

## **Seymour Lake Association Annual Meeting July 27, 2013**

The meeting was **called to order** by President Lyman McWain at 8:05 am.

The **Secretary's Report** was given by Jean McKenny. The minutes of the Annual Meeting of July 28, 2012 were approved.

The **Treasurer's Report** was given by Jan Selby. Jan reported a balance in the check book of \$9,116.99 and in CDs of \$63,390. She estimated expenses throughout the remainder of the fiscal year (until 12/31/13) to be \$8,560. She listed the income to this date for the year as maps \$80, Ice out \$780, memorial donations \$185, regular donations \$10,875 and membership \$8,560. Jan also reported that the aquatic nuisance grant of \$7,800 was \$2,230 lower than last year. She noted that 1421 boats/vessels were inspected last year and that 22 instances of milfoil were found and prevented from entering the lake with these inspections. The Treasurer's Report was approved. Lyman (on behalf of the SLA) expressed thanks to Jan (not running again for Treasurer) and Steve (board member resigning) and Linda (not running again for the board) and Ron (not running again for Vice President) for their service to the SLA board.

### **New Business**

The **Nominating Committee Report** was given by Ron Kolar. He distributed a sheet outlining the existing officers and directors. Ron expressed thanks to Jim McWain for the start of the Newsletter in the format as it now exists.

The **Election of Board Members and the Election of Officers** was conducted. Ron Kolar reported as the Chair of the Nominating Committee that for directors Tim Buzzell and Peggy Barter agreed to serve for another three year term until 2016. Dave Anderson agreed to serve for a three year term until 2016 filling the seat vacated by Linda Broadwater. Charles Woods agreed to serve out the remaining one year of the three year term of Steve Massicotte, That seat will be open again in 2014. Lyman McWain agreed to remain as president for another year. Chuck Nichols agreed to serve as Vice President (Ron Kolar decided not to run for that position again). Jean McKenny agreed to serve as Treasurer filling the seat vacated by Jan Selby. The board is actively searching for candidates for the Secretary's position. Erik Lessing moved acceptance of the Nominating Committee Report. Tim Buzzell seconded the motion. Ron Kolar asked if there were any nominations from the floor. As there were none, Erik Lessing moved that nominations close. Tim Buzzell seconded the motion. Lyman then asked for a vote in favor of closing the nominations and electing the persons nominated on the Nomination Committee Report. All of the nominated officers and directors were then elected.

Lyman asked if there were any **New Issues From The Floor**. Lyman mentioned the SLA concern about high water and the resultant debris into the lake that is counter to good shoreline management. In addition the high water level causes a lack of functionality. The members can anticipate from the board a continuation of the ongoing discussions with the state regarding high water. In addition the board is planning to send out a survey to ask property owners about damage. This will allow for a record over time of damage to be kept and miscellaneous conversations being formalized. Discussion then centered around information that a truck had fallen into the lake over the winter and has not yet been recovered. As the truck is in 200 feet of water its removal may be difficult. The SLA board will continue to monitor the situation. A discussion also took place at the recent FOVLAP meeting about this situation. As this is the third vehicle known to go into the lake in recent years it is a concern. It was mentioned

that SLA needs to have deeper interest in winter including ice fishing. This would increase the role of SLA and the board had already agreed to try to communicate more with ice fishermen.

## **Committee Reports**

**The Dam/Lake Level/Boat Parade Report** was given by Tim Buzzell. The boat parade was held the Saturday after the 4<sup>th</sup> and was a huge success. There were more than 25 boats involved. Regarding the lake level, Ron Kolar has been the chair of the dam committee for the last 10 years, responsible for the dam. Ron asked Tim to take over as chairman of that committee. Tim reported that SLA has been badgering the state to allow the reduction of the lake level in the fall with minimal success even getting the state to respond to this request. He reported that finally, last August, Peter LaFlamme from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) came to Seymour with his staff and the committee spent an afternoon explaining the problems caused by a high lake level to the state. Those problems include shoreline erosion and septic leaching. Also, the dam is being over topped at the left abutment and that could compromise the dam. Peter Laflamme said that they would “study the situation and get back to us.” When they did not respond by January, Tim sent a letter to them letter suggesting a pilot study. Again, Tim did not hear back from the state. Consequently, Tim started to call Peter LaFlamme's office. Finally, in June, Tim received a letter saying “No” to the pilot request. The committee wrote another letter to the state about a month ago and still hasn't heard back from them. The committee is coming to the conclusion that Agency of Natural Conservation needs some outside coaching. Frustrated and embarrassed by four years of hard work trying to resolve this issue with the state with no resolution, the committee is considering other avenues to try to get some satisfactory answers. The committee plans to continue to work hard to resolve this issue.

**A Loon Support and Awareness Presentation** was given by Eric Hanson. He is the coordinator of the VT loon recovery project. His experience includes 15 years in VT and 20 years total working in this field. He reported that loons are doing well with 70 nesting pair in VT. That compares to 20 years ago there were only 10. He reported that the number of nesting pairs will level off over time. Loon like islands and marshes and our lakes do not have those. He stressed the importance of thinking beyond the loons. Lake shore buffers, water quality and the base of the food chain are important. How to handle shorelines is important and he pointed out a document that can function as a guide for lake shore owners. It is the Lake Shoreland Protection and Restoration Management Options-Executive Summary, January 2013 document produced by the Agency of Natural Resources. He mentioned two studies that have been done showing how very subtle changes made a big difference in the fish population. One was the Wisconsin perch catch rate study where simply removing woody debris from the shoreline reduced the catch rate of fish. The other study involved a count of fish nests on 3-4 lakes with undeveloped or underdeveloped shores. He mentioned the Lake Wise and Buffers for Blue Lakes programs. An added benefit is that a lake will have fewer geese with a buffer. He made available a one page sheet describing how persons or organizations can contribute money to replace loon nesting site warning signs. A brief discussion followed his talk including mention of the “crowdrise” website where people can obtain more information and contribute for signs to mark loon nesting sites.

**The Membership Committee & Data Report** was given by Bruce Barter and Ted Jewett. They separate membership into three categories (single, couple, and family units). The current 341 units is ahead of last year with 28 new members. These members represent 269 properties which is 68.5% of lake front properties. A list of members was displayed on a back table in the room so people could examine it. To date donations were received from 200 of the 341 membership units. This is consistent with last year. Ted felt that it is important to state that we do not actively solicit donations, only memberships. An increase from \$14,800 to \$20,600 dollars (memberships and donations) indicates a

39% increase for the committee. With a potential for 395 members of lake shore properties the committee feels that it is short 111 properties and will continue to try to gain membership from that group. The committee will also go out into the watershed to get more members. Bruce reported that SLA membership includes 17 members who do not own property and 57 owners in Morgan but not on the lake. They reported what they call "other mundane things." They have spent \$331 for postage out of a budget of \$650. They have met once this year and will probably meet twice more. Membership among the ice fishing community is a new target. A brief discussion of the committee procedures, how to support local business owners who are SLA members, and a request for suggestions for the committee followed. Lyman also spoke briefly regarding the need for a \$75,000 cash "contingency fund" as well as the important role of membership in the organization. If the lake were to become infested with milfoil cash on hand could allow quick action as opposed to waiting for the state to provide it (which might be too late). The SLA organization is the "voice of the lake" and works with the state to understand what is good for the lake. The board feels that communication is a very important role of the organization.

**The Milfoil Program and Inspection Report** was given by Jan Selby. The amount of money that we received in the grant was less this year than last. To date there have been 5 instances of milfoil detection on watercraft but this is early in the season. August and September are the biggest months. Last year 22 of 1481 watercraft inspected were contaminated. A question was asked about airplanes landing in the lake being inspected. Jan responded that airplanes are not likely to be contaminated but that "we have talked with them." She requested that if anyone finds new suspicious looking growth in the lake to call her. She, and others can identify milfoil. She reported that it looks like a feather. The milfoil program has 22 volunteers. More weeds around the boat ramp were mentioned. Jan reported that they are checked and "so far so good." She feels that they should double check that area again this year. Jan mentioned the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds (FOVLAP) providing us information and thanked Bruce Barter of our membership for serving on that board. Many SLA members attended the recent FOVLAP meeting. These included in addition to Bruce and Peggy Barter, Tim Buzzell, Candy Moot and Chuck Nichols, Beth Torpey and Tracey Shadday.

**The Loon Report** was given by Charles Woods. He reported that two years ago the loons lost the chicks and they nested a second time. This also happened this year. The loon tried to nest again this but gave up. He felt that was probably a good thing as a baby can't get off to migrate before the ice forms if it is hatched too late in the season. Woody reported that we have 10 resident loon and 6 vagabonds on Seymour. They are very active on this lake. His wife Missy Woods counted 35 one day during migration. Jan Selby also reported that she saw this large group. Jan called Eric Hanson and he confirmed that is migratory behavior. It is more likely to be seen on the Great Lakes but is possible on other smaller bodies of water. A question was asked about building a small island near Ken Whitehill's camp for loon nesting. The answer given was that it is illegal to put anything in the water. It was stated that a nesting platform near the Jenness property might be a possibility. It was mentioned that Norton has 3 nesting sites as that lake is irregular and better suited for nesting platforms.

**The Newsletter Report** was given by Erik Lessing. He mentioned extra copies in the back of the room of two issues (May 2013 and November 2012). Each issue is 8 pages long and costs \$2200. Erik expressed thanks to Bruce Barter and Maggie Griffith for help with mailing and proofreading it. SLA sends out 900 via mail with about 100 left over each issue. Erik is always soliciting inputs for good pictures and or ideas for articles. He is listed in the phone book here and wants members to give him their ideas.

**The Water Quality Programs Report** was given by Peggy Barter. The state of Vermont does not

have regulations for shoreline development. At one time they did exist but no longer do. There is a public hearing being held on August 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 to 3:30 pm on H526 at the East Side restaurant in Newport. H526 is a proposal for statewide regulations regarding shoreline development. These meetings are being held around the state this summer. Ten legislative representatives will be present at each meeting. The DEC and the legislators will explain their positions on this proposed legislation. They will then collect written questions from the people present. There is also a MWA meeting planned for the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup> at the East Side. Amy Picotte from the state will be at that workshop. It includes lunch and people need to register to attend. The SLA is a member of the MWA. Peggy also presented information about the Lake Wise Awards program. It is a volunteer program and provides us with a multi-page form for local volunteers to evaluate local properties. If these pre-evaluators find a property qualifies for a Lake Wise designation then the state visits the property and evaluates it. Properties are examined on four criteria. Those are driveway area, structures and septic systems, recreation areas, and shorefront and lake access. If Seymour wants to be designated a Lake Wise lake we need 15% of our properties to qualify for an award. Chosen properties have three years to make needed improvements to qualify. At this time six properties have been evaluated by local volunteers with another seven planned. As volunteers are needed as evaluators and as properties to be evaluated contact either Peggy or Tracey Shadday to volunteer. Peggy also announced that the first (maybe in the nation) septic social was held on July 19<sup>th</sup>. There were two sessions with 47 participants.

Twenty-three of the participants were from Seymour. The lake scorecards were used during the social and Peggy displayed the red, blue yellow scorecards for Seymour, Echo, Salem and Willoughby on the wall for this annual meeting. One outcome of the social was an idea to plan a program where people in an area of the lake could get a group rate to pump or inspect septic systems. Erik Lessing gave a demonstration at the social on how to tell when septic needs to be pumped. The last program Peggy mentioned is from the nongovernmental group FOVLAP. They are creating programs to help meet the requirements of the Lake Wise program. They are essentially offering information, workshops, technical help, and financial assistance. They are choosing eight lakes with five properties on each lake to receive three blueberry plants. Each property will receive planting soil information and possibly labor for the planting. The property owner pays 50 % and the grant pays 45% of the cost. It was noted that Canadian Geese won't walk through blueberry bushes. Peggy passed out a sign up sheet for the program and received more volunteers than the program will allow. A Wayeeses Shores Road Association member asked a question about the Better Back Roads Grant Program. The Wayeeses Association voted last summer to spend money on a "survey" Better Back Roads Grant. That money was not spent and it seems that there is some confusion about what such a grant entails and how to access it. Peggy mentioned that they should contact Ben Copans to ask questions about it. Lyman reported that Ben is working with the town and having discussions about either the Town of Morgan or the SLA applying for a survey grant in January of 2014. Lyman explained that this would entail having an inventory of needs in the watershed and a plan for addressing them. As a part of the Water Quality report Lyman thanked Tom Emery for his contributions. Eight times every summer Tom collects data to measure the state of the lake. He does this quietly behind the scenes and is greatly appreciated for his work.

## **Old Business**

**The Ice Out Contest Report** was given by Jan Selby. The ice went out on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:58 am. The third place winner was Fred Jackson. There was no second place winner as there was a tie for first place. Elizabeth Jenne and Sue and Jerry Tubbs shared the winning guess. Sue is Jack Carter's sister and she and Jerry had marked their submitted guess with a request that should they win they wanted the

winnings to be donated back to the association. There were fourteen guesses for April 19<sup>th</sup>. Jean McKenny was the fourth place winner but alas, that does not carry any monetary award.

Allan Wooley reported 23,000visits to the **SLA website**.

**The Activities Committee Report** was given by Frank Antonelli. He is communicating with Allan Wooley and Ileen Douglass who own the property where the annual outing will be held again this year. The date is Saturday August 3<sup>rd</sup> . Frank reminded people wanting to attend the outing to register with Jan Selby and bring food (to share) and chairs. Serving utensils are not needed as the association has them.

Dave Anderson reported that the **(formerly IROC) swim** scheduled for Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> needs boats. It starts at 7:30 am and goes until 10:30 am. He will be sending out e-mails this week to boat owners.

The meeting **adjourned** at 10:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McKenny, Secretary