

CRYSTAL LAKE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2012

Message from the President

Usually I would start this newsletter by describing what a long, snowy winter we've suffered through and that there are finally signs of life that spring is near. Not only has spring arrived, the flowers, trees and shrubs are in bloom! Unfortunately, for Crystal Lake, there is a downside to this amazing weather. Winter (usually) brings with it a thick coating of ice that acts as a buffer to keep the invasive plants dormant by limiting sunlight which is needed for growth. Consequently, this can translate into a bumper crop of milfoil which has been under control for the past several years.

The ad-hoc Milfoil Committee has done an amazing job in the battle to rid Crystal Lake of milfoil but the fight is an expensive one that may never end. If you let up, the plants will continue to spread. The Crystal Lake Association has put its money where its mouth is by contributing \$10,000 towards the cause. The generosity of Association members, as well as fundraising, has permitted this. We are currently holding an ongoing painless fundraiser that not only saves you money, helps the environment but raises funds for the milfoil removal efforts!

At our last meeting in September, Linda French from Viridian Energy gave a presentation explaining how switching your energy supplier to Viridian from CL&P can benefit not only you, but Crystal Lake. I personally have switched and am enjoying the savings! It is every consumer's right to select their energy provider while CL&P continues to maintain the lines and equipment. Please bring your electric bill to our next meeting on April 25th and see for yourself how to save some money!

Memorial Day Celebration

When: Monday May 28, 2012
Time: 9:00 a.m. sharp
Where: on Sandy Beach Rd. Rte 140

The parade starts at the town beach and ends at the cemetery on route 140, just past West Shore Rd. We need members, friends and family members to march with us representing the Crystal Lake Association. We are also in great need of donations of store bought or baked goods for the reception immediately following the parade. Donations can be muffins, cakes, cookies, doughnuts, fruit or any breakfast finger food of your choice. Donations can be dropped off at the Memorial Park at the corner of West Shore Rd. and Rte 140 between 8:30 am and 9:00 am. If you are unable to bring your donation(s) that morning, please call Cheryl at (860) 875-1001 to make other arrangements.

Thanks for your support!!!

2011 Milfoil Update

The annual maintenance was performed in the main body of the lake to remove a small amount of milfoil as well as two large beds of Large Leaf Pondweed that were first discovered in 2005 (near the Town Beach and just outside of the Northeast Cove). Approximately 0.8 acre of milfoil was removed from the Dam Area and Aborn Cove. Approximately 1.4 acres remain in the coves.

In 2012, we intend to continue the maintenance work of removing milfoil in the Dam Area, Aborn Cove and Northeast Cove.

The 2011 Aquatic Plant Mapping Report was completed by Northeast Aquatic Research. The open water areas of the lake are in good condition but the remaining milfoil in the coves will be difficult and time consuming to remove. Continued milfoil removal and monitoring of plants in the lake is recommended. See the CLA website for additional information.

(For anyone interested in reading about Lake George, NY and their battle with milfoil as well as Zebra Mussels and Asian Clams, please check out their website at: www.lgpc.state.ny.us).

David Arzt, Chairman, Ad-Hoc Milfoil Committee

2010/11 Water Quality Summary

Over the last two years, Crystal Lake has remained in excellent condition, with no change in dissolved oxygen levels. It is recommended that the CLA increase the frequency of water sampling to between a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 6 or 7 per season. A season starts in April (ice out) and goes through October, and if possible, even into November.

Water clarity depth in 2010 was on average 6 meters, with the best reading to date of 6.5 meters in May 2010. We have been monitoring water quality since 1998. Values in 2011 were lower with an average of 4.3 meters. Clarity has been better in the past 5 years than it was prior to 2007.

Phosphorous concentrations at the bottom of the lake may be declining, even though they have been higher during the past 8 years. Unfortunately, dissolved oxygen data collected during 2010 and 2011 was invalid due to a malfunction or miscalibration of the Dissolved Oxygen Meter. Our meter, which is more than 10 years old, requires frequent

sampling-probe maintenance with a complicated calibration procedure. In addition, each reading of temperature and dissolved oxygen must be hand logged to a data sheet.

There is a newer optical technology for probes which is easily calibrated and has the ability to capture and store data in the meter for later download to a spreadsheet. We are recommending that the CLA consider purchasing a new device for these important measurements.

Bill Merson, Water Sample Team

CLA Website Update

Since last year, we have only made minor changes to our new website, www.crystallakect.com. Interestingly, our old website, www.mycrystallakect.org, is still operating. We cannot make any changes to it, but we still receive emails from people visiting the site. Due to time constraints, we have not had a new website committee meeting since our last CLA meeting. The Committee members are: Bill Merson, Mark Mickiewicz, Monique Burns, Al Breton, Bill Chase and Jean Burns. We should take a few minutes at our April 2012 meeting to select a date and time to meet and discuss our new site. We would appreciate all members, if you have time, to look at the site and suggest improvements or ideas.

Bill Merson, Chairman, Website Committee

Mark Your Calendars....

April 25th – CLA Meeting, 7 pm, church

May 28th – Memorial Day Parade, 9 am

July 18th – CLA Meeting, 7 pm, church

Sept. 19th – CLA Meeting, 7 pm, church

Viridian Energy Fundraiser

We are excited to announce our partnership with Viridian Energy, a socially responsible energy company. When you choose Viridian as your electric supplier, you can save money and do something good for the environment while still receiving the same delivery, service and billing from the utility.

Viridian Energy provides greener electricity at an affordable price, allowing our customers and independent Associates to make a difference in the environment and their personal lives simply by switching energy providers.

And now, through our fundraising partnership with Viridian, you can support the Crystal Lake Association every time you pay your electric bill. We receive income each month when someone we refer is a customer with Viridian Energy. You can help our organization without ever needing to take out your checkbook!

Our organization will receive an initial bonus of \$5,000 when we enroll 500 customers! Plus we'll earn up to \$2 every month for every customer we refer to Viridian Energy. Go green for less money and feel great about making a difference. Sign up today!

The benefits of being a Viridian customer:

- No enrollment fees
- Same reliable service
- Receive only one bill
- 20% renewable energy
- Affordable rates

PLEASE BRING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL TO THE NEXT MEETING & WE WILL EDUCATE YOU ON THE BENEFITS OF CHOOSING VIRIDIAN AS YOUR ENERGY SUPPLIER!

CLA CSA Fundraiser

So....what is a CSA? CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture and it involves community members purchasing shares in a local farm for the growing season, and sharing in the produce grown during that season. The benefit of being a member of a CSA involves receiving fresh, locally grown produce every week from mid June through mid October. Dave and I have been CSA members for the past two years and have greatly enjoyed eating fresh veggies all summer long! The farm we have purchased half shares in, is Devon Point Farm in Woodstock. The first year, I commuted to Woodstock every Tuesday to pick up my produce. But last year, the folks at Devon Point Farm agreed to make a delivery to our 24 Private Grounds Road cottage if we could find at least 10 families to join, which we did. So 11 Ellington families enjoyed the benefits of pesticide-free produce delivered locally every Tuesday afternoon. The produce varies, depending on the weather and the season. And the risk we take in buying into a CSA is that if the weather is lousy, it can affect the crop. But the folks at Devon Point, Erick and Patty Taylor, work very hard to make sure all their share holders receive a bounty of veggies, no matter what! (Remember last June's hailstorm?) To quote from the farm's website: "There are significant differences between joining a local CSA and purchasing from a Whole Foods, Price Chopper or even a Farmers Market. Joining a CSA does not mean that you can select from 17 farmer vendors who will bring only those crops that were successful that week to the Farmers Market. It does not mean that you select from hundreds of international farmer vendors that Whole Foods has brought together for you under one roof. What joining a CSA means is that you share in one local farm's harvest. You share in the risks and rewards of farming, with one farmer, not 17 farmers. When purchasing

from Whole Foods or a Farmers Market, at the end of the day, you don't truly know how those vegetables have been grown, where they've been grown or how they've been handled. When you join our CSA, you gain the ability to walk through the fields of crops and see your food being grown. And, you get to know your farmers on a first name basis."

The price for a half share is \$425 (more than enough for 2 people and suitable for a small family), and a full share is \$700. A \$25 donation to the CLA for milfoil removal is included in each share/half share purchase. To read more about Devon Point Farm's CSA program and to download an enrollment form (be sure to use the ELLINGTON/CRYSTAL LAKE form), please go to www.devonpointfarm.com! Questions? Feel free to call me (Bea) at 860-874-6297.

Thanks – Bea Arzt, Devon Point Farm CSA Shareholder

2012 Penguin Plunge

The fifth annual Crystal Lake Penguin Plunge took place on Saturday, March 24th.....and what a difference from 2011! Last year involved cutting through 16 inches of ice but this year's 159 participants enjoyed balmy weather in the 60s! The event raised \$33,613 for the Special Olympics Connecticut Eastern Region which includes Hartford and Tolland counties. According to eastern region Special Olympics director Marc Mercadante, most of the money will go toward the May 12th regional games in Hartford. Way to go, Penguin Plungers! It'll be interesting to see what kind of weather 2013 brings.....!

Old Crystal Lake Schoolhouse

While the Old Crystal Lake Schoolhouse has been completed, there remains an issue of parking. Only 10-12 cars can park at the schoolhouse which may be an issue for holding our CLA meetings there. At present, the Crystal Lake Methodist Church has been reserved for this year's CLA meetings, and April's meeting will definitely be held there. At our April meeting, we can discuss various options: to continue to meet at the church, or to utilize the schoolhouse for our July and September meetings but to carpool from the elementary school, etc. The town is receptive to the CLA using this facility if we can develop and present a workable parking plan to the First Selectman, Maurice Blanchette.

Current CLA Officers

President: Mark Mickiewicz
Vice President: Bill Merson
Recording Secretary: POSITION OPEN
Treasurer: Victor Laptik
Corresponding Secretary: Beatrice Arzt

As you can see, a VOLUNTEER IS NEEDED for the position of Recording Secretary. A big thank you to Monique Burns for her service as CLA Recording Secretary for the past few years!!

CLA Members,

Our association has been very successful the past few years in its efforts to preserve our Crystal Lake for future generations. But our work is far from done. The lake will require continuous maintenance to insure complete eradication of the milfoil. We must also be on constant vigil to insure other type invasive plants populating other lakes do not get a foothold here.

The CLA needs more members and more volunteers to insure we sustain a strong vibrant ongoing organization. Our next meeting is April 25 at 7:00 pm at the Crystal Lake Methodist Church. Please attend and bring a friend or neighbor with you so that they may see the benefit of joining the CLA and help keep Crystal Lake pristine for us and future generations.

Thank you!

Crystal Lake Association 2012 Membership

316A Sandy Beach Rd., Ellington, CT 06029

Our redesigned website has a new address: www.crystallakect.com

Name _____

Permanent Address _____

Phone _____ Preference: Mail __. Email __

Lake address (if applicable) _____ Email _____

Membership (\$35 per household) _____

Additional Donations: Milfoil Removal _____ General Fund _____

Please make checks payable to the **Crystal Lake Association**. *The Crystal Lake Association is a Public Charity Federal Tax-Exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3). Membership dues and donations are tax deductible.*