

Alamoosook Lake Association Late fall 2020 Newsletter

www.alamoosooklakeassociation.org

"Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you." - **Frank Lloyd Wright**

In celebrating this Thanksgiving holiday, we want to give thanks to our Alamoosook community and the volunteers who work hard throughout the year to sustain our Lake's beauty. In times where it can feel hard to measure any one person's impact, remember that your support makes a world of difference here. We'll be taking membership dues and contributions through the winter, so please use our paypal link or mail to ALA PO Box 464 Orland, ME 04472. Blessings to you all!

In this letter: Water Quality report (pg2-3), CBI wrap-up (pg2-3), IPP (pg4)

ROCK ON!



Colorful rocks have been spied around Bucksport and Orland the last couple of years. The brainchild of Sharon Radley, the painted rocks may be re-hidden, kept or posted to her facebook page, "Bucksport Rocks." Her friend, Alamoosook's Karen Wardwell and her great granddaughter Macy have embraced the project together. Some of their rocks are true works of art, and they enjoy seeing who finds them and where they end up.



Dear Alamoosook Stewards!

It's a time to be thankful, it's a time to heal, it's a time to continue our stewardship of our common ground and waters of Alamoosook Lake.

There's much to be thankful for: creative on-the-water gatherings during a cautious summer, zoom technology to bring us together virtually in August, the dedication of our Board members and all the Alamoosook All Clear Team surveyors and Courtesy Boat Inspection volunteers and paid CBI staff, Molly Dunbar and Kevin Barry. ALA couldn't accomplish its goals without your membership contributions, generous donors, and our supportive grant funders, Ram Island Conservation Trust.

Our Association is just one of many stakeholders in the Alamoosook Watershed. Community outreach and collaboration with other lake associations and organizations are two aspects of our mission (continued on page 2)

Hookers on the Lake



Before the Newsletter, how did lake people pass the news and catch up with neighbors? A group of dedicated crafters have spent their Tuesdays together for years. While their nimble fingers create works of art, they engage in the original form of social networking: chatting. Deep friendships have formed. Neighbors learn who needs some help, or a meal, or a ride.

Folks will remember at Sallie Page's memorial service, Sue Van Leer stood up and announced in her inimitable style—that Sallie was a HOOKER! Of course, everyone knew about the Alamoosook Happy Hookers. Betty Larson, our supreme rug hooker, led the group for years. Her daughters, Connie and Julie, help carry on the tradition. When the hookers have lost a dear member, they have finished her rug for family members—such a sweet ministry.

to protect this precious land and water.

We face many challenges, but if we're mindful of the long-term goals, keep the communication lines open, and each do what we can to help, no volunteer will be overwhelmed. Looking to the future, please ask yourselves what talent, skill, or interest do you have that you could contribute to the health of the Association and Alamoosook.

How can we strengthen our CBI and Alamoosook All Clear Teams? What can we do to prevent the spread of forest insect pests such as the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and the Brown Tail Moth? How can we reach out to our neighbors on the lake? What can we do to bring the next generation of leaders on board?

Read on in this newsletter, creatively formatted by Anne Davis, for education, inspiration and celebration. Grateful for your support, ALA's Board of Directors

Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) Program

ALA's CBI Program had another successful year in 2020 monitoring boats entering the lake(continued on page 3)

Taking the Pulse of the Lake by John Greenman

Since 2014, Katie and I have been "taking the pulse" of Alamoosook Lake water, every two weeks after ice-out through October. Recording data this frequently and sending water samples to the Health and Environmental Testing Lab (HETL) three times a summer helps us to know that if a problem suddenly pops up, we'll have a good chance of knowing about it, soon. What we do can be done by anyone with access to a boat and a little training. Our association owns all the equipment needed. Please get in touch if you'd like to help.

So, what do we look for? Transparency using a Secchi Disk, Dissolved Oxygen (DO) and Temperature using the YSI ProSolo Optical DO and Temperature meter. Water Samples for the lab to test for Total Phosphorus (TP) and Chlorophyll A (CHA) levels are gathered using a core sampling tube.

Here are some "highs and lows" from the past three summers:

For Secchi transparency, the deepest reading: 6.15 meters in late 2018 and shallowest reading: 3.4 meters in early 2019. This last summer (2020) depths ranged from 3.6 meters early in the season to 5.8 in late summer.

For DO the highest reading: 12.4 parts per million (ppm) at 2 meters depth on 5.4.2019 and lowest reading: .1 ppm at 6.5 meters depth on 7.25.2019. This last summer DO readings ranged from a high of 11.2 ppm at the surface all the way to 6 meters on 5.6.2020, to a low of .8 ppm at 6.5 meters on 8.10.2020.

Recent results from the HETL testing lab for our water samples:

TP was highest in early 2018 at 17 parts per billion (ppb) and lowest in late 2018 at 7 ppb. This last summer (2020) it ranged from 12 ppb in early summer to 9 ppb in late summer.

CHA was highest in early and late 2018 at 7 ppb and lowest in late 2018 & 2020 at 2 ppb. This past season it ranged from 6ppb in early summer to 2ppb in late summer.

Note that **Total Phosphorus (TP)** and **Cholorphyll a (CHA)** relate to plant growth. The higher the readings, the more prone a lake will be to algal blooms. Average TP concentrations of over 15ppb would be a serious problem. Phosphorus comes from point sources, non-point sources including animal wastes, septic systems, fertilizers, soil erosion...many of which we have control over with best practices.
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at the Fish Hatchery. Our main goal has always been to defend against invasive aquatic species from entering our wonderful lake. Thanks to the efforts of our CBI Inspectors the program continues to mature and become more effective at protecting Alamoosook Lake.

We inspected over 500 boats this past summer, focusing on the busiest times at the launch. Many of those enjoying the lake are becoming more aware of the program and familiar with the efforts to stop invasive species. This is our first line of defense, to ensure the boaters are performing self inspections and cleaning their boats, with the guidance of our inspector many are doing just that.

Although there were no identified invasive species this past year, we don't want to let our guard down. We are planning for the 2021 season and need support from members of the Association to continue the success of the CBI Program.

We are seeking motivated volunteers to join this important effort! All you need to bring to the program is your time, a smile, and

Secchi Disk Depth

The depth at which the secchi disk is no longer visible is taken as a measure of the transparency of the water.

Dissolved oxygen (DO)

is a measure of how much oxygen is dissolved in the water - the amount of oxygen available to living aquatic organisms.

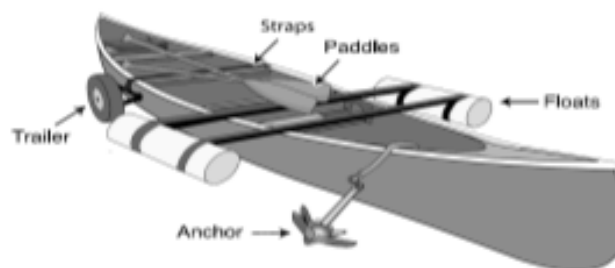
Bottom line: Alamoosook Lake's health seems to be pretty stable and predictably looks better and better as the summers go by. We can be thankful that the lake has, historically, experienced over 7 flushes a year. If the flush-rate goes down due to drought, the combined point and non-point source amounts of TP could be considerably higher.

There is nothing new to report concerning the state of the "consent agreement" between the Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

FMI or for questions, contact me at jgreenman@gwi.net

and some people skills. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer inspector please email Charlie Dodge at cdodg0629@gmail.com or call at 210-863-1105.

The Message: Please CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY your Watercraft!



Alamoosook All Clear Team Paddles Through the Pandemic

Online webinars with Lake Stewards of Maine, masked equipment hand-offs, paddling at a distance with surveying buddies, low-water level....it's been an unusual year.

Our team members (Charleyne Gilbert, Mary Murray, Caroline Van Leer, Martha Pedrick, Miriam Tatum, Pam Grindle, Uli Guthrie and Katie Greenman) identified over 50 native plants, and a couple of suspicious ones were exonerated by the experts. We logged a guesstimate of 70 volunteer hours surveying on the water, identifying and photographing plants, and compiling data for LSM. A big shout-out to Lucy Leaf of Toddy Pond who surveyed the entire Dead River and northeast shore from the hatchery.

While we document our natives, we keep our eyes open for the invasive aquatics we don't want to take root in Alamoosook. Little did I know until I shared it with Roberta Hill that the weird bib lettuce-like plant I photographed in the shallows of Meadow Brook Cove was an immature spatterdock! Sometimes I feel like a four-year-old excited to learn the names of dinosaurs as I listen to experts rattle off scientific names and think, wow, will the name of coolest of all bladderworts, the floating "utricularia radiata" ever roll off my tongue?

In September the Native Plant Trust sent biologist Chris Schorn to join Mark Whiting (our local Hancock County expert) to search the lake for a rare quillwort "isoetes acadensis" last sighted in Alamoosook in 2005. Whitecaps on Alamoosook that day prevented good visibility but some quillwort samples were taken from the shoreline and their DNA is being studied.

We have a team challenge for 2021!

To close here's Mary Murray on why she surveys:

"I thoroughly enjoy being part of the Alamoosook All Clear Team. Each year I learn more about plants that live in my own cove. I am delighted that they have all been native. This year I could do so much more because I had a super new "suitcase scope" that allowed me to see a larger portion of the bottom of the lake as I floated about. I feel a great sense of accomplishment as I build my knowledge base. It is very much like being a detective when I find a new plant I know nothing about and search the books and data base to discover what it might be. Lake Stewards of Maine offers excellent training and refreshers and we always have an "expert" to call on to confirm our identification. For me it's an excellent adventure!"

Raise your paddles in appreciation for the Team! Please contact me with questions about how you can get involved and get to use one of those "kayak" or "suitcase scopes": kgreenman@gwi.net.



Charleyne, Mary, Katie on the shore

a few favorite photos..



from Caroline Van Leer