

Sabbathday Lake News

November 2009

Letter from the President

Dave Becker

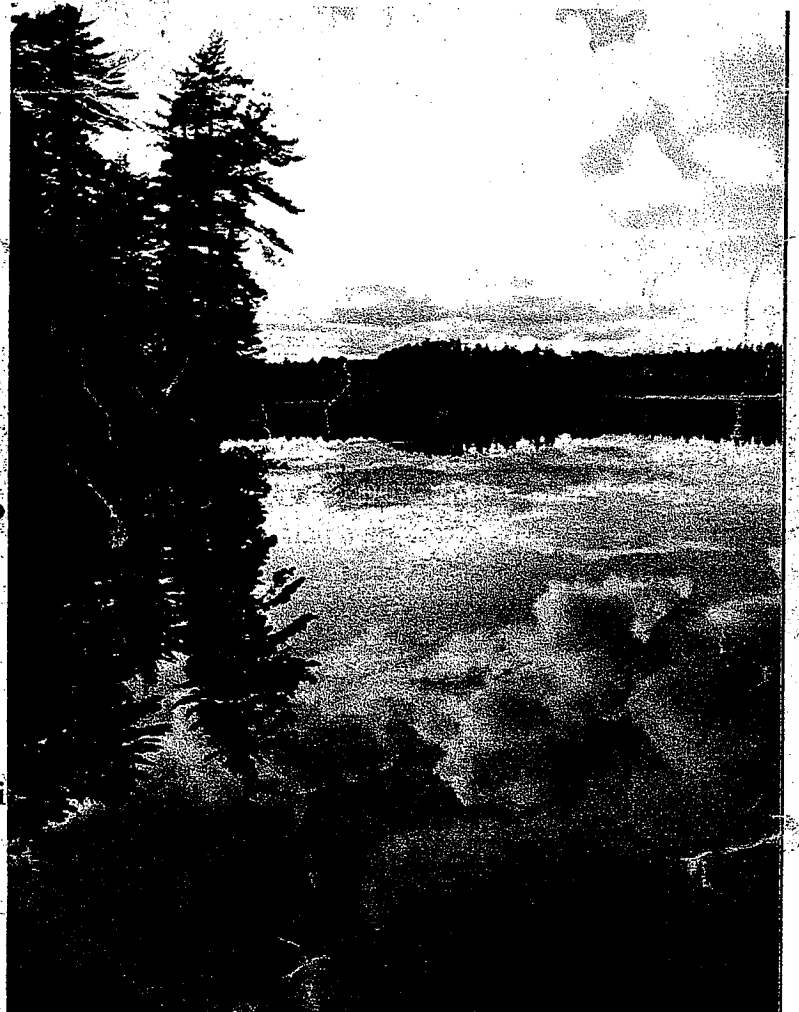
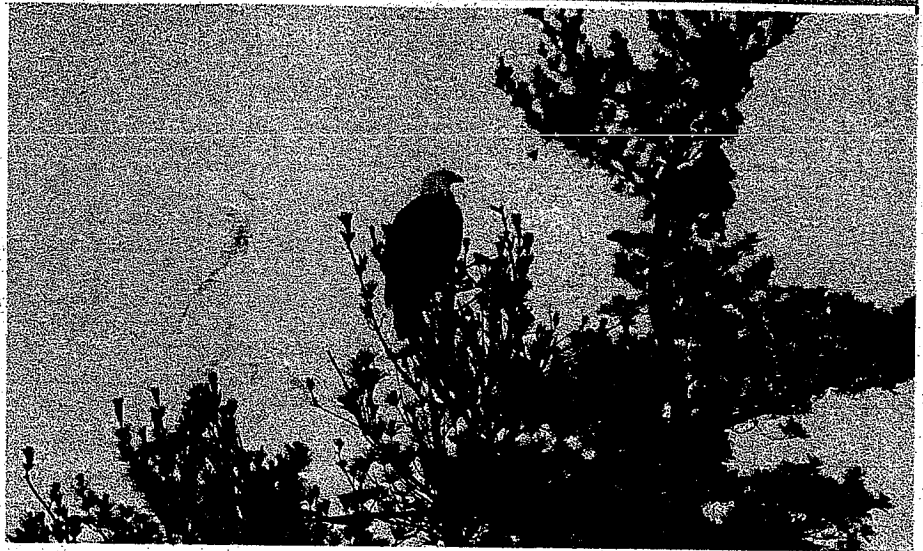
Dear SDLA members,

I have to say the summer season for 2009 seemed to fly by. I guess I shouldn't be surprised given all the rain we had in July this year. I don't ever recall the water level being so high and staying that way for most of the summer.

I don't think I could raise my dock up any higher. Of course I saw the lake in snapshots so I am sure we had at least one sunny day.

Again, as we have done every year, we sponsored the annual water testing with some funding coming from the town. I expect to get the result anytime and will post them on the SDLA web-site. Early results suggest that the visibility measured using a secchi disk in the lake has gone down but that can be mostly attributed to all the extra rain we had this year. We also hosted the watershed survey that took place last year and we have been leading an outreach program to land owners whose properties may need improvement to prevent run off entering the lake.

This was another great year on and around the water even if most of it happened in August. Sharon Scannell along with the help of several board members organized many great events both social and educational. At the August Association meeting we had a guest speaker from the Chewonki Foundation speak about riparian habitats. That same day we had our 2nd annual SDLA cookout with live music. We had a great turn out and I was happy to see all the support for the SDLA. Thanks



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Eagle photo by Sharon Scannell, Bottom photo by Ellie Fellers

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going out to Chris Ricardi and his fellow musicians. Of course, we will look forward to seeing them next August. Many thanks go out to Becky Delaney for letting us use Outlet Beach as a location for the cookout. We also had several paddle events both on the lake and on the Royal River and a few biking tours. I heard many stories of packs of kayakers moving up the lake at dusk. Given the shortened season due to the extra precipitation I think we still managed to spread the word and fit in a lot of meaningful events. I personally was proud of all the support I witnessed and am looking forward to 2010.

On a more serious note invasive plant species infestation has become the top threat to the health of the lake. When you look around Sabbathday Lake there aren't many ponds and lakes left untouched by this threat. In 2009 we worked in partnership with the Outlet Beach to run boat inspections. While the actual number of boats entering the lake went down this year, this is still one of the best ways to raise awareness and prevent these plants from stowing away on a boat or trailer. This is an extremely important program. Boats being the primary way a lake gets infected this left unchecked could be a disaster. Funding for this program comes partly from grants that SDLA applied for from the state.

Awareness is the key to the prevention and survival of Sabbathday Lake. We are still planning to host a volunteer plant patrol and while our 2009 efforts to get a training event on the lake were rained out I look at it as an opportunity to increase the number of volunteers for the 2010 training. Mike Cloutier has worked hard to bring the training to Sabbathday Lake and start up a grass root effort via a patrol. While we have been delayed a season, it hasn't diminished the need for prevention and early detection. Boat inspections are an important front line of defense and a key step in the right direction. The next phase of our strategy will be having a trained group of SDLA members who are on the lookout for unwanted plants. Early detection being the key to keeping an unchecked outbreak from ruining the pristine waters of Sabbathday Lake.

One last topic I would like to remind everyone of is the way in which the SDLA is funded. We are primarily a volunteer organization. But some of the

programs that we run do have cost associated with them. Our primary form of funding is from annual membership dues. This allows us to continue to do things like water testing and soon training on how to detect invasive plant species. I can appreciate that this past year has given people good reason to as they say "tighten the belt". I certainly have done it myself. But this is an important cause and membership not only provides funding but awareness. At the many events we hosted this year I had a chance to talk to many new and familiar faces. I heard many great stories about families who have lived on the lake for generations and if every member takes a moment to invite a family member or friend or neighbor to join the SDLA we could in a very short time double our membership. Remember membership is only \$15 per year.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you all in summer 2010.

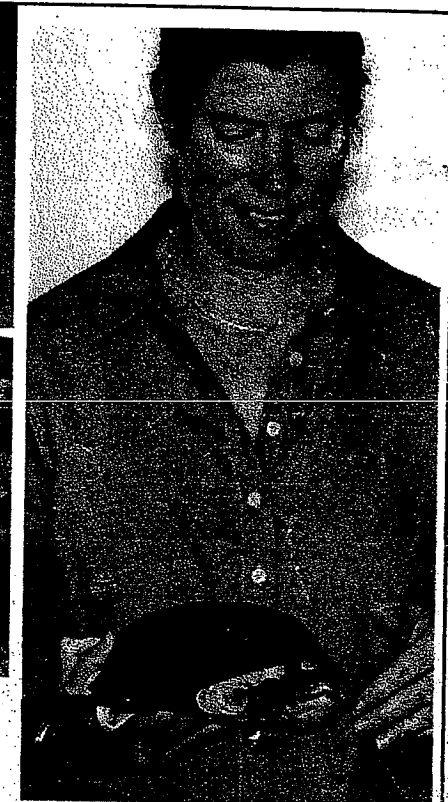
Sincerely, David Becker SDLA President

Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP)

(aka Weed Watchers) Mike Cloutier

As you all know by now our initial IPP training was canceled as a result of a fast moving and very wet storm in August. Due to the tight training schedule of the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program we were unable to get a back up date for the training. So I am working with Roberta Hill, program director at the VLMP, to lock in another date in August 2010 with a back up date as well. As many of you have read by now, Hydrilla (the worst kind of invasive plant) was found in Damariscotta Lake in August by a newly trained Invasive Plant Patroller. Because of this trained volunteer they may have caught it in time to contain it somewhat. You can read all the details on their website, vlmp@mainevlmp.org.

The SDLA appreciates all those who have signed up for the training and we hope even more will consider it as well. I will get the dates out to you as soon as I get them via email and on our website as well. Winter Well! Mike Cloutier



August Meeting with Anne Hunt, Program Director, from the Chewonki Foundation, presenting "Water and Wildlife – The Mystery of Riparian Habitats" shown here displaying a turtle photo by Sharon Scannell

SHORELAND ZONING UPDATE

ELLIE FELLERS

New Gloucester has been out of compliance with Maine's Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act since July 1.

This past summer the New Gloucester Planning Board held a series of public meetings that began with a hearing in early July notifying landowners who owned property being considered for a change in zoning to bring the town's zoning ordinance to state guideline standards.

The July public hearing gave landowners within the lake's 250 feet from the high water mark and those landowners whose property includes rivers and streams the rights to submit testimony to the board who were working to bring the town's zoning ordinance into compliance.

The shoreland areas include all lands within 250 feet of the high water line of any pond over 120 acres, any river that drains at least 25 square miles, and all tidal waters and saltwater marshes. The zone

includes 250 feet of a freshwater wetland over 10 acres, except forested wetlands and 75 feet from a stream.

Under the new ordinance being drafted by the planning board during a series of public workshops this fall, the lake area would become a Limited Residential Shoreland District and no longer be the current Lake District.

At the time of this article, the board is still grappling with a final version of the ordinance that when completed will require a public hearing and approval by the board of selectmen for a special town meeting for voter approval.

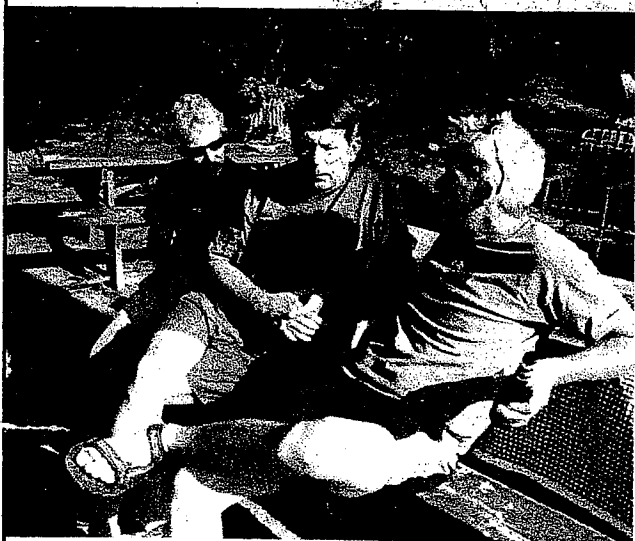
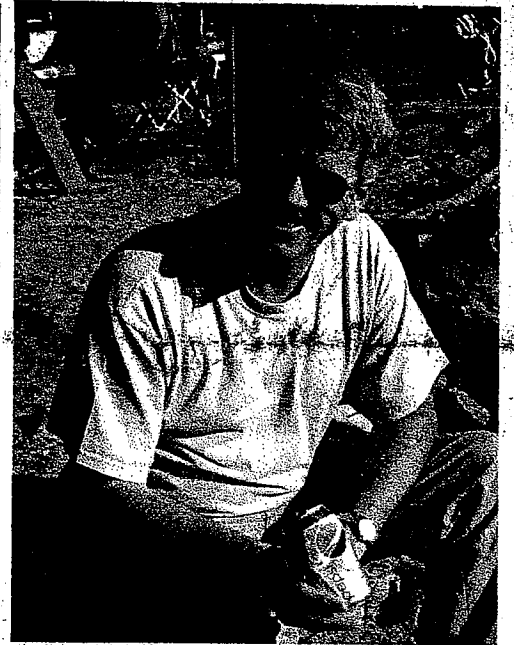
The town is choosing to integrate the shoreland zoning requirements into a town-wide Zoning Ordinance instead of having a separate shoreland ordinance.

The zoning maps have been amended and areas
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2009

Annual Cookout

Pictured clockwise from left. Sharon Scannell and Cheryl Fortier, Stu and Charlene Belden; Tom Driscoll, Julie Ricardi and Sheila Giancola, Jo-ann and David Driscoll and Kevin Scannell and Chris Ricardi and the Mountain Avenue Band



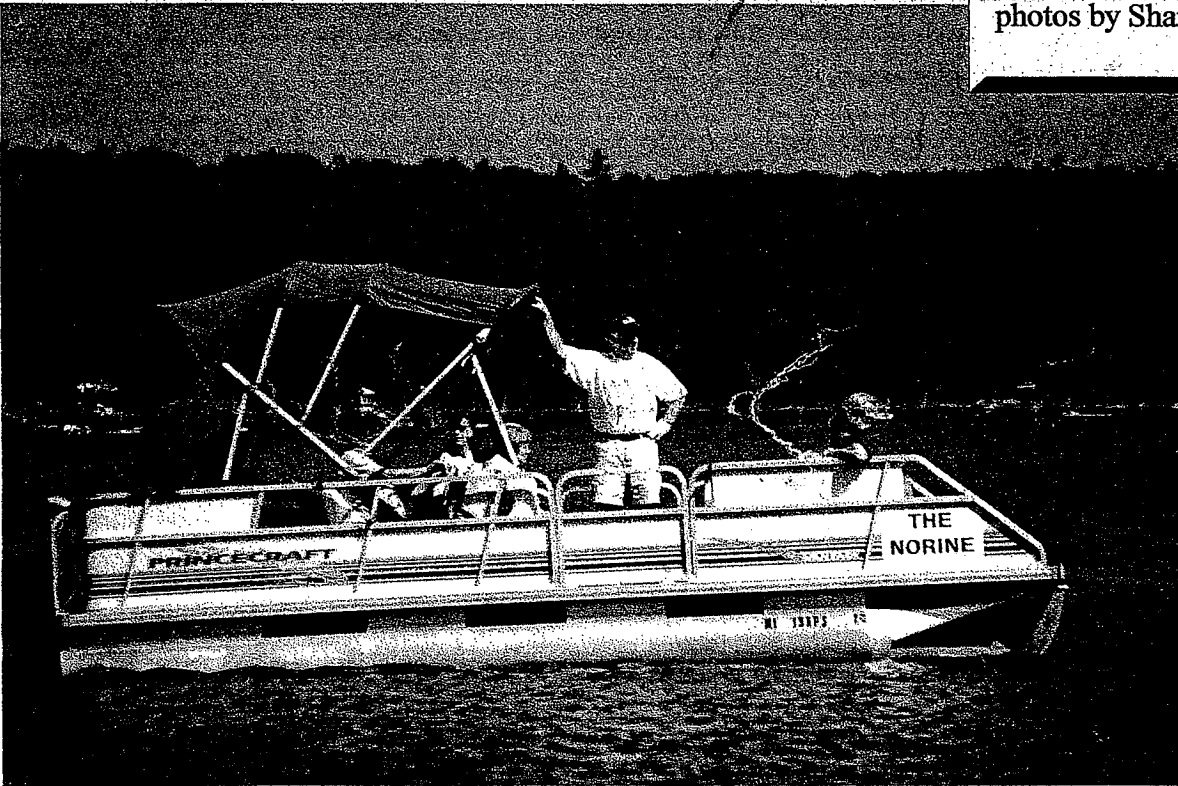
photos by Ellie Fellers



2009 Breakfast Cruise

Dave Becker and Leonard Daly pictured at left and another of the 3 pontoon boats below.

photos by Sharon Scannell



Below, back at the cookout, Paul Gillis and Tom Shupp at the grill provided by the Shakers



Pictured above at the cookout, from left, Mike Cloutier, Nate, George and Matt Johnson
photos by Ellie Fellers



COMING HOME

Kathy Young Cruz

I had been away so long - there are so many things that I had forgotten. The woods turn yellow in autumn, while golden pine needles filter gently through branches to carpet the ground. The earth becomes softer as the breeze sharpens and lays an early sting on the cheek. Deciduous forest plants give up their green and contribute their structures to the deepening down of the earthen floor. Roots protected, they wait in warm safety for the spectacular silver of winter.

Early morning sun rolls steamy pillows of fog off the water towards the west; the fog resists and seems to whisper, "Prepare! Prepare! Prepare!" Little yellow and red leaf boats land and swirl on the lake water near the shore, seeming to beckon tiny imaginary creatures to go for one last twirly ride. No fish jumps, no frog croaks, no loon calls ... all are steadily preparing for the magnificent freeze.

I haven't been here *now* for over a decade - and I am entranced. I want to step on the carpet and I want that step to last forever. I want to savor that step, and the next - and the next.

I take my dog and we go down to the woods trail. We begin our hike and I see - he *knows what I know*. We share the understanding that we are at last *home*, and we walk on, knowing just where we are going and how we will get there. We communicate through little nuances - a glance, a turn or two of the head, and minor movements that no one else would see. He tracks ahead but knows exactly where I am. He checks to see if I know what he knows - that these woods are *ours* - and that we are in rhythm with each other and with this place. We are *home*.

In the morning the breeze brings a scent of wood smoke and I remember everything. Soon I will stand a shovel up inside the front door ... and I will steam cinnamon and cloves and watch snowflakes with the heart of a child.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Sharon Scannell

Our 2009 Social Activities were a great success thanks to our volunteers and all our SDLA members who were able to join us. We saw some new and some familiar faces at our events and we hope to see more of you next year!

We started out the season with a Royal River Paddle in June led by David and Jo-Ann Driscoll. The paddle was so much fun, it led to several more impromptu trips in June and July. With all the rain, it made for easy access into the river and we were able to get over most blow-downs without taking the boats out of the water.

Anne Maurice led a couple of morning pedaling events in July. There were also a couple of morning paddles led by Paula Gauthier. Both activities were a great way to get some exercise and enjoy some great company.

In early August, we had a leisurely Breakfast Cruise on three full pontoon boats. After many weeks of rain, this sunny cruise was a great way to enjoy the sunshine. We were joined by Wanda Brissette and Jean Libby from the New Gloucester planning board. This was a good opportunity for them to see properties from the lake and discuss environmental concerns related to lake properties. Many thanks to our volunteer boat captains!

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Zoning cont. from p. 3

previously included in the Lake and Resource Protection District that are not required to be part of the LRSD or Resource Protection District have been absorbed into abutting zoning districts, in most cases to the Rural Residential District.

Maine's Shoreland Zoning Law was adopted in 1990 and undergone changes, the most recent in 2006.

The proposed amendment can be found on the town's web site: www.newgloucester.org.

In order to approve the amendment, selectmen must call a special town meeting to ask voters to adopt the changes. No date has been set.

The board has agreed to include more than the 250-foot setback at Sabbathday Lake, the minimal requirement by state law, including land that abuts the Snow Hill Road.

Under the new ordinance, once it is approved, the town's code enforcement officer grants approvals in a newly drafted section of the ordinance called Limited Residential Shoreland District. The planning board in some cases may be part of the approval procedure.

In some cases, some changes impact what people can and cannot do with their property. For example,

property within 25 feet of the high water mark are no longer able to change their property, but changes must be behind the 100-foot high water mark.

Single family and two family dwellings in the LRSD will no longer require site plan review, but instead are allowed subject to a permit from the town's Code Enforcement Officer.

Numerous additions and amendments have been added to the definition section of the ordinance.

The draft ordinance includes a new section 10 which is called the Shoreland Zoning dealing with non conforming structures, non conforming uses and performance standards, principal and accessory structures, piers, docks, wharves, bridges, parking, roads, driveways, signs and septic waste disposal and agriculture and animal husbandry and timber harvesting plus the clearing or removal of vegetation for activities other than timber harvesting.

Maine's Department of Environmental Protection considers Sabbathday Lake as moderately unstable. Over the past decade, two watershed surveys of the 34.6 acre lake with a 5.4 mile watershed resulted in grants from state and federal agencies to prevent pollutants carried by stormwater from entering the lake through best management practices.

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In August, over 40 SDLA members gathered on Outlet Beach for our Annual Cookout. Chris Ricardi gathered a group of talented musicians from the Mountain Avenue Band to entertain the crowd. Good food, good company, great weather and fabulous entertainment were the perfect formula for a successful event. We send many thanks to Becky Delaney for letting us gather at this beautiful spot. We also thank Brother Arnold for the use of the big grill.

Under the light of the Full Harvest Moon on September 7, a crowd of approximately 20 paddlers made their way across the lake, starting at Outlet Beach. Most of the paddlers had never been out on the lake at night. All agreed it was an awesome event and can't wait to do it again next year. As a reminder, if you decide to do this on your own at night, please be sure to have proper lighting on your boat.

On September 15, Brother Arnold Hadd led an enlightening tour of Shaker Village. This tour provided valuable insights into the Maine Shaker heritage and culture of the past as well as the present. We are grateful to Brother Arnold for taking time out of his busy schedule to lead this informative tour.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at next season's events and are always looking for new ideas for activities. If you would like to get involved please contact Sharon at Sabbathday@comcast.net.

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Sabbathday Lake News

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Sabbathday Lake News

The Newsletter of the
Sabbathday Lake Association

Please send your lake-related news contributions to the Editor
by E-mail to Cheryl Fortier, cfortier@maine.rr.com

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