



# Newsletter

# November 2019

## President's Message

by Chuck Nichols

What a beautiful summer and fall. It was a slow start and a quick end but the middle was fabulous.

Seymour Lake is still the only large Vermont lake with no invasive species; phosphorus level is down and the water is clearer; however, Seymour Lake Association (SLA), has concerns.

- Aquatic invasive species - milfoil, zebra mussels, spiny water flea; land-based invasive species - Japanese knotweed, phragmites.
- High water / low water - some flooding; getting boats on and off lifts, boat access issues with silt at the public access leading to shallow water.

- Jet skis, wave boats, boats of all kinds running too close and too fast near the shore.
- Loon count falling and no chicks recently.
- Fishing not as good as it has been in years past. Smelt (fish food) population seems to be way down,

I mention these concerns not to be negative, but to positively say that SLA is aware and working on all these issues. Your board and committees are dedicated to doing all we can to keep Seymour Lake the treasure it is. We need more folks to volunteer for committees, to help neighbors pull land-based invasive species, to kayak as part of the VIP

team, to talk to neighbors who drive their boats too close to shore, etc. Come to next summer's annual meeting (last Saturday in July) and listen, ask questions, and volunteer. Get involved with SLA...have fun, meet new people, and help our water quality.

And a special thanks to Beth Torpey and all her greeters who do such a great job at the boat access checking boats to make sure no invasive species get into Seymour. And a big thanks to the SLA board and all the others who volunteer their time and energy.

Have a great winter. Summer will be here soon. □

## Update on Invasive Species at the Boat Access

by Beth Torpey

We're happy to report another successful year of keeping invasive species out of Seymour Lake! The greeter program ran from Memorial Day weekend to the last day of fishing season, October 31. Returning greeters include: Bud Bergh, Dan Griffith, J McKenzie, Ed Singer and Dija Selby. They were joined by the new crew of Kim Germain, Angela Swanson and Steve Sheltry.

The boat decontamination station operated well this season as we decontaminated any watercraft that were coming from a lake with animal invasive species, such as zebra mussels. Decontamination consists of running hot water (>140° F.) through the engines and live wells and over equipment that may have any standing water. We are NOT washing boats for peo-

ple. Our normal visual inspection is not effective against most animal invasive species because parts of their lifecycles are microscopic.

As more people become educated about invasive species and regulations are enforced, we've seen less intercepts of invasive plant material. That being said, we still had 47 intercepts with 5 of them being milfoil that would have made it to Seymour without the vigilance of our superb greeter staff.

Some of the new regulations include the requirement to remove the plug and drain your boat after leaving a waterbody and a fine (up to \$1,000) for ANY plant material being transported on a boat or trailer.

Our VIPs (Vermont Invasive Patrolers) continued their searching for any-

thing that might sneak past the greeters and did not find anything bad. David Wiesemann continues to coordinate this program.

Be sure to wave to David, our intrepid kayaker in the orange kayak, when you see him by your shoreline. Anyone who's interested in being trained as a VIP and would like to take responsibility for checking a portion of the lake, please contact David at: [www.davidisbacksf@yahoo.com](mailto:www.davidisbacksf@yahoo.com).

The invasive species threat is always just around the corner, so continued vigilance is required. With zebra mussels in Lake Memphremagog, a mere 20 minutes away, supporting the greeter program is more important than ever! Thanks to all who support our important work. □



This Newsletter is a semiannual publication of the Seymour Lake Association, a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of Seymour Lake and the surrounding locality for the benefit of lake users, property owners, and residents of Morgan, Vermont.



### Seymour Lake Association

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#### Officers

President:	Chuck Nichols	<a href="mailto:craynichols@me.com">craynichols@me.com</a>	cell 802-917-4282
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Secretary:	Linda Buzzell	<a href="mailto:t-lbuzzell@comcast.net">t-lbuzzell@comcast.net</a>	802-895-4175 home 603-448-3245

#### Directors (Term Ends)

Bruce Barter	'20	Sean Selby	'21	Tim Buzzell	'22
Bonnie McWain	'20	Erik Lessing	'21	Tom Adams	'22
Charles Woods	'20	Frank Antonelli	'21	Bill Bilowus	'22

Tom Bonneville—Town of Morgan Select Board Liaison

#### Committee Members

Activities.....Frank Antonelli  
 Audit .....Doug Gimler  
 Boating.....Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain  
 Dam/Lake Level.....Tim Buzzell, Ron Kolar, Chuck Nichols, Erik Lessing, Candy Moot  
 Fishing .....Charles "Woody" Woods, Bill Bilowus, Ron Frascoia, Matt Shippee  
 Loons .....Charles "Woody" Woods, Denis Fortin, Bonnie & Dave Potter, Nancy Bowen  
 Maps .....Chuck Nichols  
 Membership .....Tom Adams, Bruce Barter, Tim Buzzell, Gerry Cahill, Erik Lessing, Ann Torpey, Chris Blais, Bonnie McWain, Brenda Wierschke  
 Milfoil .....Chuck Nichols, Beth Torpey, David Wieselmann  
 Newsletter .....Erik Lessing, Bruce Barter, Maggie Griffith  
 Nominating .....Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain, Sean Selby  
 Water Quality.....Peggy Barter, Frank Antonelli, Tom Emery, Bill Kilpatrick, Dan Barry, Gerry Cahill, Kenni Friere, Beth Torpey, Ron Kolar, David Wieselmann, Erik Lessing, Tracey Shadday, Rhonda Shippee, Charles Woods, Cynthia Stevens  
 Web Site: .....Karen Abada, Candy Moot, Chuck Nichols, Bruce Barter, Erik Lessing, Andy Barter, Rhonda Shippee  
 Note: Name underlined is Committee Chair. Others are Committee Members.

**G**reeters at the Boat Launch: Bud Bergh, Dan Griffith, J McKenzie, Ed Singer, Dija Selby, Kim Germain, Angela Swanson, Steve Sheltry.

**Town of Morgan [www.townofmorgan.com](http://www.townofmorgan.com)**

Selectmen—Robert Guyer—Chair  
 Larry Labor  
 Tom Bonneville

Town Clerk/Treasurer—TammyLee Morin  
 Asst. Town Clerk—Amanda Wright  
 North Country School Directors—Kelley Paul, Tammy Lacourse, Danielle Blake

Listers—Diane Moore  
 James Judd  
 Joseph Malgeri

Zoning Officer: Steve Matson, 802-895-2886

### Recognition

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

### Shoreland Protection Permitting

For questions regarding Shoreland Protection Permitting, the contact person is Lindsay Miller who can be reached at [Lindsay.Miller@vermont.gov](mailto:Lindsay.Miller@vermont.gov) and 802-490-6200.

**Land Invasives Update**

by Rhonda Shippee

Last year's survey of participating properties by our Ameri-Corps intern, Trevor Bannister, identified phragmites and Japanese knotweed as our most prevalent invasive. Our overall objective was to educate property owners who may have these species present and if so, how to control them. Several members of the Water Quality Committee also offered to assist owners with this work.

This summer a work crew of Bruce and Peggy Barter, along with their son, Andy, and grandchildren, Riley and Cooper, helped attack a Japanese knotweed infestation at the common boundary of three Seymour properties on the east side of the lake. Various patches of phragmites and knotweed are also monitored and cut annually by SLA volunteers, including along our public beach. If you are on a shared road, engaging your neighbors and/or road association members to participate in a "cutting day" is a great tactic that we heard was used this year at Seymour East. We continue to encourage everyone to keep an eye out for these plants and take the time to control them. Every little bit helps! □



An invasive work team of Barter's, Left to right, Riley and Cooper, their Dad Andy, and Peggy Barter.

**A Deserved Thank-You**

by Peggy Barter

Seymour Lake Association thanks the entire lake community for helping to stabilize the lake's phosphorus to a more acceptable level. This includes those who own lake shore properties, those who boat, fish or swim in Seymour and the citizens of Morgan. The Town of Morgan has been a helpful partner over the years during which we have reversed the upward trend in

phosphorus and stabilized the reduced level. Our collective actions should help the lake continue to be a safe place to fish, boat and swim. In turn, the property values and taxes collected to run the Town will be maintained.

It is necessary for us to persist in our efforts. Please do whatever you can to keep invasive aquatic species from entering the lake, prevent runoff into the

lake on both lake shore and upland properties, restore natural vegetation to the lakeshore and participate in Lake Wise. The example set by SLA, VT Fish and Wildlife boat access, VTDEC and Northwoods Stewardship Center in the new plantings at the Boat Access set a great example for us all. □

**Three Important Articles**

by Erik Lessing

The following are three very important and interesting articles about Seymour Lake and Water Quality. Each article has a note about the content of each. As stewards of the lake, SLA encourages you to read these articles. We suggest reading them sequentially for most value:

**INFLUENCE OF A CHANGING CLIMATE ON WATERWAYS IN VERMONT**

This is an excellent primer about the changing climate and its effect on the waterways of Vermont. It is a good basis for the other two articles recommended below and even covers Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and The Blizzard of 2016. It also discusses the increase in precipitation in Vermont.

**PILOTING A STRATEGY FOR TURNING SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASING PHOSPHORUS TRENDS AROUND ON VERMONT'S CLEAREST LAKES**

This article hits right at home and it is by Kellie Merrell, Ben Copans and Danielle Owczarski published 22 July 2019.

Seymour Lake is lucky to be in the category of Oligotrophic lakes. These are the lakes with the purest water while Mesotrophic, and Eutrophic define lakes of declining quality. While this definition contains many parameters, phosphorus is the most important. This presentation by well known scientists of Vermont's DEC leads you through the situation at 153 Vermont lakes of greater than 20 acres. There are 23 Oligotrophic, 89 Mesotrophic, and 41 Eutrophic lakes in Vermont. The problem identified is that the Oligotrophic lakes are showing increasing phosphorus and only one, Seymour, has not shown this trend. The article shows how a dedicated Lake Association (SLA) can arrest the decline by working with other key partners such as The Town of Morgan and DEC, We should all be proud.

**SHARING THE EDGE**

This is a wonderful booklet put together by Vermont's Lakes and Ponds Management and Program and aimed exactly at property owners of a lake. It talks about all the important programs in which lake owners should be involved with subsequent benefit our valuable lakes. It is a must read about "The Edge" we all care about.

Please take the time to go to [seymourlake.org](http://seymourlake.org) and click on the down arrow under Water Quality. The three articles are listed at the bottom of the list. It will be worth your time. □

## Sculling on Seymour Lake

by Betsy Walkerman

I think I have the longest boat on the lake. At 26 feet long, 10 inches wide and barely 30 pounds, a rowing shell is a sleek machine, the kind of machine that requires just human power, finesse and attention.

There are actually three more boats like mine on the lake, one owned by Chris Gobillot, one rowed by Corinne Hagen Bilo-deau, and one owned by Bob Lundgren. Occasionally my double rowing shell, is here as well.

Rowing shells are powered by 9½ foot oars. From the narrow hull, the cockpit flares out just enough to accommodate the sliding seat. The shoes are fixed in the boat so that the power of the stroke comes from the leg drive. Since the hull of the boat is so narrow, we keep our balance with

the oars. Hands must always be at the same level. A slight imperfection in the stroke results in an un-intended swim. That's why you'll pretty much only see us out early in the morning before the wind kicks up too much chop and definitely before motorboats are out making wakes. My neighbor asked why I rarely row in the evening. It actually takes about an hour after the last motorboat has gone home for the wakes to settle down and for the lake to be truly calm.

It is glorious being on the water early with spirals of mist curling up off the surface blurring the line between water and air. Stroke by stroke, a rower leaves small ripples behind in a shape like a flock of Canada geese. Each oar leaves a round puddle with ripples expanding until the circles from each side of the boat are left behind and intersect, weaving behind the stern. The water parts to let the craft skim through. Body, craft, motion, breath, sky and water feel like one organism.

Thirteen hundred strokes an hour, and rarely a perfect one. That's what the meditation is about. Each stroke is an opportunity to begin again. Rowing is a finesse sport, where muscle and strength play little role until you learn to handle the oars as though you were

holding a baby bird and release the tension in your joints so that the sliding seat can glide smoothly. It gets to the point where you can imagine the oar



Sally Walkerman on Seymour one misty morning.

blades are like the palms of your hands sending the water behind the boat and the water gently parting to let you glide through.

One morning, I was just getting rigged for a row, when a tiny duckling nosed around the blade of my oar.



Jonathan Crocker with the Wherry built by the author's father.

Magically, she hopped up on the blade and for a minute, I felt like I was holding that duckling in the palm of my hand.

Ever since the earliest references to rowing, there has been racing. Egyptian funerary urns from 1430 show rowing, racing and heroics. Boatmen who rowed for a living on the Thames in London raced for sport. The first rowing

competition in the Olympics was in 1900. Women finally gained access to Olympic rowing in 1976.

My friend Carlie Geer often comes to Seymour Lake to row the double shell with me and enjoy the beautiful clear water. Carlie and her sister, Judy Geer, represented the US in the double shell on the 1980 Olympic team. In 1984, Carlie beat a strong fleet of eastern European women to claim the Silver Medal in the single scull at the L.A. Olympics. Here's the link to the video of Carlie's race. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiTp2AOKFrg>

Rowing is one of the few non-weight bearing sports that exercises all the major muscle groups. If you row for an hour, you will burn 400-600 calories. But more important, you will integrate a certain rhythm, attention, and calm into your body, in a practice that can be life-long. Teaching a friend to row, he remarked, this was the first thing he ever learned where he had to concentrate so hard that he (a rather loquacious fellow) couldn't say a word for the whole hour.

If you want to learn to row, I would highly recommend the Craftsbury Outdoor Center, run by Judy Geer and Dick Dreissigacker (1976 Olympic team). Craftsbury was the first rowing camp in North America, and they train rowers from rank beginners to Olympic hopefuls. Craftsbury holds weekend clinics where you can learn the basics enough to be able to take a boat out and practice.

If you'd rather appreciate the sport from the comfort of your hammock, I would recommend the book *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown.

The story follows the epic journey of the crew from Depression-era America to the Olympic competition in Hitler's Berlin in 1936. If you like adventure stories, pick up a copy of *Rowing to Latitude* by Jill Fredston. Full of humor and personal challenges, the book follows Jill's travel rowing the coast of Alaska, Greenland and Norway.

Happy rowing...or reading. □

Sculling on Seymour Lake (continued)

by Betsy Walkerman



Betsy Walkerman



Betsy Walkerman and Carlie Geer

The “MAP” and Its Origins

by Erik Lessing

When my mother and dad, Alice and Arthur, lived full time on Seymour Lake from 1967 to 1986, Dad was a Morgan lister and my mother a retired fashion artist for Women’s Wear Daily in New York City. They got the idea that it would be good to have a map of the lake and a listing of the properties and people who lived around it. The article below from the Newport Daily Express was written by Pat Hunt, a long time SLA member and well known figure in the area and it shows the first version of the map.

There were many versions after this one, occurring about every one to two years. The first versions had a lake outline with each property located and numbered with an adjacent listing of their names, all on one large sheet.

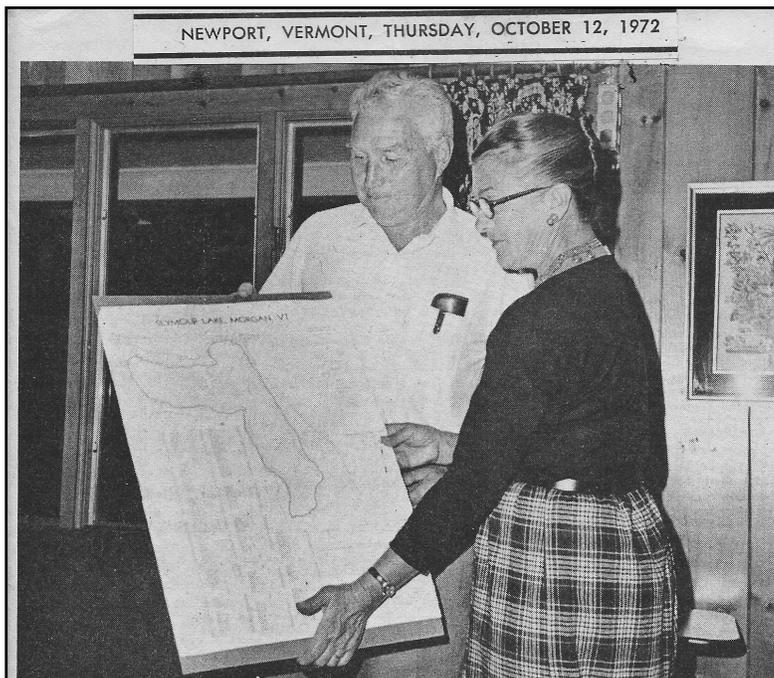
As more properties and people were added in the Town of Morgan, the detail of names had to be put on a separate list. But back then we were all just numbers starting at Camp Winape 1 and proceeding sequentially clockwise around the entire lake and then beyond.

My Mother and Dad had their copy affixed to the back of a door and often referred to it to remember just where people lived. I have kept many copies stored above our garage and it is interesting to scan through them to see just how properties and people have changed over the years.

So that is the story of how the “MAP” started but surely not the end. In 1972, the FCC recommended that the 911 emergency call system be implemented across the country and thus the program was gradually set in place. The Town of Morgan was part of this and hence, now each property is not “just a number” but an identification of road and unique number on that road.

But that is another story and in the next newsletter look forward to how that came to be and the details of the fully digitized version of the “MAP” □

If you have not already taken advantage of the “Map” on the website go to seymourlake.org, click on the down arrow by Maps>Fun Maps and then click on the large type link. You can expand any part of the map of interest to you. You can buy fully printed maps at the Morgan Country Store or the Town of Morgan office.



MAP OF LAKE SEYMOUR — Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lessing hold map now being distributed by the Lake Seymour Association. Locations of 556 houses and cottages are located along the lake and in the village, listed by owners. Maps are available from the Morgan Store, Mrs. George Noys, Mrs. James Oliver, Mrs. Everett Cargill, and at the Country Store in East Charleston. Mail orders may be sent to Mrs. Lessing RFD West Charleston, Vt. 05872. Copies have been given to all ambulance, fire, police, and emergency services in the area. Advertisements were solicited by Harold Barter, Mrs. Oliver, Gordon Elliot, and Lloyd Saville. (Photo by Pat Hunt)

Vince Speranza—Music, War Stories, and Wisdom

by Betsy Walkerman

One of the thrills of living on Seymour Lake are your neighbors who enjoy the same wonders of our beautiful lake as you. For many years, I had the privilege of knowing Vincent Speranza who came to mind this recent June 6th as this was the 75th anniversary of D-Day. Newspapers, TV, Radio, and the internet took note and the Wall Street Journal ran a front page article about how that anniversary was celebrated in

On one of those idyllic evenings on Seymour Lake with the northwest sky streaked in pink, a few plaintive notes of a waltz wafted over the water. I was entranced and followed the sound to my neighbor's cottage. Vince was sitting on the porch, eyes closed, breathing his harmonica music to life. His wife Iva was gently swaying in the porch swing. That was a beginning of a musical friendship and the opening to a lifetime of stories.

I learned of Vince's great grandfather, who at the age of 12 sneaked off the boat in NY harbor and stayed in America while his parents and siblings sailed back to Italy. I learned of Vince's first job teaching school in Port Kent, New York, inspiring kids with history and scout outings. He showed me pictures from the sixties of Iva in her daring two-piece bathing suit sitting on the rocks at their cottage. And then, for the first time since 1945, he started to talk about his experiences during the war. Vince was just 20 when he returned from the war.



Europe and it featured Vincent. Below is that picture showing Vincent including the following description:

U.S. veteran paratrooper Vincent Speranza speaks with a U.S. soldier during D-Day commemoration in Normandy.

A few years later, in 2008, Iva was no longer able to come to Seymour Lake. Alzheimer's disease had claimed her mind. Vince found himself here alone for the first time since purchasing his camp in 1959. In those early days, he was a teacher in New York City and was determined that his family would have summers by the water with nature at their doorstep.

Over the week, Vince talked about training, his first jump out of an airplane, his buddies, and ultimately about the cold miserable march to Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge. Vince survived the four worst battles of the war and was one of the troops who marched into Dachau at the end of the war to liberate the remaining starving souls there. He didn't consider himself a hero. A poem in his book includes this verse:

That first week without his wife, we tried to play music, and I took Vince to the Barton Fourth of July fireworks, but he was distraught without her. Wanting something to occupy his time, he asked if I had any chores he could help with. For the next week, we pulled all the window sashes out of my house and put two coats of varnish on them. That's when the stories started spilling out.

We the living seek not the glory,  
Only realization of our terrible losses,  
We ask for honor, respect and prayers for  
The brave men 'neath rows of crosses.

Vince had not talked to anyone about his experiences during the war. He told me that he had seen soldiers who returned from World War I shell-shocked and unable to live the rest of their lives. That was not what he wanted. He wanted to move on, raise a family, and enjoy life. What's more, he thought no one would be interested. So all the stories remained untold.



BERTRAND GUAY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Those days spent by the lake varnishing windows opened a world of memories. Every story came with a song. We'd put down our paintbrushes, he would pick up his harmonica and teach me marching songs, bawdy songs (including one in French), and mournful songs.

The next year, Vince traveled to Bastogne where he was honored to represent the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne and made strong friendships. This trip has become an annual pilgrimage where he visits the church where the wounded lay.

**Vince Speranza—Music, War Stories, and Wisdom (continued)**

by Betsy Walkerman

He goes to the field where that winter in the deep snow the German troops became ensnared in barbed wire, resulting in their terrible loss of life. As he walks the streets of the town, children come shake his hand and tell him “Thank you for our freedom.”

“I still want to jump out of an airplane one more time!” □

During his first trip back to Bastogne, Vince learned that Airborne, a local beer, is named for a local myth about a 101<sup>st</sup> soldier who brought his buddy, wounded in the liberation of the town, a helmet filled with beer. Vince was a bit taken aback to discover that his own long-ago moment of improvising had



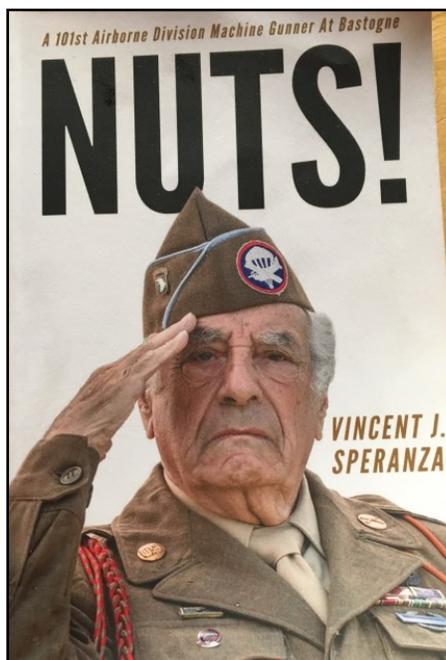
been so enshrined in local lore. He became double the hero in local eyes.

I can't begin to do justice to Vince's stories. They are all there in his book, “Nuts”, which you can find on Amazon. Maybe you will recognize some names of former landowners in the story of how he bought his camp on Seymour Lake for \$5,500 in 1959.

A few days ago, I sat out on my porch and had a good chat with Vince on the phone. I'll leave you with a few of his comments.

“I'm not a pacifist, but I just don't understand why as people we can't spend our time figuring out how to share everything instead of building weapons to fight over all the resources.”

“I have a trunk full of WWII memorabilia that I take around to schools to share with kids and tell stories. Before I started telling these stories, I was an 85-year-old man sitting around waiting to die. Now at 94 I'm traveling all over the world.”

**Editor's Note:**

I recently came across this Wall Street Journal article on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day and thought I recognized the name. With a little asking around by calling Tom Adams, I confirmed that Vince Speranza used to summer at Seymour Lake, and Tom said Betsy Walkerman was a good friend of Vince and played a special role in his telling of WWII stories. So Betsy graciously agreed to write this fascinating and heartwarming story of this one time Seymour Lake resident.

### A Raft of Loons on Seymour

by Doug Gimler

I saw these 13 loons together on September 30 outside my house and believe a group like this is called a “raft” of loons. It is certainly the biggest grouping I have seen and gives me hope that while the loon count has been down on Seymour, these birds seem to be having a grand time. □



### Seymour Histories, The Iron Kettle

by Dan Brush

The principal cash crop during this early period in Morgan as well as in most other towns of Orleans County was pot and pearl ashes—wood ashes worked into a black salts or a more refined product. These pot ashes always brought a good price at Montreal and the early settlers depended almost entirely upon this crop for money to pay their creditors. So important was this business that in most of the interior towns of Vermont not a dollar in money could be raised except from ashes. Without this, goods or provisions could not have been imported and taxes could not have been collected. All small stores had their ashery and all were eager to purchase. As land was cleared the timber was dropped in such a way as to form piles of logs, these were burned and the ashes were gathered and then reduced to a sort of salts in a large iron kettle. I am told that one of these large kettles is located on the main road to Newport on the right side of the road, going to Newport, a very short distance from the home of Mr. George Cobb, in the direction of Morgan Corners. It is being used as sort of a watering trough for horses. If this is one of those kettles I feel that the town should remove it to a more suitable location.

From The Early History of Morgan Vermont

By Sterling Ulrich

### New Look and Functionality at the Boat Launch

by Peggy Barter

In case you have not seen the new look of the boat launch area, it ought to make you smile. While many of us have worked to make our shore property Lake Wise, a sore point has been the boat launch which has violated most of the tenets of lake shore management for water quality. Happily this changed over the past summer thanks to the vision of Meghann Carter at Northwoods Stewardship Center (NWSC) and the willingness of SLA to collaborate as well as fund projects using NWSC exper-

tise. Meg, working with Vermont Fish & Wildlife as well as Amy Picotte of



VTDEC, wrote a grant which was funded to install buffer plantings at Seymour's public access area. SLA provided additional funding to pay for the plants and also provided volunteers to assist with the work. The plants seem to be thriving, so take a look next summer to see the many native shrubs as well as beautiful native flowering plants in three rain gardens. The installation was done by NWSC's Youth Conservation Crew whose members are local youths hired



by NWSC. Helping with installation were Rhonda Shippee, Cooper, Riley, and Andy Barter. We also provided refreshments for the crew. Watering was done by Toamin, Bruce, and Andy Barter. Weeding and mulching were done by Tom Adams, Rhonda and Matt Shippee, Chris Blais, Gerry Cahill, Tracey Shadday, Kenni Friere, Peggy Barter and Ron Kolar. Many of the volunteers are pictured above. □.

