

## Moose Lake News

### Cool Facts

**The story about Loons, continued from last week.** The Common Loon swims underwater to catch fish, propelling itself with its feet. It swallows most of its prey underwater. The loon has sharp, rearward-pointing projections on the roof of its mouth and tongue that help it keep a firm hold on slippery fish.

Loons are water birds, only going ashore to mate and incubate eggs. Their legs are placed far back on their bodies, allowing efficient swimming but only awkward movement on land. Loons are agile swimmers, but they move fairly fast in the air also. Migrating loons have been clocked flying at speeds more than 70 mph. A hungry loon family can put away a lot of fish. Biologists estimate that loon parents and their two chicks can eat about a half-ton of fish over a 15-week period.

Loons are like airplanes in that they need a runway for takeoff. In the case of loons, they need from 30 yards up to a quarter mile (depending on the wind) for flapping their wings and running across the top of the water in order to gain enough speed for lift-off.

Loons are well equipped for their submarine maneuvers to catch fish. Unlike most birds, loons have solid bones that make them less buoyant and better at diving. They can quickly blow air out of their lungs and flatten their feathers to expel air within their plumage, so they can dive quickly and swim fast underwater. Once below the surface, the loon's heart slows down to conserve oxygen.

Migrating Common Loons occasionally land on wet highways or parking lots, mistaking them for rivers and lakes. They become stranded without a considerable amount of open water for a long takeoff. A loon may also get stranded, on a pond that is too small.

The Common Loon is flightless for a few weeks after molting all its wing feathers at the same time in midwinter.

Like many young birds, juvenile loons are really on their own after mom and dad leave at about 12 weeks. The parents head off on migration in the fall, leaving juveniles to gather into flocks on northern lakes and make their own journey south a few weeks later. Once the juveniles reach coastal waters on the ocean, they stay there for the next two years. In the third year, young loons return north, although they may not breed for several more years (on average they are six years old when they start breeding). I hope you enjoyed this information that I gathered on the Common Loon. I thought it was interesting and educational.

A week ago, I was driving west bound on Moose Lake Rd when a Black Bear/sow and her three cubs were running down the road in front of me. It was at sunset, so I had my headlights on. They ran for about two hundred feet straight down the road and then took off into the woods. A quarter mile further down the road there was a doe standing alongside the road. She turned and walked into the woods on my right side. Within seconds two bucks, one I would guess was a 6 pointer and the second one was a good 8 pointer. Be careful when driving. Bear hunting season is upon us, and I have been seeing several dead animals including bear alongside the roadway.

This weekend Oct. 1-3 the Hayward Lakes Chapter of Muskies Inc. will hold its 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Musky tournament. The tournament is open for contestants to fish any of the 17 designated lakes in our area. The purpose of the tournament is to raise money for area fishing projects. There will be many prizes

given away including a 2021-1725 Lund Pro Guide Tiller boat and trailer. The boat is equipped with a 60 HP Mercury motor. There also will be a \$1500 gift card from Cabela's along with a \$1000 gift card from Hayward Bait and Tackle. Rods reels, depth finders and GPS units will also be awarded. Moose Lake should have many musky anglers on it this weekend.

Last Thursday September 23<sup>rd</sup> 8 ladies met at Louie's Landing to play their favorite card game, pinochle. They met at 11:00 AM for a nice lunch and then followed by several hands of cards. When things were over Audrey Pearson took first place. Connie Miller came in second and Paula Dalton took home a hand full of dimes for coming in last place. If you are interested in playing pinochle or would like to learn how, you can call my wife Barb at 715-462-4448. They will play again on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Birthday wishes this week are extended to Kathy McCoy on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October. Michelle Koehler on the 3rd, Dan Ogren the 4<sup>th</sup>, George Duewerth on the 5<sup>th</sup> and Jim Martin has his birthday on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Happy Birthday to all. I hope all of you have a fantastic day. There are no anniversaries this week.

That it for this week. If you have any news for the column please send it to [jonarheim@centurytel.net](mailto:jonarheim@centurytel.net) or call me at 715-462-4448