



Newsletter

Spring 2011

Volume 2, Issue 1

Association Leaders

Brian Harrington
President
Dave Clark, Vice
President
John Foye, Treasurer
Ken Cannon, Webmaster
Paula Kuketz, Water
Safety Committee
John Foye, Membership
Committee
Sara Grady, Invasive
Species Committee
Geri Williams,
Newsletter Editor
Dave Clark, Government
Liaison
Marleen von Goeler,
Education Committee
Eb von Goeler, Water
Quality Committee

Upcoming Event

Sat. April 30, 10 am
Herring Run Visitors'
Center

Meet with Naturalist to
learn about the herring
migration and observe
the annual herring run

Upcoming Meeting

June 20, 7:00 pm
New Testament Church
Long Pond Rd.

Website

TheHerringPondsWater
shed.org



President Brian Harrington braving ice and cold in his kayak to obtain December water samples for testing.

Challenges and Partnerships

From Brian Harrington, President

At the end of January I attended the winter meeting of the Massachusetts Congress of Lake and Pond Associations. I came away with stepped-up enthusiasm as well as lots of new information and thoughts about our local activities and their place in a bigger picture. That bigger picture includes some huge challenges if we are to keep our commonwealth lakes and ponds, including our own in Plymouth, in good health.

I was especially impressed by how parts of our state and Town governments have developed partnerships with citizen groups such as our own

Herring Ponds Watershed Association. Quite simply many of our state agencies want to accomplish goals that they cannot attain on their own, and building **partnerships** is an effective way of gaining their goals, which, of course, reflect goals that many of our Commonwealth voters believe in.

An example from our own association is our water-monitoring program, too expensive for our Association to pay for, but needed and wanted by our membership and our Town as part of Plymouth's programs with the state. The state and the Town have supplied dollars to pay for water analysis and other monitoring from pond samples.

Several times a year our Association supplies boats and volunteers needed to collect the crucial samples. We are in our third year of this effort. We expect the monitoring will tell us where we need to focus work to reduce the growing pollution of our Herring Ponds Watershed.

As residents in the watershed, members of our own association will some day benefit from our monitoring and a healthier watershed achieved in partnership with the town and the state.

We have huge environmental challenges to our commonwealth lakes and watersheds, and few resources to meet them. Voluntary partnerships are resources that together we can build, that are not too expensive, and that hold hope for delivering effective environmental protection of our ponds and watersheds. Your membership support of the Herring Ponds Watershed Association helps sustain these working partnerships. We thank you.

Safety Concern – Cold Shock

From Paula Kuketz, Water Safety Committee

With the ice gone and many anxious to get on the ponds, we remind you of these important facts.

Cold water removes heat from the body 25 times faster than cold air. Survival time can be reduced to minutes. Strong swimmers have died before swimming 100 yards in cold water. Exposure of the head and chest to cold water causes sudden increases in heart rate and blood pressure that may result in cardiac arrest. Other responses to cold water immersion can result in immediate loss of consciousness and drowning

Without a life jacket, a victim may inhale while under water (involuntary gasping reflex) and drown without coming back to the surface. This can only be prevented by wearing a life jacket at all times on the water in the off-season. There is no second chance.

MA State regulations require life jackets be worn between October 15th and May 1st.

Water Quality Report

By Eb von Goeler

October 12 and December 17 were the dates of the last two water sampling events of 2010. The December event came just in the nick of time. Little Herring Pond (LHP) was covered by ice already, and the only access to its waters was the flume at its outflow into Carter's River. Even Great Herring Pond (GHP) had already extensive ice patches. Motor boats had long ago been pulled ashore for the winter, so our intrepid President Brian Harrington took off in his trusty red kayak to face everything Mother Nature would throw at him and made it back with his water samples, while Nelson Wilder wasn't to be deterred from hiking the long steep path down to the LHP flume and back up with his sample. Thus is the dedication of our volunteers!

The analysis results have been posted on our web site theherringpondswatershed.org. The October results show a very low e.coli count, as usual, but elevated phosphorus levels, which is the plant and algae nutrient of concern. The phosphorus level had also been elevated in practically all our previous samples, sometimes at really worrisome levels. So when the December analysis results came in and showed phosphorus measurements uniformly very low, below the eutrophic level, this was a really delightful surprise. It may indicate that the natural P level from the soil and from infiltration from sources like septic systems is low, and that the main source of nutrients during spring and summer may be from runoff caused by lawn fertilizer, animal waste and similar sources. But at present this is pure speculation, and we need more data to better understand the seasonal and annual fluctuations in nutrient levels. We are right now in the second year of sampling water with funds from our three year grant from the Massachusetts Environmental Trust. Several more years of sampling will eventually give us the broad set of data needed for a better understanding of natural and man-made cycles.

Other interesting items showing up in the December data are that nitrogen in LHP is about 5 times higher than in GHP, but still not excessive, that CO₂ is about 50% higher and that water

hardness is about 40% higher, but what all of that means we have yet to learn.

The next sampling event will take place in March or April. We welcome new volunteers and we will train you. Contact me for information at 508-833-2136.

Eb von Goeler

Chair, Water Quality Committee

June 20 Meeting

The first general membership meeting of the year will take place on Monday, June 20th at The New Testament Church on Long Pond Rd. There will be a presentation on proven solutions to remediate storm water runoff which can add to pond pollution,

Recycling Reality

By Dave Clark

With the advent of spring come the visions of spring cleaning and eliminating the buildup of winter's clutter. We have all heard the reports of how much energy is saved by recycling aluminum and metal and the trees saved by recycling mixed paper and old newsprint. The following link will provide all of the details in a comprehensive report:

<http://www.oberlin.edu/recycle/facts.html>.

However, there are a few things that watershed dwellers should keep in mind. Most importantly is to always think of your septic system before you wash that jar, can, or bottle. Septic systems were not designed to digest left over gravy, fuzzy beans, mayonnaise, potato and apple peels, and other non-digested foods. The town wants you to only recycle clean items and that is fine if you are on the municipal waste water system. As for the rest of us, we must put some thought into this. The jar half full of old gravy could either go into the trash, or recycled contents and all. Let's look at the difference between these scenarios. If it goes to the trash bin it will end up at the trash-to-energy plant in Rochester where it will be incinerated at temperatures reaching 2700°. If it goes the recycle route, it will be separated, ground up, and melted down to make new glass at temperatures of at least 2700°F. Either way, the gravy no longer exists; and most important it is not forming a scum layer in your septic tank.

While speaking of septic systems this is a good time to consider when you last had the solids pumped out. If it has been 3 or more years since your septic tank has been inspected, please consider having it pumped and checked.

There are other materials that you can recycle and actually make a little money. Should you have the old triple track aluminum windows, aluminum storm door, copper tubing, brass fittings, etc., gather it up and take it to a place that buys scrap metal. There are dealers in Whitman, Brockton, and other local towns. If you do not have the ability, or desire, to carry these items to a recycler let me know (cell phone: 508-254-2602) and I will take them for you and donate the money to the Herring Ponds Watershed Association.

Nominations for Officers

The association will be holding elections for the two offices of Vice President and Secretary at our Annual Meeting in August. In fact we need someone to step in as temporary Secretary as soon as possible, since Fred Kurker has stepped down recently. If you would consider becoming more involved with the organization by serving in either of these offices please contact Brian Harrington by email: harrfam77@msn.com and he will give your name to the nominating committee. The association needs more members to share in the leadership.



Bring the Family to see the

ANNUAL HERRING RUN

**Saturday, April 30th
10:00 AM
Rain or shine**

**Meet at The Herring Run Visitors Center
By the Canal on Rt. 6**

**For a 20 minute talk with a Naturalist
about the local Herring migration**

**Then we'll view the Herring as they
struggle up the fish ladder to breed in
Great and Little Herring Ponds**

Free - All welcome