

THE LAKESIDER

Newsletter of the Greater Pushaw Lake Association, serving Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond

WORKING TO PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT

by Bill Phillips

Those of us with property here at the lake have a very special obligation to each other. The lake itself is arguably the principal source of our property's value. And whether we bought it to "flip" it or to enjoy it ourselves, our property will only retain its value if we take care of the lake. So think of the lake as a capital investment.

Like a common backyard, the lake is our collective responsibility, its overall condition largely dependent upon how well each of us maintains our parts of the land adjacent to it. Pollution by one of us is pollution for all of us. And pollution spells declining returns on our respective investments.

The Greater Pushaw Lake Association is your first line of defense against the deterioration of the lake and

a consequent depreciation in the value of your property. Made up of volunteers from among your neighbors, the GPLA serves the entire Pushaw community in working to foster the best practices for protecting the lake.

To this end, GPLA volunteers have sought and received expert advice and training in monitoring water quality, inspecting boats for invasive species, and correcting sources of lake pollution in the surrounding watershed. They have secured grants to fund improvement projects. And they have joined in "hands-on" activities of clean-up, repair and preventive measures.

This summer the GPLA will conduct a door-to-door, in-person, community survey to gather information from Pushaw residents for purposes of enhancing its

efforts. This will be a brief, informal and neighborly conversation intended to inform you of the challenges we face and to enlist your cooperation in meeting those challenges.

You can help us help you by extending a friendly and courteous welcome when one of us appears at your door. We promise to respect your privacy, to be sensitive to any personal challenges you may be facing, and to accommodate your wishes. In short, this survey activity is meant to be a nonintrusive, neighbor-to-neighbor, mutual exchange of concerns and assistance.

Together we can build a spirit of community to enrich the lives of all of us. Please join us in this effort.



2008 GPLA ANNUAL MEETING IS JUNE 28

by Sandi Duchesne

The GPLA Annual Meeting will be held at Pushaw Lake Campground, Forest Avenue, Orono on Saturday, June 28 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Following the business meeting at 1:30, we will host an Ice Cream Social with fun family activities with an environmental theme. This is a great chance to get to know some of your lakeside neighbors and kick off your summer fun season. Come by land or come by

water, as there is a nice large dock to tie off your boats at the campground. Thanks to former owner Gerry Michaud and the new owners, Brian and Carol Damford, for hosting this year's event.

We have a busy agenda this year, including a proposed change to the membership dues structure and updates on GPLA activities that will be going on throughout

the summer.

Please join us for a fun and productive welcome to summer on Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond at the GPLA Annual Meeting on June 28.



June 2008

Volume 1, Issue 1

Inside this issue:

Water Quality Monitoring Update	2
Salute to our Pushaw Partners	2
Little Pushaw has Big Plans!	2
Tear-Out Membership Form	3
2008 Loon Count	3
Schedule of Meetings, 2008-09	3
GPLA History Update	3
Watershed Survey Update	4

DID YOU KNOW?

- Soil erosion from camp roads and private lots is the greatest pollution threat to Maine lakes – even worse than lawn chemicals!
- Pushaw Lake is only 29 feet deep at its deepest point.
- The Greater Pushaw direct watershed covers 75 acres and five municipalities: Bangor, Old Town, Orono, Glenburn, and Hudson.

Water Quality Testing: Results from 2007 by Jeff Hayward

Water testing continued on Pushaw Lake this last summer with volunteers from the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (MVLMP). Testing is performed bi-weekly from late Spring to early Fall. The 2007 water testing season began on a positive note, as new volunteers were trained to assist the existing volunteer force. Louis and Dorli Cloutier received their training and split the water testing duties over the course of the summer with David Cloutier and Jeff Hayward. Lou and Dorli's ability to do the late summer and early fall water testing was especially appreciated as testing was able to extend later into the fall than usual! This summer, the MVLMP volunteers hope to expand their testing with the addition of trained monitors for Little Pushaw Pond, as well as more backup monitors for Pushaw.

Clarity measurements (the distance that an object can be viewed under the water from the surface of the lake) were slightly improved in 2007 over 2006, reflecting the cooler weather and lack of heavy rainfall.

Deep Hole Clarity Summary			
Year	Minimum (Worst) Result	Maximum (Highest) Result	Average Result
2007	2.5 meters	4.6 meters	3.9 meters
1995-2006	2.4 meters	5.3 meters	3.6 meters

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) testing for 2007 shows healthy levels of oxygen in the water, with little stratification from the surface to the bottom of the lake, which indicates that the lake is mixing well and not becoming "layered" with levels of low oxygen.

Deep Hole Dissolved Oxygen Summary			
Year	Minimum (Worst) Result	Maximum (Highest) Result	Average Result
2007	4.9 mg/l	9.7 mg/l	8.3 mg/l
1995-2006	2.7 mg/l	10.9 mg/l	7.8 mg/l

Phosphorus levels continue to be the primary cause of concern on Pushaw Lake. 2007's numbers continue to show phosphorus values in the mid to upper teens, which are high enough to support an algae bloom. It is believed that Pushaw's colored water may actually be helping the lake avoid an algae bloom, because the sun cannot penetrate to the bottom levels where phosphorus is highest in the sediment, and as a result, the algae growth is not triggered.

Deep Hole Phosphorus Summary			
Year	Minimum (Best) Result	Maximum (Worst) Result	Average Result
2007	12 ppb	16 ppb	14.2 ppb
1995-2006	7 ppb	34 ppb	15 ppb

For more information on water quality and the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, please visit <http://www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org/>.

If you would like to help out with water quality monitoring on Pushaw Lake or Little Pushaw Pond, please contact Jeff Hayward at 827-6536 or jlhayward@roadrunner.com.



GPLA Salutes Our Pushaw Protection Partners!

GPLA is fortunate to have many friends and partners in its efforts to protect the watershed of Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond. This is a big THANK you to all of our GPLA members, donors, and active volunteers — far too many to list individually, but YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE — and to the many organizations that help us protect the lake, including the following:

Little Pushaw News by Phyllis Heineman

Over the summer of 2007, because of concern over the extremely low level of Little Pushaw Pond, many of the residents discussed forming a lake association. The good news is that we are already included in the Greater Pushaw Lake Association, something most of us didn't know before last year.

Several of us attended the GPLA Annual Meeting in November 2007 and discovered the many committees and activities needed to keep both Big and Little Pushaw healthy. For instance, on Big Pushaw they conduct boat inspections at various landings, looking for

- University of Maine Cooperative Extension
- Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Town of Glenburn, Town of Hudson, Town of Orono, and City of Old Town
- New England Grassroots Environmental Fund
- Bangor Bass Club
- Maine Council of Lakes Associations
- Orono Land Trust
- Pushaw Lake Campground

(Continued on page 3)

25th Annual Maine Audubon Loon Count by Rich Dressler

We are looking for anyone who can observe part of the lake from shore and especially those with boats, canoes or kayaks to cover a larger portion of the lake on the water. It will take about 45 minutes to one hour of your time in total.



You will need a good set of binoculars and will be recording observed adults and chicks on a map of the lake. We will provide instructions, map, and field sheets to record observations as soon as Maine Audubon sends them out.

Please contact Rich or Marian Dressler 827-5407 to get details. Please respond no later than June 30. Thanks!



(LITTLE PUSHAW, Continued from page 2)

invasive plant life which could, over time, choke off the lake. They also monitor the phosphorus levels in the lake to keep algae blooms out, and much, much more.

Even though four towns are involved (Old Town, Glenburn, Hudson and Orono) and have been for about 12-15 years, there just aren't enough helping hands to do all that is required. Right now, only about ten or twelve people are active volunteers on Big Pushaw. Bbecause of their other commitments (such as day jobs!) and because those of us here on Little Pushaw weren't aware, no one in GPLA that we know of has been taking care of our beautiful lake. Now we have a small core group of volunteers to work on Little Pushaw, but we could definitely use more help.

If you're concerned about conditions on Little Pushaw, and interested in helping to keep it healthy so we can enjoy swimming, boating, etc. and assure we will retain our valuable lakefront property, please come to the GPLA Annual Meeting on June 28 and see how you can lend a hand.



Ty Sullivan leads a crew of GPLA volunteers at the annual Bog Cleanup adjacent to Mud Pond, Old Town

Schedule of Meetings

GPLA meets at 6:30 on the 2nd Thursday of each month, year-round, to work on projects that promote a healthy ecosystem on Pushaw and Little Pushaw. Meetings rotate around the lake, all are welcome, and attendees get free pizza! Call Sandi Duchesne at 827-3782 to join our e-mail list for meeting dates, locations, and agendas.

GPLA History Update

Winifred (Winnie) Collins took back the GPLA History Project following the death of Inez Boyd in 2006. She has mostly completed the manuscript, with only the by-name and by-subject indexing left to be done. There is still room for a few more stories or anecdotes from longtime lakeside residents to flesh out the "Memories" section of the book. If you can help Winnie out by providing your own interesting memories of Pushaw and Little Pushaw, interviewing an "old-timer," or helping her with the indexing work this summer, it will speed publication of this long-awaited tome! Call Winnie at 941-9607 to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time.



JOIN OR RENEW YOUR GPLA MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Name(s)

Address (Please list primary and summer addresses, if applicable)

Phone

E-Mail Address

Mail this form with \$15.00 annual dues to: Ty Sullivan, GPLA Treasurer
785 Woodland Avenue
Old Town, Maine 04468

THE LAKESIDER

Greater Pushaw Lake Association
c/o Sandi Duchesne, President
478 Beechwood Avenue
Old Town, Maine 04468

Phone: 207-827-3782
E-mail: smduchesne@wildblue.net

*“Never doubt that a small
committed group of
citizens can change the
world. Indeed it is the
only thing that ever has.”*

Margaret Mead

Watershed Survey Update by Chris Brewer, PCSWCD

The Penobscot County Soil & Water Conservation District (PCSWCD) is in the final year of Phase 1 of the Pushaw Lake Non-Point Source Watershed Project. The purpose of this project is to protect and improve the water quality of Pushaw Lake. PCSWCD has been working for the last two years installing Conservation Best Management Practices, designed to reduce the amount of polluted water flowing into the lake.

The Gould's Landing Phase 1 site contains two demonstrations. First, a Lakeside Landscape was installed. This landscape protects water quality by slowing, dispersing and filtering stormwater before it reaches the lake, while adding beauty to the landscape with flowering plants. The second demonstration is an extensive rain garden situated to absorb stormwater from the parking lot, driveway and road. It acts like a vegetated catch basin. Rain gardens effectively control stormwater in the same

manner as natural landscapes, by allowing polluted runoff to slowly filter through the soil instead of flowing directly into the lake.

In preparation for Phase 2 of the project, GPLA assisted PCSWCD in conducting a watershed survey of Woodland Ave and Lakeside Lane in Old Town. We will use the data collected to apply for additional grant funds from Maine Department of



Mary Phillips documents soil runoff from a lakeside property in Old Town for the Watershed Survey Update, April 2008

Environmental Protection (MDEP). If PCSWCD receives this grant, the funds will be used to correct identified sources of erosion within the survey area that can be improved with cost-share assistance. Because the watershed is so large, PCSWCD has decided to target each town's watershed portion in turn, including the upper watershed and Little Pushaw Pond. GPLA will be helping volunteers to survey additional portions of the watershed during the summer.

The results of the Old Town watershed survey show that camp roads are Pushaw's biggest threat to water quality. However, much of the shoreline is unstable and very few properties have adequate buffers. Watch this newsletter for more information on the grant program and for PCSWCD's "Backyard Conservation Spotlight" which will highlight simple projects you can complete on your own to protect the water quality of Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond.