

MELODY LAKE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE MELODY LAKE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

JANUARY 2013



Association - as·so·ci·a·tion (noun) - An organized body of people working together for a common interest, activity, or purpose

Being an association doesn't always mean agreeing with each other. Like most, our association is made up members with different backgrounds, nationalities, incomes, education, values, religion, amount of property, size of boat or even the reason for purchasing their property in the first place. While it's true that sometimes things need to be changed, these changes need to attempt to bring members closer together by concentrating on what we have in common rather than how we are different. In order for an association to remain successful, new ideas must be introduced, researched, discussed and then decided on. Regardless of the outcome, the final decision must be made by the majority of the members who decide to become involved and then accepted by all members of the association.

When we look at Melody Lake Association, we are one of the most successful small lake associations in the state. We have overcome many obstacles by sticking together and addressing our problems. In this year's newsletter we will look at the history of our lake and our association along with a timeline of some of decisions that were made. Even though these decisions were made by some of the members, they were approved by the majority and then accepted by all. This is one of the reasons that our lake, and our association, is the model, and the envy, of many other lake associations around the state.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 2: Important dates, phone #'s and other information

Page 3: A message from the association president

Page 4: A message from the association vice-president

Page 5 – 7: Melody Lake Thru the Years

Page 8: Associations upcoming 50th anniversary, When a permit might be needed

Page 9: Wine Tasting; Many Thanks to volunteers, members and sponsors

Page 10- 13: Sponsor Pages

Page 14 – It's The Law, Invasive Species

Page 15: Welcome New Friends, Goodbye Old Friends, Association Income 2012

Melody Lake Association was formed on June 22nd, 1964 to:
Aid and promote the preservation and protection of Melody Lake and the land around it
To aid in the protection of fish and game in such lake and area
To promote and cultivate social relationships among its members
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

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 – 1-877-457-5680 (24 hr)

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

Dam Safety – (518)402-8150

Turn in Poachers or Polluters – 1-800-TIPPDEC

Town Government Officials:

Willet Town Hall – 863-4877

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

Town Clerk – Annie Wilcox – 863-4329

Highway Superintendent – Geno Turshman 863-3283

Code Enforcement – 749-8299 or 345-0759

Dog Warden – Paul Burhans – 749-2734

Tax Assessor – Dave Briggs – 753-1232

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. Many times last year we have heard complaints from people walking around the lake that they are confronted by loose dogs. Also, excessive barking is a nuisance and is in violation of the Town ordinance. All complaints will be referred to the Town of Willet Dog Warden.

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 MEETING FOR MELODY LAKE ASSOCIATION FOR 2013 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 2013 ARE:

JUNE 9TH

JULY 14TH

AUGUST 11TH (with the annual family picnic following the meeting)

SEPTEMBER 8TH

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 2013 are:

January 21st	February 18th
March 18th	April 15th
May 20th	June 17th
July 15th	August 19th
September 16th	October 21st
November 18th	December 16 th

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

Mon, Wed, Fri - 9:30 am – 11 am

Tues, Thurs – 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

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

WILLET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 2013 BREAKFASTS

April 13th

May 11th

June 8th

July 13th

Aug 10th

Sept 14th

Oct 12th

Nov 9th

7 AM – 10 AM Free Will Offering

Menu: Pancakes, Eggs to order, Sausage Patties,
Sausage Gravy & Biscuits, Orange Juice, Coffee or Tea

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.

From the Presidents' Desk

It's 2013, time for a new year. Hopefully we can look forward to some fun at the lake. 2012 was an emotional year for many. Things were said and done that will continue to cause hard feelings among friends, neighbors and perhaps even family members. I must be getting old because I look back at the days when we could get together with other members for a cup of coffee or a cold drink and during long conversations, disagree about anything and everything, and still look forward to getting together again the following week with no hard feelings. Now, in the days of the impersonal conversations of Facebook, if you don't agree with me, I will unfriend you for life.....OMG! If you want to be my friend, you must send me a request to do so. I will then think about what statements you have made or things you have done, and maybe grant you your wish. Just remember though, that the approval is only temporary and you can be "unfriended" at any time. With the power of the internet, and the push of a single button, your ideas, concerns, complaints, etc. can be shared with everyone. Last year the board received numerous complaints from members that no longer want to share their email addresses with anyone due to the negative, and sometime childish, messages being sent. I assure all members that in the future your email will only be used for official association business. If you receive any unwanted message from another member, I suggest you take up the concern with that member. It is important that we do have your email address to avoid postage and copying costs of minutes and other necessary information. Many other lake associations distribute a membership list with names and lot numbers only and no personal information such as address, phone # or email. Perhaps this should become the new policy of Melody Lake Association.

For years the association has been run as if it were a social organization, a place to relax and enjoy while keeping the rules to a minimum. In late 2012, the board was reminded that we are a Not For Profit Corporation and bound by a certain set of laws in New York State. A small group of members decided that they were not happy with the way things were going and filed an 18 page complaint with the NYS Attorney General's Office alleging certain statements and events over the past 6 or more years. Although the exact allegations were not made known to the current

board of directors, the Attorney General suggested that we attempt to resolve the issues among ourselves and limit additional legal expenses to the association. Last October, the board sent a letter to those concerned members addressing the allegations that we were aware of but have yet to receive any comments back. We will continue to do whatever we can to address the allegations while also attempting to keep any legal expenses to a minimum. While doing this we will also attempt to keep Melody Lake a fun place to enjoy and relax. In the meantime all past, present and future officers, as well as all association members, must be reminded that there are rules to be followed for all of us. The board members must remember that all NYS Not For Profit Laws must be followed. All property owners must also remember that even though Melody Lake is a private lake, there are fishing, hunting and boating laws to be followed. There are also various permits necessary from the Town of Willet, Cortland County, New York State, and maybe even the Federal Government before certain improvements can be completed on your property. Included in this newsletter are some of the guidelines for you to follow to avoid trouble with the law. All it takes is one person to cause an expensive problem for you or the association.

If you are not happy with the way things are being run, please come to the meetings and let your voice be heard. Better yet, remember that the election of officers will be held late this year for 2014 – 2015.

Bob Rosati, Association President

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 at
(607)863-4425 or rcrosati@frontiernet.net**

A PROUD MEMBER OF MELODY LAKE ASSOCIATION

"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"

A FEW WORDS FROM JOHN OPP

The lake life offers many opportunities to connect with people. It seems that this past year my wife and I made some strong connections with people that we didn't previously know all that well. It is fun to make new friends. Conversation on the beach (low water has its benefits), fireside chats with a cool beverage, walks around the lake on a regular basis, work crew interaction on needed projects (more to follow), are all just samples of positive things the lake has to offer. We are looking forward to more of that interaction this coming year. For the new owners and members, take time to introduce yourself to your neighbors and others around the lake. Make some new friends.

We did finally complete a couple of much needed projects on the lane this past year. The drainage culvert under the lane at the power line will hopefully continue to relieve the water problems down by the Ginn's and Laurie Peloso on the lake side. The culvert replacement under the Wilbur's driveway showed preliminary results of improving the situation, however we do know that the lane and ditches from the Wilbur's to the large drain culvert, going out the lane, which was replaced a couple years ago are level with hardly no drop in elevation. Water does not run well there. There are two other driveways in between with culverts that are mostly plugged or collapsed, and we will look at replacing those in the future. We need to improve the ditch slope to improve drainage. It is the responsibility of each member on the lane to clean the ditch bordering their property to ensure proper drainage. Clean out the weeds and root growth and make sure the water will drain away. It is preferable that you do it before the association has to take action at an added expense. At the dam, the gabion basket on the east bank side was filled with help of several members. Large stone was obtained that will not wash out, and some stone and concrete packed in strategic places to control erosion. The necessary paperwork was filed with the state to close their immediate concerns over these items. We will continue to monitor these and all aspects of the dam to ensure it remains sound and respond when things need our attention. Continued maintenance can only have a positive impact on the upcoming engineering analysis to be completed in 2014. Plus we are subject to surprise inspections by the state DEC.

As all members are aware, the board is comprised of elected members serving on a voluntary basis to manage the business aspects of the association, and to ensure that the association by-laws are upheld, as well as laws applicable to us as a not-for-profit corporation under New York State law. The board is also seen as the enforcer of rules and regulations and some of that has positive impacts or negative impacts, depending on the situation. In making decisions sometimes things like exposure to risk and liability under our insurance protection need to be considered, along with long standing precedent set by the record of previous membership in years past. This can also include potential consequences of risk exposure to all members on issues they may not be aware of but would not want that exposure whether they know about it or not. Above all, the actions of the membership should be fairly and consistently applied to preserve or protect the best interests of the association and all members. The board will continue to make the members aware of issues that may have an impact on them and reserve the final decision for these issues to be made by a vote of the members. It is important to attend the regularly scheduled meetings to make sure you are kept aware on a timely basis and can have a say in matters that may impact you or your property at the lake.

See you all in the spring.
John Opp

"We abuse land and water because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land and water as a community to which we belong, we may then begin to use it with love and respect"
.....Aldo Leopold

MELODY LAKE.....Thru the Years by Bob Rosati

It all started out long before there was a Melody Lake or even a Town of Willet. The first white settler to the area was Ebenezer Crittenden in 1797. Originally from Barrington, Mass. he was married in Binghamton and set out with his new bride on their honeymoon cruise in a canoe type boat with one paddle and one pole, up the Tioughnioga River and then up the Otselic River. They would remain the only white settlers for the next 9 years. The Town of Willet was formed on April 21, 1818. Fast forward about 50 years or so to the small Hamlet of Georgetown which was located at what is now the intersection of German Rd and Rt. 41. This was the location of Burlingames Mills which was most probably a sawmill. Soon after a grist mill was built. To power these mills a steady and reliable source of water was needed. To provide this, a dam was built at an upstream swamp, forming what is now Stump Pond. As Georgetown grew so did the mills, along with the need for more water. A dam was then built at another swamp upstream of Stump Pond. This would form Ellis Pond (now Melody Lake). A town map dated 1876 shows 3 residences on Melody Lake Rd. They were J.D. Greene (on the north side of Melody Lake Rd near the dam); T.L. Sternberg (now Bill Matola/Brian Norris) and I. Leach (now Dan & Debbie Walker). Over the next 70+ years the properties would change hands several times and in 1952, the lake and most of the land around it would be owned by Neal and Margret Potter. In the late 1950's Mr. Potter decided to subdivide some of the property around the lake. A subdivision was approved by the Cortland County Health Dept on July 10th, 1958 and the first lot (#14) was purchased by William and Ruth Carmen (now Joe and Cindy VanAtta). The second lot to be sold was lot #90 to Virginia Skelly (now Dennis and Sue See). In July 1964 another subdivision was approved resulting in additional property around the lake to be developed. As development increased, it became obvious that some type of oversight was necessary to monitor what was going on around the lake and an informal association was formed. All property owners were asked to donate \$5/year for upkeep on association property. After a few years trying this, it was decided to form a formal association and incorporate. (we've skipped over a lot of local history, but let's save that for a future newsletter).

Now let's look at some important dates for Melody Lake Association, Inc.....

June 22nd, 1964 Melody Lake Association, Inc. was formed. ByLaws were adopted which called for all members to pay \$5.00/year dues but also failed to make membership mandatory.

August 1965 – The lake, dam, 9 rights of way, and Melody Lane were deeded to Melody Lake Association, Inc by Neal Potter.

May 23rd, 1968 – A large portion of land on Melody Lane opposite lots 1275 thru 1287 was donated to the association by Bill and Jerry Hudick (now Wohlgemuth).

July 1968 – Lake was stocked with 400 bass

1969 – Lake was stocked with 200 channel cats, 160 bass and 300 yellow perch

1971 – 200# of copper sulfate was applied throughout the lake in an attempt to control weeds. This practice continued thru 1980.

August 1971 – Dues were raised to \$10/year and bylaws were changed to make membership mandatory. Dues would be used for (1) stocking the lake with fish, (2) weed control, (3) dam maintenance, (4) purchase of gravel for Melody Lane maintenance, (5) liability insurance for association property.

1972 – Multiple complaints were received by the Cortland County Health Dept regarding faulty outhouses and septic (current regulations require all outhouses to be at least 50' from a body of water).

1974 – lake was stocked with channel cats, bullheads and perch

1975 – lake stocked with 200 channel cats, 300 bullheads and 100 northern pike. Melody Lane was treated with 20 bags of calcium for dust control

July 1976 – Melody Lake Association purchased 4.16 acres located at the end of Melody Lane for \$6500. This included the final 209' of lake frontage that was not controlled by the association. Dues were raised to \$20/year to cover the 10 year mortgage, additional insurance and taxes

1980 – lake was stocked with 150 channel cats, 150 Oswego bass, 150 crappies, 100 yellow perch and 200 snails. In the summer of 1980 the association decided to try to drag chains, and even a bed frame behind boats in an attempt to get rid of the weeds in the lake. Since this did cut the weeds, but did not harvest the cuttings, it only made the weed density worse.

1981 - the association purchased a small sickle bar weed cutter which was used until 1985. Once again, this cut the weeds but did not harvest them. The weed cutter was sold in 1988.

Sept 1981 – the association was informed by NYSDEC that as the result of a Phase 1 Army Corp of Engineer inspection, Melody Lake Dam was found to be unsafe due to an inadequate spillway capacity and lack of an operable drain and ordered to retain the services of a professional engineer (PE) to correct the deficiencies within 12 months. An estimate from a PE put the cost at more than \$250,000. The association attempted various fundraisers such as garage sales, chicken bbq, flea markets, etc. which did raise some funds. In 1986, it became obvious that DEC was getting impatient from the lack of any progress being made. Several association members got together and agreed to offer a more reasonable and affordable correction to the concerns. A proposal was made to DEC in June 1986 which was approved in August 1986. Throughout the winter of 1986, bids were sought and in early 1987 the lake was lowered 7 feet and construction started. To pay for the necessary construction, all property owners were assessed \$600. More than ¾ of the members paid and then the association hired Atty. Edmund Hoffman in Cortland to write to the remainder threatening legal action. Eventually all members but one paid the assessment. Much of the prep work, demolition, tree cutting, etc. was completed by over 2,500 hours of association member volunteers. The installation of the drains, along with the final concrete work, was performed by hired contractors. The project was completed in the fall of 1988 at a cost of less than \$60,000. A letter was received from DEC stating that “the dam now meets all current requirements of a high hazard dam” and goes on to say “you and your members should be commended” for the work completed. **(if you would like to see the pictures of this project contact President Rosati)**

August 1984 – a motion was made and approved to develop a permanent access road thru the “pasture property” from the end of Melody Lane to the western boundry of Association property to allow vehicle access to two properties near the dam (now Accardi and Atutis).

1987 – Melody Lake Association joined New York State Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA). Water quality testing became available through a DEC program called Citizen Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP). Initial test results showed that the lake had an extremely high level of phosphorus which was probably the main reason for our negative aquatic vegetation problem. A survey sent to all property owners showed that the #1 complaint was the high density of nuisance vegetation

1989 – 400 Largemouth bass were stocked into the lake

1990 – DEC received numerous complaints regarding property owners using motor oil to control dust. All members received a letter from DEC advising them that this was not allowed.

July 1991 – dues were raised to \$30/year.

1991 – an over population of stunted perch and sunfish became a concern. In an attempt to alleviate the problem, 1000 walleyes were stocked each year thru 1993.

June 1992 – a survey showed that a mobile home owned by the McGraths at 1290 Melody Lane (now Bernard) was partially on association property. Due to liability concerns, discussions between the association members, the property owner and his attorney proved futile and no agreement could be reached. The end result was that the mobile home was relocated and is now totally on private property.

August 1995 -John Peverly, from Cornell and a member of the NYSFOLA Scientific Advisory Board identified the major problem was Eurasian Milfoil. It was obvious that past measures of control had failed and the membership couldn't decide on how we should attempt to control the weed.

May 1997 – 175 grass carp were stocked in the lake to attempt weed control. This project was paid for by an “Adopt A Carp” program resulting in no cost to the association.

1999 – as a result of a few members attempting to cut weeds with various handheld cutters the weed density was only getting worse. A motion was made and approved that no aquatic vegetation control could be done without the approval of the association.

2001 – the association was given an \$8000 grant from DEC and NYSFOLA to prepare a “*State of the Lake*” report describing the past and present condition of the lake, and a “*Lake Management Report*” describing the steps we planned to take to improve the water quality of the lake. **(for copies of these reports contact President Rosati)**

2001 – for the first time the paid membership of Melody Lake Association was 100% (90 members)

2002 – Many members voiced concern that the grass carp were not controlling the nuisance weeds as quick as they expected. It was decided that we should invite representatives of various vendors and give them an opportunity to “sell” their product. The Sept 2002 meeting was held at the Willet Town Hall. In attendance were representatives of companies specializing in chemical, mechanical and biological aquatic vegetation control. Each representative was also offered one page free in the 2003 newsletter to explain their product. When it was all said and done, it was decided to continue with the grass carp program.

2004 – the association approached the Town of Willet and the State Police regarding uninvited people from parking on Melody Lake Rd and fishing in the lake. The State Police stated that they were not going to attempt to check membership status but would enforce a no parking law if one were put into effect. The town would not agree to a seasonal no parking law but suggested a year round no parking law. A public hearing was held with no negative comments and in 2005 a no parking law was put in place along Melody Lake Rd from the intersection of Melody Lane to the dam.

Sept 2004 – Association member Tami Darrow-Zebrowski suggested a “Save the Lake Fund” to allow the fellow members to donate additional money that would be used specifically to improve the quality of Melody Lake. The fund was started with a \$1000 donation from Tami along with an additional \$15 from bottle and can deposits. Since that date Tami has donated more than \$100 annually.

2005 – the association was made aware of a gate being erected on Forshee Rd which blocked our secondary access to the dam. The association attempted to work with the town to try and get the gate removed. From 2005 thru 2012, the association would spend several thousands of dollars for this and other lawsuits resulting from accusations against various members and officers of the association.

August 2005 – a motion was made and approved to establish a Dam Fund in the amount of \$100/member.

Sept 2005 – a motion was made and approved to raise the dues to \$60/year starting in 2006

July 2006 – 350 more grass carp were stocked into the lake, again at no cost to the association.

2006 – association member John Opp donated proceeds from land sales and unsold land to the association worth about \$6000. Over the years the land would be subdivided and sold to adjacent land owners which allowed them to additional property. This property also served as a buffer to protect the lake from future development.

Feb. 2008 – NYSDEC announced a proposal to update the NYS Dam Safety Regulations. Since Melody Lake Dam is considered a Class C, High Hazard dam, if the proposed regulations were adopted, it may have been more than we could afford. The association joined forces with NYSFOLA and other dam owners across the state and wrote letters of concern. The association also sent representatives to public comment meetings throughout the state.

August 2009 – DEC adopted a scaled back version of revised dam safety regulations. Under the new regulations, the association must (1) prepare an Annual Certification to DEC, (2) Prepare an Emergency Action Plan by 8/2010 with updates annually, (3) Perform periodic Safety Inspections, (4) conduct an Engineering Assessment by 8/2014.

Items (2), (3) & (4) must be completed by a Professional Engineer (PE).

2009 – Dues were raised to \$100/year to help pay for legal expenses.

January 2011 – the association was served a summons to appear in court to answer charges by neighboring property owners stating that they were “**seeking relief and restitution for the time, work and money we have spent defending, repairing and protecting our property and family from a continuing campaign of belligerence that has been waged against us by the members of Melody Lake Association**”. Rather than pay additional legal expenses, the current board chose to appear in court and defend the association. The alleged charges were that on several occasions, past association officers harassed and ridiculed their families by trespassing and refusing to leave, taking pictures of their children, giving them the finger, torn down posted signs and many other accusations. After the current board presented the association’s view, the judge agreed that even if the incidences had occurred, they were done by individuals and even though they were board members, they were not representing the association at that time. All charges against the association were dismissed.

2011 – by the end of 2011, all property owners had paid their dues except one. Due to personal matters, this member had also not paid for the past 5 years, along with the \$100 dam fund. A decision was made to attempt to collect, which failed. It was then decided to proceed to small claims court. Negotiations just prior to presenting the case before the Town of Willet Judge, resulted in an agreement being reached and all monies due the association were paid.

Sept 2012 – the association members and officers were advised that a small group of members had filed an 18 page complaint with the NYS Attorney General’s Office against the current officers. Although the full list of accusations were not disclosed, in an attempt to avoid further legal expenses to the association, the board addressed, in writing, the concerns they were aware of. We are still awaiting a reply to assure that all concerns have been addressed.

In the last 3 pages, we have looked at the past of Melody Lake Association. Now let's look at the future. Next year, 2014, we will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the association. During these 50 years, we have had our share of ups and downs. We have had a membership of only 40% but for the last 6 years can brag about 100%. In fact, last year, due to the generosity of some of our members, dues exceeded 108%. For the most part, we are one of the most successful lake associations in the state. In 1992, our association was used as an example of the problems faced by the typical not for profit small dam owner in a publication by the US Army Corp of Engineers. Just last year in 2011, an article in ClearWaters, a magazine of New York Water Environment Association, Inc. had an article about Melody Lake titled *Lake Association Works for Dam Safety – Vital issue to Downstream Citizens*. A copy of each of these articles is available. Several times each year, we are contacted by other lake associations asking our advice on many of their problems. We have a right to be proud when we say we are a member of Melody Lake Association. If you have any ideas on how we can celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 2014, please let us know.

DON'T FORGET THE PERMITS

Over the past several years, property owners have made improvements or modification to their property or shoreline. We would however like to remind you that many of these things require a permit. While it may sometimes be easy to complete the job without being noticed, there are some very stiff and expensive penalties if you get caught. While the association can't offer you advice when a permit is required, we can lead you to the right people to answer your questions. Don't rely on your contractor or neighbor because they are not the ones that will be paying the fine.....**you will!** In an attempt to protect the lake and the property around it, the association has formed a partnership with the Cortland County Health Dept. so when a permit is applied for the association will be notified. We are in the process of entering into a similar partnership with both the Town of Willet and the New York State Dept of Environmental Conservation.

Town of Willet: Many home improvements such as buildings, decks, sheds, etc. require a permit. If you have any improvement planned in the near future contact the Town Clerk at 863-4877. You might get an answering machine but someone will get back to you.

Cortland County Environmental Health: A permit is required for all new installations and many repairs or modifications to both your septic and well. If you have anything planned, please call (607)753-5035.

New York State Dept of Environmental Conservation: Over the past several years, many lakefront property owners have been placing gravel or peastone in the lake. Some have even built "seawalls" or "breakwalls" made of concrete, stone or wood. All of these types of improvements (?) require a permit from DEC and perhaps the Army Corps of Engineers. Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) 15-0505 states that – ***no person.....shall excavate or place fill below the mean high water level of any navigable waters of the state without a permit issued by the department. This fill shall include but not limited to earth, clay, silt, sand, gravel, stone.....or crib work of wood, timber, logs, concrete or metal.*** The mean high water mark for Melody Lake is 1402" and anything that touches the water when the lake is at the spillway elevation is in violation of that regulation. Also remember, your property line ends at the waters' edge and any fill or excavation beyond that point may be considered trespass. If you have any plans to place anything in the lake please contact NYSDEC Permits in Cortland at (607)753-3095 ext 235. In addition, since the association is the legal owner of the lake at 1402' elevation, it also requires approval from the association.

REMEMBER, ALL THESE PERMITS TAKE TIME TO PROCESS AND NO WORK CAN BE STARTED UNTIL THE PERMIT IS APPROVED.



Wine Tasting: Sometime this summer we will be having a wine tasting. For a small donation of around \$5.00 you can sample some of the homemade wines made by our association members. Sample some of the fine wines made by Rudy and Diane Bernard. Also sample some 12 year old elderberry port, 11 year old blueberry or that all time favorite mix of **Vinifera** and **Niagara** (also known as VIAGRA) or maybe even the last bottle of Honey Concord which won the "Best of Show" at the 1996 Broome County Fair...all made by Bob and Carol Rosati. If you know of any other wine makers, please ask them for a couple bottles to include. Further details (time, place, etc.) will be announced at the first association meeting on June 9th, 2013. All proceeds will be donated to the association.



NEW SIGNS AT THE ENTRANCES TO MELODY LAKE RD AND MELODY LANE

A big THANK YOU to Bob Eastman for the new signs that greet welcome guests (or discourage unwelcome guests) as they enter Melody Lake property. Also a big THANK YOU to Jack and Patsy Ginn for building the frames and erecting the signs. These signs inform all visitors and also remind our members that the association is here to both protect and beautify the area.

Thanks also to the members that volunteered their time working on the dam and Melody Lane this year. We did have a dam inspection from DEC this year that identified several concerns. With the help of John Opp, Chuck Tennant, Tom Troscher, Dan Walker, Cory Troscher and Bob Rosati all concerns were corrected. Also a big thanks to Highway Supt. Geno Turshman for donating the stone for the gabion baskets from his private pit. Thanks to John Opp, Rob Atutis,, Tami Zebrowski-Darrow, Steve Smith and Norm LaMontagne for the culvert, ditch and road work on Melody Lane. Another big thanks to those members that included a little extra or maybe even double when they paid their 2012 dues. These include Lorraine Bates, Ted & Stella Czupryna, Jack & Patsy Ginn, Peg Moxley, Joe & Stella Polosky, Bob & Carol Rosati, Chuck & Anne Tennant, Tom & Deb Troscher, and George & Bonnie Trythall. Together they brought more than \$600 in additional funds. Also to Tami Zebrowski-Darrow for more than \$100 from bottle deposits and Rudy Bernard for homemade wine to raffle at each association meeting.

A very special thanks to Bill Cobb, Cincinnatus Home Center. Bill donated several items throughout the year to raffle off at the meetings and the family picnic. Proceeds from the donated items exceeded more than \$250. Bill has also offered more items for 2013.

For the past several years, Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District has paid both our NYSFOLA membership and our CSLAP Lake Testing Fees saving us \$525 annually. We have been informed that will be, once again, paying these fees for 2013.

THE BIGGEST THANKS GOES TO THE SPONSORS THAT PAID FOR SPACE IN THIS NEWSLETTER. YOU MIGHT NOTICE THAT A FEW OF THEM ARE EVEN ASSOCIATION MEMBERS. WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THESE SPONSORS, THIS NEWSLETTER MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE. THEY SUPPORT US AND MANY HAVE SUPPORTED US FOR YEARS. PLEASE MAKE AN EFFORT TO SUPPORT THEM WHENEVER YOU CAN. ALSO PLEASE MENTION TO TELL THEM THANKS.....AND THAT YOU LEARNED ABOUT THEM IN THE MELODY LAKE NEWSLETTER.

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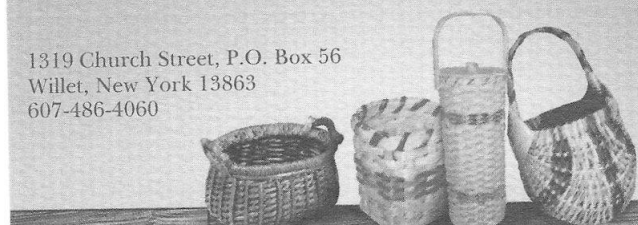
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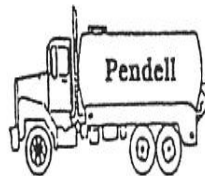
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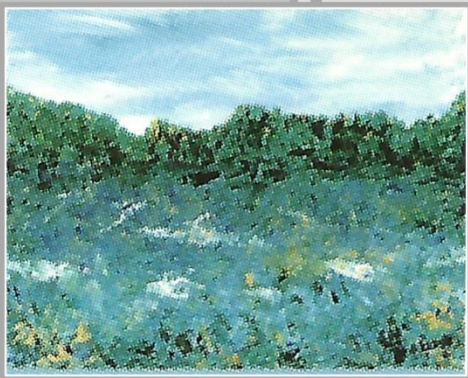
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IT'S THE LAW !!!

Open Burning:

On October 14, 2009 NYSDEC regulations became effective prohibiting all open burning in NYS. This includes the burning of household trash and yard waste. There are some exceptions such as:

- Small cooking fires or camp fires, using only untreated wood. Any campfire must be less than 3' in height and less than 4' in length and diameter
- The burning of downed limbs and small branches less than 6" in diameter and 8' in length
- Barbeque grills or maple syrup arches
- No burning of any kind are allowed between March 16th and May 14th

For a complete description of the Open Burning Law go to www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/58519 or call NYSDEC Region 7 sub-office in Cortland at (607)753-3095 x 261 or the Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District at (607)756-5991

Firewood Transport:

Your firewood may be hiding deadly invasive pests that have already killed more than 50 million trees in neighboring states. These pests include but are not limited to both the **Asian Longhorned Beetle** and the **Emerald Ash Borer**. It is now illegal to bring any untreated firewood into New York State. It is also illegal to transport untreated firewood more than 50 miles from its source. If you transport any untreated wood from within the allowable 50 mile radius you must be able to provide proof of its source (such as a receipt) or be subject to a fine. For additional information call (866)640-0652 or visit www.dec.ny.gov and enter "firewood" into the search index.

Aquatic Invasive Species:

Over the past few years several invasive species have shown up in the waters of NYS. Even though our lake is private with no main inlet source, it doesn't mean that these problems can't show up here. Many invasive species can be introduced by using fishing gear, boats, kayaks, etc. in other bodies of water and then used without proper cleaning in Melody Lake. Many of these species are microscopic and can be transported on boots, hooks, lures and even fishing line. If possible have separate fishing gear left at your cottage that you only use here at Melody Lake. Many of us take our boats or other watercraft to the local ponds, lakes and rivers. Before using again in Melody Lake, please do a visual inspection to remove any weeds, algae or anything else. Clean with a 2% household bleach solution or scrub with water of 140° and then allow to air dry.

Did You Know that a brochure was developed to distribute to potential property owners of Melody Lake property to inform them, in advance, of the rules and regulations required by our members? These brochures are sent to all realtors whenever property is put up for sale. To view this brochure, please visit the association website.

WELCOME NEW FRIENDS

We would like to welcome the following new property owners. Rich and Julie Kipp are the new owners of 1312 Melody Lane (formerly Homza) and Dan and Libbie Ritzman are the new owners of 1287 Melody Lane (formerly Foti). We invite both to become active members of the association. If there is anything we can do to make their property ownership more enjoyable please contact any association officer.

GOODBYE OLD FRIENDS

One of our newest members, Bernie Atutis passed away on April 13, 2012 at the age of 54. Bernie was co-owner of 6034 Melody Lake Rd (the new cottage across the dam) with his brother Rob and friend Steve Elliot. A longtime resident at the lake, Jonathan Pratt, passed away as the result of a hit and run accident at the young age of 35. Jonathon spent much of his brief life at Melody Lake and was the son of Jim and Connie Pratt (1346 Melody Lane). His grandfather Fran Pratt was one of the original organizers of the association.



FLOODING ON MELODY LAKE ROAD: Over the past several years, water would overtop Melody Lake Road at the lake inlet and cause damage to the Fortenbaugh (now Deluca) property. This past year, the town highway department installed an overflow pipe which should help to prevent this from happening in the future.

ASSOCIATION FINANCES:

2012 was another successful year for our association. Our 100% membership brought in \$8,300. In addition, many members contributed an additional donation of over \$500. Cortland County Soil and Water paid our NYSFOLA Dues and CSLAP Fees of \$525. They have also agreed to pay the same for 2013. Door prizes from Rudy Bernard and Cincinnatus Home Center brought in another \$350. Newsletter proceeds were \$450. Bottle returns from the Zebrowski family of \$136. Family Picnic proceeds were more than \$350. Donations in the memory of Bernie Atutis and Jonathon Pratt were \$260. Sale of surplus association property (thanks to John Opp) \$1000. All this resulted in an additional \$3800+ into our available funds. Also the stone for the gabion baskets at the dam was donated by Geno Turshman of Willet. Culvert pipe for ditch work was sold to us by the Town of Willet at their cost. The time donated by our members has saved us many dollars. Also the time put in by the board and all committee members must be worth hundreds. Since dues were paid early last year, Steve Smith was able to pay many of our bills in a lump sum which resulted in savings from additional fees. Many members have supplied us their email addresses which saved much in postage. Our sincere THANKS to everyone.

There is still work to be done and any help will be appreciated. The earlier you pay your dues, the better for the association. Each year we put money aside so when our next Dam Inspection is due in 2014, the money should be available. When you pay your dues, we ask that you provide your email address. The postage rates just went up again so anything we can send electronically is a savings.



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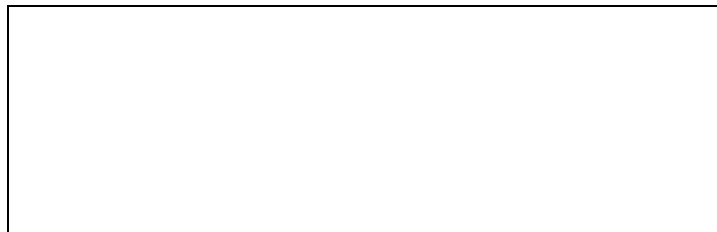
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