



# NEWSLETTER FALL 2014

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members:

As fall arrives and the leaves start to turn, it's important to reflect on what TLIS, with your strong support, have accomplished during 2014. It seems there is never enough time, in what seemed like a very brief summer, to do all that we aspire to; however, I am proud to say that we:

- Had a record attendance at our annual July breakfast and raised substantial funds from both the sales of bags, shirts, and auction items. Due to what we fear may be the limit on what the current building we use can handle, next year's breakfast may be at a new and larger location. We'll let you know in the spring newsletter of any changes.
- Can claim that member support from individuals has never been greater with total donations meeting or exceeding actual dues paid. It's my opinion that that fact, by itself, indicates TLIS is on the right track in meeting the needs of its members. Membership in TLIS, as a percentage of total lakefront owners, is one of the highest in the region! I would like to personally thank every member for both your membership and any donation you have given. Due to both costs and lack of volunteer services, it is not easible to send individual thank you notes to each and every donor, but please be assured that individual contributions are so greatly appreciated and provide the much needed motivation to keep us going.
- Participated in a very successful chipping program with the assistance of the Maine Forest Service. In one day, we were able to chip debris from over 15 lakefront properties in order to reduce the fire threat to those homes.
- Continue to refine and consolidate our mailing and members lists to reduce any possible errors and reflect changes in ownership of some properties. This is an ongoing processthat we continue to refine and improve on.

- Have had lengthy conversations and meetings with local law enforcement and local officials about the continuing effect of both legal and illegal fireworks around the lake area. There are additional comments in regards to this issue in this newsletter.
- Continue to attack the milfoil problem in Purgatory stream. Despite not providing the physical help we have in the past, the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed continue to mat the remaining milfoil in the stream with goal of total eradication in the future.
- Provided funding, through our alliance with the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed, for routine boat inspections (for invasive species) of all boats entering and leaving the Tacoma Lakes chain at the Purgatory boat launch. Funding allows us to cover the launch on almost all Friday, Saturday, Sundays and holidays throughout the summer.
- Had a very active plant patrol group on the lake system this year as is further elaborated on in this newsletter.
- Have taken the initial steps to upgrade our website to make it much more user friendly to all that visit it. We look forward to the initial roll out of the new improved site in the very near future and will let you know when it is available.
- Lastly, we continue to work with local officials on what is needed to maintain and improve our dam in Purgatory, without which, we would all be looking at mud flats and not the crystal clear water we see know. All I can say is that slow, but steady progress is being made and this is a year round project that has no end in sight.

I would encourage you to utilize the services of the businesses that have so generously supported us not only in the past but continue to do so. They are for the most part local businesses owned by local people, who depend on your support to stay in business!

We will continue to send out regular updates through much of the year by email or on Facebook. It is too time consuming and expensive to send the updates by regular mail. If you have an email address and have not provided it to us please send it to us at [memberservice@tacomalakes.org](mailto:memberservice@tacomalakes.org). We will be happy to add you to the email list so long as you are a current member.

Lastly, I encourage you to ask your lakefront neighbors, particularly if they are new, if they are members of TLIS. If they are not members please encourage them to join. Suggest they check out our website, which is loaded with information. It's only though strength in numbers that we can be the influence we hope to be on what happens in our watershed!

Sincerely,

**Bruce Doyle**  
President, TLIS







# TREASURER'S REPORT

The Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society has enjoyed another successful financial year in 2014.

Membership as of September 4, 2014 is 218, just shy of last year's total of 230. We are striving to pass last year's total membership, so please send in your dues if you have not done so already. Donations have been excellent again this year, totaling \$3,219.80 as of August 31, 2014. All donors are recognized on our webpage and in this newsletter. Thank you everyone!

Our total revenue for 2014 is up \$469.57 over last year. Most of this came from our record turnout at the Annual Meeting breakfast. This year over 100 people attended, thank you everyone. We also thank everyone for your wonderful support at the silent auction, which also raised a record amount of money.

Expenses are below last year, but that is primarily because we have yet to receive the final billing from the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed for the boat inspectors. Your board has also authorized \$1,000.00 to update our website. While we are spending more money on inspectors and the website this year, we will end the year with a surplus again.

Our grant from the State of Maine was increased by \$100.00 this year to \$1,900.00. We are very grateful that Litchfield and Monmouth continued the same level of support to TLIS at \$1,000.00 and \$500.00 respectively.

We continue to invest our surplus safely in a government insured checking account and two CD's. The interest rates are very low but our money is safe.

A complete financial statement is available at any time to member only. Please send your request to [memberservice@tacomalakes.org](mailto:memberservice@tacomalakes.org) or call me at 860-614-6321.

Thank you,

**Buddy Potts**  
Treasurer, TLIS



# TLIS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 07.01.14 - 06.30.15

## PRESIDENT

**Bruce Doyle**  
31 Doyle St | Litchfield, ME 04350 | 207-312-3698 | [bdoyles@roadrunner.com](mailto:bdoyles@roadrunner.com)

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**Terry Averill**  
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*The Tacoma lakes annual water drawdown will commence on October 15th. Lakefront owners should prepare for this annual drawdown by removing or repositioning any boats or docks that may be effected by this water lowering.*



# DONOR LIST

The Officers, Board of Directors would like to thank the following individuals for their generous cash donations this year. Thank you for supporting the programs of the Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society!

Please note: this is NOT a membership list. It's a list of people who made donations in addition to paying their \$15.00 dues.

- Anonymous
- Jim & Jan Adams
- Linda Alonzo
- Steven & Kathy Aucoin
- Richard & Joline Banaitis
- Ronald & Rita Bard
- Roger & Janice Beaudoin
- Dana & Nancy Beale
- Gary Bell
- Lawrence & Joline Bell
- Kevin & Colleen Benedix
- Jeffrey Blais & Michael Horton
- William & Robin Bonn
- Gary Bouchard & Gaylene McHale
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- Brian Boyer
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- Roger & Joan Champagne
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- Normand & Lauretta Demers
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- Claude & Brenda Fontain
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- Stephen Roberge
- Roger & Joyce St. Pierre
- Theresa Samson
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- Ronald & Marilyn Segars
- Roger Segars
- Grant & Bridget Siwinski
- Richard & Joni Smith
- Patricia Soboleski
- Gardner & Denise Stevenson
- Mark & Michele Stowe
- Lorraine Szykiewicz
- Remi & Patricia Theberge
- James Thompson & Shareen Gustin-Thompson
- Helen Thorne
- Barbara Tillson
- Todd & Bridgett Wagner
- Todd & Bridgett Wagner -  
In Honor of Alita Manchester
- Don & Evelyn Waterman
- Dian White
- James & Theresa White
- Susie Wilding-Hartford
- Gary & Gayle Williams

TOTAL: \$ 3,324.80

# TACOMA LAKES INVASIVE PLANT PATROL

2014 was a busy year for the Tacoma Lakes invasive plant patrol. The team used new scopes that were developed for easy use from a double kayak, with one person paddling and the other looking. Areas targeted this year were Jimmy Stream and the Woodbury boat launch. Once an area is examined, the completed survey forms are sent to the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program and are available for other interested agencies to review. TLIS would like to thank team members Diane Clay, Buffy Dematteis, Suzy Wilding-Hartford, Rainey Doyle, Millie Donahue, Dian White, and Lynn Sidman for the invaluable work they performed this season.



Photo credit: Rainey Doyle

# ELEVATION CERTIFICATE AND THE LETTER OF MAP AMENDMENT (LOMA)

A request for an elevation certificate is normally triggered by a mortgage loan application. The financial institution determines the structure is in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) by an in-house department or by using a flood determination company and informs the loan applicant an Elevation Certificate is needed. The applicant secures the services of a licensed Land Surveyor to establish necessary on-site elevations required to prepare the certificate. Information from the document is used to determine if the structure is at risk of possible flood damage. Flood insurance is required if the structure is below the 100-year flood elevation, also known as the base flood elevation (BFE). Premiums are set by the insurance company based on the data provided on the elevation certificate. Many times it is discovered the structure is not in the SFHA because the lowest adjacent grade (LAG) at the building is at or above the BFE. If so, the next step is to request a LOMA to remove the structure from the SFHA.

A LOMA is a request by a homeowner, or its representative, to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to remove their dwelling, a portion of their parcel or the entire parcel from a (SFHA). Issuance of a LOMA removes the federal mandatory flood insurance purchase requirement for federally backed mortgage loans. A lender has the prerogative to require flood insurance even if a LOMA is issued.

Not paying flood insurance may seem like an ideal result because the savings can be in the thousands. One may want to consider it has been stated in many publications that around 40% of insurance claims are outside the 100-year flood zone. So it may not be prudent to cancel the insurance policy without first doing some research on the body of water the structure is adjacent to. Seeking knowledge of longtime residents, town officials, or recent flood data may reveal flooding traits of the body of water contrary to the base flood elevation.





# WILL WE LOSE

# OUR LOONS?

by Buddy Potts

## Can anyone imagine life on the Tacoma Lakes without our resident loons?

Sadly we face an entirely man made crisis which holds the possibility that the loons we all love will leave our lakes forever. This crisis is the legalization in Maine of high power fireworks for consumer use.

Everyone who lives on our lakes has noticed that almost every weekend of the spring and summer is now very different than it was before Maine legalized fireworks. Lakefront owners, tenants and guests are using a variety of high powered fireworks without regard for the impact of these fireworks on the lake water quality, wildlife or their neighbors. The fireworks sold today are not the sparklers and firecrackers of old. The high power devices sold today go hundreds of feet into the air and make explosions rivaling anything heard at a commercial fireworks event.

## Why should we care if someone is using legal fireworks on the Tacoma Lakes? They are legal after all, right?

Wrong. Lots of things which are legal have negative impacts on our lakes. High phosphorous fertilizer is legal in Maine, but most people know that to use it on their lawns will increase algae growth in our lakes so they don't use it. It is legal in Maine to bring boats from other lakes and even other states into our lakes, but we are spending \$5000 this summer for inspectors to inspect boats which are legally launched from the Woodbury Pond boat ramp. It is legal to burn on our lakes with a permit, but TLIS has worked diligently to develop a fire protection plan for our lakes and offered a chipping program this summer as alternative to burning to help keep pollution out of our water. I could go on, but you get the point.

Over the last few years TLIS has published detailed information about the pollution from these fireworks which is going into our water every time they are used through our newsletter and website. These chemicals include lead, aluminum, and phosphorous among many others. The effects of these chemicals accumulate over time. Maine rightfully banned lead tackle because of the danger to wildlife and humans from lead poisoning. Following that ban fireworks were legalized, reintroducing lead. Why didn't the legislature consider the pollution from these explosive devices before they were legalized?

A great deal of loon habitat has been lost in the United States over the last 100 years because of human activities on lakes. Because Maine lakes have traditionally been less populated the loons have been relatively stable here. It is well documented and understood that loons are very sensitive to human activities, in particular noise. Here is just one of many sources of information on loons and noise from the Adirondack Cooperative Loon Program:

**Vulnerability: Loons are sensitive to the loud noises and water disturbance that accompanies human recreation on lakes. They also have been affected by pollution in the form of oil spills, and acid rain that increases the ingestion of chemicals throughout the food chain.**

Perhaps you noticed that 2014 was a poor year for loon breeding on the Tacoma Lakes. To think that the months of noise we now experience from fireworks was not a factor is simply incorrect. Loons hate sudden loud noise. Every time fireworks go off by our camp we hear the loons scream. There is a great deal of research on line and all of it indicates that loons will leave areas with excessive noise. Add to that the pollution being introduced to our water. Consumer legal fireworks have created an unprecedented threat to the loons on the Tacoma's. No loons may well be the ultimate price the Tacoma Lakes pay for the fireworks being sold and used in Maine today.

Maine's fireworks law is poorly written and creates a difficult burden for small towns like Litchfield. The fireworks law has a local option provision which on the surface seems like a good idea. All of the major cities in Maine have passed strict bans and dozens of communities have passed tight restrictions, including Monmouth. Why can't Litchfield do something?

Recently members of your board of directors met with the Kennebec County Sheriff's department to discuss enforcement of restrictions should Litchfield ban or restrict fireworks under the local option. What we learned is that neither the Sheriff's Department nor the State Police can enforce local option restrictions. They can enforce state laws only. Under Maine law towns must enforce town regulations. Litchfield does not have a police department. What this means is that if Litchfield were to pass local restrictions there is literally no one to enforce the restrictions. Monmouth has a police department so they can enforce their restrictions. Litchfield, and many small towns in Maine for that matter, cannot do anything about the fireworks being used in their communities because they have no way to enforce local restrictions.

Where does this leave us? The only way we can protect the Tacoma's is through legislation being passed in Augusta and signed by the governor. There is supposed to be a legislative review of the fireworks legislation in the near future. Please write your legislators and tell them that small towns need changes to the law to allow enforcement by Sheriff's Departments and the



Photo credit: Buddy Potts





**“The high power devices sold today go hundreds of feet into the air and make explosions rivaling anything heard at a commercial fireworks event.”**

State Police of local restrictions. Small towns should not be precluded from imposing common sense restrictions to protect wildlife and lake water quality because they do not have the tools to enforce local restrictions.

If we do nothing the quality of life on the Tacoma's will be degraded forever. You can make a difference. Please don't use fireworks yourself anywhere near the water and please ask your neighbors to do the same. Please write your legislators. Please attend commercial fireworks shows instead of using your own. Please don't wait it is too late.

Please consider this from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, where they face a similar crisis from legal fireworks. You can make a difference!

### **THE FINAL IMPACT**

Altogether the damaging effect fireworks have is overwhelming. They impact water quality by affecting the odor and taste of drinking water. On the economic side, excessive algal and cyanobacteria growth due to phosphorus or contamination due to firework fallout increases water treatment costs, degrades fishing and boating activities, and impacts tourism and property values. The cost of damage done to property, the litter and the effect upon both wildlife and human life is incalculable. The Department of Environmental Services urges you to consider the effects of fireworks and perhaps find an alternative to a problem that is only growing with time.

## **ORDER YOUR TLIS T-SHIRT TODAY!**

ALL TEE SHIRTS MUST BE PAID FOR AT THE TIME OF ORDER. PAYMENT IS BY CHECK ONLY.

Make checks payable to and mail to:

Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society  
PO Box 293  
Litchfield, ME 04350-0293

Detach the form below to order. Submit order by mail to the address above. Allow 3 - 4 weeks from order to delivery. Available sizes, prices, and colors are listed below. Shirts will be delivered to Bruce Doyle. We will email or call you when your shirts are in so you can pick them up.

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3 XL: \$25.00; 3 XL Tall: \$25.00; 4XL: \$25.00  
White, gray or yellow

#### **CHILD**

XS: \$22.00; S: \$22.00; M: \$22.00; L: \$22.00; XL: \$22.00  
White, ash gray or light pink

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**Tacoma Lakes Improvement Society T-Shirt Order Form**

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