



NEWICHAWANNOCK NEWS

GREAT EAST LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION - 76th YEAR, Fall 2008

President's Column

By Bess Smith

While it saddens me to take out the boats, lift the dock and perform all of the other "closing up" activities, autumn is a glorious time of year at Great East Lake. The trees are turning and the loons are preparing to take flight.

During this first year as President of GELIA I have enjoyed making fabulous new friendships. I love the emails I get from all of you and I am grateful for your concern and interest in our treasured lake. We are so very fortunate to have our volunteer programs with Lake Hosts, Weed Watchers, Water Quality Monitoring, Boating Safety, Navigational Marker placement, Loon Watch, and more! All of our Board members volunteer for at least one program such as the Membership Committee, Nominating Committee, Activities Committee and those mentioned above.

The Activities Committee had a very successful year. We produced the amazing "Measure of Time at Great East Lake" calendar. It has been so popular we've had to reorder twice. Last chance, we're going to reorder one more time so send in your order form found in this newsletter. Then there was the Family Lake Festival with the kayak scavenger hunt and carnival. The kids really had fun. For me it was another year with cotton candy in my hair!

We had a terrific turnout at the Annual Meeting. I think we almost ran out of hot dogs! More about that inside.

I hope you all returned your GELIA survey. The results of the survey will be presented in the winter edition of the Newichawannock News. We've got another survey in the works, the Great East Lake Watershed survey. Please read the article about that upcoming event in this newsletter.

So, while the weather was not the best in history, our summer at Great East Lake was eventful with some spectacular lightning (and lots of it), great activities, best membership ever, more milfoil saves by the Lake Hosts, and the list goes on and on.

I would like to thank the entire Board of Directors for helping me through this transition. I also want to thank all of our volunteers. I ask anyone with dedication to Great East Lake and a little extra time to please help out by volunteering.

Hope you all enjoy the crisp fall air and colorful foliage. Get ready to hunker down for the winter!

Please feel free to contact me at pres@greateastlake.org. or call me at 978-807-8675 See you next spring!

Webmaster Wanted

GELIA is looking for someone to improve and maintain the website, www.greateastlake.org. This might be a good position for someone with excellent computer skills looking to enhance their resume with a community service project or a way for a retiree to fill some hours while helping to keep our members informed. Duties could include creating a new website, updating information, managing a forum, setting up an online store and installing a webcam. We're looking for some new ideas! If interested, please email pres@greateastlake.org.

Great East Lake Improvement
Association

OFFICERS

Bess Smith, President
Jennifer Craig, Vice President
Bill Hohenberger, Treasurer
Pat Theisen, Secretary
Linda Schier, Past President

DIRECTORS

Gary Field
Marcia Hodsdon
Dee Kasprzak
Carol Lafond
Dave Mankus
Walter Neff
Gene Rosenthal
Dorothy Smith
Doug Smith

Mission

To preserve, enhance and
protect the advantages of Great
East Lake and its environs

The GELIA Family Lake Festival

By Gary Field

August 2nd, 2008: Lots of preparation went into this event. The activities committee was at Weeks Park bright and early, setting things up. The first of the day's activities was to be a kayak scavenger hunt. At 11:00 AM four intrepid explorers arrived with their kayaks and received their instructions. Off they went, returning later with their appointed treasures, ready to claim their prizes. There were: Nalgene water bottles, watertight container to carry belongings in the kayak, floating seat cushion. They chose prizes according to their place in the finish.

At noon, people started to arrive with picnic lunches, and at 1:00PM carnival-like festivities began; free popcorn, cotton candy, snow cones and drinks were served, music flowed through the park, and games began! There was an obstacle course, basketball throw, horseshoe toss, hockey puck skee-ball, fishing pool, and a very popular face painting and tattoo table. There was a booth with the new GELIA calendars, history books, and GELIA wear items for sale.

At 2:00 PM a special guest, The King of Silly, arrived and dazzled and amused the crowd of over 60 people with his tricks and stunts. Then, kids traded their hard earned tickets for trinkets and treasures at the prize table and met new friends that hopefully will last a lifetime.

The event was planned and organized by the GELIA Activities Committee: Chuck and Marcia Hodsdon, Gary and Mary Field, Doug and Bess Smith. Pat Theisen, Barbara Wadleigh, Ann Travers, Rebecca Carney, Michelle Lee, and Beth Rom helped run the event. Many thanks to all of the organizers and volunteers!

What about next year you ask?

Well, from the small number of volunteers, and the results of the GELIA membership survey which just came back, it looks like this event isn't really something that the bulk of our membership supports. Therefore, sadly, it is unlikely that this event will be held in the future (even though your new GELIA calendar may have it printed on it). If you feel strongly one way or the other about the event, please contact Bess Smith at pres@greastlake.org. or 978-807-8675 .

Annual Meeting 2008: Facts and Fun!

By Jennifer Craig

In addition to providing a wonderful time to reconnect with lake friends after the long winter, the GELIA Annual Meeting is always a source of great information and even inspiration for our members. This year's meeting, held on July 5, 2008, was no exception. President Bess Smith opened the meeting in the traditional way, by leading those assembled in the pledge of allegiance. Minutes from last year's meeting were accepted, as was the Treasurer's report which indicated financial health and wise use of resources. Officers were elected: Bess Smith as President and Jennifer Craig as Vice-President, and new Director Dee Kasprzak was approved by the membership. The other directors were then introduced and thanked for their generous service to GELIA.

After this "business" was conducted, reports were received from our many hard-working committees. Ever-faithful Chuck Hodsdon reported on water quality monitoring efforts, which continue to show that Great East Lake is "pristine" in terms of transparency and chlorophyll levels. Transparency measures in Great East in 2007 were actually twice what is considered ideal on a national basis. Chuck emphasized how critically important it is for everyone's property values to *keep* the lake in this pristine condition, largely by preventing soil and debris from washing into it. Vegetative buffers, avoidance of fertilizers, and landscaping techniques that divert run-off from impervious surfaces are all important techniques for keeping our water pristine. Other committees are looking at lake health in other ways. The Lake Host program is thriving and can take responsibility for another "save" of milfoil from a boat coming from Lake Winnepesaukee. The ranks of the Lake Hosts swelled with volunteers this year because local training was made available. Funds for the invasive species defense fund continue to be important as a means of quick action should an infestation occur. In addition to the Lake Hosts, the 60 Weed Watchers on the lake are also working to prevent invasive species from taking hold. Two other committees offered reports: Loons, reporting the hatching of a single chick on Copp Brook, and Membership, reporting 372 paid members. Members who sent in their dues ahead of the meeting were thanked enthusiastically by Membership Chair Gary Field.

Three speakers helped keep us informed about new developments and ideas. Linda Schier took off her GELIA hat momentarily and assumed her other one as the Executive Director of the Acton-Wakefield Watersheds Alliance. She spoke to those gathered about the critical importance of preventing stormwater run-off in order to maintain water quality. She described AWWA's Youth Conservation Corps resource: young people who can take on larger scale landscaping projects for homeowners, providing free labor if the homeowner purchases the plant material. Linda informed the group that, because the lakes in this area are so pristine, her organization had been awarded a "High Quality Waters" grant to conduct a physical survey of the entire watershed in order to pinpoint areas that might need some help in controlling run-off. The Great East Lake portion of this survey will kick-off in spring of 2009 and many volunteers are needed!

The next speaker was John Ciardi, Shoreland Code Enforcement Officer for the town of Wakefield. He described the new regulations for docks, which are going to be very challenging for many NH homeowners. Questions about the regulations should be directed to the town office. The final speaker was Dave Mankus, who spoke about proper management of septic systems. Septic contamination is another huge negative for water quality so everyone needs to make sure their systems are in proper working order.

Continued on page 4

Annual Meeting continued

The presentation portion of the meeting closed with announcements: the GELIA opinion survey that was going out, the upcoming Family Lake Festival, the Golf Tournament, the Band Concert and Flare-up, and the winners of the photo contest for the 2009 calendar. These winners included Julie Mankus (third place), Mary Field (second) and the first prize winner, Ernie Alvino. Thanks to all who entered!

With the presentations over, attendees were free to wander among the many tables and displays, purchasing items such as calendars, books, maps, and GELIA logo merchandise, learning about invasive species, water safety, and land trust possibilities (Three Rivers Land Trust had a booth), and generally socializing with like-minded people interested in our shared experience on Great East Lake. The usual gourmet hot dog lunch was served up by Gene Rosenthal and his helpers and then the raffle was held, to the delight of the many winners. In sum, a good time was had by all, who left the meeting well-fed and full of important facts and information about the lake and the association.

GELIA would like to thank all of the following businesses for contributing to this year's raffle:

Seven Lakes Provisions	Countryside Corner
Lovell Lake Food Center	Irving Gas
Poor People's Pub	Raise-A-Dock
Ted's Fried Clams	Interiors Plus
Cabin Life Magazine	Seven Lakes Realty
Assets Realty	Branch River Trading Post
E T Hines Mercantile	Great East Docks
Roadside Farmer	Ed Morrison's Reiki Sessions

Great East Saved Twice!!

By Linda Schier

Lake Hosts Chris McKay and Scott Mrazik saved the lake again this year when they found both Variable milfoil and Eurasian milfoil fragments on incoming boats at the Acton ramp. The combination of your donations to GELIA, grants from NH Lakes Association and the Maine Courtesy Boat Inspector program, and lots of volunteer time has continued to keep our boat inspection program vital and effective.

Go figure – we expected fewer visiting boats this year with the price of fuel and the lousy weather but - surprise! We had 36% more boats than in 2007. Our paid and volunteer lake hosts inspected 1378 boats between Memorial Day and the weekend after Labor Day. They found 22 plant fragments – 2 of which were confirmed invasive species. While our Lake Hosts inspect the boats they have an opportunity to chat with the visitors about our lake protection programs and give them informative literature about boating safety and water quality protection. Thanks to our enthusiastic crew Caitlyn McKay, Liam Pillsbury, Scott Mrazik, Dylan Venell, Tessa Venell and a **very special thanks** to our captain **Chris McKay** for his stellar coordination of the program.

We had a record breaking number of volunteer lake hosts this year thanks in part to the freedom to hold the training locally rather than in Concord, NH. We also had some students who were eager to volunteer at the ramp to satisfy community service requirements. They learned a lot about protecting the lake and getting to know their lake neighbors. For their continued commitment we thank our veteran volunteers Don and Catherine Mills, Dorothy, Doug, and Nancy Smith (not related!), Win Robin and Charlie Wills. Our new recruits did a terrific job – thanks to Sue Cain, Dan Kraft, Jack and Taylor Kelly, Michelle and Nick Lee, Norm Panall and Jack Whitney. We hope to see you all again in 2009.

Continued on page 5

Great East continued from page 4

While the Lake Hosts are the first line of defense it is still up to each of you to scour your own lake shallows for anything that you don't recognize. There are many places boats can launch that we can't inspect so our Weed Watchers need to remain vigilant. Weed Watcher Gary Field found a suspicious-looking plant in the Second Basin which was identified as the native Coontail. Whew! Better safe than sorry so please do contact us if you are at all unsure about what you're seeing. We'll have lots of info about invasive plants at the 2009 Annual meeting so stay tuned for the details.

Single Loon Chick Thriving Into Fall

By Carol Lafond

The Loons of Great East Lake produced only one chick in 2008, but that chick has been growing steadily and with luck should be heading off to the ocean in the late fall. It will spend the next three or four years on the ocean before returning to a lake where it will eventually find a mate and establish a nest.

Nests were seen from mid May and into July in the Scribner River, Copp Brook and the Second Basin. There may have been a nest on Loon Island also, but it could not be seen from the water. The only chick came from the Copp Brook site, where the artificial loon nest was floated. It was not used as a nesting site, but the loons were successful on a natural site nearby. All other nests failed this year.

The Loon Preservation Committee biologist retrieves unhatched eggs and the shells of hatched eggs for analysis. They also collect dead loons and do necropsies to determine the cause of death. LPC reports that a record 240 pairs nested in NH this year, but the survival rate of 95 chicks is too low to maintain a stable population. This was the second worst year for surviving chicks since 1975. There were only 7 surviving chicks on the state's three largest lakes, Umbagog, Winnepesaukee and Squam.

Welcome New and Renewed Members

Barry Bishop
 Rich and Lisa Brown
 Michael and Lisa Cooley
 Robert and Anita Feins
 Jeffrey and Robin Kelly
 Gail McLean
 John and Gini Quinn
 Dwain and Darleen Scruton
 Arnold and Donna Stadig
 Prescott and Dorothy Greene
 Robert and Christine Devine
 John Minges

Nelson Broce
 Ronald and Susan Comtois
 Michael Cywiak
 Glenn and Mildred Fulton
 Scott Knapp
 Sharon and John Meader
 Richard and Rosemary Rainsford
 Ellen Spalding
 Jerry and Lea Janelle
 Helen Capelianis
 Kenneth and Kathie Edmonds
 Steven and Cynthia Murray

All Hands On Deck! Great East Lake Watershed Survey – Spring 2009

By Linda Schier

Results from the recent GELIA opinion survey indicated that 95% of those responding (over 180 people!) are concerned about the effects of erosion caused by stormwater runoff. It's great that so many of the GELIA membership are aware of the serious nature of the issue. Water quality can be quickly affected by uncontrolled soil erosion and the phosphorus attached to soil particles. Excess phosphorus can essentially fertilize a lake, lowering water clarity and leading to nuisance algae blooms. Fortunately, there is still time to reduce sources of pollution and prevent decline in Great East Lake.

GELIA is making every effort to take action by monitoring water quality and working with the Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance (AWWA) through the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), public education and development of a watershed management plan.

AWWA has been awarded a NH Department of Environmental Services grant to develop a watershed management plan for all the headwaters of the Salmon Falls River which includes Great East, Horn Pond, Lovell Lake, Lake Ivanhoe and Wilson Lake. AWWA is working with partners to review information collected through water quality monitoring, review of municipal plans and ordinances, land-use modeling and volunteer watershed surveys. All this data will be used to create a plan to recommend strategies for the communities, lake associations and other stakeholders to preserve the high quality waters of all these beautiful lakes and ponds.

GELIA will partner with AWWA in the Spring of 2009 to complete a volunteer watershed survey of all the properties within the Great East Lake watershed. AWWA and 50 enthusiastic volunteers completed the surveys of Horn Pond and Lovell Lake this past summer and fall.

So – what is a watershed survey?

Well, a watershed survey is an on-site visual inspection of properties to locate erosion sites on all developed areas and roads around the lake. The information gathered is **not used for finger pointing or enforcement purposes**. Locally-led watershed surveys have been used successfully throughout Maine and New Hampshire and the benefits include:

- Raising public awareness about the need to protect water quality from stormwater runoff and soil erosion problems.
- Helping the watershed community understand the watershed concept.
-
- Identifying sources of pollution in a cost-effective way by using volunteers.
- Documenting types of problems existing in the watershed.
- Providing landowners with information about how to reduce or eliminate soil erosion problems and phosphorus runoff from their property.
- Providing an important component of a comprehensive strategy for long-term lake water quality protection.
- Making GELIA, AWWA and the Towns eligible for grant funds to fix problems that are outside the scope of the YCC.

Great East Lake's watershed covers 15.6 square miles in Wakefield and Acton so we'll need lots of volunteers to get it done. Every property owner within the watershed will be sent a letter in the early spring explaining the survey details so keep an eye out and volunteer to help. Volunteers from the other surveys commented on how much they learned and how interested and welcoming the landowners were. It's a great way to protect the lake and meet your lake neighbors. Questions? Contact Linda Schier:

info@AWwatersheds.org or (603) 473-2500; or Carol Lafond: carol.v.lafond@roadrunner.com or (603) 522-6538.

GELIA Merchandise Order Form

Last Chance to order GELIA 2009 Calendars – orders must be received by November 5th

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number (if questions) _____

Number of GELIA 2009 calendars @ \$15 each _____
Calendar total: \$ _____

Number of Newichawannock Reflections books @ \$15 each _____
Book total: \$ _____

Total merchandise: \$ _____

PLUS \$2.50 Shipping Charge for each Calendar
PLUS \$5.00 Shipping Charge for 1-2 Books

Total Cost: \$ _____

Date _____

Make check payable to GELIA
Mail to : Mr. Gene Rosenthal
535 Shaker Street
New London, NH 03257

Thank you for your support and enjoy!

Notice: Possible change in Annual Meeting 2009

By Bess Smith

At our most recent Board of Directors meeting we noticed that next year's Annual Meeting will fall directly on July 4th (due to the fact that we have it the 1st Saturday of July). We reviewed the Bylaws of the Association and found that we have the ability to change the date of the meeting at the Board's discretion. Therefore we were thinking of changing it to the following Saturday, July 11th. If you have a strong opinion about this change – one way or the other – please let me know at pres@greateastlake.org. or 978-807-8675

 * **Thank You!** *
 * To the 50% (!) of GELIA members who took the time to complete and return the Opinion *
 * Survey to UNH. The results aren't quite complete but will be published in the Winter *
 * Newichawannock News. Preliminary results show that the primary concern of the GELIA *
 * community is protecting water quality. The GELIA Board of Directors is grateful to have this *
 * opportunity to hear your thoughts. Please don't hesitate to contact President Bess Smith, *
 * pres@greateastlake.org or (978)689-9202 if you have any further comments. *
 * You should receive your coupon for a free GELIA mug soon which can be redeemed *
 * at the **Watershed Survey Breakfast on Saturday, May 30**. Or, at the **Apple Core Gift** *
 * **Shop** in Acton. More info will be in the Winter and Spring newsletters. *

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

GELIA
 P.O. Box 762
 Tewksbury MA 01876

