

THE LAKESIDER

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

JUST DESSERTS!

Save some room after lunch to share some sweet treats at the GPLA Annual Meeting!

Saturday, July 18, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Herbert Sargent Community Center on Route 16, just north of Stillwater Avenue in Old Town

Come join our celebration as we look back at last year's successes and to the future's opportunities! We want to thank all the volunteers that helped make this past year a great success and to hear from everyone around the lakes. Whether or not you're a member, take this opportunity to share what the lakes mean to you and why they're important.

Join us for:

- Dessert Buffet (sugar-free desserts available!)
- Coffee and Cider
- Conversation - tell us what you'd like to see GPLA doing

Learn about upcoming training opportunities:

- Camp Road Maintenance
- Road Association formation and capacity building
- Invasive Plant Patrol

Join us and find out what you can do to help Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond!

"Lakeside Building Codes and Enforcement Appear to Vary from Town to Town around the Lake." **FACT or FICTION?**

by Kathy Lukas

In the December 2008 Lakesider, I said we might follow up on some of the beliefs and questions raised by GPLA 2008 Survey participants. This is the first of those **Fact or Fiction** columns.

To gain a layperson's understanding of this question, I spoke with Mike Polyot, the current Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) in Hudson, and

separately with Mike Ireland, founder and owner of Ireland Environmental Services and a former CEO in Lincoln.

It is a **FACT** that the Planning Boards and CEOs in the four municipalities act independently of each other and are themselves subject to the laws and



Photo credit:
Bob Duchesne

(Continued on page 2)

June 2009

Volume 2, Issue 1

Inside this issue:

Annual Loon Survey on July 18	2
Anglers: FREE Tackle Exchange!	2
Join the Invasive Plant Patrol	2
DEP Phase II Grant	3
It's Dues Time at GPLA!	3
Saluting our Pushaw Partners	4

DID YOU KNOW?

- Soil erosion from gravel 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.

26TH ANNUAL MAINE AUDUBON LOON COUNT ON PUSHAW LAKE



Saturday July 18, 2009 7:00-7:30 am

In July 2008, volunteers counted loons on both Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond. Both bodies of water were covered in their entirety by the volunteers, many representing GPLA. The official total loon count reported by Maine Audubon on Pushaw Lake was **30 adults and 1 chick**. Volunteers counted **10 adults and 1 chick** on Little Pushaw. Note that weather conditions and other factors may limit visibility so it is not always possible to count every loon on the lake. The count occurs over a single half-hour to minimize the possibility of double-counting loons moving about the lake.

Volunteers will again count loons in July 2009 from shore and from boats, canoes or kayaks to cover all of Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond. We are hoping all the volunteers from 2009 will be available to do the survey again this year. If you participated in 2008 you should receive a mailing from Maine Audubon in late June or July with instructions. Rich and Marian Dressler will be coordinating the survey again this year, so they will be contacting you by early July to determine your availability, make sure you have the necessary forms, and coordinate the portion of the lake to survey.

If you did not participate in the survey last year and want get involved **please contact Rich or Marian Dressler 827-5407 to get details**. Please respond no later than June 30. The survey takes about 45 minutes to one hour of your time in total. You will need a good set of binoculars and you will be recording observed adults and chicks on a map of the lake. Thanks!



Fact or Fiction continued...

(Continued from page 1)

political will of the people in their towns. So each town does have different codes, rules, policies, and experiences that play a role in how the town responds to questions about building around the lake. These boards and CEOs cannot, however, abridge the Maine shoreland zoning law or create building codes that are less protective than the state's minimum guidelines, which in turn cannot be set below federal minimum guidelines. So we can all be assured that building codes in all four towns around the lake meet or exceed state and federal standards.

Some survey participants questioned the legality of construction going on very close to the shoreline in their neighborhood. Under all codes in effect today, building within 250 feet of the lake may be permitted to improve upon pre-existing structures, and some expansion may be allowed under guidelines that differ slightly between the towns. All of the codes become increasingly restrictive as the distance to the lake decreases, and they require that the lake be protected from runoff and harm throughout construction and in the final landscaping.

To date, there has been no public sentiment expressed for uniformity of building codes around the lake. The Planning Boards and CEOs in Orono, Old Town, Glenburn, and Hudson do not confer with each other on these matters. If you have specific questions about your building codes, you should contact your own municipal CEO or Planning Board. If you feel your questions may be too complex or time-consuming for you to handle on your own, you can contact Mike Ireland at mike@ireland-environmental.com, or another professional who can advise or represent you on matters related to permits for building around the lake.

Join the Invasive Plant Patrol! by Sandi Duchesne

GPLA volunteers help to ensure that invasive plant species will never get the chance to take over our lakes. Join the Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP) and learn how to identify alien water plants, then adopt your own special stretch of shoreline and patrol it on your own schedule. These plants CAN be eradicated if they are detected early! Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) is sponsoring a FREE IPP training workshop at the University of Maine on Tuesday, July 21. Want more info? Contact me at 827-3782 or smduchesne@roadrunner.com.

Anglers: Get the Lead Out! (and get new, FREE non-toxic gear for your tackle box!)

The Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District is offering a free tackle exchange to help anglers swap out their old lead sinkers, jigs, and lures for new non-toxic materials, such as tin, brass, bismuth, and ceramics. Maine law now prohibits retail sales of lead items, but previously purchased lead tackle can be used indefinitely — and the new non-toxic tackle is more expensive, so many frugal Mainer have still not switched over to the new materials. The problem starts when a line breaks, and that leaden lure or weight sinks to the bottom of the lake. A single lead sinker will poison and eventually kill an adult loon! Lead can also bioaccumulate in fish tissues and move up the food chain, poisoning larger fish, mammals, birds, and of course humans if they eat their catch. Children are especially sensitive to lead poisoning, and they can suffer permanent damage from it.

If it's time for your old tackle box to get a non-toxic makeover, call Chris Brewer at the District, 990-3676, or bring your gear to his office at 1423 Broadway in Bangor. It's first-come first-served, so don't delay!

Old Town Is Focus of Pushaw NPS Grant, Phase II by Bessie Wright, PCSWCD

The Pushaw Lake Non-Point Source (NPS) Watershed Project, Phase II is currently underway. Like Phase I, the purpose of Phase II is to improve Pushaw Lake's water quality by reducing the amount of phosphorus entering the lake from the surrounding watershed. Phase II will focus on repairing the most severe erosion sites along the shoreline and lakeside access roads in Old Town. Most notably, the Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District (the District) will be working in partnership with the City of Old Town and its Public Works crews to ditch, crown and install culverts on Woodland Avenue and Lakeside Lane.

Throughout Phase II, the District will be working closely with GPLA to encourage more widespread participation in volunteer projects to protect and restore the Greater Pushaw watershed. Additionally, The District is working with GPLA to conduct the second of five watershed survey updates to the original 2001 survey. This year's survey updates covered the Pushaw Lake shoreline in Hudson. Next year GPLA volunteers will assist in surveying the entire upper watershed of Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond, all the way north and west to Charleston Ridge!



"Lupine Moose"

Photo credit: Bob Duchesne

WHAT GPLA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY SUITS YOUR LIFE ON THE LAKE?

Patron: \$15-50 per year dues, no minimum volunteer commitment

Underwriter: \$51-100 per year dues, no minimum volunteer commitment

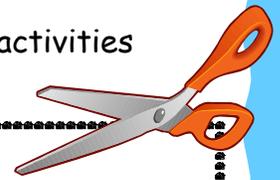
Sustainer: Over \$100 per year dues, no minimum volunteer commitment

Helping Hand: \$0-35 per year dues, 1-15 hours per year for GPLA activities

Activist: \$0-35 per year dues, 16-36 hours per year for GPLA activities

Watershed Warrior: \$0-35 per year dues, >36 hours per year for GPLA activities

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR GPLA MEMBERSHIP TODAY!



Name

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

Phone and E-Mail Address

Mail this form with your dues to: Ty Sullivan, GPLA Treasurer
PO Box 302
Stillwater, Maine 04489

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@roadrunner.com

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

Margaret Mead

COMING SOON: NEW GPLA WEBSITE!

The GPLA Steering Committee set several ambitious goals for 2009. A major goal for this year is to start up a GPLA website to provide more widespread education, public outreach, and easy-to-find information about watershed volunteer activities and opportunities. One of our members, Joanne Van Voorhis, is a seasonal resident in Glenburn who works as a website design consultant. Joanne has graciously volunteered her professional skills to help GPLA bring this goal into reality. Thank you, Joanne! We hope to be able to announce the debut of the new website by the time the next newsletter comes out in December.

GPLA Lost & Found Dept.

Bill Phillips recovered a tow-behind raft from someone's motorboat following the last big storm on Pushaw Lake, and he lost a section of his dock in the same gale. Wouldn't it be great to have a central clearinghouse for all the lost items that float up on our shores now and then? Well, Bill has volunteered to serve that function for GPLA. Whether you have lost or found an item, call Bill at 827-0454 and he will try to return it to the rightful owner.

GPLA Salutes Our Pushaw Protection Partners!

GPLA is fortunate to have a core group of active and strongly committed volunteers. This issue of **The Lakesider** is dedicated to **Barbara Hildreth**, one of GPLA's founders, who recently stepped down from her duties as GPLA Secretary after many years of continuous service. Thank you, Barb! We are also grateful to all of our GPLA members, donors, and active volunteers for their ongoing support, and to the many organizations that help us protect the watershed surrounding Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond: **Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, New England Grassroots Environmental Fund, Maine Congress of Lakes Associations, Bangor Bass Club, Orono Land Trust, Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program**, plus our four Municipal Partners: **Town of Orono, Town of Hudson, Town of Glenburn, and City of Old Town.**