

Three Lakes Council

Summer 2000

Education



Conservation

Dear Readers and Fellow Lake Dwellers,

Each year we try to identify the most pressing issues affecting our lakes and the supporting environment. Then we look for neighbors willing to investigate and research a topic and grapple with how best to present the information.

On this page, we examine the impact of roads on our lakes. Cars need roads and highway departments are charged with paving and de-icing them. Catch basins are installed to prevent flooding and frost heaves in roads, yet they also direct unfiltered pollution — oils, micro rubber from tires, fertilizers from lawn run-off, asphalt, and decaying road kill — into our lakes.

On page 3, we weigh the pros and cons of decreasing the eurasian milfoil in our lake by introducing a non-indigenous fish.

On page 7, we explore an alternative to the noise pollution of neighbors' power mowers.

On page 9, we look at a summary of land use studies presented to the town with suggestions to protect contiguous pieces of open land. Will townspeople have the foresight to push for this land to be preserved before it is developed?

On page 10, we look at the complicated issues of whether to spray trees for insects that are non-indigenous and invasive. Some argue to let nature take its course since intervention can do more harm than good, but others argue that unchecked insects will possibly destroy all our native tree species one by one.

In *News and Notes* (pp. 14-15), you will find a sprinkling of interesting information.

Please peruse this newsletter and explore what your neighbors and the Three Lakes Council believe are important issues concerning our lakes.

If you have ideas for next year's newsletter, please write to *James Blechman, P.O. Box 375, South Salem, NY, 10590.*



Roads vs. Lakes: Turning a Lose/Lose Into a Win/Win

In November of 1999, all the lake associations in Lewisboro decided to join forces to form the Lewisboro Lake Alliance (LLA). In sharing our experiences and ideas, we made some important discoveries. First, we realized that there is considerable strength in our numbers. Together, the residents of Lakes Truesdale, Kitchawan, Waccabuc, Oscaleta, Rippowam, Katonah, Timber and The Colony constitute one quarter of this town's population... roughly 1,000 households. Second, we came to appreciate that we share many of the same grave concerns about the impact of road maintenance activities on the health and welfare of our lakes and watershed areas.

During the winter of 1998-1999, one of the mildest on record, the Town of Lewisboro's Highway Department emptied 45 tons of salt on *each mile* of our town's roads, almost twice that spread in years past. Nine tons descended on our Three Lakes Council watershed alone. In addition, the Highway Department has recently seen fit to add seven more storm drains along Post Office Road and another three along Old Pond Road. There are now 92 drains concentrating non-point-source pollution and directing it toward Lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta and Rippowam.

Granted almost unchecked authority to spend our highway budget as they see fit,

continued on next page

THREE LAKES NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Publisher: THREE LAKES COUNCIL

President: DR. PETER S. TREYZ

Editors: JAMES E. BLECHMAN
TARA A. OWEN

Designer: TANIA GARCIA

Contributors: KEITH EDDINGS JOE TANSEY

JOHN GURTNER HENRIETTA TREYZ

SUSAN HENRY ROSS WEALE

JIM NORDGREN DANIEL WELSH

Letters to the editor can be addressed to James Blechman, PO Box 375, South Salem, NY, 10590

Roads vs. Lakes, *continued*

Highway Superintendents, past and present, have never consulted with the lake associations or any environmental authority in making these decisions regarding our roads. We feel that's a great shame in a town that is blessed with so many lakes and streams... and a real threat to property values if the harmful effects of these decisions continue unabated.

So, the LLA would like to take this opportunity to present not only a common front but some viable win/win solutions to the pollution problems we see threatening our community.

LET'S REPLACE SALT WITH AN ALTERNATIVE DE-ICER

Many lament the heavy use of road salt as a necessary evil. It is not. First, the quantities and the concentrations we're applying are absurd. Second, there are time-tested, environmentally safe alternatives – alternatives that have been used with great success in towns near ours. Yorktown Heights has enjoyed excellent results for the past four years with a product called "Ice Ban Magic," a liquid pre-treatment containing magnesium chloride. It is an *anti-icing* measure – specifically a chemical freezing point depressant – applied to roads *before* a snowfall to prevent a bond forming between the snow and the pavement surface. Salt, by contrast, is a *de-icing* measure applied to roads *after* a snowfall as a reactive measure.

While Ice Ban Magic is more expensive on a per ton basis and requires the purchase of a spraying system (roughly \$1,000) since it is applied in liquid form, we can benefit from Yorktown Heights' long experience to bring costs down. Eric DeBartolo, the superintendent of highways in Yorktown Heights, has devised a

solution (after experimenting with many of the alternative treatments on the market) that achieves effective results with far less Ice Ban Magic per road mile than the manufacturers suggest. He mixes the product with a 22% salt brine solution and beer hops... yes, beer hops. The result? A snow removal solution that is, he claims, less corrosive than *water*... and that clears roads without killing bushes, eating cars and polluting lakes. And Mr. DeBartolo is only too happy to share his "secret formula" with neighboring towns. In fact, at industry gatherings he has issued a standing invitation to come tour his operations.

We can enjoy safe roads and vibrant lakes. We owe it to ourselves... and to future generations.

Is magnesium chloride a perfect solution? No. It is still a chloride, and chlorides corrode. Moreover, chlorides allow toxic heavy metals in the soil to become soluble, allowing them to poison living things. But magnesium chloride is certainly more environmentally friendly than sodium chloride, a.k.a. road salt. First of all, magnesium has been found to be less toxic than sodium,¹ and since it is a liquid treatment, it can be diluted and combined with beneficial agents (such as rust inhibitors) and applied more evenly and efficiently.

The "perfect" solution may be CMA or calcium magnesium acetate, which we have discussed in previous newsletters. According to laboratory and field re-

search, CMA does not harm vegetation or nearby streams, is non-toxic in human handling tests and does not significantly corrode steel, aluminum or concrete². But CMA is seven times more expensive than magnesium chloride and not as effective melting snow.

Last fall, prior to the town election, the Three Lakes Council sat down with Highway Superintendent Steve Hill to discuss the road salt problem in our lake community, and he committed to using a more environmentally friendly "pre-wetting" treatment on Twin Lakes Road this past winter. Since the application equipment wasn't purchased until March of this year, that "test" never happened. In a memo he wrote in response to our queries, Mr. Hill indicated that he would be using Ice Ban Magic on Twin Lakes Road moving forward. Let's hold him to that promise... and encourage him to purchase two more machines so he can "pre-wet" all the roads surrounding our lakes. \$1,000 for each machine (which is what the town paid for the machine purchased in March³) is not a lot of money, when you consider the Highway Department just purchased two new dump trucks at \$80,000 a piece.

MANAGE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF STORM DRAINS

Another issue of environmental relevance to the Three Lakes is the installation and maintenance of the 92 storm drains situated around our lakes. Some of these drains empty directly into the lakes; all divert surface water toward the wetlands adjacent to the lakes. This runoff is a serious non-point-source pollution problem, concentrating animal waste, car effluents and winter salt and

¹ Vancouver City Council, "Use of Road Salt for De-Icing," March 9, 1998

² Sarah S. Chung, "CMA In for S'Mass Village," *The Aspen Times*, March 16, 1999.

³ Donna Bertoli, "Town Buys New Dump Trucks, Anti-Icer," *Lewisboro Ledger*, March 2, 2000.

Roads vs. Lakes, *continued*

then sending them into our lakes. Following the addition of seven additional storm drains along Post Office Road this summer, water samples taken from Lake Waccabuc registered dramatically higher fecal choloform counts, the highest in the ten years we've tested. Moreover, because so many of these drains are not properly constructed or filtered, they dump silt directly into the lakes.

To minimize the threat posed by these storm drains, the Highway Department should start by involving the lake associations and environmental engineers in the design, placement and proper installation of these drains. The drainage leaving these catch basins should be directed, wherever feasible, to points *above-ground* into rocks and gravel that can filter the runoff. Right now, much of the drainage empties directly into our lakes and streams.

Moreover, we should be cleaning the catch basins on these storm drains regu-

larly. The catch basin is a three-foot box through which the storm drains filters silt. (Technically, in a lake community, they should be four feet). In the past, we have had to lease a special vacuum truck down in New York City every time we wanted to clean out the 700 catch basins in town. Last year this truck sat idle for much of the time we were paying to lease it. Again, Superintendent Hill made a commitment last October to buy a Vac-All truck for the town and actively maintain these catch basins. The truck finally arrived this spring, and we look forward to seeing that truck in action on our roads in the coming months.

Re-instituting leaf pick-up this fall was a positive sign of change at the Highway Department. The Lewisboro Lake Alliance and the Three Lakes Council would like to build on this foundational step by working more closely with the Highway Department to see that our lakes' health is

not compromised by our roads' maintenance. The two are not mutually exclusive. Those who cling to that notion have been burying their heads in the sand and salt for far too long. We can enjoy safe roads and vibrant lakes. We owe it to ourselves... to those our watershed supports... and to future generations of homeowners in Lewisboro to apply constructive pressure to those in our Highway Department and town government who can take the necessary and immediate steps required to preserve the health and beauty of our town's many lakes. —*Tara A. Owen*

Lewisboro Lake Alliance members include the Three Lakes Council, Truesdale Lake Property Owners' Association, TEA, Lake Kitchawan Association, Lake Katonah Association, Two Lakes Club, Perch Bay Association, Lake Waccabuc Association and Timber Lake Association.

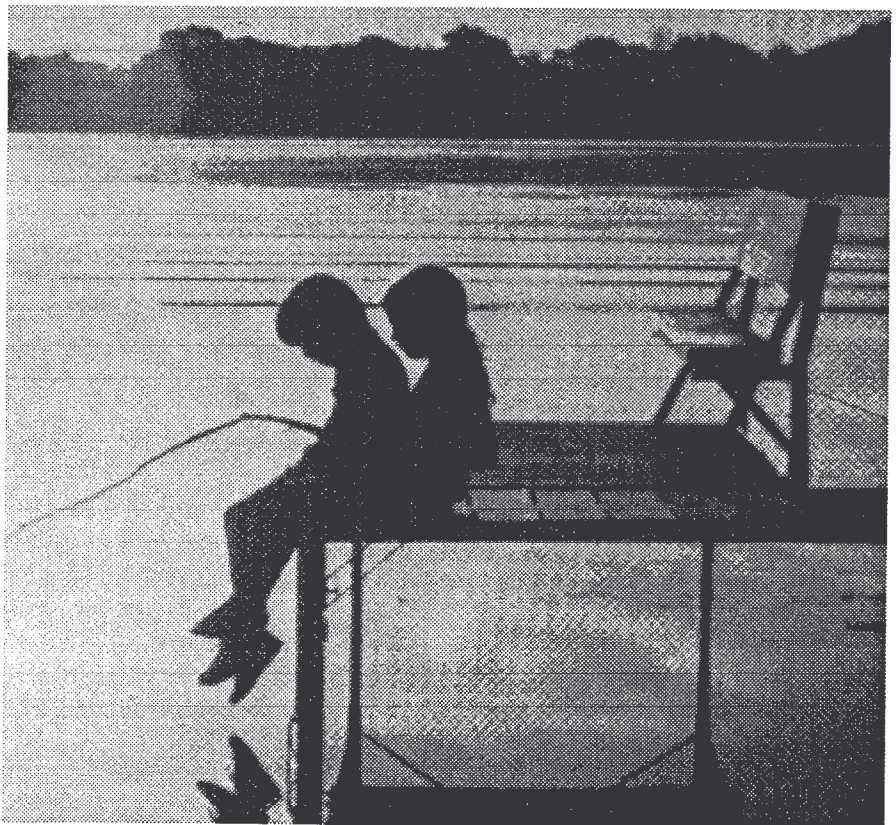
Grass Carp: To Stock or Not To Stock, That Is the Question

The most common questions I get as president of the TLC relate to that environmental nuisance that plagues our shorelines every summer — those slimy, prolific weeds. What about the weeds? How do we control them? What can be done?

In this year's effort to answer the above vexing questions, I did a rather exhaustive study and will propose a few solutions.

Unfortunately, we are all a bit lazy. After all, that's what the "daze" of summer are all about, right? Kicking back, swimming, fishing, sunbathing, picnicking, entertaining, enjoying friends, family and possibly a few adult beverages. Anyway, perish the thought that any four-letter word should enter our coveted and savagely brief weekends like, "WORK."

However, I must tell you that the best and most environmentally acceptable method of weed control is **hand harvesting**. Sound familiar? This, of course, involves a lot of that "four letter word." Moreover, since one of the worst weed



Grass Carp, *continued*

offenders is the Eurasian Water Milfoil, which can take root 30 feet underwater, pulling them up by the roots can be a real challenge.

The next best approach is what I discussed in the newsletter last year: the **Benthic Barrier**, and we'll be experimenting with this approach at one of Lake Waccabuc's right-of-ways this year. But this solution also requires a bit of that "dreaded word," hence, this year's investigation of a more passive approach, the introduction of **Triploid Grass Carp** into our lake ecosystem.

You may wonder what "triploid" means? Well, you have heard of "designer jeans," right? These carp have a different sort of "designer genes." They are genetically altered, so that they cannot — under any circumstances — reproduce. Unaltered (i.e. fertile) diploid grass carp have been controlling weeds and providing nourishment in China for 700 years.

Now, scientists have found a way to alter the genetic structure of these fertile fish by shocking their fertilized eggs with hot or cold water (both work equally well), which results in the retention of an extra chromosome set, rendering the fish incapable of producing viable young.

THE SITUATION

Aquatic plants are a reality of life when dealing with lakes or ponds and are generally considered a beneficial component of these ecosystems. They provide important fish and wildlife habitat, and when not excessive, can have a positive impact on water quality. There are those among us who fear our weed growth is excessive, thereby restricting — or at least inhibiting — to some degree our recreational enjoyment of the lakes.

The particular animal we are investigating is the white amur (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) or grass carp. These carp often weigh 40 pounds and have been recorded at 110 pounds. Long, sleek and silvery fish, they resemble tarpon (not common carp) and are good eating and tremendous fighters when hooked. Catching them is not easy, however, since they are vegetarians. This fish is no newcomer to our nation's shores. It has been investigated and researched since 1963, when the Bureau of Sport Fisheries brought 70 fish from Malaysia to the fish

farming experimental station in Stuttgart, Arkansas.

All of this research has produced somewhat conflicting results as to the grass carp's appetite and its impact on water quality. Without being too terribly scientific and technical, I will try to summarize the findings and make a recommendation.

The indigenous fish populations of the tested lakes were largemouth bass, chain pickerel, blue gills, pumpkinseed, yellow perch and golden shiner. We have all of these, as well as rock bass, trout, white perch, carp and catfish. The pre-stocking plant community of our three lakes is very diverse as well and includes white water lily, water shield, purple

*The milfoil will
[then] have no
competition to keep
it in check and it
will become a
worse problem.*

bladderwort, low water Milfoil, Eurasian Milfoil, bull rush, pickerel weed, arrow head, water moss, pond weed, water stewart and common elodea.

Our Lake Waccabuc is much larger than most researched ponds at approximately 127 acres. This is the only lake into which we are considering introducing the grass carp. If we introduce these fish they will be certified triploid (sterile), by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, thereby eliminating the possibility of the introduced fish taking over and eating our lakes clean of all vegetation.

PROS AND CONS

There is a major tested lake site in our area, namely Lake Mahopac. It is at least four times the size of Waccabuc, at 550 acres, and during the 80's and early 90's was very weedy. In 1994 the lakeside residents decided to stock with triploid grass carp and were hoping for a 70 percent reduction in submergent vegetation. What they got was a 99 percent reduction. Bass fishing surveys conducted both before and after the

grass carp stocking indicated that the largemouth bass population decreased... as the bass depend on weed beds for feeding on smaller fish. However, overall the research indicated that the bass population was not significantly reduced; they were instead driven into deeper waters for feeding.

Results are not immediately visible. The reduction in submergent vegetation that comes from introducing grass carp really starts occurring in the year *following* stocking. The grass carp are not unlike humans in their eating habits. That is to say, some plants are more appetizing than others and, of course, the one we would like them to devour first — the Eurasian Milfoil — is apparently way down on their gourmet scale.

Water chemistry changes that occur because of grass carp defoliation and increased defecation must be noted. Generally chlorophyll concentrations will increase due to increased overall biomass activity and fish droppings, which decreases water clarity. Total Kjeldahl nitrogen also increases significantly for the same reason. But the indigenous fish population of the lakes should not be affected in terms of number or size due to carp stocking.

Virtually all studies showed the grass carp to be extremely efficient at consuming submergent plants. The recommended number of carp per vegetated acre is between 2 to 5, which — at \$13.25 per 12" fish — could turn out to be an expensive proposition for Lake Waccabuc (25 vegetated acres... so \$1656.25).

It should also be noted that experts recommend that about 20 percent of a lake system's acreage be devoted to submergent weed beds to maintain ecological balance. That's just about where we are today.

A fear often voiced about grass carp in mixed plant communities is that selective grazing will actually result in the opposite of the intended effect. If grass carp don't like Eurasian milfoil, they'll deplete our other aquatic plants first, allowing the Milfoil to spread unchecked. Do we take that chance? Perhaps we need to take this up with all of our residents, since we will contend with the consequences of a stocking decision until the fish die off in 10 to 15 years.

In conclusion, it is very clear from the

Grass Carp, *continued*

innumerable studies conducted that grass carp provide an extremely efficient method of submergent vegetation control. The caveats, however should be kept in mind (preferred grazing habits, the impact on water clarity, and the subtle change in fishing technique as bass go deeper). The potentially undesirable impacts noted in this analysis could be effectively minimized or substantially avoided through the exercise of patience and conservative stocking methods to effect a gradual but steady reduction of weeds.

In an effort to represent every expert viewpoint on this decision, I consulted a very highly respected local naturalist, Kenneth Soltez, who is a lifelong resi-

dent of Lake Oscaleta. Here's an excerpt from his response.

"The Three Lakes are natural, ancient glacial lakes which have been developing their flora for some 20,000 years, and many of the aquatic plants that grow here are relics of those earlier times. That diversity of plant life is part of what gives our lakes their character and acts as a natural protection against alien invasives. In other words, the main reason why Eurasian Milfoil hasn't invaded every inch of the lakes is because of competition from the established native plants. Grass carp prefer tender leafy plants to the more fibrous milfoils and naiads. If you introduce them, the first thing they'll do is wipe out the native plants. The milfoil will

then have no competition to keep it in check, and it will become a worse problem. I've noticed a decline in the milfoil in recent years, and this should continue to a point where the milfoil will be much less of a nuisance. The best course of action is still (1) keep septic systems well-maintained, (2) don't fertilize lakeside lawns, and (3) don't feed the damn geese!"

Therefore it is my and The Three Lakes Council's conclusion that we NOT stock any grass carp at this time, or probably any other time in the foreseeable future.

Respectively submitted,
Dr. Peter S. Treyz President, T.L.C.

Lakeview Road Fire and Chemical Spill

As you may know, there was a fire at 35 and 43 Lakeview Road on January 27 of this year, during which fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides and other materials were released into the ground and air. This fire brought the business being operated there by Bill Finke to the attention of the Department of Health, the DEC, the DEP and the Lewisboro Building Department and Supervisor's office, as the attached letters indicate.

The location of Mr. Finke's business in a residential area violates the zoning laws of this town, and the operation of that business violates any number of building codes. As many neighbors can attest, Mr. Finke has kept contracting equipment on the property for years, including, at various times, spray trucks, snow plows, salt spreaders, wood chippers, back hoes, cherry pickers, dump trucks and other equipment associated with commercial landscaping use. The fire revealed that he had been storing 50-gallon canisters of chemicals on the property as well. A variance Mr. Finke received in the mid-90s to place an office above his garage specifically forbade the housing of any chemicals or contracting equipment on his property. More-

over, Mr. Finke never picked up the Certificate of Occupancy for that office, which has since been revoked (but may now be reinstated... see below).

On February 4 following the fire, Lewisboro's Code Enforcement Officer, Frank Tucci, was directed by the Building Inspector William Cargain to issue an "Order to Remedy" if all vestiges of his business had not been removed by then. That Order to Remedy gave Mr. Finke 30 days to move his business. He did not comply. Mr. Tucci conducted a follow-up investigation on March 6 and found numerous violations of the Code of the Town of Lewisboro including 1) operating a commercial activity in a residential district; 2) operating an office without a Certificate of Occupancy; 3) cutting a driveway onto a public road without a required permit; 4) operating a machine and repair shop in a residential area; and 5) storage of contractor's equipment without a required permit. A summons was issued to appear in Town Court.

Town Court met on April 10, 2000 with Judge Roberts presiding. Mr. Finke arrived late without an attorney. A letter from Mr. Tucci was read into the record citing the violations he had witnessed during his March visit. Mr. Finke asked for more time to understand and

respond to the charges. He then pulled the town's attorney aside and threatened to deface his own property if his neighbors did not back off. He also put forth the following proposition. He would remove his trucks and the chemicals in return for a Certificate of Occupancy to run his business office on the property.

The town's attorney, Peg Clark, presented this proposition to the Lake Waccabuc Association. Ms. Clark had tried to bring charges against Mr. Finke a few years ago and had been unsuccessful in soliciting neighbors to testify. Her implied recommendation was that we consider Mr. Finke's proposal.

The Lake Waccabuc Association called a meeting on April 21, during which those present drafted a list of stipulations that Mr. Finke would have to agree to secure the Certificate of Occupancy he wanted. These encompassed storage of equipment, conducting of business and traffic in and out of his property. We also asked that a fine be assessed for the violations that had occurred and enforcement procedures be established.

Town Court met again on April 24. Mr. Finke appeared ready to sign an agreement in theory, but again asked for more time to review the document. The matter was deferred again until May 22,

at which time Mr. Finke indicated his unwillingness to sign the drafted stipulation and the Court, with Mr. Seedorf presiding, ordered a trial date set for June 23, 2000 at 9:00 am.

Ms. Clark proceeded to assemble a case and gathered five witnesses prepared to testify that Mr. Finke was indeed running a tree company and landscaping business from 35/43 Lakeview Road and that it was in violation of the stated building codes. However, those witnesses never had to testify. On the morning of June 23, 2000, Bill Finke finally agreed to the stipulation drafted by Ms. Clark. That stipulation included Mr. Finke's acknowledgement of three of the building code violations, including running a commercial business from a residential property and storing contractor's equipment in furtherance of that business at that property. The stipulation mandated that this activity cease, although Mr. Finke was given approval for a C of O on his office space as part of this plea bargain. While Mr. Finke was not fined for any violations to date, an automatic \$500 fine per week per violation will be assessed moving forward.

VIOLATIONS INCLUDE:

- Storage of chemicals, herbicides, salt or any other materials intended for resale or commercial use;
- Storage of wood chippers, salt spreaders, dump trucks, trailers, backhoes, cherry pickers, snow plows or other equipment, vehicular or otherwise, associated with commercial use;
- Dispatching of trucks (other than by radio) from 35/43 Lakeview or delivery of supplies to that location.

If you see any such violations, we urge you to report them to the Building Department Code Enforcement Officer, Frank Tucci or Building Inspector Bill Cargain at 763-3060. You can fax a report to 763-3637.

It should be noted that Mr. Finke was able to exempt from this stipulation three pickups he owns that he claims to use for personal use and two unregistered commercial vehicles he bought from the town. Once registered, those vehicles are a violation. He was also

given until July 10 to move his snow plows.

Roughly 30 people attended the hearing in an impressive display of solidarity. In addition to Judge Seedorf, Town Attorney Peg Clark and Enforcement Officer Frank Tucci, Supervisor Tom Herzog attended the meeting and gave his personal assurance that not only would the Building Department be making regular follow-up inspections, but the police department would make a point of driving by the area regularly. The discussion became rather heated as neighbors expressed their skepticism about the mechanisms available to enforce this stipulation and the town's lack of vigorous action to date, but at least some attendees were reassured that their opinions had been heard.

You might ask, "Why does this concern the Three Lakes Council?" In fact, the Three Lakes Council was formed in the early 1970s to protect our watershed against just such violations. If storing 50-gallon canisters of chemicals and running a machine repair shop across the street from an auxiliary NYC reservoir doesn't count as an environmental threat to our lake community, what does? We plan to be active in monitoring the court order imposed on Mr. Finke's business and will keep you apprised. Meanwhile, if you know of any similar environmental violations occurring in our Three Lakes Community, please bring it to our attention anonymously, and we will investigate. That's one of the important reasons why we are here.

TOWN OF LEWISBORO

WESTCHESTER COUNTY
11 MAIN ST. BOX 500
SOUTH SALEM, NEW YORK 10590



THOMAS D. HERZOG, Supervisor

February 7, 2000

I am writing to the large group of citizens who signed a letter to me, dated January 27, 2000, concerning the use of the premises at 35 and 43 Lakeview Road for commercial purposes.

- It is a violation of the Code of the Town of Lewisboro for a business to operate in a residential zone such as the one in which you live.
- Mr. Finke has a permit from the Zoning Board to operate an office only on Lakeview Road. Lewisboro's Code Enforcement Officer, Frank Tucci, was directed by Building Inspector William Cargain to issue an "Order to Remedy" last Friday, if all vestiges of Mr. Finke's operations were not removed by then.
- The Order to Remedy will expire in thirty days, at which point a summons to appear in Lewisboro Town Court will be issued if the business is not removed from the neighborhood.
- Once the summons is issued, the matter will be decided by the Court. No other division of Town government will be involved other than, perhaps, serving as witnesses in a possible trial.
- The Building Department has searched the records in its office and has found no previous complaints on file about the properties in question. How this happened is open to several interpretations.

If Mr. Finke applies for a ZBA permit to operate his business from Lakeview Road, the Building Department will not allow him to continue to operate it there while his application is pending before that Board.

The Town of Lewisboro has no intention of allowing a flagrant violation of its zoning code to continue to exist. Now that there is a formal complaint on file, the Building Department will do everything within its power to see that there is compliance with the Code.

I assume that you will pass along the above information to your neighbors. If you have further questions, the best person to contact is Bill Cargain at 763-3060.

I share your concern and thank you for your letter.

My very best,
Thomas D. Herzog Supervisor

Cc: William Cargain
Town Board Members



A Reel Alternative



Most of us are too young to remember the days when lawns were kept trim with the aid of a non-motorized push reel mower. To suggest that such a device be considered as a contender for the job today is to risk ridicule. Yet the same people who would so quickly write it off more likely than not have never actually pushed one. Or they may have pulled an old rusty beast out of storage and pushed it around a bit before dispatching it (hopefully) to the recycling center—a valuable chance to make a contribution to the environmental big picture and our local quality of life squandered.

It is, in fact, a very sensible option for many homes in our community. Though your grandfather's mower can still be found for sale essentially unchanged, better models have been designed, cutting weight to as low as 17 pounds and making mowing far easier.

The benefits of using a manual mower are so obvious as to be almost a waste of print space to recite here:

NOISE POLLUTION AND CIVILITY

Unlike its partner in crime, air pollution, noise makes its mark quickly. Who of us has not lamented the loss of a long awaited quiet moment at the end of the day or on the weekend to a neighbor's lawn mower. The importance of those special times has been captured in many municipal codes. A New York City area resident will pay a fine of \$240 if found violating 24-227.1(i), *Operating lawn care devices before or after permissible hours*, or 4-227.1(ii) *Unreasonable noise from lawn care devices*.

In dense suburban communities such as ours, physics works against us. Decibels at the receiving end are a reverse square function, so as houses move closer together, the noise level rises quickly. According to Donna Wayner, director of the Hearing Center at Albany Medical Center prolonged exposure to 90 decibels or higher can damage hearing. An average lawn mower produces about 97

decibels. Most people do not wear appropriate ear protection when using a power mower and over time will experience some hearing damage. The EPA has identified an outdoor noise level of 55 dB as the "safe" level of environmental noise, but surveys find that most people have reached the "annoyance" level already at about 60db.

A study by Messrs Mathews and Canon found that loud noise can change the way people normally behave toward one another. In their study, a person wearing a cast on his arm dropped books to see if a passerby would stop and be helpful. In the absence of noise, 80% of the people stopped to help the individual. However, in the presence of lawn mower noise, only 15% of the people stopped to pick up the books.

AIR POLLUTION

Power mowers are less efficient and have less pollution control equipment than cars, oftentimes none. According to 1997 EPA figures, lawn mowers, leaf blowers and other internal combustion lawn and garden tools put out almost half a million tons of ozone-forming hydrocarbon and nitrogen oxide emissions - about 10% of the total air pollution for the year. An average new lawn mower will, after two years, create 34 times as many hydrocarbons as an average passenger car and if we were in California, your instruction manual would warn you that "Engine exhaust from this product contains chemicals known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm." Professor of Botany William A. Niering, a botanist at Connecticut College has been campaigning for smaller, environmentally benign lawn mowers. He estimates that one hour of power mowing emits the same amount of air pollution as a car that has been driven 350 miles.

SAFETY

Power mowers can propel stones, wire, glass and other objects at speeds up to

200 miles an hour, and can easily fling them 40 or 50 feet. The blade itself is a dangerous weapon, with a wounding capacity more than three times that of a .357-caliber Magnum gun. Power mowers send many people to the emergency room each year with missing fingers, toes and eyeballs. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an estimated 60,359 emergency room visits were associated with power mowers in 1997. A study at Loyola University Medical Center revealed that more than 2,000 children are permanently disabled every year by power lawn mowers. Mowing severe slopes is certainly less perilous if executed with a manual reel mower. No need to shut off the engine or take other precautions when you want to stop to pick up a branch, talk to someone, or throw a ball back in play; you just stop.

CONVENIENCE

The reel mower takes up much less space than the mower plus gas can combination. This feature should be particularly welcome in our community where a good number of the houses may have been converted summer places and suffer a shortage of storage area.

YOU WON'T BE ALONE

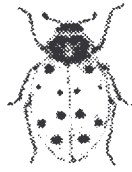
The prospect of eliminating the hassle of spark plugs, pull cords and trips to the gasoline station has caught the interest of quite a few people. People are buying manual reel mowers at a rate of about a half a million a year. This is still way off the 6.8 million power mowers sold in 1997 but its over 5 times what it was back in 1985.

The reel cut is favored over the rotary mower. The scissors-like action is said to do less damage to the grass, making for a cleaner cut and healthier lawn.

Hope to see you (but not hear your power mower) out there!

Dan Welsh has been mowing his acre+ plot with a manual reel mower for several years now. You are welcome to call him at 763-8339.

The Good: Identify Your Insect Friends



Ladybird Beetles or Ladybugs

Ladybird beetles are small, oval, convex and often brightly colored insects. Most of this family are predacious both as larvae and adults and feed chiefly on aphids. The most important local species is the two-spotted ladybug—orange red in color with black spots on each wing cover



Dragonflies

These large insects may be seen soaring and darting about near and over ponds and streams in a manner to arouse the envy of the most daredevil aviator. They both catch and eat their insect prey while flying. Mosquitoes and other flies make up a large part of their diet.



Ground Beetles

This beetle family contains hundreds of species. Most of these predacious insects are somewhat flattened, dark and shiny. Found under stones, logs, bark or debris during the day, they come out at night to feed on many types of insects, slugs and snails.



Braconids and Other Wasps

There are many species of parasitic wasps most of which are quite small. They feed on the inner body fluids of their hosts. The most common ones prey on Sphinx moth larvae like tobacco and tomato hornworms.



Syrphid Flies

Syrphid flies are commonly called flower flies—they may be brightly colored and may resemble wasps or bees hovering over flowers. However, they do not sting. The larvae of most species are predacious, feeding on aphids or the young of termites, ants, or bees.



Lacewings

The lacewing, with its gauzy green (sometimes brown) lacey wings and jewel-like gold eyes, produces aphid devouring larvae. The larva is grayish brown with sharp curved jaws that extend beyond its head. Crawling along the leaf surface in search of aphids, scales, mealybugs, thrips, mites and insect eggs, they can consume 100 and more insects a day.



Lightning Bugs

During the early summer, the adult insects fly about in the evenings and are conspicuous by their blinking yellow light. Most of the larvae are luminescent and are given the name "glowworms." The larvae feed on various small insects and on snails.



Praying Mantis

These predacious insects feed on a variety of other insects. With front legs in an upraised position, they want to ambush their prey...thus their name. Egg cases may be gathered by cutting the twig you find them on, then tying the case to a branch in your garden. The young come tumbling out by the hundreds in the spring. They are cannibalistic, so only a few will survive in the garden.

Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension News, p. 6, Summer 1999.

The Bad: Zebra Mussels Threaten our Lakes

Primary prevention is the only answer!

The "zebra mussel" is an invader to North American fresh waters that has the capacity to disrupt food webs and ecosystem balances, interfere with sport fishing, navigation, recreational boating, beach use, and filtration devices.

Zebra mussels were first discovered in the Great Lakes Basin in 1988. The zebra mussel is the only bivalve fresh water mollusk that can attach itself to any hard surface, i.e. docks, boats, motors, intake valves, etc. When zebra mussels are introduced into a body of water they multiply at such a staggering rate (10–20 thousand per square inch is the norm) that a "feeding frenzy" is created, in which the zebra mussel attacks and destroys the bottom of the food chain and sets up a chain reac-

tion which will eventually affect all aquatic life. The zebra mussel shell is so sharp that shoes are needed on affected beaches. The obnoxious smells from the decomposition of mussels also would detract from the enjoyment of shoreline recreational activities.

In short, we must prevent the zebra mussel from entering our lakes!

Recommendations:

- Do not transport your boats or motors from one body of water to another. If a friend's boat is transported to one of these lakes, **to destroy zebra mussel larvae** the boat must be steam-cleaned or allowed to dry in the sun 1½ weeks before launching. Do not transport motors.



Remember, zebra mussel larvae are resilient and undetectable to the human eye. The Three Lakes Council strongly urges you to protect our lakes by informing all who may be transporting a boat into our lakes.

Update: Town Planning and Environmental Studies

In last year's newsletter, we reported on several environmental studies being conducted in Lewisboro. Most have now been completed and, with luck, will soon result in some concrete policy changes.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Recommended changes to the Town Master Plan have now been submitted to the Town Board. The changes seek to put into zoning regulation the broad concepts included in the 1973 and 1985 Master Plans. Some of the changes recommended are:

- Regulating building on steep slopes (We're one of the few towns in the County that does not require a permit to build on steep slopes);
- Extending wetland buffers to 150 feet (as Pound Ridge has done);
- Regulating cutting of large trees (as Mt. Kisco does);
- Extending our 'Special Character Districts' to cover greenways as well as historic districts (as Mt. Kisco is doing); and
- Regulating building over our aquifers (as Bedford now does).

BIOTIC CORRIDOR STUDY

The Biotic Corridor Study is still ongoing. However, the review of some twenty pre-existing wildlife studies done here in town was startling! We now understand why biologists from around the country come here. Lewisboro is home to more than thirty-five different species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and plants that are classified by the County or New York State as either "Endangered," "Threatened" or of "Special Concern." Some of the richest biodiversity is found right here on the shores of the Three Lakes. Several of these studies were performed by our own Ken Soltez.

OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

Finally, the Conservation Advisory Council's Open Space Inventory was



completed on February 22, 2000. Several years of work, study, hiking and photographing of the town's last remaining open spaces ended in good news and, you guessed it, bad news.

The bad news is something we're all intuitively aware of: Our town is facing severe development pressures. The numbers are more disconcerting. Four thousand acres of land, some 20 percent of the town's available land, has been developed in the last sixteen years. That would not necessarily be a problem, if we had continually set aside part of that land as open space along the way. Sadly, that's not been the case. The study shows that there have not been any major additions to our open space acreage in over sixteen years.

While we've been fortunate to have benefactors like the Bedford Audubon Society and Adam Rose buy up or donate land in the last two years, even their additional 180 acres of preserved open space amounts to less than one percent of the town's land. This is all the more perplexing when one considers the results of the CAC's townwide survey, which found that 74% of the respondents were in favor of the town buying land to be set aside as open space!

This disturbing paradox might be explained away if a large chunk of our town had already been dedicated to parks or nature preserves. After all, driving around town gives the impression that

this is still a semi-rural suburb. Again, the numbers tell quite a different story. While 25 percent of Lewisboro's land is preserved as open space, our neighboring towns average 30 percent! Amazingly, we've got less open space than the County overall. The County has 29% of its land preserved!

Before we pull up stakes and move north in despair, there is reason to be hopeful. The survey of the land reveals that broad swaths of unbroken natural areas still remain.

Unlike some towns down-county that don't have anything left to preserve, Lewisboro is blessed with several beautiful, biologically rich greenways.

Two of these greenways envelop the Three Lakes region. It's possible to hike from Mountain Lakes Camp west across a band of nine nature preserves covering 500 acres all the way to Goldens Bridge. It's also possible to go around the eastern side of Three Lakes following the town's major aquifer all the way to the Norwalk Reservoir on the Connecticut border, a greenway of nearly 700 acres.

These greenways not only provide opportunities for recreation, but also serve as a buffer to our drinking water, and provide a habitat for wildlife.

The challenge we face is in preventing these greenways from being broken up by development. We can preserve these greenways by acquiring the key parcels that connect the corridors, and the Lewisboro Land Trust is working on options for funding such purchases. They can also be preserved with sensitive subdivision design. The zoning changes now before the Town Board will go a long way toward accomplishing this goal.

—Jim Nordgren

If you'd like to contribute to the Lewisboro Land Trust, you can mail your tax-deductible donations to: Lewisboro Land Trust, P.O. Box 496, South Salem, New York 10590.

Local Arborist Discourages Treating Hemlocks

OPINION ARTICLE

There has been considerable discussion recently within the lake communities regarding the hemlock wooly adelgid and its long term impact on the landscape. The last publication by the Three Lakes Council encouraged property owners with hemlocks to treat their trees with pesticides. However, homeowners should understand how the wooly adelgid spreads and the impact the horticultural oils and pesticides will have on the lakes, aquifer, and beneficial insects.

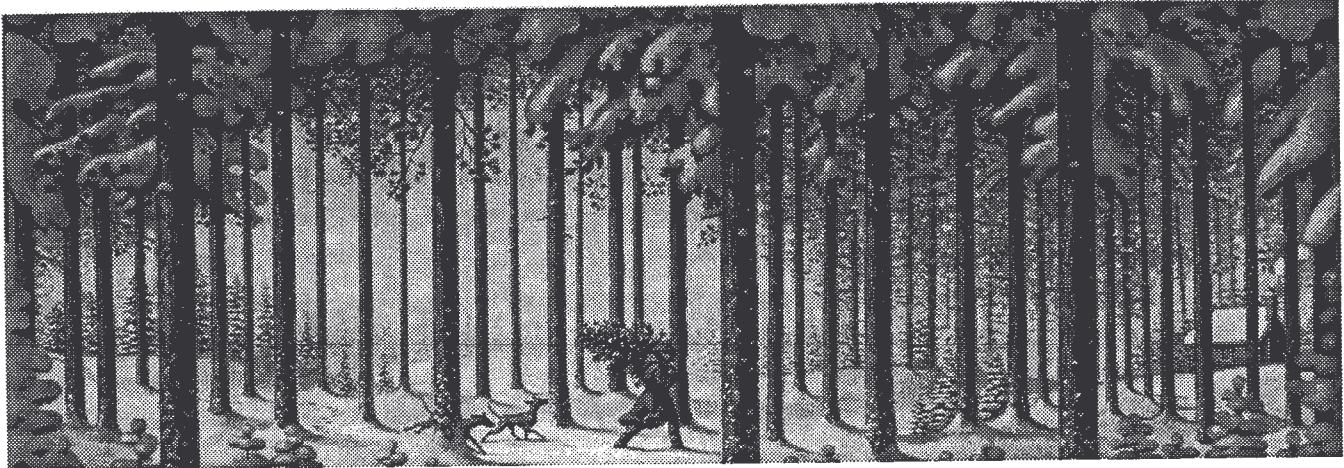
Before treating your trees they should be inspected to verify that an infestation

wise. For example, the application of Sevin insecticide is known to result in future heavy infestations of spider mites. In my 20+ years in the business I have noted that properties that were once sprayed are now the ones where the plants are plagued with a wide array of insect problems.

If you decide to hire an arborist to treat your trees, their price should be your last consideration. You can't do a good job, be environmentally conscientious, and be the lowest bidder! The best work I've seen is usually done by small companies where the owner is out doing

material is also likely to kill beneficial insects that keep other destructive insects in check. Trees over 40 feet tall cannot be effectively sprayed with horticultural oils because the insects are suffocated by the oil and this is achieved only if all surfaces of the tree are saturated. This is difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish using available technology. Large trees therefore must be treated more aggressively.

These larger trees are commonly treated with imidacloprid (trade name Merit 75 WSP) or other toxic substances via soil injections or by aerial spray. The



even exists. The presence of the wooly hemlock adelgid is clearly visible to the naked eye. They are most prominent in the spring and then again in the early fall. The adelgid is a picky eater and only feeds on hemlock and an occasional fir tree. It looks like little balls of cotton on the underside of the twigs at the base of the needles. If an infestation is noted the first question you need to ask yourself is how important is that tree to your landscape. Are the risks and expense associated with treatment justified?

You should also keep in mind that insects build up an immunity to pesticides. Even if you do get some control, it probably won't last forever. Additionally, spraying has been proven to upset the balance of nature because the chemicals kill beneficial insects too and lead to diseases and insect infestations that would have never occurred other-

“Consideration must be given to the fragile ecosystem surrounding our lakes.”

the applications. By law any person employed by a licensed applicator can apply pesticides; they need not be experienced or be under the direct supervision of the professional. Check to make sure the person who is doing the actual spraying on your property is licensed and well experienced. Large companies often fail to meet this criteria.

Treatments vary but the most probable, and least toxic program, is the application of a horticultural oil. While this material is considered “safe,” the label clearly specifies it is toxic to fish. This

chemical is absorbed by the plant's roots or leaves and it travels throughout the tree where it remains for up to a year. Insects feeding on treated trees are poisoned. Non-target beneficial insects are at risk as well as birds, animals, and humans that come in contact with the material at the time of the application or with its residuals. In essence you must contaminate your property to a degree in order to attempt saving your trees.

Consideration must be given to the fragile ecosystem surrounding your home and the lakes. Research conducted by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station has proven that pesticides migrate and are found in ground water. Obviously the lakes are also at risk. Merrit is a persistent pesticide, and the label specifies not to plant any food crop within one year of an application to the treated area.

Another available treatment consists

of injecting a highly concentrated pesticide directly into the trunk of the tree. In theory this is the ultimate treatment. In practice the tree is damaged at each of the many injection sites, and the chemical is often not accepted by the tree and is spilt when the tiny pressurized capsules are removed from the tree.

Treatment does not guarantee results. For example, one property owner in the community has been spraying for several years and still has adelgids and heavy infestations of other insects. Whereas, the hemlocks by the Two Lakes Club right-of-way, which have never been treated, show no signs of wooly adelgid infestation or other diseases. As a rule, insects are far more likely to attack trees weakened by other factors. Since hemlocks prefer moist sites, water during dry periods and mulch within the drip line of the tree. The mulch will help retain soil moisture and moderate ground temperatures. It is also important to note that the adelgid insect does not fly; insects, birds, and small animals that visit the hemlocks carry it from tree to tree. Even if you are spraying - the town, county and "forest" trees remain un-

treated. Treated trees will, most probably, become reinfested. Spraying must continue indefinitely to keep trees alive, and more aggressive treatments will be needed as other insects invade the sterilized trees and build up an immunity to the pesticides being used.

An informal inspection of hemlocks in the area indicated to me that many trees are not infected and should not be treated prophylactically.

The hemlock wooly adelgid remains a persistent pest in the northeast and no large-scale treatment is feasible at this time. Research is currently under way with a ladybug that feeds on the Adelgid, however the long term effects of their introduction into our environment could be disastrous. On a small scale, spraying with a horticultural oil is effective if done correctly. Secondly, healthy trees are less likely to become infested. And finally, homeowners should consider planting new species of trees including western hemlock and Norway spruce. Ask your local garden center for trees best suited for your site. This will provide the "natural buffer" needed to prevent soil erosion and to absorb runoff

from septic systems. Planted now, these trees will be mature specimens when, and if, the eastern and Canadian hemlocks on your property die.

Taking the least toxic approach will indeed result in less hemlocks in the area. However, even with aggressive treatments, we will still see less hemlocks around in the years to come. The environmentally correct thing to do is not spray your trees. It will also save you money. Mother nature has consistently done a wonderful job of supporting a vast array of living organisms throughout time. The more man interferes with her work, the worse things seem to become. So before applying any chemicals on your property make sure they are really needed. They're going to be there for a long time.

About the Author:

John Gurtler is a certified arborist and President of Timberland Tree Care, Inc. with twenty years experience in the tree business. John discontinued his highly profitable "spray program" and has adopted a "least toxic, environmental friendly" policy. John can be reached for additional information at 763-9461.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Rockland Horticultural Spray Oil Label; Rockland Chemical Co, Inc.

Environmental Hazards: "This product is toxic to fish....do not apply directly to water, or to areas where surface water is present..... Hazards to Humans and Domestic Animals: Caution- harmful if swallowed. Avoid breathing vapors or spray mist. Do not get in eyes or on skin or clothing."

2. Merit 75 WSP Insecticide Label; Bayer Corporation Garden & Professional Care. Environmental Hazards: "This product is highly toxic to aquatic invertebrates ...This product is highly toxic to bees

exposed to direct treatment....This chemical demonstrates the properties and characteristics associated with chemicals detected in ground water. The use of this chemical in areas where soils are permeable, particularly where the water table is shallow, may result in ground water contamination. Hazards to Humans and Domestic animals: Caution: Harmful if swallowed, inhaled, or absorbed. through skin. Restrictions: Do not plant any food crop within one year of a treatment with Merit 75 WSP Insecticide."

Facts stated above are verifiable with Cornell Cooperative Extension. Their scientists research pest management and educate professionals on treatment methods.

Another Point of View

OPINION ARTICLE

The Audubon Field Guide to Trees calls the Eastern Hemlock the most beautiful and rugged tree in the North American forest, as anyone who hikes down to my end of Twin Lakes Road can see. My own small half-acre is crowded with the trees, many of them centuries old. More than 50 hemlocks grow at 60 Twin Lakes Road, including several that

are eight feet around and 80 feet tall, as thick and high as in any of the national forests I've been to. To me, the hemlocks are as much a part of the Three Lakes as the lakes themselves.

That's why I'm not ready to give up on them yet, although I've seen many of the biggest and most beautiful fall in the neighborhood in the 10 years since I moved here. The cost of trying to keep

them standing hasn't been cheap, as any of your neighbors who have joined in the effort will tell you. But the economic - and environmental - cost of losing them is far higher.

So I disagree that the trees should be allowed to die, as my friend John Gurtler argues in the accompanying article. Here's why.

John argues that "Mother Nature has

Another Point of View, *continued*

consistently done a wonderful job of supporting a vast array of living organisms throughout time. The more man interferes with her work, the worse things become.”

That argument ignores the fact that the bug attacking the hemlocks is not a natural part of the North American environment. For that reason, the effort to contain the bug would restore – not interfere with – the natural balance that existed before the woolly adelgid landed in the United States 40 years ago, probably on a shipment of wood from Japan unloaded in a North Carolina port. It was man’s interference that brought the bug here; our effort is to undo the damage done.

The adelgid and the Eastern Hemlock have lived together in Japan for centuries because a ladybug native to Japan has been able to contain it. But with no natural predators here, the adelgid has spread up the East Coast unchecked, devastating hemlock forests. Since arriving in the lower Hudson Valley in 1986, the adelgid has wiped out half the native hemlocks.

The adelgid is just one of dozens of exotic, invasive species that have hitchhiked around the world over the last half century with the growth of modern trade and travel (the West Nile virus is the latest to arrive). In fact, the Nature Conservancy considers that invasive species are the biggest threat to the natural environment in the United States, after the loss of habitat.

Several exotics – purple loosertrife, phragmites and the adelgid – already are in the Three Lakes area, where they threaten to wipe out our natural flora and transform our lush neighborhoods into weedy lots. The worst of them all – the zebra mussel, which would turn the lakes into empty sinks – is knocking at our door. So is the Asian long-horned beetle.

None is part of the natural environment in the Three Lakes. None belongs here. And each should be confronted forcefully when it arrives.

If you don’t think exotic species pose a serious threat, then ask yourself when you last saw an American Chestnut or a Dutch Elm. Just last month, when Asian long-horned beetles were discovered in

maple trees in a Manhattan playground, New York City Parks Commissioner Henry Stern said this about the effort to extinguish exotics: “All humanity is united in the struggle against the alien species which threaten our trees, the trees we value in life. It really is a biological war, and it’s being waged in the trees.”

The only defense against the zebra mussel is vigilance in keeping it out, which the Three Lakes has shown. Purple Loosestrife and phragmites must be ripped out by hand. And the woolly adelgid can be contained only by spraying the hemlocks with a dormant oil or a horticultural soap twice a year. Those trees too tall to spray can be injected with the pesticide Merit.

“It was man’s interference that brought the bug here; our effort is to undo the damage done.”

Because horticultural oil works by suffocating parasites rather than by poisoning them, it is probably the least toxic weapon in an arborist’s arsenal. John is correct when he says that the oil is toxic to fish, but that warning applies to direct, undiluted applications to water. If the oil is applied properly – highly diluted, on clear calm days, by licensed professionals – little if any reaches the lakes. I know, because I make it a point to be home when my trees are treated.

There are other choices we all make that are far more damaging to the lakes. The gasoline that leaks from the two-cycle engines on our powerboats is much more toxic to aquatic life than dormant oil. So is the fertilizer that many of us use on our lawns. So are the household chemicals, detergents and septic tank treatments that get flushed down our drains. So are the nitrogen oxides in the exhaust from our lawn mowers. Are the oils and soaps we’re using to treat our hemlocks also killing fish? Ask the fishermen you know if the

fishing here has ever been better, if the fish have been better-tasting.

John and I agree on several important points:

* Trees that are too tall to be reached by spray should *not* be treated by injecting the pesticide Merit into the soil around the trees, as many arborists will suggest. However, Merit can be injected directly into the tree, which poses no danger of runoff and little threat to the tree.

* The dormant oil can kill beneficial insects as well as the adelgid. But this is a limited spraying targeted at hemlocks and done from the ground, not an aerial coating of the entire area (as was done last summer to kill mosquitoes carrying West Nile.) Most insects that live on hemlocks live just as well on the oaks, maples and other trees in our neighborhoods.

If this seems like too much work, help is on the way. The ladybug that keeps the adelgid in check in Japan has been imported to the United States. Environmental officials in 10 states, including New York, have released it into the forests. The ladybug has been up to 87 percent effective in controlling adelgid, according to the University of Massachusetts Agricultural Extension. To wait for the ladybug to spread naturally to our neighborhoods would be a mistake. Many of our trees already are in critical condition. We need to treat them this summer.

Why bother?

“Tree planting always is a utopian experience, a wager on a future that the planter doesn’t necessarily expect to witness,” Michael Pollan, a naturalist, wrote recently. “It is to embark on a project that may outlast us, to plant a tree whose crown might shade not us, but our children, or more likely, the children of strangers.”

We’re luckier than that because our hemlocks already are shading us. We don’t have to plant them to live under their rugged beauty. We have only to protect them.

Keith Eddings, an editor for The Journal News, has covered environmental issues since 1981. To join the hemlock consortium, call him at 763-6450.

Fish Report

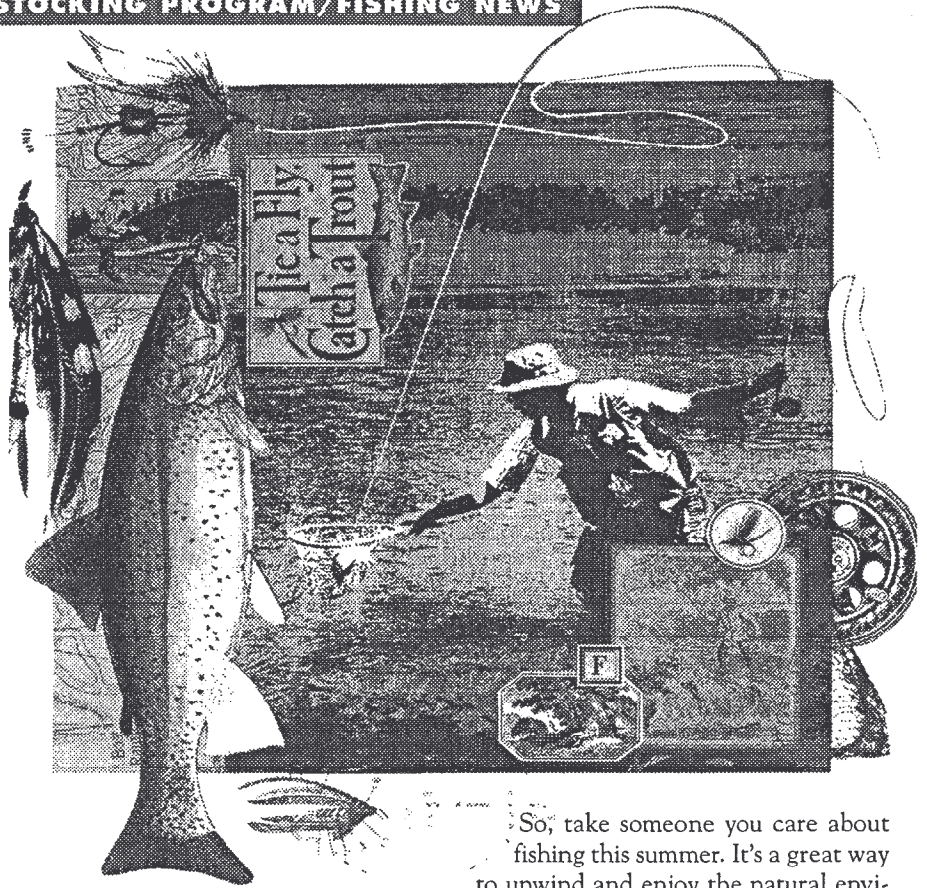
TROUT STOCKING PROGRAM/FISHING NEWS

The fishing season is in full swing on Lakes Waccabuc, Oscaleta and Rippowam. As the fishing enthusiasts among us sharpen our hooks and reload our reels with new line, visions of the powerful strike of the large-mouth bass, the spectacular leaps of a hooked smallmouth, and the sizzling runs of the brown trout crowd our thoughts. The trophy fish that narrowly escaped our capture last season are now larger, wiser and ever more elusive.

This season the 10 to 11-inch brown trout we stocked last year should be reaching lengths of 16 to 18 inches. In fact, Terry Schribner caught and released a 17-inch specimen while fishing Lake Waccabuc on the very first day of trout season, April 1st. That same fish could easily grow to be 5 to 6 pounds by this time next year... and 8 to 10 pounds by the year after. Thanks to Terry, this fish gets a second chance to elude our best efforts.

The largemouth bass population continues to thrive in all three lakes, while smallmouth bass and pickerel continue to show improvements. We are anticipating that the smallmouth bass stocked in Rippowam and Oscaleta two years ago will reach spawning size this year, which should greatly improve the stocks in those lakes.

We are currently planning to stock trout again in Waccabuc and Oscaleta as part of a life-cycle management program. Trout, unlike the bass and pickerel, will not reproduce naturally and therefore need to be replaced to maintain the fishery. We will probably stock about 500 fish, a little less than half last year's number. We finance the stocking program with monies from the Three Lakes Council fish management fund. If you would like to support this fund, you may do so directly by sending money to the fish management fund c/o the Three Lakes Council or direct a portion of your dues to this worthy cause. Just indicate your intention on your check. We thank all of you who have supported this program in the past.



While we often talk about the trout and bass in our lakes, there are many other species that add immensely to our overall fishing experience. The largest fish in our lakes are the common carp, which typically weigh between 12 and 18 pounds and put up a great fight. They don't jump like bass, but they can easily run off 50 to 60 yards of line in a blink, testing the most skilled angler's ability. (More often than not, the carp win). I had the opportunity to taste an Oscaleta smoked carp last summer, thanks to George Harris, and it was excellent.

We have great pan fishing as well. Yellow perch are numerous and very tasty. For many years, a 9-plus pound black bullhead taken from Lake Waccabuc held the state record, and a white perch (3 lb. 1 oz.) taken from Lake Oscaleta in 1991 still holds the state and world records. We also enjoy trophy-size black crappie, which frequently reach 2 to 2.5 pounds... although they are a little harder to come by.

All in all, a wonderful opportunity awaits anyone who wishes to wet a line.

So, take someone you care about fishing this summer. It's a great way to unwind and enjoy the natural environment that surrounds us.

The Fish Committee would love to get your input, so please feel free to contact Gene Tedaldi at 763-5544 or Joe Tansey at 763-3456.

CATCH AND RELEASE GUIDELINES

In order to "well manage" our natural resources, we ask that you aim to release as many or more fish than you keep. The following guidelines should be followed if you intend to release your catch.

Bait fishing — When the fish is brought to the side of the boat or into a net and the hook is *not* visible, cut the line close to the mouth and immediately release the fish. Do *not* hold the fish up by the line, as this will likely result in internal injuries and possible death. If the hook is visible, remove it and return the fish to the water.

Lure fishing — Remove the lure as carefully as possible and release the fish. When using soft baits, rubber worms, and the fish is hooked deep, cut the line close to the mouth and release to fish.

—Joe Tansey

News & Notes

SEPTIC TANK CLEANING

Once again, the Three Lakes Council is organizing a group discount for septic tank cleaning. These tanks should be pumped yearly if you live on the lake and bi-yearly if you do not. If solids, sludge and scum reach a high level, they will wash into and clog the drain field surrounding the tank, jeopardizing the health of the lake and, quite possibly, your well. Please contact Mimi Shane at 763-6564 if you are interested in participating.

Educational Seminars

The Lewisboro Lake Alliance will be sponsoring a series of four educational seminars presented by the Norwalk River Watershed Initiative Committee in September and October at the Lake Katonah clubhouse. They will be held in the evening and will feature speakers from Cornell Extension Services. Topics are relative to living on lakes in an acceptable environmental and ecological manner.

Aeration Finances Update

In order to help offset some of the costs associated with operating the TLC, the Board of Directors has authorized an increase of \$25.00 in the annual dues for all families belonging to the Council effective June 30th. This is the first such increase in the history of the Council. Total operating costs (including taxes, electricity and maintenance to support the aerators, insurance and the fish stocking program) now approximate \$14,200.00 a year. The Council is not able to survive on dues alone; we depend heavily on the generosity of all members to support the preservation of our three lakes.

The aerators, so important to Waccabuc, increase the dissolved oxygen throughout the entire lake allowing the fish to exist in a larger portion of the total vertical water mass. At the same time, they make oxygen available to the organic material (weeds, leaves, etc.) in the lake thereby slowing the aging process. While our two aerators certainly contribute to the operating costs of the TLC, they, as you can determine, contribute immeasurably to the health and welfare of the lake itself. It is very likely that we will be doing some maintenance this summer on perhaps both aerators. We do not know the exact extent of the work, but it will hit the checkbook. For those of us who reside on or utilize Lake Waccabuc, please be financially supportive.

Thank you !!
Ross M. Weale
Treasurer



Three Lakes Council Annual Picnic

Enjoy the beach, your neighbors, the lake, music and dancing! We'll have our grand cookout featuring filet mignon, salads, beer, wine, soda, hamburgers, hot dogs, etc. Get informed on all the new Three Lakes news!

Place: Waccabuc Country Club
lake front

Date: Saturday, July 29th

Time: 6:00 PM-to ?

Admission: free for families who have paid their \$50 yearly dues. All guests and non-members welcome at \$10.00 per person.

News & Notes

Storm Drain Disaster

For more than 15 years storm drains have been systematically installed along the roads. The past and present highway superintendents answer to no one when it comes to their placement or design, and they've maintained little in the way of records.

The Three Lakes Council has been conducting total coliform (fecal bacteria) tests twice a month in June and September and weekly in July and August for 10 years, through 20 sites on all three lakes. As we've taken samples, we've noted prevailing weather patterns.

The Three Lakes Council has noticed an incremental rise in the coliform proliferation in recent years. To attempt to evaluate the reasons for this increase, we contacted Mr. Douglas Bartel, the senior science director of J.J.H.S. He assigned one of his students, local neighbor Henrietta Treyz, the task of analyzing 3 years' worth of coliform bacteria water testing data collected by the Three Lakes Council.

The results were chilling and of indisputable statistical significance. The areas of our lakes near where storm drains empty had significant increases in coliform after precipitation. Especially problematic is the west end of Lake Waccabuc, where a great number of the storm drains along Mead and Post Office Roads dump their unfiltered contents. Oscaleta Road also has storm drains that direct non-point source pollution toward the canal and bird sanctuary between the lakes.

With the introduction of the storm drains, there is no longer any natural aqua purification (when run-off naturally filters through dirt, rocks, gravel, and plants), causing a drastic increase in concentrations of serious non-point source of pollution.

This study only screened for fecal coliform counts. Other local lakes are experiencing high build-ups of silt directly near the conduits that empty road contaminants from storm drains. It would be interesting to conduct additional tests to determine what chemical contaminants are entering our lakes through these unfiltered channels.

If any of you readers are at all dismayed by these findings you may call or write:

Ms. Sabrina Charney
New York City Watershed Programs Mgr.
Department of Planning
432 Michaelian Office Bldg.
White Plains, NY 10601

Coalition

The Three Lakes Council has joined the Lewisboro Open Space coalition which formed early this year for the purpose of promoting a land preservation program in Lewisboro. This coalition has joined coalitions in neighboring towns in a Westchester Open Space Alliance, coordinated by the Westchester Land Trust, in order to have a regional presence and possibly attract County and /or State funds for land preservation efforts. The main goal of the coalition is for the Town to place a bond issue before the voters in November which would fund the purchase of environmentally sensitive open space. This fund would be financed by an average \$100 per household surcharge on our property tax.

Although gifts of land and easements on property is commendable and the updated Master Plan will provide some new protections for environmentally sensitive land, the only certain way to protect some of the remaining valuable landscape is to purchase it. The Conservation Advisory Council inventory showing "green" corridors existing now shows the possibilities for meaningful open space protection (see p. 9).

The other members of the Lewisboro coalition include Old Goldens Bridge Neighborhood Association, Goldens Bridge Community Association, Lewisboro Garden Club, Lake Katonah Association, Lake Kitchawan Association, Lewisboro Horsemen's Association, Waccabuc Landowners Council, Lewisboro Land Trust and Bedford Audubon Society.

Attention: All Aspiring Fisher People

Interested in learning the basics of fishing? I invite anyone over the age of 7 to give me a call for free lessons. We'll follow good fishing practices (catch and release more than you take). An adult must accompany children between the ages of 7 and 11, and a NYS fishing license is required for those 16 years of age or older. I will supply equipment to those who do not have it. This offer is available on a limited basis and is open only to Three Lakes Council members. If you're interested give me, Joe Tansey, a call for further information at 914-763-3456.

