the Fall, we would post the minutes of the summer meeting on our website along with any other pertinent information. There has been less and less to write about for the Fall edition (and contributions remain rare) and the lake association could save some money having only one printed addition, better utilizing the Sebasticook Lake Association website. A second yearly social event in its place, might be quite nice. We hope to talk about this at next summer's annual meeting, so think about it.

Visit our website at:

(www.sebasticooklakeassociation.org)



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 2019—July 2020:
Regular \$10.00 Associate \$8.00

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

FALL 2019 ISSUE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



22 Loon Drive
NEWPORT, ME 04953