

**Lake Rescue Association Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**August 2, 2008**  
**Plymouth State Park 11 AM**

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 AM by Frank Wingate, president. Present board members were introduced: Glenn Brown, Angi Benson Ciuffo, Kevin Davis, Chris Salerno, Judy Zilvitis. Dave Hearne was absent.

A summary of the minutes of the 2007 meeting was read and approved. No new members were present to be introduced.

**President's Report.** This is the 75<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the association which was formed in 1933 to protect and preserve the lake. Today the mission is very similar, but expanded to “maintain, preserve, restore and improve the bodies of water within the Lake District, including but not limited to Lake Rescue Round Pond, Lake Pauline and portions of the Black River and watershed lying within the Lake District.” For four and a half years the lake is milfoil-free. Today the principal threat is sediment building up in the lake. Potential overcrowding of the waters has led to forming a zoning committee. In order to promote common interests through the membership the Association has updated the original membership booklet (2006) copies of which are available at the end of the meeting, and sponsored the successful July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic. Frank offered his thanks to all board members and volunteers.

**Ludlow Town Manager,** Frank Heald reporting. Frank acknowledged how he missed Mary Davis from the audience as a faithful member of the association and positive influence throughout the community. He congratulated Frank Wingate on the success of the milfoil control program, and Liz Spaulding for her successful Better Back Roads grants, on which work will begin shortly. The town is grateful for the funding from BBR as it helps keep town expenses/taxes low. He mentioned that Rep. Dennis Devereux also helps town, but is outnumbered in the legislature on several key issues. Heald reports that the Lake Pauline Dam is being transferred from village to town jurisdiction. Originally that dam powered Ludlow street lights. Dam needs some repair but considering that the dam is only about 2 feet above the bottom level so there is no real threat of flooding. Frank reiterates that his door is always open and town services are available to all. Questions: 1) Confirmed use of calcium chloride to keep dust down on roads. This material is spread by machine which Ludlow shares with Weathersfield. 2) re ditches along roads: said crews try to “ditch with the grader and turned “out” periodically into vegetation. 3) Commented that paving the dirt roads would cut down sand used, but would cause increased speeds on East Lake Rd, where that is already a concern. Speed bumps or dips were suggested by audience members. Frank pointed out that most of the lake roads were designed only for summer use. Paving East Lake from Plymouth line to Ludlow has been mentioned in Select board meetings in that as a class 2 road it qualifies for some state funding. 4) Need for rock in ditches on Ellison's Lake Rd: FH replied some rock lined ditches had been created on East Lake Rd, along with a catch basin which will need to be cleaned out next year. 5) Many enquiries re desire to draw down the lake level in order to clean shoreline: FH says town would need a state permit for real draw down, which he considered more than removal of flashboards at Red Bridge. FW mentioned that as Okemo is no longer drawing down the river for their holding pond perhaps there was a compromise position on degree of drawdown that town itself could allow, as was given to Okemo. 6) 31 acres for sale at end of Round Pond: FH assured all that Ludlow zoning would allow only one house to be built there as the required road access for more houses was not available.

Glenn Brown reviewed flashboard history by commenting that flashboards were used to raise the lake level for summer activities, returning to normal levels when boards are removed. In mid

October the lake level was intentionally dropped about 3 feet for about 2 weeks to allow for cleaning. This practice was followed for 30 years. Being unable to clean shorelines is developing a lake filled with big, black snails, more nutrients, more decay and more muck.

7) Frank Heald was thanked for straightening out the contradictory speed limit signs which are now consistently 25mph around the east side of the lake. Comments indicated that contractors regularly do not observe these limits, with the noted exception of Tony Ciufu.

8) Bob Bellemare asked Alice Nitka to research the precise legislation that prevents drawdown of the lake level. FH believes that is in state environmental regulations.

**Comments from State Legislators Dennis Devereux, Representative and Alice Nitka, Senator.** Devereux commented it was difficult to come to this meeting with no good news about high taxes and education for kids, but as member of the minority party he regrets that no action on these issues from the majority party. Proposals to make it possible for local Vermonters to afford living and educating their children here allowed for discussion, or venting, but no action was taken. A new speaker will take office in January. Devereux is writing to Ways and Means and all “sending” (taxes) towns to seek multiparty support for immediate action in 2009. Three quarters of towns in VT are “receiving” towns, and therefore there is no incentive to change how VT funds education.

**Alice Nitka: 1)** Commended the local school boards for the great effort expended in keeping budgets down, under the Excess Spending Clause. This is the highest sending district in the state. Property tax is needed for funding education in VT and income sensitivity for primary homes shifts the major burden onto high income residents, business owners and second home owners. The Common Level of Appraisal is based on the previous year’s sales. Kevin Davis said home values in this area are relatively stable, despite generally dismal housing market. He believes the only option for Ludlow is to promote the ski area and lake in order to boost the local economy. 2) Glenn Brown asked why Montpelier does not address the poor business climate throughout the state: loss of jobs, few employment opportunities for young college graduates which means they leave the state. He also commented that other states (e.g. SC) have clear property tax guidelines for resident and nonresident owners, and that others states have caps on tax increases. Confusion and lack of clarity characterize the VT situation. Devereux commented VT was too small to adopt such regulations. 3) Question about consolidation of schools: VT encourages but does not require consolidation. Strongly encourages merging administrations, and some state aid available to do so, as has been done in Wilmington and Whitingham. Angi Ciufu, Ludlow elementary school board member, commented that many meetings were held locally on this issue, but Mt Holley is unwilling to consolidate. Devereux, Mt Holley resident remarked that as Mt Holley is in Rutland County it is far less affected by Act 60-68 and that Ludlow (120 students) and Mt Holley (100 students) were not markedly different in size. He noted that Plymouth with 20 students sends \$3 million to Montpelier which is 3 times the amount contributed by Mt. Holley.

4) Natalie Fisher: What strategies are in effect to attract young people and businesses? Nitka replied there were programs but gave no specifics. 5) Charlie Robinson commented that Lake Bomoseen had tried to get permission to lower lake level and went to court when state denied permit. Bomoseen lost in court decision.

**Water Quality:** Chris Salerno reported that LRA’s principal task was to educate the public about the activities that harm the lake especially those causing sediment to flow into the lake, actions that decrease damage, raise awareness of the various issues, and plan and implement various projects to document changes and remedy some problems. To this end the State has again (6<sup>th</sup> year) provided grant funding of \$2500 for projects, another grant to support water testing at high water events, various helpful consultants, and a comprehensive website rich with information and resources. LRA is now also represented at state Lakes and Watershed associations meetings learning about how others deal with similar problems. Current projects include: 1) Annual GPS

surveying of the areas in the lake heavily sedimented and weed covered to document increase in area affected. 2) Better Back Road grants to address road runoff problems, planned by Liz Spaulding in cooperation with the Town of Ludlow 3) Lay Monitoring: water sampling done weekly throughout the season. Dave Hearne, who did this expertly for three years, has been succeeded by Jim and Janine Norman. 4) Water sampling at the mouths of 6 streams during high water level events. OMS students have been responsible for this task this summer. This is to identify those streams that deposit sediment loads in the lake. Water sampling tests phosphorous levels, among other items, as phosphorous is carried by sediment and nourishes plant growth 5) Interview milfoil diver Chris Sheldon re condition of lake bottom. He reports significant sediment increases in Round Pond and near Discovery Island, both resulting from the Black River currents carrying and depositing sediment. 6) Work with state lakes association and consultants and watershed (Ottaquechee and Black River watershed) association and consultants. 7) collaboration with Okemo Mt School science program to educate youth on lake protection issues.

**Milfoil:** Frank Wingate gave a brief history: 1998 milfoil was discovered in the lake. 1999 abdiver was hired to remove plants, paid by state grant and member contributions. 1999-2003 100 plus plants found and removed. 2004- 2008 no plants found since. This year the grant is for \$4435 which will also help fund a Saturday morning monitor at the Fishing Access. The diver makes two complete circuits of both Pauline and Rescue each summer.

**Membership:** Judy Zilvitis reports 143 members, 40% of which give extra contributions for lake protection. New residents are joining. We all miss Mary Davis deeply and give condolences to Kevin Davis and family. Mary was one of LRA's greatest supporters. A moment of silence was held in her honor. Several LRA members are able to provide matching grants, now that we are officially a 501-c-3 organization. Letters of appreciation will be sent to all donors of \$100 and above. Dues are tax deductible. The new directory is available today for those present and others will be mailed. Judy thanked Toni McPherson at Davis Office for production, and Liz Spaulding who did a fine job of proof reading.

**July 4<sup>th</sup> Picnic:** Angi Benson Ciufu reported the 7<sup>th</sup> annual event, instituted by Kevin Davis in 2001, was very successful. 200+ attended and income covered expenses with a slight excess. \$800 insurance policy for the day. This year 8-10 yr old children paid for lunch. Thank you to many helpers. New volunteers are needed for next year. Kevin's goal was and is to promote lake residents having fun together, to build a cohesive, caring community.

**Water Safety:** one of LRA purposes is to promote water safety and encourage adherence to VT safety regulations. LRA publicizes the rules and the state police enforce them. State police do patrol the lake irregularly. Call the state police if anyone observes violations. 2 no wake buoys, replacing 2 of the 4 stolen last year, were replaced at \$450. Charlie Robinson asked if rules were posted at Fishing Access and was answered affirmatively.

**Website:** Dave Hearne will continue to manage the website. Check there for July 4<sup>th</sup> photos and boating regulations. *Lake Breezes* will be posted there when next published.

**501-c-3 status achieved.** Thanks to Marty Wolf for his legal advice and Anne Wingate for her research required by the process.

#### **New Business:**

1) Election of officers: Kevin Davis, head of the nominating committee, presented three candidates: Angi Ciufu for a full three year term, Judy Zilvitis for a second term and Jim McCall, a new term to replace outgoing Dave Hearne. These three were elected by acclamation. Dave

Hearne was commended for extraordinary fine service to the board. His knowledge, expertise, and dedication will be missed.

Liz Spaulding was also cited for excellent service to the LRA community for her work with Better Back Roads and the membership booklet, which was initially her idea.

2) Zoning and Development committee: Jim Mc Call will head up this effort to work with the town on zoning issues. Liz Spaulding and Marty Wolf have agreed to assist in helping to clarify state and local jurisdictions.

**Loons on the lake:** A pair and a single loon seem to be regular residents this summer. John Esau has agreed to be the Lake Rescue loon person, reporting to the state loon person, Eric Hansen. Frank Wingate asked that we purchase a floating loon nesting platform for \$500 to encourage and protect nesting loons from boat wake wash, high water that might flood a lakeside nesting site, and from the two snapping turtles found in Rescue and Round Pond. The vote to purchase the nesting platform was affirmative.

The meeting was adjourned at 1PM. Thanks were expressed to Frank Wingate.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Salerno, secretary