

Seymour Lake Association Newsletter

November 2012

www.seymourlake.org



President's Message

by Lyman McWain—President

Another year has flown by, and we have experienced continued growth and support for our programs to support Seymour's water quality and shoreline environment. Our key performance indicators including new members, gifts and member interest gain momentum again this year over last year. I want to personally thank you, our members, for your continued support and even more for your interest in our efforts.

We had a great turn out for our Summer Outing up on the hill at Ilene Douglas and Alan Wooley's beautiful home, with a wonderful view of Seymour that must be seen on a clear day to appreciate. As I have said before, it is just great to visit the various and different settings around the lake to fully understand what a great place Morgan and Seymour Lake really are.

We have added new board members, Sue Davis and Frank Antonelli and added new faces to our various committees which are so important to keep new ideas flowing from an expanded base of personal skills and experience. Erik Lessing has done a great job coordinating and improving our newsletter and communications about our programs. The Water Quality committee held several key training sessions—

each with the wonderful support our State Environmental Experts and Coordinators helping us define our Seymour educational programs to help our shoreline owners improve our erosion prevention efforts.

With all the good things that happen on our behalf, unfortunately, we have two issues impacting our efforts that just are not getting resolved in spite of hundreds of hours invested by many of us on various committees. These two issues which are controlled by the State are as follows:

Silt buildup at the access area restricting boat access.

Lowering the lake in late fall to minimize property damage and shoreline erosion from ice and subsequent high water levels due to spring runoff.

As I write this we are expecting a response from the state on our dam management proposals (see article on page 3). And we are expanding our discussions on the same topics with other associations in the New England area hopeful that we all have issues and solutions in common. We will keep you posted.

Have a good winter, and see you in the spring.□

SLA Board of Directors

Many may wonder who we are so here is a recent picture taken in July 2012. There are a total of 14 board members, 3 new replacements added each year. Board salary is \$0 for each of us.

Here is detail of permanent residence, and responsibilities:

Allen Wooley: Morgan, VT, Website

Tim Buzzell: Plainfield, NH, Boating, Lake Level, Membership, Nominating

Susan Davis: Derby Line, VT, Membership, Water Quality

Lyman McWain: Madison, CT, President, Development/Education, Website

Jean McKenny: Derby, VT, Secretary

Ron Kolar: Amelia Island, FL, Vice President, Dam/Lake Level, Nominating, Water Quality

Janet Selby: Morgan, VT, Treasurer, Grants, Ice Out, Membership, Milfoil, Swim

Frank Antonelli: East Charleston, VT, Water Quality

Peggy Barter: Amherst, NH, Development/Education, Grants, Water Quality

Bruce Barter: Amherst, NH, Membership, Newsletter

Erik Lessing: Monument, CO, Dam/Lake Level, Newsletter, Water Quality

Ted Jewett: South Burlington, VT, Membership

Linda Broadwater: E. Burke, VT, Water Quality



Left to right: Allan Wooley, Tim Buzzell, Susan Davis, Lyman McWain, Jean McKenny, Ron Kolar, Janet Selby, Frank Antonelli, Peggy Barter, Bruce Barter, Erik Lessing.

Linda Broadwater, Ted Jewett, and Steve Massicotte are missing from the picture.

Seymour Lake Association

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Officers July 23, 2011

President:	Lyman McWain	lmcwain@aol.com	895-4438	cell 203-676-0083
Vice President:	Ron Kolar	rkolar@eagle-harbor.com	723-4400	cell 904-261-7976
Secretary:	Jean McKenny	jmckenny@together.net	766-8895	cell 802-895-2942
Treasurer:	Janet Selby	hyselby@surfglobal.net	895-2951	

Directors (Term Ends)

Ted Jewett	'14	Tim Buzzell	'13	Susan Davis	'15
Bruce Barter	'14	Linda Broadwater	'13	Erik Lessing	'15
Steve Massicotte	'14	Peggy Barter	'13	Frank Antonelli	'15
Allan Wooley	ex-officio				

Committee Members

Audit	<u>Steve Massicotte</u>
Boating	<u>Tim Buzzell</u>
Dam/Lake Level	<u>Ron Kolar</u> , Homer Selby, Tim Buzzell, Dave Anderson, Chuck Nichols, Erik Lessing
Development/Education	<u>Lyman McWain</u> , Tracey Shadday, Peggy Barter
Fishing	<u>Homer Selby</u> , Ron Frascoia
Grants	<u>Janet Selby</u> , Peggy Barter, Beth Torpey, Linda Broadwater
Ice Out	<u>Homer Selby</u> , Janet Selby
Loon Watch	<u>Charles "Woody" Woods</u> , Eric Hanson, Bonnie & Dave Potter, Ruby Jenness,
Maps	<u>Ron Kolar</u>
Membership	<u>Ted Jewett</u> , Bruce Barter, Linda Broadwater, Tim Buzzell, Gerry Cahill, Susan Davis, Ilene Douglas, Erik Lessing, Janet Selby, Ann Torpey,
Milfoil	<u>Janet Selby</u> , Peggy Barter
Newsletter	<u>Erik Lessing</u> , Bruce Barter, Maggie Griffith
Nominating	<u>Ron Kolar</u> , Tim Buzzell, Jim McWain
Swim Program	<u>Janet Selby</u>
Water Quality	<u>Peggy Barter</u> , Frank Antonelli, Linda Broadwater, Susan Davis, Tom Emery, Bill Kilpatrick, Ron Kolar, Anthony Lazzara, Erik Lessing, Tracey Shadday, Gil Wierschke
Website	<u>Allan Wooley</u> , Lyman McWain

Note: Name underlined is Committee Chair. Others are Committee Members.
 Greeters at the Boat Launch: Bud Bergh and Reed Hubbard

Morgan Town Officers

Selectman—Larry Labor
 Robert Guyer
 Allan Wooley

Town Clerk/Treasurer—Tammy Morin

Asst. Town Clerk—ErikaSue Jacobs

North Country School Director—Kristin Mason

Listers—Diane Moore
 Jim Judd
 Deanna Keenan

School Directors—Tammy Lacourse
 Kelly Paul
 Danielle Blake

Lake Loons by Jean McKenny



I took this picture of 12 loons on October 1, 2012. It is one more than last year's picture of 11. Next day, Homer Selby saw 13 loons but alas, no picture.□

Dam/Lake Level Report

by The Committee

As mentioned by Lyman McWain in his president's report on page 1, Seymour Lake Association is facing two issues of importance to all lake property owners. Lyman covered the silt situation at the access area while the following explanation of the lake level follows:

First, a little background so all of us can understand why lake level is such an important issue for SLA:

In 1928 a dam was constructed 1200 feet down from the Seymour outlet on the south end of the lake. While there were previous dams, this 1928 dam is the one most of us are familiar with. The Vermont Public Service Commission in 1951 and the Vermont Supreme Court in 1952 required Citizens Utilities Company, the dam owner and operator, and their successors, to maintain the Seymour Lake level between 2 pins set at the outlet and 14 inches vertically apart. From the mid 1950s through 2003, this dam operation was managed by Citizens Utilities in collaboration with several interested parties on the lake. The "old" dam incorporated a gate which could be lowered and raised and hence could somewhat control lake level. For both reasons of hydroelectric power generation and the Supreme Court ruling, Citizens lowered the lake level in late fall so that the lake was at its lowest during the winter and early spring. This procedure increased the storage capacity of the lake so it would not "stage up" as much from spring run-off and hence minimize high and damaging water levels in the spring.

This same procedure is followed on many lakes throughout the United States for the same reasons mentioned above.

Because of deterioration of the "old" dam, a new one was constructed in 2004 with consultation from the lake level committee of SLA. As with the "old" dam, an operable gate was incorporated into the dam. At this same time, management of the dam was transferred from Citizens Utilities to Great Bay Hydro Corp. and we were notified by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and Great Bay Hydro that new operating procedures were established in the State License mandating the new gate was not to be operated to lower or raise lake levels.

When the new dam became operational in 2004, lake levels have been higher and many property owners have complained to SLA how high ice and water levels have adversely impacted their properties. These higher levels have been caused by two changes:

- A less leaking and hence and more effective dam
- Not using the dam's capability to lower lake level in winter

By far, the greatest impact is caused by not the lowering lake level in winter.

The Seymour Lake Association has requested that Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) approve our requests to lower the lake level in the late fall and through the winter for the following two reasons:

- Lower lake level in the winter minimizes property damage due to higher levels of ice.
- Lower lake level in the winter increases the storage capacity of the lake, so it can accept more spring run-off and hence diminish high water levels which cause shore erosion and adverse impact upon septic systems.

Our dam already has the capacity to easily lower the lake level in the winter and spring and comply with the Supreme Court requirements.

SLA lake level committee and others met with ANR on August 20, 2012 at the lake. This all day meeting included trips to the outlet and dam and many discussions about operation of the dam and subsequent lake levels. SLA emphasized the importance of operating the dam as the "old" one was due to the two reasons mentioned above. We have also impressed upon them that across the country, lakes similar to Seymour follow this exact procedure during the winter. ANR's response has been that their philosophy is "run-of-river" meaning that no human operation of

the dam's gate is allowed. Their reasoning appears to be that little is to be gained by lowering the lake in winter and that damage to lake property is insufficient to change their mind. SLA respectfully disagrees with this assessment, and hence, we are at an impasse with ANR and the State of Vermont. □



"Mark Hinton of Great Bay Hydro and Ron Kolar, SLA Vice President, are shown at the pins at the southern end of the lake at the outlet. Mark is pointing out the high pin and Ron is measuring water depth from the low pin. This picture was taken on August 20, 2012, when the lake level was 5 inches above the low pin."

Recognition

The newsletter is paid in part with support from VT Department of Environmental Conservation funds.

Boating Committee Report

by **Tim Buzzell**

Boat Parade: The 3rd annual Seymour Lake boat parade was held this year on Sunday, July 8th. The event, as always, was a huge success with some 27 boats participating,



This picture shows the lead boats as they approached The Ames Park area of the lake. Photo by Doug Gimler

including the antique Chris-Crafts of the Kolars and the Lessings. The parade, originally the brainstorm of Collin Kwasnik, again was organized and led by him with assistance provided by the Lake Association. The parade began off Rossiter's



Enthusiastic patriots wave their flags from the shore as the armada passed by.

Point proceeding counterclockwise around the lake. The theme of the parade revolved around the Independence Day celebration, and a plethora of flags were waving both from boats and by onlookers ashore. Selected photos of the parade are shown herein. Additional pictures may be viewed on the SLA website.□

IROC Triathlon: For the 3rd year in a row, the swim portion of the IROC triathlon was held on Seymour. Marker buoys were anchored at pre-surveyed spots to form a course in the north east sector of the lake. Dave Anderson coordinated the SLA's participation with the IROC management. Several boat owners donated their time and the use of their boats to provide swimmer safety and guidance. In addition to three state police officers in three state boats, other volunteers included: Gil Wierschke, Dave Bullock, Dave Anderson, Chuck Nichols, Erik Lessing, and me. About 55 swimmers participated in the race.□

Boating Safety: At the annual SLA meeting in August, concern was expressed about the perceived increased incidence of unsafe boating practices. Perhaps a review of a few of the more important safe boating rules is in order:

- It is unlawful to drive a boat in excess of wake speed closer than 200 feet from a shoreline or from another boat or person.
- Motor boats and personal water craft lacking navigation lights must be off the lake between sundown and sunup.
- There must be an approved life jacket in your boat for each person aboard. Children aged 12 or under must wear a life jacket.

Membership Update

by **Bruce Barter**

During the past few years the Membership Committee has been striving to increase the membership of lakefront property owners. At year end 2008, 50.5% of lakefront properties were members in the Association. Through the efforts of the Committee, that percentage was increased to 70.6% by year end 2011. That percentage is presently (10/15/2012) at 68.1% and it appears that we will end this year slightly above 70% again. Of significance this year is the number of Morgan

property owners who have joined the Association whose properties are not on the lake. At year end 2011 there were 31 such members. Year to date (10/15/2012) that number has increased by 68% to 52. We enthusiastically welcome all Morgan property owners and invite them to participate in the Association; on committees, at the annual picnic/outing, at the Annual Meeting, etc. We all enjoy and benefit from our shared resource that is Seymour Lake.□

	Yr End 2008	Yr End 2009	Yr End 2010	Yr End 2011	Yr to Date 10/15/2012
Total Membership Units	251	317	329	337	346
Number of Donations	113	130	160	186	206
Lakefront Properties with an active membership	50.5%	66.2%	69.8%	70.6%	68.1%
Number of Members Not on Lakefront Property	NA	43	44	49*	73**

* includes 31 Morgan property owners/residents and 18 people living elsewhere
 ** includes 52 Morgan property owners/residents and 21 people living elsewhere

Morgan Highlights—Jim Maas

by Erik Lessing

Meet Jim Maas, his wife Billie, and Golden Retriever, Maggie. They live up Toad Pond Road, far from the madding crowd on Seymour. Jim is a retired Orthopedic Surgeon and now a master carver of birds in wood. He's been doing this since 1998, tracing a path through many other artistic endeavors and ending up in his true love of carving true-to-life birds as they look in their natural environment.

A project will start either by a commission from someone for a specific bird or by Jim's own desire to fashion a bird and pose he finds intriguing. Once a subject is etched in his mind he follows many steps to the finished product.

First, he bandsaws a block of wood, usually Tupolo for its softness and ease of forming. Second, he starts the process of power carving using an electric powered tool, similar to a Dremel tool or drills used by dentists. He employs a multitude of bits to achieve the basic form of the bird.



Power sanding follows, and then he uses a wood burner (again with many different bits) to achieve the detail so important for the bird's realism. These final tasks require very

fine lines to match the bird's quills and feathers.

Last, Jim is onto his favorite part, painting. As he says, "he carves to paint." He may use oils or acrylic and both air and traditional brushes. He is also a fan of "free form" creation, where a particular fascinating piece of a wood's grain leads him where it will.

You can see many of Jim's creations on his extensive website, birdsinsinwood.com and may contact him at jim@birdsinsinwood.com. You may find just the bird for you. □



Jim's Great Horned Owl

Aquatic Nuisance Report

by Janet Selby

Seymour Lake appears to be free of all aquatic nuisances including milfoil for the year 2012. The Town of Morgan received a grant written by the Seymour Lake Association of \$10,030 from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. This grant provides financial assistance to municipalities with aquatic nuisance prevention or eradication programs. Our Aquatic Nuisance program costs approximately \$25,000 a year. The town and your Association share in the remaining costs of the program.

Bud Bergh and Reed Hubbard (pictured nearby) continue to be our greeters/inspectors at the State Fishing Access from Memorial Day weekend and into October. This year they inspected 1421 vessels of which 22

carried milfoil and were prevented from entering our lake.



Additionally, more than 20 volunteers searched the shorelines and shallows of the lake for approximately 150 hours and reported no instances of milfoil. It was reported by several of the searchers that there appeared again to be less native vegetation in some areas than in previous years. Our sincere appreciation goes to all who kayak, canoe, and snorkel around the lake to look for milfoil at least twice during the summer. We look forward to continuing with the program next year and are always looking for new volunteers. □

Where we all hail from!

By Erik Lessing

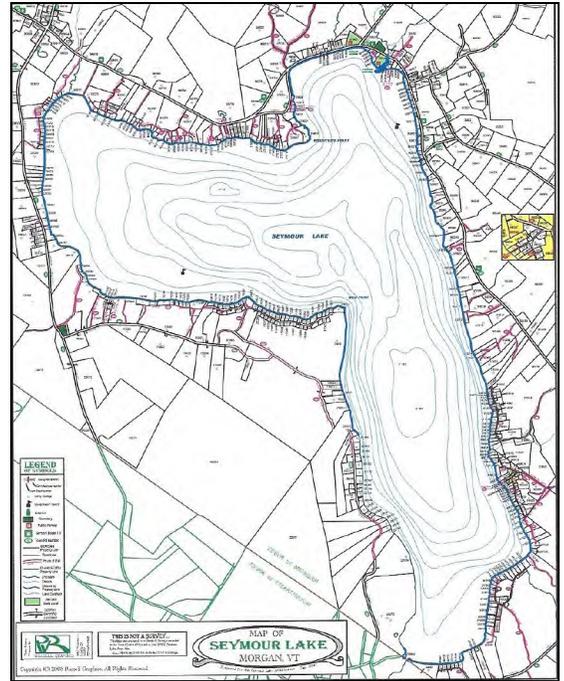
Many times I have been asked where Seymour Lake residents hail from. How many live permanently on the lake? How many live nearby or far away? This article will answer most of your questions and hopefully give you a better understanding of where we all live.

Seymour Lake Association keeps track of how many people live on the lake. This information comes from the Morgan Grand List which is updated often by the Listers as properties change hands or are altered in some other way. There are 395 properties identified as "on the lake." They are categorized as follows:

- Lakefront Properties: 298
- Right Of Way (ROW) Properties: 97

- Properties with dwellings: 360
- Properties without dwellings: 35

While there are a few owners with multiple properties on the lake, they are small and don't impact the totals much. Also included are properties without dwellings even though you could argue they don't "dwell" on the lake. This compilation includes all 395 properties. The categories are LAKE RESIDENT, MORGAN RESIDENT, NEK RESIDENT, and all others are in states or provinces. LAKE RESIDENTS are those who declare their property as a homestead. MORGAN RESIDENTS are those who own a property on the lake but who are listed as homestead in Morgan but not on the lake. NEK RESIDENTS are those who reside in NEK but not Morgan. VT RESIDENTS reside in Vermont but are not LAKE RESIDENTS, MORGAN RESIDENTS, or NEK RESIDENTS. Hence, all Vermonters totals 224 or 57% of the 395 lake properties. □



LAKE RESIDENT	63
MORGAN RESIDENT	9
NEK RESIDENT	71
VT RESIDENT*	81

*Only VT residents not included in the above 3 categories.

QC	4	GA	4
ON	1	FL	14
NH	29	TN	1
ME	1	OH	2
MA	38	IL	1
CT	21	MO	2
RI	4	MI	1
NY	9	WI	1
PA	2	WY	1
NJ	18	CO	1
DE	1	AZ	3
MD	4	NV	1
VA	2	CA	4
NC	1		

Monster Laker

by Jean McKenny



Douglas "Mac" McKenny, Jr. (right and holding fish) and friend, Marc Brown (left) are shown with the fish that Mac caught on Seymour Lake on August 14, 2012. Mac was able to land the 19.8 pound 40 inch long laker after 40 minutes! Estimates are that this fish is 25-30 years old and may be the record laker caught in Vermont this season. □

Seymour Histories – Gildersleeve Family

Story by Tracey Shadday, pictures from Gildersleeve Family

Barbara Gildersleeve, along with her three nephews, own one of the oldest cottages on Seymour Lake, a place where five generations have continued to enjoy its pristine water. Her grandfather, Harry Johnson, from Island Pond, came to Seymour to build a fishing camp next to his friend, Herb Danforth who had built a few years earlier. These two camps, both with little change over the years, are today known as “Trails End.” Built in 1922, the camp offered a place to enjoy the outdoors, where family and friends could gather and anglers could perhaps snag a fish or two. Today the legacy continues as Barbara’s children and grandchildren (the 4th- and 5th-generation) make Seymour their annual vacation destination.

For a long time, the camps on Seymour were mostly owned by Vermonters who came to fish its crystal clear water. By 1922 there were only 39 camps on the lake. That number increased as roads improved and by the 1930s there were approximately 50 camps. A list of camp owners printed in the 1931 edition of “Lake Seymour Illustrated and Historicized”, by William Bryant Bullock, lists 40 proprietors by name and town of origin. 32 of those were Vermonters. By 1976 the number of camps swelled to 238.

The family cottage was christened “Camp Naku”—“beautiful water”—by Barbara’s grandmother, Edna. It is located on the lake across from Wolf’s Point, with a panoramic view of Bald Mountain to the south, the sand beach to the north and a full view of the bay to the west. From their vantage point, family members enjoyed watching the changing moods of the lake, especially as storms moved in through the area.

The scene was not always as it is today. Across the lake, Barbara remembers the tall letters spelling “Ames Park”, placed on a ridge on Mt. Elan and reminiscent of the famous

Landmark sign overlooking Hollywood. The sign marked the area that is now off Camp Winape Road, a section where Harley Ames developed homes.

During the 1940s and 50s her grandparents would spend the summer at the lake, and Barbara’s family would join them in August. Once they arrived, there were no trips to nearby towns, and socializing with other lake visitors was limited. Gas was rationed back then, and no one really wanted to leave the cozy sanctuary! Outings included once-per-summer canoe trips to Lafoe’s, a store and gas station which had been a landmark in Morgan Center since the 1920s. Barbara and her sister bought 5-cent candy bars—their only sweet treats. Swimming across the lake to Wolf’s Point became a rite of passage.

There were no loons on the lake to fill the night time hours with their plaintive calls nor ducks to come visiting. It was a time without kayaks; sailboats were rare, and even the motorboats were few in number. Occasionally, a canoe would pass by, but mostly it was just rowboats, usually with fishermen at the oars. In those early years before electricity, food was stored in a wooden box buried in the ground and kept cold with ice from the ice-

house at Lafoes. Without indoor plumbing, water was drawn from the lake by a hand pump and a nearby spring provided drinking water. An out-house was located some distance from the house. Inside the cabin there were gas chandeliers for lights and a large wood-burning kitchen stove for cooking and heating water. In the 1940s, the cottage was expanded. An eating porch was added to the kitchen, and the open front porch facing the lake was enclosed as a glass porch. (Continued on the next page)



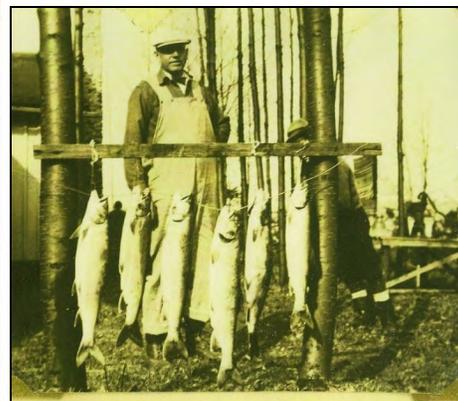
Original Cottage in 1922



1922 Edna, Helen and supper guests at the original cottage



1922 Helen & mother Edna



1938 Harry with Seymour catch

Gildersleeves, continued

Reminders of loved ones who have since passed away remain. The Old Town canoe in which Barbara's parents courted still hangs in the shed. A stuffed lake trout caught by her grandmother and a stuffed fawn with antlers added by her grandmother's father adorn the living room wall. The Civil War gun carried by her



1930s Harry & Edna getting ready for golf

grandfather's father, Elhanan Johnson, from Island Pond, also hung on the wall. In fact, the Johnson family traces its Vermont roots back to the 1780s when Obed Johnson



Barbara and her father Ken circa. 1942

moved from Massachusetts to Guildhall Vermont, and later to Newark. The decorations add character and awaken wonderful memories of times shared on the lake with family. Each subsequent generation has

made its own mark on the cabin by adding some curiosity to a wall or room.

Times are changing, but each summer generations of the family are drawn back to their lake retreat. Life slows down and returns to its traditional Vermont pace. There is no TV, Internet or phone—distractions that could interfere with the solace they find in this very special place.

There remains one lingering question in Barbara's mind—are there any other families who have had five or more generations enjoying the lake in their original camp? □



Barbara and grandfather Harry circa. 1941



The house in summer 2012

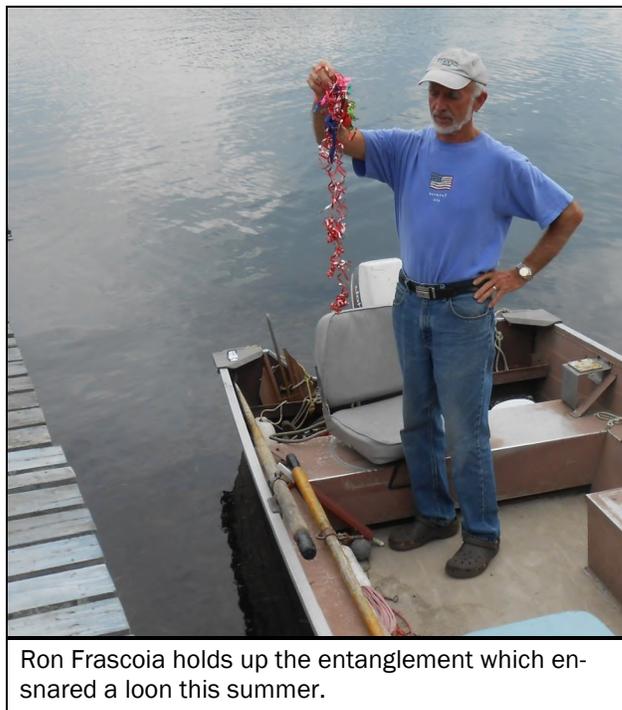
Loon in Distress!

by Erik Lessing and Charles Woods

In early July this year, Ron Frascoia was alerted by his neighbor, Frank Pinard, of a loon in distress. Frank had seen this loon tangled in a mass of colorful streamers and deflated balloons.

After locating the proper rescue equipment of a big net, towel, scissors and clippers, they jumped into Ron's boat to locate the loon. After finally locating the bird, the tough part of capturing it ensued. This was a frustrating procedure as the loon dove more than 6 times to elude them. Finally, they were able to get close enough to grab the entanglement and pull it close to the boat to net the loon. Once in the boat they put the towel over the loon's head and clipped the entangled mass from the loon's body. As they set it free, it bit Ron on the arm drawing blood—a thankful nibble or a defiant bite at being caught?

This is the third loon capture Ron has been involved in since 1999. That rescue involved Pete Rodin and Eric Hanson at the southern end of Seymour, and this loon was entangled in fishing line. His second rescue occurred in 2005, and Ron was ably assisted by Dennis Fortin and Daniel Frascoia



Ron Frascoia holds up the entanglement which ensnared a loon this summer.

(age 13). This poor loon was entangled in a fishing line, lure, and a child's Zebco rod and reel! Grabbing the rod and line enabled them to pull the loon to the boat and make the rescue.

First, congratulations to Ron for thrice rescuing distressed loons. Second, be aware that foreign material left in the lake can cause great problems for loons including death. While it prevents them from flying, most important it inhibits their ability to preen, a vital activity for loons as it spreads oil around their feathers, keeping water out. If a loon cannot preen, they become saturated and hypothermic and can even sink.

Please help our Seymour loons by being careful with your recreational activities. Don't leave ribbons, balloons or decorations on your docks or floats where they might blow into the lake and eventually be exposed to a feeding loon. Take care with your fishing tackle, and most important, as you motor around the lake, keep an sharp eye open for loons, especially ones with young chicks.

Loons are very vulnerable to one or more jet skis zooming too close to them. Young loons are already vulnerable to the acute eyes of soaring bald eagles as these great birds make a remarkable recovery in the Seymour Lake area. □