

MELODY LAKE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE MELODY LAKE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

MARCH 2015

I'm sure that you have all been anxiously awaiting this newsletter. Winter is winding down and you are all looking forward to getting back to Melody Lake. Hopefully many of you are reading this newsletter in an electronic format. If you are, you are seeing all the photos and ads in color. Many of the articles may also contain a link that all you need to do is click on and it will put you directly into a website with more information. This format also allows our sponsors to put a link into their ad which with a simple click will put you directly into their website.

The newsletter is an important means that allows the board to inform all property owners about the past, the present and the future of what is happening around the lake. The old way of printing, copying and mailing "hard copies" to everyone was a big expense. Even though we are a Not-For-Profit, it is important that we cut costs wherever we can. The cost of insurance, taxes, road repair and dam maintenance continue to rise annually. We feel that by providing an electronic format, we not only save money and natural resources, but also can provide a better product.

So go pour yourself a cup of coffee, sit back, relax and enjoy reading about what is happening at the lake. If you are reading a black and white paper copy, please provide us with your email address so we can keep you up to date throughout the year. Also by providing us your email address we are able to inform you whenever a Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) has been identified. Your email address will not be shared and will be used only for official association business.

Finally, we ask you to support the sponsors of this newsletter. Many of them have supported us for several years and many are association members. Please tell them you saw their ad in the *Melody Lake News* and thank them for their support.

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Melody Lake Association was formed on June 22nd, 1964 to: 1) Aid and promote the preservation and protection of Melody Lake and the land around it. 2) To aid in the protection of fish and game in such lake and area. 3) To promote and cultivate social relationships among its members; and 4) To undertake programs and activities calculated to advance the above purposes

IMPORTANT PHONE #'S, EMAILS, DATES AND INFORMATION

Melody Lake Association
PO Box 95
Willet, NY 13863
www.stny.info/melodylake

or visit us on Facebook

HOW TO CONTACT:

Association Officers:

President – Bob Rosati (607)863-4425 rcrosati@frontiernet.net

Vice President – John Opp (607)821-2697 j.opp47@yahoo.com

Secretary – Tami Zebrowski-Darrow (607)722-5994 (home),
(607)863-4319 (lake) tzebrowski@stny.rr.com

Treasurer- Steve Smith (607)729-8823, sjstev@gmail.com

Member at Large – Dan Armstrong (607)775-3137,

DARMSTRONG11@stny.rr.com

Webmaster – Jim Pratt – (607)775-4925 jpratt@stny.rr.com

Emergency Response

NY State Police – (607)756-5604 or 911

Cortland County Sheriff – (607)753-3311 or 911

Fire & Ambulance – 911

NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation:

Conservation Officer – (607)836-6595, (607)749-0163 or
1-844-332-3267 (24 hr)

Permits – 1-800-388-8244 or (607)753-3095 ext. 235

Dam Safety – (518)402-8150

Town Government Officials:

Willet Town Hall – 863-4877 (for building permits)

Town Supervisor – Alvin (Sandy) Doty – 863-3252

Town Clerk – Annie Wilcox – 863-4329

Highway Superintendent – Geno Turshman 863-3265

Code Enforcement – 749-8299 or 345-0759

Tax Assessor – Frances J Butler 849-6966

Other:

Cortland County Health – 753-5035 (permits for wells & septic)

DOGS AROUND THE LAKE:

Remember that your dog must be under your control at all times. If the dog is loose, they must remain on your property. Every year we receive complaints from people walking around the lake that they are confronted by loose dogs. Excessive barking is also a nuisance and is in violation of the Town ordinance. All complaints should be referred to the Town of Willet Dog Warden. (Country Acres Animal Shelter – 749-2734)

There are new operating hours for the Willet Post Office:

Mon – Fri : 10 AM – 12 noon & 1 PM – 3 PM

Sat – 9 AM – 11:45 AM

THE MEETINGS FOR MELODY LAKE ASSOCIATION FOR 2015 WILL BE HELD AT 12:00 NOON ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF JUNE, JULY, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER. ALL MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE WILLET TOWN HALL (unless decided otherwise). THE MEETING DATES FOR 2015 ARE:

JUNE 14th

JUNE 20th - Melody Lake Association Family Picnic

(More information inside this newsletter)

JULY 12th

AUGUST 9th

SEPTEMBER 13th

YOUR IDEAS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE ASSOCIATION. PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND WHENEVER POSSIBLE. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO LIMIT THE MEETING TO ABOUT 1 HOUR HOWEVER WILL CONTINUE UNTIL ALL IMPORTANT TOPICS ARE DISCUSSED.

The Town Of Willet Town Board Meetings are held on the third Monday of every month at 7:30 PM. The meetings for 2015 are:

January 19th

February 16th

March 16th

April 20th

May 18th

June 15th

July 20th

August 17th

September 21st

October 19th

November 16th

December 21st

WE WOULD LIKE TO REMIND ALL PROPERTY OWNERS AND THEIR GUESTS THAT EVEN THOUGH MELODY LAKE IS A PRIVATE LAKE, ALL NYS LAWS APPLY. THIS INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO FISHING, HUNTING, BOATING AND MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS. ALSO REMEMBER THAT ALL BOATS THAT ARE POWERED BY AN ELECTRIC MOTOR (INCLUDING PONTOON BOATS) MUST BE REGISTERED. ALL NON-NYS RESIDENTS MUST HAVE A NONRESIDENT FISHING/HUNTING LICENSE.

CORTLAND/CHENANGO RURAL SERVICES

NEARLY NEW SHOP (gently used clothing)

2704 Lower Cincinnatus Rd, Cincinnatus, NY

Located at the Catholic Church (607)863-3828

Mon & Fri - 9:30 am – 11 am

Tues & Thurs – 9:30 am – 11:00 am & 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Wed – 9:30 am – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Sat–9 am –12 noon (also Local Farmers Market in season)

Remember that the speed limit on Melody Lake Rd. is 30 mph and on Melody Lane is 10 mph. Please remind your visitors and everyone that you may be doing business with such as contractors, fuel delivery companies, etc.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter by Melody Lake Association's diverse group of volunteers may not necessarily reflect the views held by the Association, its members, or its sponsors.



Association President Bob Rosati:



It's Sunday, March 1st and I just woke up to a fresh snowfall. The forecast says we can expect another 4-6 inches by tomorrow morning. So far we have had 91" of snow and record low temperatures this winter. Its days like today that I realize how fortunate I am to live year round at Melody Lake. While I do admit that it is beautiful in the summer, nothing can compare to a fresh, clean snowfall. Throughout Upstate New York, everything looks so clean after new snow. But whatever it takes to allow us to maintain our commitments and lifestyle, roads are plowed, salt and sand are spread and within a few hours everything looks dirty again. Here on Melody Lane, we realize that while we have to plow our way in and out, it is worth it to see the deer, turkeys and who knows what just a few feet from our back door. As spring approaches we might even see a bear at our bird feeder.



All of you have seen the beauty of our lake in the summer but many close their camps around Labor Day. If you do, you are among those that have not seen the beauty of Melody Lake in the peak of fall.



We all have a lot to be thankful for by owning property on Melody Lake. Along with this privilege, we also have the obligation to do whatever is necessary to protect this privilege. Please remember:

“AS PROPERTY OWNERS ON MELODY LAKE WE HAVE THE OBLIGATION TO ALTER OUR WAY OF LIFE TO PROTECT MELODY LAKE RATHER THAN TO ALTER MELODY LAKE TO PROTECT OUR WAY OF LIFE”

ARE YOU EXPECTING COMPANY WITH NO PLACE FOR THEM TO STAY?

COTTAGE FOR RENT

1362 Melody Lane

Two bedroom w/ additional sofa bed.

Full bath. New Septic System.

Recently remodeled with all new appliances

Available by the day, weekend or full week

A short walk for full lake access.

No Pets and No Smoking

For more information contact Bob & Carol Rosati

(607)863-4425 or rrosati@frontiernet.net



Mid-Winter Thoughts – by John Opp

Like a lot of people I find I have more time to check the weather on a regular basis now that I am fully retired. However, one difference from a lot of those people is I get to check it from the middle of Florida in the winter and there are a lot of people that cannot escape the brutal cold of the north in wintertime. And as I write this I glance at the calendar and see that it is February 2. One group that certainly cannot escape the cold weather are the farm families that manage their herds throughout the winter to supply our dairy products and then commence to grow lots of our crops in the spring. They count the days until the warmth returns so they can enjoy a much more comfortable environment for their work. My wife presented me with a poem that her grandmother, Helen Loomis, would recite each February 2nd and I am sure it was from the farm upbringing she had and passed on down through her family. It makes good sense and foretells the coming of spring:

February 2nd is Candlemas day!

You should have half your wood and half your hay!

Half the winter has passed away, we'll eat our supper by the light of day!

The daylight hours are getting longer with each passing day (no matter what that darned groundhog might say). Huh...? That rhymes, too! The warmth of spring is on its way so hang in there and keep the faith. Hope to see a lot of you lake dwellers when we return to the lake. We'll continue to work on things that need to be worked on (roads), and build a fire on those cool nights so we can renew the friendships and enjoy trading stories.

In the meantime, when you see a farmer and have a chance to talk to them, thank them for the jobs they do and the sacrifices they make each and every day they farm. It's not an easy life, especially in winter.....but they keep on plugging.....for others!

Be Safe, John and JoAnn

What should I do if I cut myself at the lake? Will I need a tetanus shot?

Foot wounds should raise concerns. The source of the injury may be contaminated, so a tetanus shot is a good precaution. If you have medical problems such as Diabetes or Vascular disease, special care should be taken with foot injuries and medical attention should be sought early. Cuts, scrapes (abrasions), and puncture wounds facts:

- Wash a cut or scrape with plenty of soap and water. Medical studies have shown that tap water is as good as anything. The more water the better. Wash it and then wash it again. Keeping it clean and dry is all that is required for most wounds.
- Cleaning the wound with hydrogen peroxide or iodine is acceptable initially, but can delay healing and should be avoided long-term. Beware of iodine allergies.
- Apply antibiotic ointment and keep the wound covered.
- Seek medical care within 6 hours if the affected person thinks they might need stitches. Any delay can increase the rate of wound infection.
- Any redness, swelling, increased pain, fever, or pus draining from the wound may indicate an infection that requires medical care.

ELECTIONS

Keep in mind that elections will be held at the end of the summer. While it is possible that some board members will run for reelection, all offices are available to anyone wishing to run. I would like to thank this entire current board for working together trying to protect Melody Lake while also trying to please 83 property owners.

MELODY LAKE WEBSITE

Jim Pratt and family have sold their cottage. We hate to see them go since Jim's family has been loyal supporting association members for several years. Jim was the one to help move our association into the electronic age by developing and maintaining both our website and Facebook sites. Jim has agreed to continue as our webmaster for a small fee and the Board has agreed. We thank Jim for his support in the past, present and future. If you have any ideas on what you would like to see on the website please let any board member know and we will pass it on to Jim.

ENCROACHMENT ON LAKE ASSOCIATION PROPERTY

Over the past few years, at many of the association meetings, along with articles in the annual newsletter, you have all heard the concern of certain property owners using association property for their personal gain. For the most part, this use is restricted to mowing just a little bit beyond their property line. There is one instance where a property owner has extended and improved their property by actually building a shed on association property. There is also a good chance that they have increased the size of their cottage without a Town of Willet permit and also installed a septic tank without a Cortland County Health Department permit. It also appears that both the cottage and the septic are closer to the property line than current deed restrictions and NYS Law allow.

This encroachment has been the discussion at many of the association meetings. It is true that the members in attendance have voted to allow the current board to take whatever means are necessary to cease this concern. While past association administrations have found it OK to “break the bank” by draining the entire association bank accounts on attorney fees to solve concerns, this administration is still trying to resolve this through dialog. We started by acknowledging that this may have been an innocent act and could be resolved by a simple easement or outright sale of a small piece of association property. The ball was placed in the member’s court with their promise that they would think about it during the winter months in the south and then present a proposal at an association meeting the following spring. Now, more than 2 years later, the only proposal we have received was to spend association money and to take them to court. They have also suggested that we (the association) pay for a survey of the association property which would cost about \$1500. Since their property is much smaller than the 4+ acres the association owns, a survey of their property would be much less costly but they are not willing. Past practices have shown that while court action may resolve a concern, there is little way in NYS to recoup the legal costs to the association coffers.

Why such a big deal? This encroachment is on property that the association pays both liability insurance and taxes. Both list this property as “unimproved” and by allowing the structure to remain could result in the canceling of our insurance and/or the increase in our taxes.

What is most puzzling is that this property owner is part of a family that has owned property and has been supporting members close to 50 years. Other family members continue to own property elsewhere on the lake and continue to support the association. There is also a concern that there may be a sale of the property in the future without the association’s knowledge which could result in passing the concern to an unknowing purchaser resulting in an early battle with the association.

The board will continue to try to resolve this concern in the least costly method to both the association and the involved property owner. The thoughts and suggestions of all members are both welcome and encouraged.

Building Permits

Remember, building permits are required for many of your improvements on your property.

- Obtain an “Application for Construction Inspection” from the Town Clerk (607)863-4877
- Submit a drawing of improvement
- Pay fee to Town Clerk (cost varies)
- Town Clerk submits application to Atlantic Inland
- Atlantic Inland issues the actual building permit
- Process can take 1 – 2 weeks so plan accordingly. Any work started without a permit could result in a fine, penalty or removal of the improvement.

Invasive Species and Property Values

In 2009, The University of Wisconsin conducted a study to determine the effects of the presence of invasive species on the value of lakeshore properties. Over 170 lakes participated in the study. Since most lake users looked at the aesthetics of a lake before purchasing property, it was determined that the presence of invasive species could reduce the dollar value of the property by as much as 15 – 18%. Many of you can remember back a dozen or so years when Melody Lake was taken over by Eurasian Milfoil. It took several years to bring this nuisance under control. Every year we hear of other invasive species being discovered in neighboring lakes.



Over the last three years, members of The Nature Conservancy sampled over 400 lakes in the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. On August 13, 2014, Association President Bob Rosati accompanied several members of the conservancy as they took a good look at Melody Lake. Over a couple hours 15 sites were sampled resulting in finding at least 2 locations with Starry Stonewort, an algae native to Europe and Asia, several locations of Purple Loosestrife and a large population of Chinese Mystery Snails throughout the lake. These invasives are found throughout NYS. The problem with invasive species is that they usually do not have any predators to keep them under control, thereby allowing them to spread and compete with our natural habitat. While it is too early to see if any of these will create a problem at Melody Lake, we must try to keep an eye on them. In the meantime, we will continue to take advantage of every program we become aware of to keep our lake free from invasive species infestation. We ask every property owner to take every precaution known to help keep these undesirable species out of our lake.

For more information on this project go to:

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/newyork/glri-ais-fact-sheet.pdf>

To see a map of the testing sites at Melody Lake go to:

<http://tnc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html?appid=9dda5d6dd7cc4eb8bd19d5cb5e682558>

Once you get on the map you can zoom into Melody Lake (Ellis Pond) and click on the testing sites to see where the testing was done and what was found there.

For more information on Starry Stonewort go to:

http://michiganlakeinfo.com/uploads/Starry_Stonewort.pdf

For more information on Chinese Mystery Snail go to:

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/invasive_species/docs/ChinesemysterysnailFactSheet.pdf

For more information on Purple Loosestrife go to:

<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/badplants/noxiouslist/~media/Files/plants/weeds/purpleloosestrifebmp.ashx>

NEW BOATING LAW IN NYS

Effective May 1st, 2014 anyone born on or after May 1st, 1996 will need to complete an approved 8 hour course and obtain a "Boating Safety Certificate" before being allowed to operate any motorized boat. This includes an electric motor. These courses will be given by NYS Office of Parks and Rec., US Power Squadrons, or US Coast Guard Auxiliary. To obtain a list of approved courses please visit www.nysparks.com

Also remember that all motorized boats, including the many pontoon boats on the lake must be registered.

Teach Our Youths To Enjoy The Outdoors

Did you know that DEC publishes "Conservationist For Kids" several times each year? You can view or download every issue published since 2007 free of charge by going to: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/100415.html>



DEC ANNOUNCES A NEW TOLL FREE NUMBER TO REPORT POACHERS AND POLLUTERS

Members of the public now have a way to instantly report poachers and polluters by using a new toll free hotline which is manned 24/7 that will help to ensure strict enforcement of NYS environmental laws.

1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

We all need to support our Environmental Conservation Officers (ECO's). There are less than 300 ECO's in the entire state so they each must patrol an average of 400 square miles to protect the land, air and waters of NYS. You can help by reporting every violation of New York's Environmental Conservation Law you suspect.

When you suspect a violation it is best to keep a distance from the violator. Do not attempt to approach or confront the suspect. They may be dangerous or may destroy any evidence or evade the officers if they are forewarned. Make notes on what the violators are doing. How many people are involved? What do they look like? (age, sex, height, weight, hair color, etc.). Are there any characteristics that could aid in identifying the person? (glasses, jewelry, beard or moustache, tattoo, etc.). How are they dressed? (hat, coat, pants, gloves, footwear). Description of vehicle if any. (color, make, model, year, license number). Remember, all poachers are thieves and all polluters are criminals.



New information on Fishing Licenses

Remember, just because Melody Lake is a private lake, you must still have a valid NY fishing license and all laws apply. If you are not a permanent resident of NY, you must have a nonresident license. Since Feb. 1, 2014 there have been some changes. Many fees have lowered for both residents and non-residents. Also, an annual fishing license is good for a full 365 days from the date of purchase. An annual license for a NYS resident is \$25 (down from \$29). A 7 day license is \$13 (down from \$15) and a 1 day license remains at \$5. A nonresident annual license is now \$50 (down from \$70). A 7-day license is \$31 (down from \$35) and a 1 day license is \$10 (down from \$15). Remember, a fishing license is required for everyone 16 years of age or older. These licenses may be purchased on line, by phone, or from the Willet Town Clerk or other issuing agent.

No license is required to fish during the last weekend of June (June 27th – 28th, 2015).

For more information on any environmental law, go to: www.dec.ny.gov and type any topic into the SEARCH window at the top right hand corner of the page.

NEWS FROM THE DAM



On August 14th, 2014, several association members spent a couple hours at the dam doing our annual maintenance. Grass and brush was cut, gabions were tightened up, the spillway was cleaned and the valves were opened and pipes were flushed. Thanks to Tami and Mike Zebrowski, Justin Hansen, Kelly Cerroni, Dan and Debbie Walker, John and JoAnn Opp and Bob Rosati for helping to complete the work. If you would like to help us out in 2015 please give your name to one of the board members. When the work is scheduled, you will be notified and if available you're welcome to assist.

DEC INSPECTS DAM



On August 21st, President Rosati, Vice-President Opp and Melody Lake Engineer Alex Urda P.E, met with State Dam Safety Representatives Scott Braymer P.E. (DEC Albany), Dan Fuller P.E. (DEC Kirkwood) and Tim Walsh P.E. (DEC Avon). The drains were operated and a visual inspection was performed with no deficiencies found. Thanks to the maintenance completed the week before (see article above) the inspection results noted that "all brush and vegetation is well controlled".

DAM ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT

Our DEC required Engineering Assessment (EA) is taking a lot longer than we expected. It appears that we might have to be doing some work constructing or improving an auxiliary spillway. Our 2014 September meeting was postponed until October so we could have a presentation from our Engineer Alex Urda. An overview of this presentation was included in the minutes and sent to all members with email. We will try to inform everyone when the results of the assessment are complete.

100% MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES FOR 2013 & 2014

We would like to thank all property owners for paying their dues. You might remember that in our newsletter last year it looked like we would not reach 100% for 2013. Since then, all past dues have been paid and we now have had 8 years in a row of reaching 100% membership. Very few lake associations can make that claim.

It's important that all property owners pay their dues. If we achieve 100% again this year we can count on \$8300.00 in income. Let's take a look at what our General Fund expenses are:

Estimated Non-Dam Expenses:

- Taxes – (Town/County & School) - \$780.00
- Memberships – (NYSFOLA & CSLAP) - \$560
- Travel – (NYSFOLA Conference) - \$200.00
- Insurance on Association Property - \$1,100.00
- Association Property Maintenance (Road, Right of Way, etc.) - \$1,525.00
- Office Expense – (PO Box, Safety Deposit Box, Postage, etc.) - \$553.00
- Attorney Fees - \$0.00 (hopefully)
- Annual Transfer to Dam Fund - \$2,500.00
- Association Picnic - \$100.00
- Donations – (Willet Fire & Rescue, Cortland County Soil and Water) - \$150.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED GENERAL FUND EXPENSES - \$7,468.00

As you can see, this doesn't allow us much for unanticipated expenses. We also have a Dam Fund with the following estimated expenses:

- Final Payment for DEC required Engineering Assessment - \$4,500.00
- Annual Emergency Action Plan Update - \$100.00
- Annual Maintenance - \$200.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED DAM RELATED EXPENSES - \$4,800.00

Keep in mind that under the new NYSDEC Dam Safety Regulations we must have periodic inspections performed by a Professional Engineer. We must also update our Emergency Action Plan, file an Annual Dam Certification and do whatever is necessary to maintain a safe dam. In order to have the necessary funds available, we will be transferring \$2500 annually from our General Fund to our Dam Fund.

The Board is always looking for ways to save the association money. Last year (2014) we were able to get the assessment lowered on one of the pieces of property we own which resulted in a savings of \$180 in school taxes and \$202 savings in property taxes. The Town of Willet agreed to pay for the cost of the street light at the dam which saved us about \$300. Thanks to the continued support from our newsletter sponsors and the savings by sending electronically where possible brought in an extra \$324. Our great relationship with Cortland County Soil and Water saved us \$525 in NYSFOLA and CSLAP fees. Proceeds from the picnic brought in \$490 and extra donations from many of our members provided another \$1003.

All this brought in an extra \$3024 into our General Fund and Dam Fund.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this possible.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the above estimated expenses please plan to attend one of the 2015 meetings. The meeting dates are listed on page 2 of this newsletter.

GOOD BYE OLD FRIENDS and WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS

by Bob Rosati

On August 6th, 2014, Melody Lake lost a long time member, John (Jack) Sosenko. Jack's parents, Paul and Margaret had owned property here for as long as I can remember. In the past, I spent many days with Jack, fishing, canoeing the Delaware and Tioughnioga Rivers, or just sitting around a campfire. Over the years we only got together when working on the road, or the dam. Hopefully the cottage will remain in the family and be used by John's wife Eileen and the rest of the family. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the entire family.

We also have to say goodbye to some former property owners and welcome the new owners and invite them to become active association members.

We welcome:

- Tom & Jeri Haessig are the new owners of 6070 Melody Lake Rd (formerly Blanchard)
- Ron & Mary Birmingham are the new owners of 6057 Melody Lake Rd (formerly Lamb)
- Brian & Sarah Sirgany are the new owners of 1267 Melody Lane, (formerly Wohlgemuth)
- Mason King is the new owner of 1346 Melody Lane (formerly Pratt)
- Scott Harris and Deborah Gates are the new owners of 1318 Melody Lane (formerly Wisey)

As far as I know, there are still 5 properties for sale at the lake. They are:

- 6089 Melody Lake Rd (Pfeifer)
- 1372 Melody Lane (Ambrose)
- 1306 Melody Lane (Jones)
- 6079 Melody Lake Rd (Burrows)
- 1293 Melody Lane (Zwierzynski)

REMEMBER, YOUR 2015 DUES ARE NOW DUE

Please send a check for \$100 made payable to Melody Lake Association to:

Steve Smith, Treasurer

824 Tyler St

Johnson City, NY 13790

Please include your updated contact information (address, phone, email, etc.). This information will not be shared and will be used for official association purposes only.



MELODY LAKE POLAR BEAR CLUB CONTINUES TO GROW

At 12 noon on New Year's Day, the 9th Annual Polar Bear Plunge was held at the dam. This year's attendance grew to 7 which was an all-time record. Temperature was a balmy 21° and water temperature was about 34°. In attendance were association members Chuck Tennant, Bob & Carol Rosati and Steve Smith along with friends Debbie Goga, Will Gallerani and Bryan Hills. The event is not sponsored or endorsed by Melody Lake Association and all participants are required to sign a release relieving the association and any other property owners from any liability.

Blink your eye, and another year goes by... By Jack Ginn

It's now the time of year, WINTER; when a person finds a lot of time to reflect on what has transpired in the last 12 months on and around the lake. For me, it was arriving back at the lake close to the end of May. The tulips and crocuses had already shown their beauty and colors. June showed great promise of being a NY summer that we all brag about to our distant friends.

Lots of activity in and around the neighborhood. Bob Pendall was making his rounds on a daily basis, which encourages me to know that everyone is diligent in the responsibility of maintaining their septic's. I've always said, Bob is #1 in the #2 business.

Lumber trucks, cement trucks, workers by the score. It was an amazing process to watch the building of a new home on the lake. I was dumbfounded on just how fast something can be accomplished by a hardworking, professional crew. It's been quite some time since I have met anyone as respectful and courteous as the men from Texas were. To say nothing of the delicious food smells quaffing out from their grills every day. Kudo's and a well-deserved job well done to all involved, I believe a great addition has been added to Melody Lake.

I have come to the conclusion that geese are now considered a feature to our lake's environment. I guess that if you can't beat them, then it's easier to just accept the fact they are here for the duration.

How about the 2 white ducks that spent the fall months visiting the lake, now that was a 1st that I can ever remember.

I have to say, fishing was at an all-time low for me last summer, my success rate was minimal...which leads me to a story (true). in July, after a day of enjoying a few "toddies", I thought fishing was in order. As I threw my line out from the dock, I lost my balance and fell off into about a foot of water, and 2 feet of mud and rotting leaves, I was a mess, leaves and mud up to you know where, so I lay the pole down, bait still in the water, and go take a shower. 30 minutes later, I come out to retrieve the pole, it's gone. So if anyone hooks into an Abu Garcia pole and reel, it's yours for finding it, but I sure would like to know how big a monster that fish was.

Where do lady bugs appear from all of a sudden, come October, every window in the house is loaded with them. I shouldn't complain though, they are more inviting then those darn stink bugs anytime.

If you want to try and effort in futility, try live trapping a feral momma cat and her brood. I had no luck and Bob Rosati had even less. Out done by an animal again. Makes me wonder who is smarter, I'll leave that for you to decide.

Been watching the winter on the lake via my computer. God bless your hearty souls.

Stay safe, stay warm. C U round the lake,

Jack

P.S. there is a snow shovel in my barn, feel free to borrow it, if your wife needs one.

ASSOCIATION FAMILY PICNIC

In the past, the association picnic was held the same day as the June meeting. Last year it was suggested that the picnic be held on a separate day with no association business discussed. That turned out to be a good choice which resulted in one of the best picnics in the history of the association. Attendance was great and the festivities continued late in the evening around a bonfire at the meeting right of way. A 50/50 raffle was held and the winner donated his half back to the association. Items that were donated by Cincinnati Home Center brought in \$133.00. With these and other events, close to \$500 was brought into our general fund.

This year the picnic will be held at the Willet Town Hall on **Saturday, June 20th**. Set up will be around

12:00 noon and be eating around 1:00. No meeting will be held. As always the association will furnish the meat, soda and water. Everyone will be asked to bring a dish to pass along with their place settings.

If you want something to drink other than soda, bring your own. There will be some items to be raffled, a 50-50 raffle and homemade wine tasting. If you would like, you can bring a cake or other baked good for the cake wheel. Chances will be sold for 25¢ each and with the spin of a roulette wheel you might be the lucky winner of one of these homemade baked goodies.

Learn more about this fun filled day by attending the June 14th meeting.

Lake Testing Results for 2014

We all know, monitoring the health of the lake is important to both the safety of our family and the value of our property. Since 1987, we have participated in a program called Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP). This program is sponsored by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and New York State Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA). While there are some costs for us to participate, thanks to the generosity of Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) our fees have been paid for the past several years. In this program, twice a month in the summer, water samples are taken, field processed and sent to a lab in Syracuse where they are analyzed for several parameters such as phosphorus, nitrogen, chlorophyll a, etc. These samples also show the presence of Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB). Except for the presence of HAB's, the results are not available until the following spring. Starting in 2015, certain information such as water clarity, temperature, lake perception and more will be available instantly. For the first time in a long time, we received the results from last year's water sampling (CSLAP) in time to include something in this newsletter. Below are some answers to questions we have heard from our members over the past several years. Remember, these are based on the samples taken in 2014. By changing our habits, we just may be able to have some more positive answers to these same questions next year.

Q1. What is the condition of our lake this year?

A1. Water clarity appears to have decreased over the last two decades, including 2014, although this change is not statistically significant, most likely due to a rise in nutrient levels. This has resulted in less favorable water quality and recreational assessments. Few shoreline blooms were reported in 2014, and plant (weed) coverage was still low.

Q2. Is there anything new that showed up in the testing this year?

A2. The HABs testing includes information about the types of algae found in the water samples. These results showed increasing total algae levels during the summer, but the open water algae samples are comprised primarily of (non-toxic) diatoms and green algae. Shoreline blooms are at times dense and comprised of blue green algae.

Q3. How does the condition of our lake this year compare with other lakes in the area?

A3. Melody Lake had slightly lower water clarity, but similar nutrient algae levels, than other nearby lakes. Aquatic plant coverage is much lower than in these other lakes.

Q4. Are there any trends in our lake's condition?

A4. Few clear statistical trends are apparent- water temperatures have increased and plant coverage (in response to grass carp stocking) has decreased. However, there is some evidence that water clarity is lower now than in the mid- 1990s, due to higher phosphorus readings.

Q5. Should we be concerned about the condition of our lake? Are we close to a tipping point?

A5. The drop in water clarity should be further evaluated by lake residents, particularly since algae levels did not consistently increase over the same period. Sources of phosphorus, sediment or other materials contributing to the drop in water transparency should continue to be evaluated. Shoreline blooms should continue to be reported.

Q6. Are any actions indicated, based on the trends and this year's results?

A6. Individual stewardship activities such as pumping your septic system, growing a buffer of native plants next to the water bodies, and reducing erosion from shoreline properties and runoff into the lake will help to maintain lake health by reducing nutrient and sediment loading to the lake. Visiting boats should be inspected to reduce the risk of new invasive species, since nearby lakes harbor several invasive plants not presently found in the lake.

The report goes on to say "Lake productivity steadily increases during the summer—water clarity decreases due to increasing nutrient and algae levels. The lake can continue to be characterized as *eutrophic*, or highly productive, based on water clarity, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll *a* readings (all indicative of *eutrophic* lakes). The trophic state indices (TSI) evaluation suggests that these indicators are "internally" consistent- each of these indicators can be predicted from the other indicators. This further indicates that increasing water clarity will require decreases in algae and phosphorus readings. This entire report can be seen on the Melody Lake Association website <http://www.stny.info/melodylake/>. We will also discuss the results at the association meeting throughout the year.

GETTING READY FOR WINTER

As most of you are reading this, winter is more than half over and your thoughts are getting ready to return to enjoy the lake within the next few months. Some of you are still trying to survive the winter here in the north, while some are enjoying the warmth of the south. Think back to last fall as you were getting ready to prepare to leave the cottage and return to wherever you spend the winter months. In just one short weekend, you can drain the plumbing, empty the refrigerator, put away the lawn chairs and maybe even set a few mousetraps. Unfortunately, things don't happen that fast in nature.

For several months, squirrels and chipmunks try to store enough food for the winter. Snowshoe rabbits, deer and many other mammals shed their summer fur and put on a coarser, different color coat that will protect them from both the weather and predators throughout the winter months. Even our lake has to go through several steps to get ready for the long upstate NY winter months ahead. As temperatures and daylight decrease, solar energy no longer warms the surface waters, the upper layer of the water column cools. Since cold water is denser than warm water, when the upper water cools and the lake's thermal layers weaken, wind activity will cause the lower and upper waters to mix creating a "fall turnover". After this turnover, water temperatures and nutrient concentrations are essentially the same from top to bottom and the lake is said to be isothermal. By the end of November our lake has reached its maximum density and the water temperature is about 39°. The coldest water (32°) will cover the top of the lake and the ice will start to freeze with its first permanent ice layer. This fall turnover will also send a signal to the aquatic life below that it is time to prepare for winter. The decrease in both daylight and temperatures will cause them to slow down their activity but will not entirely stop. For many, the decrease in their body temperature will signal them to seek appropriate shelter. Frogs and some aquatic insects will head for the bottom of the lake and burrow in the leaf litter. Turtles will continue with their normal routine of both eating and mating. Fish will increase their level of body glucose to build up their tolerance to the cold. Although the fish will remain active throughout the

winter months, their movement is slowed and restricted.

Algae and phytoplankton also go through changes as winter approaches. While most algae are a good part of the food chain, the dreaded Cyanobacteria (Harmful Algae) may produce akinetes or special resting cells. These special resting cells allow cyanobacteria to over-winter and live off the stored nutrients of the lake. Since Melody Lake has a higher than desirable amount of phosphorous, there are plenty of nutrients available to keep this algae alive.

Many plant species remain active during the winter months and continue to photosynthesize under the ice. These plants help to provide the oxygen necessary to provide the habitat needed for the fish and wildlife to survive the long cold winters in upstate New York. Other plants will produce an abundance of protected seeds before ice over. These seeds will remain dormant in the lake sediment until spring. Since Melody Lake is known to have both a lower than desired Dissolved Oxygen level and plant population there may not be an adequate amount of oxygen available for a successful winter survival for many aquatic species. This is just one more reason to encourage a more positive land use practice of all property owners around the lake during our summer time activities here at Melody Lake.

Volunteers Needed

It always seems that it is the same handful of people that fill the potholes, cut brush at the dam, and mow the right of way. If everyone would put in a couple hours every summer, we could all enjoy the lake a little more. If you are willing to do your part, please give your name to any board member. When work is scheduled, you will be notified and if you are available at that time and date we look forward to work with you. Also, help is needed to help with the lake sampling. This takes about one hour, twice a month, four months of the summer. This testing has been done since 1987 and except for a handful of times has been done by Bob Rosati. In order for this important project to continue in the future we need a couple volunteers to be available. If you would like to tag along and observe on some of the 2015 sessions please contact Bob.

THANKS!

Inadequate Onsite Wastewater Treatment

Onsite Wastewater Treatment is just another way of saying septic system. Here at Melody Lake most property owners are supposed to have a sealed “hold and haul” type system due to the small sized lots. This type of system, if installed properly, does not allow any leaching of wastewater into the ground. The problem is that many also have a graywater system that allows their sink and bath water to go into a hole in the ground. Remember, all wastewater, including graywater, must be going into a system approved and permitted by the Cortland County Health Department.

The Problem...

While most residences in NY are connected to sewer systems and larger centralized wastewater treatment plants, about one-quarter of New Yorkers and a comparable number of businesses and institutions are served by onsite wastewater treatment systems. Onsite systems are effective and economical when properly designed, installed and maintained. However the lack of an adequate onsite system, poor routine maintenance, increased density of homes served by onsite systems, undersized and overused systems (particularly due to overuse of vacation cottages and camps or conversion into all summer residences), and the installation of systems on sites with unacceptable conditions can all lead to onsite system failure and water quality impacts. Acute failures may result in impacts to our lake or backups into buildings and may cause potential health problems. Chronic problems can result in bacteria contamination of groundwater and nutrient loadings to nearby lakes and other recreational waters that spur excessive aquatic weed and algal growth.

The Significance...

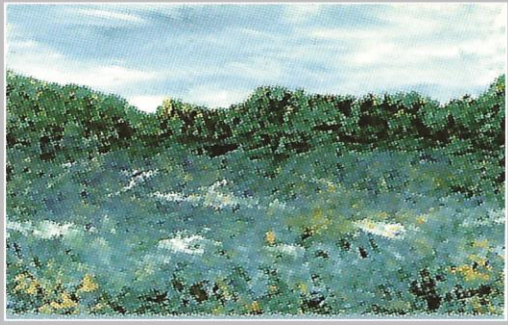
Inadequate and/or failing onsite wastewater treatment (septic) systems are identified as a major source in 7% of all waterbodies assessed as impaired in New York State. In another 20% of impaired waterbodies, onsite systems are noted as a contributing source (though not the most significant source). In addition, for 7% of the waters with less severe impacts or threats, onsite systems are noted as a major contributing source. Failing onsite systems are also cited as the major suspected source in 11% of waters where impacts need to be verified, while also being cited as suspected contributing sources for 22% of waters needing verification of impacts.

Specific Waters...

Waters that are impaired or impacted by inadequate and/or failing onsite systems are located throughout New York State. Most such instances occur in smaller hamlets and communities that are not served by municipal collection and wastewater treatment facilities. NYSDEC has identified over 100 unsewered communities where inadequate/failing onsite systems contribute to water quality problems..

What is Being Done...

Since 1990, NYSDEC has worked with USEPA, state and local health departments, municipalities, local agencies and organizations, and universities to address siting, design, construction and maintenance issues for residential and small community onsite wastewater treatment systems. The Onsite Training Network (OTN) has been established to provide wastewater treatment training events across the state to share knowledge and expertise with local officials, building inspectors and professional engineering firms.



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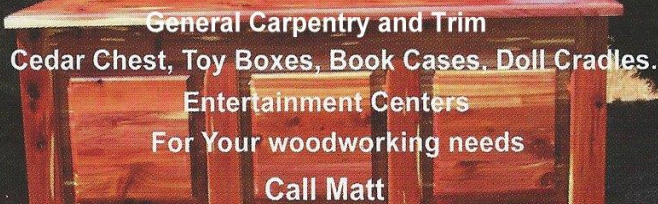
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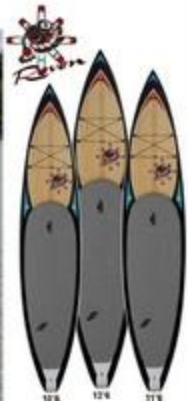
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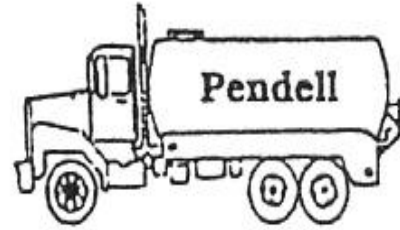
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Extra Donation: \$ _____

Check#: _____

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