



# CHEBACCO LAKE & WATERSHED ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*

A Quarterly Publication of the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

www.chebaccolake.org

October 2014

## Notes from Around the Lake

Another summer is winding down and the geese are starting to leave (most of them anyway, there is one in Echo Cove with a damaged wing). The boat ramp got a lot of use this year as word has been spreading about the lake. We really appreciate the work done by the State workers from Bradley Palmer State Park who drive over to the ramp once or twice a week to remove all of the trash from the barrel.

As during previous years, CLWA provided the port-a-potty at the boat ramp, paying for the spring set-up and routine cleaning/maintenance.

The cabomba weed has been heavy again this year. It has now also infested Beck Pond. We had hoped that this wouldn't be the case due to the very cold winter and thick ice. The fact that there has been very little water flow out of the lake during the last two summers probably hasn't helped. The beavers, sedimentation and heavy vegetation in the brook have really slowed the water leaving the lake. Marine Fisheries will be opening the dam soon to release the alewife that hatched in the lake this year and hopefully release enough water so we won't have a problem if there is a lot of rain. The cabomba is fed by the nutrients in the water as well as in the sediment. There was a small algae bloom on one side of Gregory Island this summer. This is also caused by excess nutrients. Everyone around the lake and watershed can help by not using fertilizer, maintain their septic system, slow the runoff from storm water, etc. Raking loose pieces of cabomba out of the lake keeps them from taking root. You can add it to your compost bin.

The CLWA board has been working hard on the Alewife brook issues but we also need help from the towns of Essex, Hamilton and the State to get things done. Come to the annual meeting on October 16 to hear about the Rivers Partnership and give us your input on ways that we can all work together to protect Chebacco Lake. Hope to see you there!

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## Purple Loosestrife

### It's Not Too Late to Remove the Purple Loosestrife

This invasive plant may look pretty in the summer but it spreads quickly and crowds out native plants. It has now produced seeds on a long square stem. Please break them off and put them in a trash bag.

## Mark Your Calendars

### Fall Shoreline Clean-up

**Saturday, October 25**  
**9:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

We will have the annual fall clean-up in association with the Chebacco Woods Land Management Committee on Saturday, October 25, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Meet at the beach parking lot on Chebacco Rd. Please bring gloves. Trash bags will be provided. This area gets a lot of use in the summer. Students can get a couple of hours for their community service work. In case of rain, call 978-468-7715 and we can reschedule.

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## Join CLWA!

Meet your neighbors! Learn how each of us can help to protect and preserve Chebacco Lake and its surrounding watershed.

All memberships expire in January of each year. If your mailing label doesn't have a date on it, you're not a current member. If your mailing label is marked 1/15, your membership expires January, 2015.

Membership dues received after September 1 are considered paid through the following year. So, if you mail in your membership today, your membership will be paid through January, 2016.

## 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

### *Newsletter Layout*

Kimie Kester

### *Web Site E-mail Address*

chebaccoassociation@gmail.com

## Fishing Derby

The weather was perfect for our first CLWA Family Fishing Derby which was held on Saturday, June 7. The Derby was organized with the help of Dan Wildes from Big Daddy's Bait'n Tackle of Danvers. Refreshments were provided for the participants at several docks around the lake. The Derby started at 8 am, and the weigh-in was at 1 PM at the boat ramp.

The grand prize winner was T.J. Mscisz from Danvers, who caught a 3.6 pound bass. Jack Gebhardt weighed in with a pickerel; Brendon Belyea with a crappie and Adam Green with a white perch. Jack, Brendon and Adam are all lakeside residents. If there is enough interest, we will run the fishing derby again next year or possibly in the winter if we have good ice.

## Boat Parade

Because of the inclement weather, we had to reschedule our July 4th Boat Parade to July 6 which, regretfully, reduced the number of entries. Everyone who participated did a great job. Start planning for next July 4th!

Winners were: tie for Most Patriotic - The Breen family (World Cup) and the Kaplon Family (lots of red, white and blue), Most Original - the Rice Family and friends (Mario Brothers) complete with authentic sound and Best Costume - the Bishop Family (characters from Frozen). Coolers, kick boards and gift certificates to Cherry Farm Ice Cream were awarded.

## Water Testing

The CLWA continued with our water testing program again this year. Bio-Marine Labs in Gloucester does the tests for e-coli to ensure that the water is safe for swimming. This was done several times during the summer near the boat ramp, in Echo Cove and in the small cove on the other side of Gregory Island. The results were all between 1 and 15, which were excellent. The highest allowed for swimming is 235. We sampled the water twice in one area where a lot of ducks congregate to get a comparison. These results were 2-3 times the acceptable limit. This shows that the feeding of waterfowl to attract them to one area is not a good idea. Please don't feed the ducks and geese!

The Town of Essex does the same water testing at Centennial Grove and Camp Menorah beaches but no other parts of the lake. Hamilton does not do any water testing.

If the water test results come back too high any time during the season, we will notify people by e-mail or our Facebook page. If we don't have your e-mail address yet, please send it to our secretary, Chris, at northshoreconst@comcast.net.

# Designing With Nature

## Landscaping For a Healthy Lake

### The Shoreline Buffer Zone

If you have ever walked along the ponds in Chebacco Woods, you may have noticed the grouping of plant material that separates the trails from the ponds. This shoreline vegetation along the bank is an example of a natural BUFFER ZONE. This area is important in that in addition to creating a naturally scenic shoreline, the plants in the buffer zone are helping to curb runoff pollution and soil erosion. They are also providing a wildlife habitat. In short, this buffer zone is extremely important in maintaining good water quality.

When all the homes around the lake were summer cottages, we still had the benefit of this natural buffer zone. However, as homes were remodeled, septic systems installed, lawns, and driveways developed many of these vegetated areas were lost. Nevertheless, it is very easy to recreate these areas, either in a natural state or in a more designed setting - “controlled wildness”, as I call it. If you look closely at the plants that make up a natural buffer zone, they include many plants that landscape professionals use all the time in their work. Usually, because these plants have already adapted to the soil conditions they are easy to grow and require very little maintenance (which is why homeowners love them).

In this article, I will talk about the plants you can use along the edge of the shoreline, as far back as 10 – 15 feet. If you want the natural look, just select a few from the list below, randomly plant them and let nature take its course. For a more designed look, layout a few beds and plant in masses of one variety. You may want to frame an opening vista or pathway to the lake. BE CREATIVE.

**Amelanchier canadensis** (Shadbush) – A sturdy tree-like shrub that has clouds of white flowers in early spring followed by dark red fruits. The branching has a nice form with gray bark so it can stand alone as a specimen plant. A great choice for the water’s edge as it tolerates “wet feet”. 10 – 15’

**Clethra anifolia** (Summersweet or Sweet Pepper Bush) – This is a great shrub with showy spikes of fragrant white flowers in late July followed by clusters of small black seeds. It spreads by underground stems and makes a dense mass of roots, giving it value as a soil binder. It can stand in water, so do not be afraid to plant this plant near water as well. 6-8’

**Ilex verticillata** (Black Alder) - This deciduous holly is the plant with the showy bright red berries in late fall that you see growing in the streams and ponds in Chebacco Woods. The shrub grows in regular soil as well and with a little pruning, it makes a great wide spreading shrub 6-8’ high.

**Lindera bezoin** (Spicebush) – This native shrub was a staple of colonial gardens because of the pleasant aromatic qualities of its flowers, but you do not hear of it too often these days. It is a great shrub for any naturalistic setting and like all the plants on this list it can take considerable moisture should the lake rise. 6-8’

**Myrica pensylvanica** (Bayberry) - This sturdy shrub grows like Clethra in that its roots that are clump forming. Therefore, it makes for a great soil binder. You may be familiar with the berries but the foliage is very attractive well – a glossy green color with nice fall shades. In an exposed setting it will only get about 3’ tall.

These are just a few shrubs to get you started. I have used botanical names because when it comes to native shrubs there is often more than one name. Spicebush for example refers to a least five different plants that I know. The local nurseries are usually very willing to help you select the right plants if you tell them the setting and soil conditions. By the water’s edge you want plants that can tolerate a lot of moisture.

A few tips: When planting in masses, use an odd number (5/7/9) and plant in a zigzag pattern. In addition, if you want someone to give you a little more time at the nursery try to go during the week.

**Mark your calendars!**  
Sunday, November 2, 2014 at  
2:00:00 AM clocks are turned  
backward 1 hour



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

## **CLWA Annual Meeting**

**Thursday**  
**October 16, 7:00 PM**  
**American Legion Hall**  
**School Street, Hamilton**



There will be a short business meeting and election of officers. Wayne Castonguay, director of the Ipswich River Watershed Association, will be the guest speaker this year. He will be providing an introduction to a recently formed group - the Parker, Ipswich and Essex Rivers Partnership and their relationship with Chebacco Lake. Refreshments will be served.

Please come to the meeting. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet your lake-side neighbors and gather information so you can help protect Chebacco Lake and its watershed.

We have an opening for another board member and we always appreciate volunteers. The board meets one evening each month. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact any board member listed in this newsletter.