

LAKE PARKER ASSOCIATION, INC.

PO Box 69, West Glover, VT 05875

January 1999 Newsletter

Hello again from frosty Lake Parker!

As you have probably heard, winter got off to a tenuous start. We had balmy temperatures into December and little or no snow. Large numbers of mergansers were resting on the lake until the day before the lake froze over in late December. We even had some latecomer geese land overnight, two days before Christmas. Then, starting the second week of January, came a two week period with lots of snow and extremely low temperatures during which we were reminded that it really is winter after all. All of this comes on the heels of setting the record for the wettest year ever. We survivors, left here on the pond, are quietly settling down to deal with whatever else winter throws at us.

JD's CORNER

Thursday, January 14th 1999, my thermometer on the western side of Lake Parker looked like this. Actually off the bottom of the Fahrenheit scale at -32 F. or so. Reminds me of when I was doing graduate work in spy novels and ran across the following:

JD is a water dog and observer of life on the pond.

“There is a land in the northern fringes of the state of Vermont known to locals simply as the Northeast Kingdom. It takes in most of Essex County, with pieces of Orleans and Caledonia, a wild, mountainous place of lakes and rivers, hills and gorges, with here and there a bumpy tract and a small village. In winter a cold descends on the Northeast Kingdom so terrible it is as if the land had been subjected to a state of freeze-frame – literally. The lakes become ice, the trees rigid with frost; the ground crackles beneath the feet. In winter nothing lives up there, save in hibernation, apart from the occasional lonely elk moving through the creaking forest. Wits from the South say there are only two seasons in the Kingdom – August and Winter. Those who know the place say this is nonsense; it is August 15th and winter.”

The Northeast Kingdom as described in Frederick Forsyth's "The Negotiator" Bantom Books May 1989.

Bird Sighting Report – by Dr. Ray Griffin

The long, warm fall, and the late open water on Lake Parker, produced a considerable array of waterfowl and other interesting birds. The lake finally closed around December 21st, 1998, but about 35 Canada Geese stayed on the ice until December 24th, undisturbed by a skating party and ice fishing. On November 8th, a flock of 150 Snow Geese paid us a visit - what a beautiful sight, as they rose in unison from the water. Common Mergansers started arriving in goodly numbers on November 22nd and continued until December 17th at least. Their numbers reached highs of 125 to 150 and they spread out over the lake in a line - what a beautiful sight they made with their red bills (mostly males). Mergansers being fish eaters, I wonder how many fish they removed from the lake? Perhaps the fishermen will let us know in the spring. Other ducks sighted were Buffleheads, Blacks, Mallards, Hooded Mergansers, Black Scoter, White-winged Scoter and Ruddy Duck. A late Pied-billed Grebe was sighted on December 5th, and a King Fisher on December 14th. Other interesting birds seen near the lake this fall were Osprey, Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier and, showing no partiality, one on each side of the lake, Northern Shrike, one an adult the other an immature.

Editors Note: If you see a bird that you can't identify, give Dr. Griffin (camp # 20) a call at 525-3646. He will gladly try to help you identify the bird from your phone description or he may need to come and observe the bird to properly identify it.

Memorials to Jennie Monette and Ken Dewing – by Lynn Washburn

Always a cheerful greeting and a warm smile! We all lost a good friend and a great lady when Jennie Monette died suddenly on September 13th. Some of us can recall the start-up years of the Lake Parker Association in the early '70's, when the treasury "cupboard was bare", and Jennie, along with Emma Millette, were the "ways and means Committee" – which was simply a high-falutin' name for figuring out ways to raise money! The bake sales and white elephant sales, in front of the Barton Municipal Building were annual events for several years. Jennie never turned down a request to lend a hand. With her dish of delicious baked beans for the pot-luck suppers, she was a faithful attendee of all LPA meetings – and probably would have earned a 26 year perfect attendance award if such were given! Jennie and Rene were charter members of the LPA, and their devotion to the cause contributed greatly to the successful history of the LPA. All those who knew Jennie will hold special memories of her, and she will be sorely missed.

We will also miss the support of long-time member Ken Dewing, who passed away last December. Along with his wife, Mary, Ken could always be found in attendance at LPA meetings, and tending carefully to his camp every summer. Ken was active in the operation of the weed harvesting machine when it was first acquired, and could often be seen out on the lake. Along with the other members of the early LPA, Ken made a major contribution toward the formation of the association, and continued to support it every year. He will be missed.

Dues News

The LPA fiscal year starts on July 1, so you have until then to pay your 1999 dues. You can also pay at the Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper on July 10th. We have new E-911 addresses, so if this changes your mailing address please help us update our records by noting it on the enclosed form when you mail in your dues. Please take the time to fill out both your summer and winter addresses and phone numbers. There is also space on the form to share your ideas on Association matters. Last year at the annual meeting we voted, for the first time in many years, to increase dues from \$10.00 to \$15.00 per year. We have a busy year planned and will have increased expenses and probably decreased income from grants so your dues are more important than ever. We are counting on your continued generous support.

Hats Off to LPA Volunteers

The summer of 1998 was an extremely busy one for the LPA. At the 20th Anniversary of the Lay Monitoring Program and LakeFEST "kick-off" celebration in Burlington, the LPA received an award for "Excellence in Lake Protection" from the Vermont Department of Natural Resources. At the same event, our lay water quality monitors were recognized for their work on Lake Parker. We presented our watershed survey methods at a statewide workshop held in Fairlee. Our Certified boating safety instructors offered the Vermont Boating Safety course. The LPA and Shadow Lake Associations co-sponsored a "Protect Our Lakes" poster contest for area children. We completed the watershed survey, operated and maintained the weed cutting machine, re-seeded ditches around the lake, started work on a "Better Back Roads" grant and held the first "ICE-OUT" contest. LPA members built a loon nesting platform, made a LakeFEST promotional TV commercial and were instrumental in obtaining a substantial amount of grant money for the Town of Glover. The highlight of the summer was the "Maple Leaf 7" Dixieland Band, which entertained us while cruising around Lake Parker on a pontoon boat and at a concert at the boat access. This is an impressive a list of accomplishments by LPA volunteers. The best thing about the LPA President's job is getting to know and work with all of the great people who devote so much time and energy to care for the lake and community. One of the hardest things is struggling to find the right words with which to adequately express appreciation for all they do. So I'll just send along a sincere **thank you** and **hats off to the LPA volunteers** for all they accomplished in 1998!

Weed Harvesting Update

This year our Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant was audited, so we had to turn in all canceled checks, invoices and vouchers to prove all claimed expenses. All went well. Joyce Croteau reports that she received \$471.00 in December as the final payment on the grant, making the total received this year \$943.00. We were only reimbursed for 60% of projected costs instead of 75%, as in past years. Also, per new state procedures, all weed harvesting grants will be audited every year from now on. In the spring, probably in June, we'll have a work party to scrape and repaint the weed machine before it goes into the water for the summer. If you would like to help out, check the box on the dues form.

Summer 1999 Upcoming Events –

Birding Day Trip with Dr. Ray Griffin

*****Watershed Survey Review*****

***** LPA Annual Meeting *****

Glover Day

***** Dixieland Band ***** and Lake-Wide Family Picnic

Lake Protection Projects Workday

Another Busy Year Ahead - Important LPA activities have been scheduled well in advance to assist you with planning your summer. Please post the chart of events near your calendar and help protect your lake by being an active participant in the activities of your association.

Ice-Out Contest – We are going to hold the ICE-OUT contest again this year. If yours is the closest guess of the time and date when the ice goes out of the lake this spring, you will not only become a celebrated local hero but will also help the lake association and win a cash prize. An entry form is attached. We are holding the contest again because you have indicated that is what you want, so don't forget to enter. Remember that the contest is open to everyone, so photocopy the form and encourage others to enter.

Finish Better Back Roads Grant – We are committed to providing some volunteer labor to finish our Better Back Roads Grant before June 1st. We have to build culvert entry and exit headers where the Dewing Brook crosses West Shore Road. The Town will provide the rocks and stone, but it will take a few hours of manual labor to build the headers. If you want to help out, contact Bob Johnson at 525-3458 days or 525-4078 evenings, and I'll coordinate a time that we can all get together and finish this project.

Birding Trip – with Dr. Ray Griffin

Tentatively we are setting the date of June 5th, 1999 for a birding trip. We will meet at the West Glover Church at 7:00 AM for car pooling and proceed around Lake Parker. For those who would like to extend this further, we will do the Coventry Marshes, returning home around 1:00 PM. Bring snacks (food), bug repellent and binoculars. Please contact me during the week of May 30, 1999 at 525-3646 so we can determine the interest.

Watershed Survey Review

On November 24th, a giant sigh of relief and accomplishment could be heard echoing through the hills as Madeleine Ducham turned in the completed watershed survey final report to Susan Warren of the Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation - Water Quality Division. This marked the completion of a major chunk of work that has been ongoing for a few years and will guide our lake protection efforts in the future. Many thanks to Madeleine and all the volunteers for seeing this through.

Susan Warren (left) and Madeleine with about 30 → pounds of watershed survey final report.

Now that the watershed survey is complete, we need to get started fixing the problems found. To that end, Madeleine is going to host one of her now famous neighborly "Coffee Hours", at which we can all get together and review the results of the survey. You can come and learn about conditions that were found on or near your property that may have a detrimental effect on the water quality of the lake and get some ideas on what can be done to improve the situation. Please keep in mind that it is really our collective presence around the lake that is the problem. When considered alone, any one camp would not have a significant impact on water quality, but collectively, 120 camps are a threat to the lake. We are not interested in singling any specific camper out as contributing more or less to the problem than anyone else. But, there are improvements that each of us could make on our property that would add up to making a significant difference. Volunteers worked long and hard on the watershed survey and we would like all of the property owners to know what was found.

We are also hoping that many of you will also volunteer some of your time to help with a few larger lake protection projects. Susan Warren is now going over the survey, and by the time of the coffee hour will have given us her recommendations on projects we should undertake to best protect the lake. We will combine these recommendations with our own ideas and come up with a list of projects that we want to complete this summer. Susan is also working to get us some funding to help defray the costs of the projects we undertake. We have tentatively scheduled a "Lake Protection Projects Workday" for Saturday August 14th. This is a day that we hope volunteers will work with neighbors in teams to complete the above projects. This way we could have a little fun while getting some real work done. We anticipate the work will be seeding ditches and planting buffer strips and such. There is a checkbox on the dues form that you can use to volunteer for the Lake Protection Projects. We will have a lot more information about all of this at the coffee hour so come and join Madeleine at her camp (#66) on **Saturday, June 12th at 10:00AM** for a friendly get together on how we can use the watershed survey information to protect the lake.

Dixieland Band

Back by popular request on **Sunday afternoon, July 25th**, the "Maple Leaf 7" Dixieland Band will be cruising around Lake Parker starting about 1:00 PM and winding up with a concert at the boat access which will last until 4:00PM. Including our own Ron Ducham, from camp #66, the band will have you all on your feet! In case of inclement weather, the band will perform in the West Glover Church.

Boating Safety Course

Vermont State Boating Laws require that all persons born after January 1, 1974, pass a Boating Safety Course before operating a motorboat. If there is sufficient interest, the LPA plans to sponsor a Boating Safety Course, taught by its certified instructors again this summer. But, because the instructors must be re-certified this year, and we don't know the schedule for that, we can't be more specific at this time.

Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper – Mark your Calendar!

Saturday, July 10, 1999 is the date for our annual business meeting and potluck supper! The potluck supper is from 5:30PM to 7:00PM with business meeting following. This is a great opportunity to see everyone again and discuss common interests in Lake Parker and the Association. So bring a favorite dish to share and come for a neighborly get together. This is an **Election Year** so your attendance is especially important because the direction and activities supported by YOUR association will be determined by the new officers and committee chairpersons that you elect. As usual, the Association Board will submit a slate of officers and committee chairpersons for your consideration, but remember that you can nominate any member that you feel would do a good job in a particular position. So please, actively use the election process to make the LPA what you want it to be. **Please mark your calendar and plan on attending.**

Saturday
July 10, 1999
5:30PM
West Glover Church

Eurasian Watermilfoil Invades Four More Vermont Lakes in 1998

The statewide total of Eurasian watermilfoil lakes has risen to 46. New infestations discovered in 1998 were in Chipman Pond in Tinmouth, Lake Rescue in Ludlow, Cogman Pond in West Haven and Long Pond in Eden. Lake Parker is surrounded with milfoil infested lakes. Eurasian watermilfoil was introduced to North America from Europe by accident. In nutrient-rich lakes, such as Lake Parker, it can form thick underwater stands of tangled stems and vast mats of vegetation on the water's surface that interfere with boating, swimming, fishing and other water recreation. It also crowds out important native water plants. One of the most insidious things about Eurasian watermilfoil is that it propagates by stem fragmentation. Imagine a motorboat passing through a patch of watermilfoil with the propeller cutting away at the plants. Each of the separate pieces can take root to form new plants. In fact, the plant is spread primarily when pieces of milfoil become entangled on boats and trailers that are transported from infested lakes to uninfested lakes. This is why we ask people to thoroughly clean their boats and props when leaving a lake.

So far, Lake Parker has been spared the problems that a Eurasian watermilfoil infestation creates. However, we should be vigilant and redouble our efforts in watching for the plant in our lake because an infestation that is discovered early is

much easier and cheaper to control than one that gets a good head start before being discovered. Just ask your neighbors at Lake Elligo in Craftsbury. An identifying characteristic of Eurasian watermilfoil is that each leaf has from 12 to 21 pairs of leaflets, whereas the native northern watermilfoil has from 5 to 9 pairs of leaflets. If each of us learned to identify Eurasian watermilfoil and got in the habit of regularly checking the lake in front of our camps, we would have a much better chance of detecting an infestation early enough for effective control measures to be taken. We'll be talking more about this in the summer.

Conservation License Plates

If you register a vehicle in Vermont, please consider purchasing a Conservation License Plate. Applications can be found at the Lake Parker Country Store or provided by the LPA. All of the proceeds from the sale of Vermont Conservation License Plates provide funding for local and regional watershed conservation projects.

Since none of the

proceeds are used for other purposes, unlike other government programs, you can be assured that your hard-earned dollars will be used as you intended.

GAS (Glover Ambulance Squad) Update - Randy Williams, Captain

As you probably know, we finally got started renovating the old Creamery (Town Garage) in late October. It was all volunteer labor up until early December when I decided we needed to hire someone to finish the work. Many thanks to John Washburn, Bob Johnson, the Urie brothers (Ed, John and Bernerd) for your hard work. Now the building is all repaired and painted outside, insulated, rewired, heated and sheet-rocked inside. By the end of January we were moved in on a minimal basis.

I am applying for a matching grant through the federal Rural Development program; thanks to Matt Wood for lining up that opportunity. Next spring we plan to bring in a water line, build a small bathroom and resurface the floor in the main bay. You will be amazed at how nice it looks both inside and out. We even decorated for

Christmas. Without your personal and financial support, all of this would have been much more difficult. Thank you all.

In the works, we have some new ideas- a summer flea market at the new bay in West Glover. Since we now have some storage space, we also are considering taking in used medical equipment to loan out to town residents as needed. Let us know if you have anything to contribute or need anything.

Working.....

Working.....

Almost Done...

Remember that your ambulance subscription runs from March to March each year. You do not need to subscribe in order to use the services of the ambulance squad. But if you do subscribe, only \$20.00 per household, any charges that your insurance doesn't pay, the ambulance squad will absorb.

A FLATLANDER'S VIEW

by Beryl Adams

Earning the right to be called a Vermonter is no easy thing – it takes something like several generations of homesteading OR Abenaki Native-American roots OR hibernating with a black bear and living to tell about it. Unlike, say, Massachusetts, which requires a validated Mayflower cross-Atlantic ticket, circa 1620. Or Ohio, for God's sake, where all you have to do is drive in, put a quarter in the meter, and apply for a BlockBuster Video card. (You have to ask, where's the quality control?)

Bob and I have worked hard to fit in. He has learned to pronounce his "Rs" and I can now slur mine. We both have practiced the Vermont Driver's Wave, that casual-but-controlled greeting of split-second timing... raising four fingers deftly from the steering wheel just as the oncoming vehicle reaches the right approach-distance.

Bob easily perfected this one but I'm still working on it. I wait too long to recognize the other driver, and then lose my head at the critical moment, bursting into a frantic, Flatlander air-flap instead.

Samantha & Flatlander

But the one thing we did absolutely right, in the finest Vermont tradition, without even knowing it, was to have a Labrador Retriever. This is obviously the state Dog of Choice.

Samantha is our beautiful, 8-year-old, Yellow Lab. She gets a lot of attention wherever we go. More than once we've been stopped by strangers who compliment her looks and ask relatively personal questions about her parents. When Sam goes with Bob to the Candlepin Restaurant for breakfast, she gets bacon strips, fried especially for her (not too crispy) and personally delivered in the parking lot by Donna, the cook. On those rare occasions that I accompany Bob instead, Donna gazes wistfully past me, nervously fingering the pre-cooked bacon and worriedly murmuring about Samantha's health.

Sam used to regard me as an authority figure. However, after 3 ½ years of acclaim and attention, she now regularly challenges me for the car's Alpha-Female seat. Sam *will* grudgingly move to the back seat at Bob's insistence, but then she sighs and snorts, and actually sticks her tongue out at me when he's not looking. If we leave her in the car while we're shopping, Sam waits for the instant my back is turned and then bounds into the shotgun seat, where she deliberately sheds two pounds of magnetic dog hair. I've tried telling on her, but she just looks at Bob with those big, brown, "Who, moi?" eyes, and then he thinks I'm crazy, and tells me to stop whining, that she's not drooling down my arm on purpose.

But think about it – there may be something organized going on here. I mean, we've been so focused on religious, ethnic, and gender issues for the past several decades, that a grass-roots species-movement may have grown unnoticed. And Sam gets an awful lot of cryptic, poorly-spelled, email from correspondents with improbable names... code names like Sherman, Buddy, Roland, Cassie, Maverick, J.D., Duncan, Zach, Daisy, and Indigo.

I really think I've stumbled onto a species-specific plot. Although no one will openly admit it, my exhaustive research has revealed a Vermont status-hierarchy that goes something like this:

1. Men
2. Labrador Retrievers
3. All other breeds of hunting dogs
4. Six-Point-plus bucks
5. Large-mouth Bass
6. Hand-tied flies
7. Women
8. Cats and children

I invite you to conduct your own investigation and reach your own conclusions. Often, the evidence is right under our cold, wet noses. For example, in an anonymous lake association newsletter, a Labrador columnist brazenly receives Page-One coverage, with a full (and highly complimentary) photo, while a woman's thoughtful and comprehensive column (with barely an 8-point font byline) gets crammed in the back, between the weed-trimming report and a zebra-mussel update.

When I called the association president to complain, a husky voice answered and identified himself only by initials. He told me to stop whining and referred me to the lake region's Equal Opportunity Officers: Buddy Day-Williams and Sherman Braithwaite. Not surprisingly, neither is listed in the association directory or in the phone book.

Coincidence? Overreaction? I think not. There are too many unanswered questions. Like, why does Samantha shed significantly more static-cling fur when I'm wearing black? How did she get a Columbus, Ohio, BlockBuster Video card, without credit references OR a co-signer? Who is the unnamed authority behind "Lab-tested" and "Lab-approved" analysis, and why won't he answer his phone? What's the capitol of Wyoming? Is there a fabric-safe way to get dog-drool out of a silk blouse? And, most significantly, what happens to that "not-too-crispy" bacon on mornings when Sam is left at home?

Women, children, and cats demand some answers. If you're with us, signal by waving or flapping.