



CHEBACCO LAKE & WATERSHED ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*

A Quarterly Publication of the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

www.chebaccolake.org

February 2014

Notes from Around the Lake

After a couple of winters with very little safe ice, it's nice to see so many people out on the lake enjoying winter sports. We hope that the very cold weather that we have had so far will help knock down some of the cabomba weeds for the coming summer season.

This year the CLWA will continue to work with the Town of Essex to clear Alewife Brook. The job requires a lot more than what can be done with a few volunteers, hand saws and clippers. The water needs to flow freely for the health of the lake and the migration of the alewives.

As spring approaches, we begin to think about projects to do in our yards. If you are installing or replacing a driveway or walkway please consider using stone, porous pavement or other available alternatives that will allow water to soak into the ground instead of running off quickly into the lake. Planting buffer zones, rain gardens, installing a vegetated swale or a dry stream bed are also ways that everyone in the watershed, not just lakeside residents, can help keep soil and containments out of the lake and wetlands. At the recent MA Congress of Lakes and Ponds workshop one of the speakers research had found that a quarter acre house lot can produce 200,000 gallons of water runoff in a year. Along with carrying soil, etc. to the lake this runoff also brings a lot of phosphorous (weed fertilizer) into the lake. Anything that you can do to keep runoff on your property will help everyone in the long run. There are many web sites with information on these topics.

2013 Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting, held October 17, 2013 at the American Legion Hall in Hamilton, was well attended.

Board members were reelected and two new Hamilton representatives have volunteered - Sheila Laing and Tasha Molnar. The annual treasurers report was handed out (a copy is included in this newsletter).

Jack Hauck, assisted by Hamilton Historical Society president Butch Crosbie, gave a very informative presentation on the history of the hotels which used to sit near the lake off of Chebacco Road. Members of the audience added more facts and asked questions. Jack is currently writing a book about the history of the entire Chebacco Lake area - hotels, ice houses, first airplane flight, Centennial Grove and more.

Find Us on Facebook



Join our Facebook page:

Chebacco Lake and Watershed Association

It's a great way to keep current with what's happening around the lake.

Pictures of activities around the lake, wildlife, etc. are welcome.

E-mail Addresses

Do We Have Your E-Mail Address?

Please send your e-mail address to our secretary, Chris Grammas, at northshoreconst@comcast.net if you haven't done so already.

This way we can let everyone know about things that happen between newsletters or get out an urgent message.

We don't give out the addresses to anyone.

Thank you



CLWA Officers & Board of Directors for 2014

President

Sue McLaughlin (978) 468-7715

Vice President

Robyn Kanter

Past President

Dave Lash

Secretary

Christine Grammas

Treasurer

Betty Ozolins

Hamilton Representatives

Chuck Bencal

Nancy Doyle

Sheila Laing

Tasha Molnar

Essex Representatives

Judy Brain

Kirk Fackre

Kerry Kaplon

David Lenzi

Keith Symmes

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Designing With Nature

Landscaping For a Healthy Lake

Winter Cold and Your Plants

The winter of 2013/14 has certainly been a cold one! The lake has frozen and it has been great to see many people out enjoying winter time fun, such as ice fishing and cross country skiing. The lake didn't freeze well the past two winters so, for all of the winter enthusiast around the lake, myself included, the cold and snow has been welcomed.

However, while people have ways to keep warm and protected from the cold and the wind, our plants do not and I am afraid this winter will be very tough on them. Not only have we had a lot of cold, but we have had a lot of cold wind, which is more damaging to plants. Winter winds can cause desiccation injury, causing above ground parts of the plants to dry out, as water cannot be replaced from frozen soil.

The plants that will be most affected by these winds will be broadleaf evergreens, such as holly, boxwood and rhododendrons. These plants lose water through their leaves. Symptoms of excessive water loss may be browning on the leaf margins or in the case of rhododendrons, leaf rolling, which has been very evident the past few weeks.

Needle evergreens can also sustain wind damage. It shows up as yellowing or browning of needles during the winter or early spring. The lack of abundant snow cover during our recent cold spells also means that many woody varieties of plants, such as buddleia (butterfly bush) or Caryopteris (blue mist spirea) will most likely die back to the ground.

If desiccation does occur, DO NOT prune off the dead and brown leaves. Most leaves will fall off by themselves or be pushed off by new growth in the spring. Those leaves that don't come off should be hand stripped. Premature pruning can increase the damage to the plant by exposing vulnerable inner leaves, so resist the urge to prune the plant too early. The same holds true for woody perennials and shrubs. Wait for them to leaf out in order to see just how bad the die back is and then prune them. Sometimes you have to wait until mid to late spring to see leaf growth.

Most plants can recover from wind and cold damage with the right spring care. They may not look pretty for awhile but, they will eventually leaf out again. The only plants that probably won't make it after this winter will be woody herbs, such as thyme and sage, as they haven't had enough snow cover during the extreme cold spells.

- Robyn Kanter

**Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association
Annual Meeting
October 17, 2013
Treasurer's Report**

The Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association has one Operating Account. The Water Level Relief Fund Account was closed on May 24, 2013, transferring \$118.55 balance to the Operating Account.

<u>Operating Account</u> – October 18, 2012 Balance		\$ 9,633.81
Income: (Since 10/18/12)	Dues:	\$2,625.00
	Interest:	2.83
	Water Level Acct	<u>118.55</u>
		\$ <u>2,746.38</u>
		\$12,380.19
Expenses:	Postage for Mailings:	\$276.00
	Printing of Mailings:	\$416.39
	Post Box:	\$100.00
	Boat Ramp Portable Toilet:	\$579.70
	2012 Annual Meeting:	\$178.54
	River, Water Level Maintenance:	\$500.00
	Water Testing:	\$240.00
	Website, Misc:	\$ 99.00
	Boat Parade:	\$ 93.81
	COLAP Membership	\$ 40.00
	Total Expenses:	\$ (2,523.44)
Operating Account October 17, 2013 Balance:		<u>\$ 9,856.75</u>

Some Salt Alternatives Are Better for the Environment

Throwing just any chemical listed as a deicer onto your sidewalks can wind up polluting local bodies of water. Consider, instead, using new ecofriendly salt alternatives, like calcium chloride. Some products even use vegetables, such as beets, as their primary ingredient. Many not only are safer for the environment but also can actually keep your walkways ice-free longer because they work better at lower temperatures, unlike their salt-based counterparts.

Mark your calendars!
Sunday, March 9, 2014 at 2 AM
clocks are turned forward 1 hour



Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association
P.O. Box 2344
South Hamilton, MA 01982

Ice Safety

Skating, cross country skiing, ice fishing or just walking on our frozen lake are wonderful opportunities to get fresh air and exercise. Being on the ice requires a great deal of caution though. Ice should be at least 4 to 6 inches thick for skating, skiing, fishing or walking. So, before venturing out on the ice to skate, ski, fish or walk, be sure it is at least about 6” thick. Ice formed over currents or natural springs is usually thin and weak.



As the days become more sun-lit and the temperatures go up (even slightly) the ice becomes weak and not safe. Typically, clear blue ice is the strongest, white “milky” ice is half as strong, and grey ice indicates the unsafe presence of water. Rain, mild spells and warm winds can impact ice conditions on a daily basis, deteriorating ice quality, making it untrustworthy and unsafe extremely quickly.

As the ice starts to melt, pets must be prevented from wandering on the ice. Pets depend on us humans to protect them from thinning ice.

A skate or walk around our frozen lake can be a great adventure, giving welcome relief from cabin fever – but caution must always be used.