

LAKE MOREY PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION
SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER
www.lakemorey.org

President's Column

Ice is out! With all the 60 and 70 degree weather, the ice "failed" sometime between sunset on March 19 and sunrise the 20th. The Fairlee-Orford Lions Club sponsored an ice-out contest this year. Zeke, a life-sized dummy sitting on a lawn chair over a bucket in front of Twin Birches II took the plunge when the ice went. It was all recorded via a camcorder.

Speaking of ice, our Lake was, once again, the site of some of the best ice skating in the northeast. The five mile groomed trail brought out skaters and hockey players of all ages and sizes. It seems that Lake Morey winter activities are as numerous as the summer ones. There was speed skating, snowmobile races, Nordic skating and skiing, igloo building, dog mushing, ice fishing derbies, pond hockey, and iceboating. Several restaurants provided a skating/food tasting event. Curiously, while the Lake was well frozen over, we had little snow this season. The last series of snow storms hit everywhere thirty miles away from Fairlee!

Locally, two new businesses will be up and running soon. Crystal Johnson, owner of the Whippi Dip, purchased the Your Place restaurant and is remodeling it to sell her famous barbeque and other goodies. A local farm, Your Farm, will be selling their goods there as well. At the Railroad Station, a produce business has opened and will be selling fruits/vegetables trucked in fresh from Boston.

The bandstand gazebo on the town common has been planted with locally donated hostas for the Greg McGrath Memorial Garden. A granite stone will be placed there in a ceremony sometime in late spring. A committee is forming to plan events and activities for Fairlee's 250th anniversary in 2011. If you have some ideas about the celebration or ideas for the common/town hall, get them to me or Jay Barrett. As a fundraiser, the Fairlee Historical Society is publishing a pictorial history book of Fairlee. Labelled and dated

photos, up to 1971, depicting Fairlee activities, parades, follies, and such would be much appreciated. We will borrow and scan them.

LMPA applied for a 2010 Watershed Grant. The proposal was for developing a booklet on maintaining a clear and clean watershed around the lake, including an education piece for the local schools and campers. We were not selected this year but will regroup for next year.

Speeders around the Lake has been an ongoing problem. Selectmen will be considering abatement options. An evaluation will take place and consideration of lowering the speed limit will be examined. Enforcement is also part of the equation.

Jay is also currently the Health Officer of Fairlee and is looking into how to test the septic systems around the Lakes, which is required in the Town Plan. More on this later.

The 2010 Lake Morey Greeter Program still needs volunteers. We will have a paid individual working the boat access part-time this year. The person will be trained and has experience. We are now in a place where prevention of invasives getting into the Lake is even more important. If you see milfoil on your waterfront and cannot harvest it, let Don Weaver or myself know and we'll get some help. Hand pulling and some suction harvesting will be continued in 2010.

The LMPA Board is moving towards posting future newsletters solely on the website. Patty Armstrong and I have met with our webmaster and have made the decision to use the website as an "ongoing newsletter". The pictures and articles will change regularly. Information, including a calendar of events, will be updated as well. We will add links and take suggestions as usual. It will take some getting use to, but it will be a better tool for all of us. Perhaps, in the future, we may be able to have a web cam set up so we can watch the lake year round.
John Larrabee

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Reminders

- Save the date: July 17 (the third Saturday of July) for the LMPA Annual Meeting and the 3rd annual Fairlee Family Fun Day & Sailing Regatta! Visit our website for more details in the coming months!
- July 4th Parade in Fairlee -- July 4, 2010
- Dump/Beach passes are available at the Fairlee Town offices or visit their website.

Nature Notes: Lake Morey Birds

The **Common Loon** has increased in numbers on the Lake, and we were serenaded day and night as the birds proclaimed their presence. The Vermont Loon census confirms the expansion in population and we can only hope that a couple will choose to raise a family on Lake Morey. The installation of a loon-nesting platform at the north end of the lake may encourage nesting activity.

I'm not sure if a day went by when the **Bald Eagle** didn't swoop across the lake in search of its prey. These majestic birds finally nested in Vermont (the only state without a nesting pair) and all indications are that the population will increase as they slowly recover from the devastating effects of DDT. My highlight was an incident when an adult eagle "stole" a fish from a younger member of its species (identified by the lack of white on the head and tail). The water clarity combined with a healthy fish population makes Lake Morey very inviting for our national bird.

Whereas there are many birds whose populations are decreasing as a result of winter habitat degradation, loss of breeding grounds, predators etc., the Vermont Audubon has identified twelve birds of particular concern in Vermont (Actually they identified 39 but chose to focus on 12 for the Audubon Vermont Forest Bird Initiative). The "**Birders Dozen**" consists of the American Woodcock, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Wood Pewee, Blue-headed Vireo, Veery, Woodthrush, Chestnut-sided

Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Canada Warbler, White-throated Sparrow and the Scarlet Tanager. With proper management of our forests, the populations of these delightful birds could stabilize or even increase. These birds are easy to identify: visit www.vtaudubon.org for pictures and descriptions. During my walks and hikes around the lake this summer, I was able to hear or see a majority of these birds. We are fortunate to have diversified and appropriate habitat for many of these birds (I did not encounter the Woodcock or Canada Warbler but they may have been present). Preserving what we have should be a priority!

I wish I could report that the population of **Canada Geese** was declining, however their increase in numbers have us concerned about the resulting degradation of water quality, not to mention the nuisance on lawns etc. These waterfowl can be difficult to disperse as they are federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. There are a number of people who are exploring options so that damage by these "pests" will be minimized.

The Lake Morey watershed is nature's continual gift to the many people who reside there, whether full time or seasonally. Nature enthusiasts are encouraged to post any sightings of interest on the LMPA website.

Bill Minard

Fairlee Family Fun Day: Help Wanted!

We are always looking for volunteers for Fairlee Family Fun Day! No special skills needed -- assist with games (new ideas welcome!), flip some burgers, set up, clean up, etc. Contact John Larrabee or Patty Armstrong.

Photo Gallery

LMPA activities have been photographed and posted at <http://lmpa.phanfare.com>. Catch a glimpse of Lake Morey families and friends enjoying LMPA events. See you this summer!
Patty Armstrong