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# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2016

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

### Dear Members and others:

Welcome to our spring newsletter.

I am happy to report that TLA will be celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and the current organization is committed to continuing its efforts to serve its members and protect the Tacoma Lakes watershed for current and future generations. These efforts would not be possible without the support from you and your generous donations, which allow us to continue our mission.

I would like to start by announcing that by the time you receive this newsletter, I will have stepped down as president and have been capably replaced by Director James Adams. It has been a pleasure serving you the past five years; however, every organization needs change and a fresh perspective if it is going to successfully continue to function. President Adams has the initiative and fresh ideas that will lead TLA to even greater success. Rest assured, I will continue to serve on the board to lend support to both President Adams and the rest of the board.

Despite the many accomplishments of TLA during 2015, which included both a name change and an IRS designation of TLA as a legally recognized charitable organization, TLA will again have a busy agenda in 2016. The Woodbury dam remains on our radar list and directors will again work closely with local officials to ensure that the dam receives regular routine maintenance. In addition, TLA will continue to encourage its plant patrol team to monitor our lakes to provide an early detection of any invasive species that may be introduced into our lake system. That effort, combined with boat inspections at the Purgatory boat launch, is our main defensive against the introduction of those species into our lakes.

TLA continues to be approached by more local business sponsors, who recognize the value we serve them by our ability to reach out to local property owners. You may notice an enhanced advertising section in this newsletter and I would encourage you to utilize these business sponsors.

Lastly, to celebrate TLA's 75th anniversary, we have scheduled our annual meeting and breakfast for July 9th at the Carrie Ricker School in Litchfield. I would hope that you would all come help us celebrate this memorable event.

Wishing you a pleasant and enjoyable summer season.

Regards,  
Bruce Doyle, President



Photo credit: Mark Gilbert

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The Tacoma Lakes Association enjoyed a very successful financial year in 2015. Major programs were funded including our Courtesy Boat Inspections at the Woodbury Boat launch, plant paddle surveys, a greatly improved professionally prepared newsletter and a professional website update. We purchased 3 used paddle boards to assist the plant paddle volunteers. Our annual meeting breakfast was a smashing success. A handful of volunteers set up, cooked and cleaned up after feeding 110 people!

2015 included two time consuming projects to bring our association into a new era, reflecting our change from a social organization to an environmental organization. Our members voted at the 2015 Annual Meeting to change our organization's name and convert our non-profit status to 501 (c) 3. We worked with a local law firm and a local accounting firm to help us with the required government filings. The name change was approved by the state in the fall and the non-profit change was approved by the IRS during the early winter. Your donations to TLA are now tax deductible. These changes were very important to our future.

Our Facebook page grew leaps and bounds during 2015. We now have 307 page likes; nearly double the total from a year ago. Membership reached the highest level in over a decade at 254, up 22 from the previous year. We still have much work to do to grow our membership as it remains too low, particularly considering the many hours of hard work done by Society volunteers each year.

Your membership dues are a major source of funding for the Society. In 2015 dues totaled \$3810.00. 2014 Donations nearly doubled from 2014 to an incredible \$6627.00. We continue to grow our surplus as a safety net for future issues we may encounter.

Once again in 2015 we applied for a state grant to help support our boat inspection program. We were awarded a \$2,000.00 grant, a \$100.00 increase over 2014. This was great news as the demand for this money continues to exceed the amount of money available. We are very grateful for the grant. We also thank our two towns. We received a \$1,000.00 grant from the Town of Litchfield and a \$500.00 grant from the Town of Monmouth. These grants fund a significant portion of our Courtesy Boat Inspection program.

Advertising by our business sponsors is also an important part of our funding. Please be sure to support these wonderful local businesses by purchasing their products and services. You will find their ads in this newsletter and on our website. Let them know you are a TLA member when you visit and thank them for supporting your association!

We continue to invest our surplus safely in a government insured checking account and two CDs. The interest rates are very low but your money is safe. Our audit committee has reviewed all of our 2015 financial records and found them to be in order. A full report from the audit committee will be made at the Annual Meeting.



Photo credit: Amy Lachance Charest

After Bruce Doyle's plea last year several people have stepped forward to serve on the Board. Thank you everyone! We continue to need more volunteers help with the workload associated with a busy association.

A complete 2015 financial statement is available at any time to members only. Please send us your request to [memberservice@tacomalakes.org](mailto:memberservice@tacomalakes.org) or call me at 860-614- 6321.

Buddy Potts, TLA Treasurer



**TLA OFFICERS & DIRECTORS  
07.01.15 – 06.30.16**

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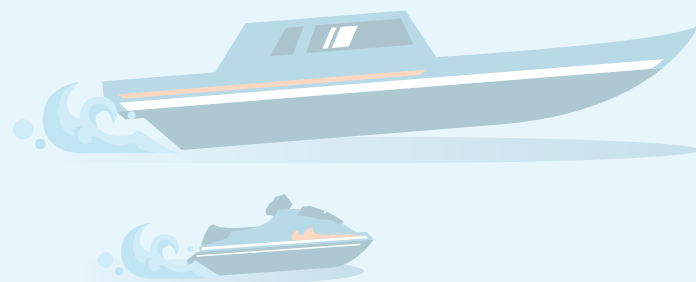
Last summer TLA was contacted by Tim Thurston, Navigational Aids Supervisor with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. Tim explained that his department maintains and inspects marker buoys on more than 40 lakes scattered throughout the state. Tim was seeking TLA help. He and his crews place and maintain the navigational buoys in these lakes, but they are also required to do visual inspections every three weeks throughout the summer season. Early this spring, TLA entered into a formal 3 year contractual agreement with the Department to carry out these inspections.

On Tuesday April 19th, Director James Adams met with Tim Thurston on a bright, early (6:00 am), and brisk spring morning to learn what his crew does. Each marker buoy is numbered, and records are kept regarding its installation date, the length of chain required, when said chain was replaced, and the longitude and latitude coordinates of each buoy. On that day, 2 chains and one buoy were replaced. All of the 20 others were inspected, data stickers applied as needed, and their placement was monitored.

As one can imagine, doing this service work, traveling throughout the state, and doing the tri-weekly evaluations is very difficult to accomplish, given tight state budgets, in Maine's short summer season. TLA's contractual agreement with this department will substantially ease that burden.

Director Adams has volunteered to be the point person for TLA, and to also complete the inspections every 3 weeks. However, all TLA members can help! If you see a buoy that appears to be damaged, has moved substantially out of place, or just does not look right, please contact Director Adams at 268-2070 and he will check it out, and if needed, contact Tim Thurston.

These buoys are an important safety aid for all who boat on our beautiful lakes, and we can all play a role in ensuring they are in good shape, doing their job to warn boaters of hazards, shallow waters, and headway speed zones.



**TLA 2016 ANNUAL MEETING**

The Tacoma Lakes Association is pleased to announce the location, date and time of our 2016 Annual Meeting.

The breakfast is open to the general public. The Annual Meeting, Office Reports and Speaker Program are member only benefits. Silent Auction and a 50/50 raffle will again be offered

Volunteers are needed for set up, food preparation, cooking and clean up after the meal. Can you help? If so please contact Rainey Doyle at 207-577-8878 or drop us a note at: memberservice@tacomalakes.org. Thank you!

**SATURDAY JULY 09, 2016**

Carrie Ricker Middle School | 573 Richmond Rd. (Rt. 197) | Litchfield, ME 04350

**PUBLIC BREAKFAST:** 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM

**ANNUAL MEETING & OFFICERS' REPORTS:** 9:30 AM – 9:45 AM

**SPEAKER PROGRAM:** 9:45 AM – 10:30 AM

**ADJOURN:** 10:30 AM

*The speakers will be announced at a later date.*

**LEAD FREE EXCHANGE**

TLA is partnering with the Maine Audubon Society (MAS) to participate in that organization's *Fish Lead Free* campaign. The goal of the campaign is to increase the use of lead-free tackle on Maine's lakes and ponds by providing lead-free products and lead-tackle recycling assistance for anglers, as well as building awareness of Maine's current lead tackle laws. *Fish Lead Free* is a cooperative partnership among Maine Audubon, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine BASS Nation, Maine Lakes Society and the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine. Generous funding for the *Fish Lead Free* campaign has been provided by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust and Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust.

The campaign will offer lead tackle exchange kits for organizations and individuals, access to a loon multi-media presentation and other resources to help anglers transition to lead-free tackle. The campaign also funds a Tufts Veterinary student to help with the collection and necropsy of dead loons found on Maine's lakes and ponds. TLA anticipates holding a lead free exchange at its annual meeting on July 9th.

**2016 Membership Dues are now due!**  
Please use the membership application included in the newsletter and mail it with your check. If you prefer you can also pay your dues online with your credit card or PayPal account.

Please visit our website at  
<http://tacomalakes.org/membership-form/>







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**WOODBURY DAM UPDATE** Citizens of Litchfield, at a special town meeting last year, voted to spend approximately \$28,000 to pay for badly needed repairs to the Woodbury Dam. The Woodbury Dam, sometimes referred to as the Purgatory Dam, is the dam that controls the water level in the Tacoma Lakes chain. Without the dam, most lake front owners would not have usable or any water frontage.



As of this newsletter, the Town of Litchfield has contacted the Town of Monmouth and received a commitment that Monmouth selectpersons will place a warrant article in Monmouth's budget requesting \$7,000 to reimburse Litchfield for repairs to the Woodbury Dam. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the Tacoma Lakes water body is in the town of Monmouth. The Monmouth town meeting is scheduled for sometime in June and TLA will publish the exact date once it is known. It is important that Monmouth residents, who own land on Tacoma Lakes and/or are members of TLA show their support for this article by voting for passage of that article. Currently Monmouth contributes \$500 yearly to TLA and that money is used for boat inspection duties at the Purgatory boat landing. It is also hoped that future yearly contributions to either TLA or the Town of Litchfield can be increased.

In regards to the Town of Litchfield, it is believed that selectpersons have approved a warrant article to spend \$4,000 in the next fiscal year for maintenance to the dam and payment for the services of the dam keeper. This is the same amount approved in 2015. It is important that Litchfield residents and particularly voting TLA members show their support for this warrant article. As previously mentioned, the Litchfield town meeting is scheduled for June 18th starting at 8:00AM and ending when the entire budget submission is discussed and voted. This year's meeting will again be held at the Litchfield Sportsman's Clubhouse on the Litchfield Hallowell road, across from the town's transfer station.

After the extensive work done to the dam last year, it is critically important that regular routine maintenance work be done on the dam. At this point, the dam surface needs to be coated with a waterproof membrane and this membrane should be applied on a regular basis. Additionally, TLA would like the gauge on the dam to be set based on sea level, as is done with every other dam in the local watershed. It is anticipated that the Woodbury Dam Committee will meet this spring and bring forward a request to the Litchfield selectpersons to approve funding to have this work done, as well as some other routine maintenance.

## TACOMA LAKES INVASIVE PLANT PATROL TEAM

Nonnative or invasive aquatic plants are one of the biggest concerns for any system of lakes. There are several types of invasive species including several of the milfoils, hydrilla, and others that have been documented in Maine lakes. Because Maine has been active in identifying and controlling these invasives for several decades, the state is fortunate have kept most of the problem under control. The Tacoma Lakes are free of such species so far, but other water bodies such as Pleasant Pond, Cobbossee Stream, and Annabessacook have not been so fortunate. TLA's IPP is fortunate to currently have five certified plant patrollers along with volunteers who have been learning from them. IPP's goal is to have a much larger number folks on the lakes who have the skill to identify and report suspicious plants before they spread.

The IPP is gearing up for another active season. Last summer IPP submitted several milfoil samples to the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) and were relieved to find that all submission were identified as native milfoils and of no threat to the lake system. Each year the IPP focuses on one particular area of the lakes unless an owner or other individual has a concern that needs addressing immediately. In 2106, the IPP added a facebook page where the team can upload pictures and content to keep viewers updated with the teams progress. Simply look under facebook under Litchfield Maine Tacoma Lakes Plant Patrol Team.

Another addition this year will be the use of paddle boards Yes, that's right. On a sunny day the view of the bottom when standing on a board is extensive. TLA has purchased paddle boards for the IPP team, and the IPP will be holding a couple of "Plant and Paddle" sessions in which we hope to encourage young (and young at heart) folks to try out these paddle boards and, at the same time, learn to recognize what they are looking at while they're out having fun.

Dates of the IPP meetings will be placed both on the TLA and IPP Facebook pages, as well as in the town of Litchfield's Sodalite newsletter. Members and others are encouraged to contact Diane Clay at 268-3247 or at c1l2a3y4@gmail.com for further information.

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# THE LOON'S FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE



by the Loon Preservation Committee

## **In spring, loons arrive on northern lakes as soon as the ice thaws.**

Loons are territorial birds, and a mated pair of loons will defend an area of water from other loons. Small lakes, generally those between 5 and 50 acres, can accommodate one pair of loons. Larger lakes may have more than one pair of breeding loons, with each pair occupying a bay or section of the lake.

Until recently, loons were thought to mate for life. However, banding loons to allow the identification of individuals has shown that loons will often switch mates if their previous mate does not return in the spring or is displaced by a rival loon during the breeding season. Courtship and mating are a quiet time, with the pair swimming and making short dives together. Eventually, the male leads the female to a suitable spot on land to mate. Nest building then begins.



Photo credit:



Photo credit:

Loons build their nests close to the water, often on a small island, muskrat house, half-submerged log, or sedge mat. The same sites are often used from year to year. Loons will use mud, grass, moss, pine needles and/or clumps of mud and vegetation collected from the lake bottom to build a nest. Both the male and female help with nest building.

Usually one or two eggs are laid in late May or June, and incubation of eggs generally lasts 26-28 days. If the eggs are lost, the pair may reneest, often in the same general location. Loon chicks covered in brown-black down appear on the water in late June or July. Chicks can swim right away, but spend time riding on their parents' backs to rest, conserve heat, and avoid predators such as large fish, snapping turtles, gulls and eagles. After their first day or two of life, the loon family moves to a "nursery" area to raise their young and they do not return to the nest.

Chicks are fed small food items including minnows, insects and crayfish caught by their parents for the first few weeks of life, and up until eight weeks of age, the adults are with them most of the time. Gradually, the chicks begin to dive for some



of their own food, and by 12 weeks of age, the chicks are providing almost all of their own food and are able to fly. By the fall, the young are able to look after themselves. Adult loons generally migrate to the ocean to overwinter in October or November. The young follow on their own, often just before ice-in of their natal lake. They will not return to their natal lakes until they are 26 months old or older, and might not breed until they are six or seven years old.

**Loons are generally solitary birds. However, they will sometimes gather for short periods in small groups of up to 20 birds in late summer and fall, and can sometimes be found in groups on their ocean wintering grounds.**





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**TACOMA LAKES ASSOCIATION  
2016 MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$15.00**

**Thank you for your membership in the Association. Your membership dues are essential to support our many activities. Together all of us can help to keep Tacoma Lakes beautiful and healthy. Please print any data legibly so we can make sure we receive the information correctly! Thanks!**

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Tacoma Lakes Association  
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**Please remember to update your email address to make sure you're getting the latest TLA news, meeting notices and action alerts!**

Anytime you change your email address please send your new address to [memberservice@tacomalakes.org](mailto:memberservice@tacomalakes.org). We are happy to update our list so you can always receive the latest information from your Association!

TLA respects the privacy of its members and does not share contact information, including email addresses, with anyone.