

## LAON ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES      JULY 7, 2018

There was a lot covered at the meeting, so these minutes are lengthy. Here are the highlights. Please see the body of the minutes for more details:

- LAON's Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) program has had 3 saves, preventing invasive milfoil and the zebra mussel from entering Lake Pennesseewassee. Since CBI is not always present, and doesn't cover all lakes, boaters need to follow recommended guidelines.
- Since CBI gaps leave us vulnerable, LAON is promoting a Plant Patrol Program to train individuals on how to look for and assess plants while recreating on their respective lakes.
- Water quality is similar to the past few years. High phosphorus in North and Hobbs Ponds, and low dissolved Oxygen in the 3 deep lake.
- We continue the fight against the yellow iris. They have been cut, and will continue to be cut until they stop re-growing.
- Our watershed protection program continues to grow. Projects are being completed on North Pond, and planning is starting for a lake Penn. watershed survey – volunteers needed.
- There are several key outreach events happening, including town events, and water events on Lake Penn. Get involved if you can. Also, LAON shirts and tote bags are available on our website.

**Sal Girifalco**, LAON President, called the annual meeting to order at 11:00 am at Town Hall. There were approximately 50 people in attendance He introduced the Board members including three new directors, Jim O'Brien, Lise Dietrich (both from Lake Penn) and Paul Shook (Hobbs Pond). After reviewing the meeting agenda, those in attendance approved the minutes of the July 8, 2017 Annual Meeting as posted on the LAON website.

Sal thanked LAON's sponsors (Ari's Pizza & Subs; Cafe Nomad; Dows Law Office, Edward Jones Investments; Granite Ridge Estate & Barn; Norway Lake Marina; Norway Savings Bank; Oxford Federal Credit Union; Paris Cape Realty; the Lake Store and White's Marina). He encouraged everyone, when visiting any of these businesses, to thank them for their sponsorship of LAON.

**Tom Webster** presented the **LAON Financial Report for 2018**.

"We have

We started the year with \$43,157.88 in our bank account and have designated \$11,000 for contingency funds leaving an operating fund balance of \$32,157.88. Anticipated expenses include courtesy boat inspections, water quality testing, invasive plant surveys, watershed protection, and printing/postage for membership solicitation. LAON is continuing to fund its contingency funds: (emergency remediation fund - established to enable an immediate response to any location where invasive plants are found; and its water quality test equipment fund - money set aside to purchase replacement equipment, when needed).

Tom reviewed a chart of contributions/dues paid by each of the four lakes, which showed that so far, 2018 dues were less than half of what was received in 2017 (only 21% of potential donors had paid to date). He encouraged any members who had not yet paid 2018 dues to do so before August 1 to reduce the cost of a second mailing. He also clarified that contributions to

LAON from road associations, though most welcome, should be considered additional contributions, not as a substitute for individual household dues.

**Phil Lamoureux** gave an update on the **Courtesy Boat Inspection Program**. Between 5/26/18 and 7/4/18, a total of 862 boats were inspected. Of these, 149 (17%) were not from Lake Penn. By comparison, the total number of boats inspected in 2017 was 1889; 378 (20%) were not from Lake Penn. There are 4 boat inspectors who cover the Lake Penn boat launch from 7 am to 7 pm on weekends; they are there early mornings and early evenings on weekdays. We will be adding an intern and one volunteer to help with the increased demand for inspections. Phil highlighted a number of interesting points about lakes in Maine: there are 33 infected lakes out of the 6000 lakes in Maine. Nearby, Thompson and Sebago Lakes are infected. In Naples, their boat, the Windham Eagle, is in use 8 hours a day removing milfoil from the lake. They originally tried to do the cleanup with volunteers, but found they had to hire professionals at around \$1,000 per day. Brandy Pond has tried using tarps to suffocate milfoil found there. Long Lake, which had cleared up milfoil, had another outbreak this year.

In 2017 there was one incidence of variable milfoil on a trailer coming into Lake Penn from Sebago Lake (which has milfoil). This was our first “save”. So far in 2018, the CBI’s at Lake Penn have found Eurasian milfoil wrapped around fishing tackle in a boat previously used on the St. Lawrence River. This boat also had a zebra mussel attached (Phil indicated that this mussel is rampant on Lake Champlain!) Phil showed a number of informative slides about these dangers to our lakes. Visit the LAON website to see these and learn more!

Phil shared advice to boaters to prevent problems to our lakes:

- CLEAN - DRAIN - DRY. Boaters should clean their boats of any plants and debris; drain boats and all compartments of any standing water and dry boats prior to entering any new body of water.
- The state recommends allowing a boat to air dry for 5 days before launching again. That is not always practical. Other options are to wash the boat with hot water (140 degrees or hotter) or wash with a 10% bleach solution.
- LAON encourages boat owners who visit water bodies in NY, VT, and MA to take boats over to the car wash where the pressure and heat of the water will remove any mussels.
- While many LAON members do not visit other lakes, we often get visitors. Please assist your visitors to inspect and clean their boats before launching.

A question was raised from the audience as to whether the Town of Norway could consider closing the boat ramp when there is not a CBI present? *(Subsequent to the meeting, Sal had preliminary discussions with the Town of Norway on this. It is a difficult subject, with no clear answer. Preventing an infestation will be an ongoing project between LAON and the Town.)*

Another question from the floor was whether or not the two marinas in Norway were supportive of these efforts.....YES! White’s Marina has been very diligent about checking boats entering; Norway Marina rents slips by the season so checks are done at the beginning of the season (and boats are left there generally). There was some concern expressed about boats entering the lake off Crockett Ridge but we do not have a sense of the extent of any risk associated with this entry point. A sign has been placed there reminding boater to check boats for plants.

Recent newspaper articles and TV coverage about CBI and our “saves” and related activities are helping to create better awareness of this important issue and the role everyone plays in protecting our lakes!

Since CBI is not always on duty, **Lynn Girifalco** presented information on **EYES ON THE LAKE: THE NEXT LEVEL OF PROTECTION**. She talked about the Plant Patrol Program where individuals look for aquatic plants during normal water activities, then use a “quick key” to assess those plants. The goal is to have an Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP) team on each of the lakes with one certified IPP leader, so that multiple sets of eyes are looking out for plants that could be invasive. Lynn asked for volunteers from each lake to host a “Plant Paddle” where people would be trained in the IPP approach. The “quick key” will be scanned and placed on the LAON website.

Jeff Stern of the Androscoggin River Watershed Council (ARWC) who is LAON’s technical advisor on the North Pond Watershed Project discussed our grant. He works with many associations, and complimented LAON on its strong and widespread proactive program. He will be coordinating a plant paddle for 12-24 people to be held on Woods Pond on July 24.

There will be a watershed survey workshop on August 2 in Bridgton sponsored by the Lake Stewards of Maine (formerly Voluntary Lakes Monitoring Program/VLMP); look for more information on the LAON web site.

**Steve Zeeman** updated the group on **Water Quality**. The 2017 results showed high phosphorus levels on Hobbs and North Ponds. There are much lower levels of dissolved oxygen in our 3 deep water lakes (Penn, Sand and Hobbs) than is desirable (since this releases phosphorus). Higher chlorophyll levels in North Pond indicate the presence of algae. All of the collected data reinforce the need to address watershed erosion. Pennesseewassee has been classified as “at risk”. Details of the 2017 water quality report will be posted on the LAON site.

Steve talked about water clarity, stratification and dissolved oxygen and the characteristics of good versus bad lakes. Low oxygen concentration is a problem for lakes. Steve told the group that he is available to answer questions once the report is posted on the LAON site. You may reach him at [szeeman@une.edu](mailto:szeeman@une.edu) or on 207/595-8591 or email questions to the LAON ([norwaylaon@gmail.com](mailto:norwaylaon@gmail.com)).

There was a question from the audience about lake data which has been collected for 40 years. Steve recommended reading the 2015 LAON water quality report where long term data was assessed (available on the LAON website). He stated that data for the past 15 years is more reliable than for the earlier years.

**Lise Dietrich** gave a presentation on efforts to deal with the **yellow iris** problem. This is an all-volunteer effort that has been quite successful.....they were able to monitor/inventory yellow iris during the blooming season (2nd-4th weeks of June). Lise reported 3 confirmed sites for yellow iris: the north end of Lake Penn/near the bog; the NE shore of Lake Penn and the Dam. She reviewed the steps associated with attacking yellow iris: Inventory; Control; Killing them and ongoing monitoring. There are two ways the yellow iris propagates (thru flowers/seeds and thru rhizomes...so it is important not to dig them up if they are in the water!) The suggested method of attacking these plants involves: cutting them to the water line; if feasible, covering with light barrier to starve rhizomes; if not covered, repeating the cutting as plants grow; and always collecting the flowers and seed pods separately and destroying them. More information on this effort, including the names of all volunteer team members, is posted on the LAON site.

Sal updated the group on the North Pond Watershed Project. Our worse site at Beaver Way was fixed last fall. This year several additional sites are expected to be addressed. This is an ongoing effort which needs to be addressed continually!

Sal introduced Jeff Stern from the Androscoggin River Watershed Council who has been contracted with by the Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation Office to assist LAON with its 319 Grant for North Pond. Jeff is a watershed specialist whose company is Fiddlehead Environmental Consulting. He explained that the North Pond Watershed Protection does not involve any regulatory or enforcement.....it is all about cooperation and volunteerism.

Work was done on Beaver Way in November 2017 with Jeff, Sal and Tom Webster collaborating. This area had represented the biggest source of sedimentation into North Pond. Soil erosion from land is the lead contributor of phosphorus into lakes. It fertilizes algae blooms resulting in algae growth. PREVENTION is key!

Jeff explained that the 319 Grant is a cost sharing arrangement (cost sharing can include in kind contributions of time, equipment, people). He talked about the two aspects of the 319 Grant for homeowners: Technical assistance (from Jeff or Michelle Windsor at the Soil and Water Conservation office) and residential BMP/Best Management Practice/Installations. They work with home owners for up to \$350 in grant funding (based on matching contributions) to make home property improvements to mitigate watershed/erosion issues. Jeff is also available to assist home owners in securing necessary permits for work to be done. Both the technical assistance and residential BMP are offered on a first come first served basis. Jeff can be reached at 207/595-0317.

**Susan Jacoby** updated the group on **Outreach** activities. The goal of all outreach is to engage more people in helping save our lakes....so talk with your neighbors about LAON and the work it does. Some of the upcoming events Susan mentioned are: the Norway Music and Arts Festival/ Saturday, July 14 from 11 am to 7 pm; Threading the Needle sponsored by The Western Foothills Land Trust on August 18 with all proceeds to benefit LAON; and the second annual Enid Dulla Length of the Lake swim on August 19. There are lots of ways to get involved. Check out these events and other upcoming activities on the LAON site! LAON shirts and tote bags are available....see our site for order information.

Sal briefly described plans for a Lake Penn Watershed Project. We first need to organize and plan, then conduct a survey in 2019....volunteers needed!!!! Watch our site for developments on this important project!

Sal presented the slate of officers for LAON for 2018-2019: Sal/President; Jean Silverman/Vice President; Pat Daniels/Secretary; and Tom Webster/Treasurer. This slate was unanimously accepted! The group attending today's meeting thought that the first Saturday of July was a good date to meet..... Watch the LAON site for the date of next year's annual meeting.

The meeting concluded at approximately 1:30 (a bit longer than planned, but believed to be worthwhile given the number of and importance of agenda items presented.)

Thanks to everyone who attended. We look forward to finding ways to get more connected!!!

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Daniels  
LAON Board Secretary