

# Waves

The Newsletter of Hickory Hills Landowners

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Autumn 2008

## Annual Shareholder's Meeting Reports from September 20, 2008

*Following are the reports presented at the meeting.*

### President's Report - Paula Bertram

It has been a pleasure serving all of you over the past year and to have had the privilege of working with such a dedicated Board and staff; they are some of the most hard working people I have every worked with.

This year the Corporation is celebrating it's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday; and I think it's appropriate to talk a little bit about the wonderful history of Hickory Hills starting with the construction of the lake in the summer of 1925 by Charles P. Dickinson, one of the largest single property owners in this area. Dickinson's vision was to create an enormous inland lake, which would eventually be called Dickinson Lake. Dickinson used the lake primarily for the taking off and landing of his and his guests amphibious aircraft. In the early 1950's the lake was sold by Arnold Dickinson to the newly formed Hickory Hills Lake Corporation. One of the founders of the Corporation was Al Bowron, who was a primary force in building our lake community. For many years Hickory Hills was predominantly occupied by summer residents who enjoyed pot luck suppers, sail boat races and events at the community beach. After Al Bowron's death in 1971, his son Scott took over management of the lake. A volunteer association of residents was

formed to perform much needed maintenance and to work to bring the lake community back to its original condition. Scott found the situation to be very difficult; the lake community required finances greater than those available from the annual charges collected by the lake corporation and in the summer of 1978 Scott put the lake up for sale. On September 6, 1979 Hickory Hills Landowners Inc., a group of residents formed from the defunct maintenance association, became the owners of the lake, beaches and roads.

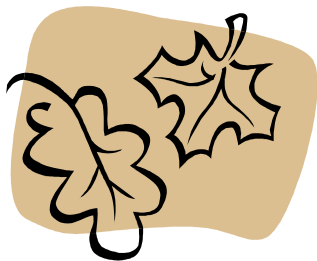
In preparation of this meeting, I did a great deal of research into the history of the corporation and past practices and one of the things that struck me the most is that for the past 30 years, the issues facing the Board have not changed a great deal. Some of the earliest newsletters talk about many of the things that were talked about tonight; constructing a recreational building, managing weeds, maintaining the dam and the need for additional financial resources. One of the other prevalent themes of the old newsletters was the ever present need for volunteers.

In the June 1989 issue of the newsletter, Jack Gorman , a truly dedicated man who served as the President for many years, emphasized the beauty of our wonderful community and the responsibility that goes with it. In that he relayed a story about seeing deer on the lake to illustrate how important it is that we remain vigilant in protecting our community, this

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### Yard Waste Days for Lunenburg

The Lunenburg Landfill, off Youngs Road will be open Saturdays through **November 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Guidelines for disposal or yard waste:



- **Acceptable:** grass clippings, back mulch, wood chips, leaves, brush (with a diameter not to exceed 3 inches and unlimited length). Shrubbery and plantings with the same restrictions.

### March Mixer Volunteers

HHL is planning its March Mixer for 2009 and we are looking for volunteers to organize the event. Please contact the HHL office if you have an interested in working with others on this event. Thanks for your help!





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is an excerpt from his message ***“A beautiful animal on a beautiful lake, on a peaceful Sunday morning. What a reflection on just how lucky we are to have this resource and how vigilant we all must be in protecting it. This lake and its environment is fragile at best. We are graced with the presence of the loons, the magnificent blue heron, osprey, owls, mallard ducks, Canadian geese and other variations of wild life. I can personally attest to the abundance of bass and other fish that are thriving. But I caution you, this can change very quickly unless we are protective in what we as an Association allow to transpire”.***

Tonight you have heard reports from the Board of Directors (see reports that follow) in which they talk about the amount of work that goes into maintaining our property and our way of life; but we can't do it alone. The December 1985 newsletter puts it best; “the transfer of property to Landowners meant that residents were responsible for their own community. They could complain to no one but themselves if the job was not done the way they wanted it done.” We need people to come forward; to get involved, to help with maintenance projects; to help us expand community events.

This year the Directors worked towards seven community goals; the first being the completion of an Emergency Action Plan for the Dam as required by Dam Safety. The Board hired Tighe & Bond to complete inundation maps and then we worked many hours drafting the actual plan. The Plan establishes the guidelines and procedures to be followed when an emergency condition is identified that may cause or is causing failure of the dam. The general purpose is to encourage thorough and consistent emergency action planning to help save lives and reduce property damage in areas that would be affected by dam failure or operation. The plan was submitted to the Department of Dam Safety in accordance with regulations and will be continually updated.

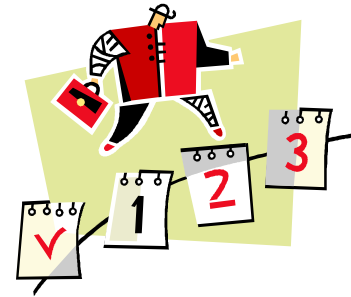
Our second goal was the completion of a three to five year financial plan. In order to facilitate this goal, the Board appointed a Finance Committee to review the finances of the corporation. As demonstrated by Neal's

presentation; the finance committee has done an amazing job at analyzing our financial situation and has made some suggestions as to how we can continue to protect our lake community in the years to come.

The third goal was to create a peaceful coexistence for residents and recreational vehicle users. At the last meet-

ing, several shareholders voiced concerns about recreational vehicles and the Board attempted to appoint a committee to investigate this issue. We were looking for both recreational vehicle users and non-users. Unfortunately our pleas for committee members in the Waves were only answered by a couple of residents. Due to the lack of volunteers, the Board did not appoint a Committee, however we will remain vigilant in our education efforts for proper and respectful use of recreational vehicles. If there is sufficient interest in the future the Board will be happy to reinvestigate a recreational vehicle committee.

Our fourth goal was to complete the sale of the Beachview/Wildwood Road property. Unfortunately, we have been unsuccessful in our attempts to sell this property due to the sharp down turn in the housing market. However, we continue to actively market the property. Anyone interested in purchasing the property is encouraged to contact the office or our realtor, Linda Marble.



Our fifth & sixth goals were to increase the number of volunteers and community involvement & the number of community events. As noted in the

earlier reports, the Board is happy to report that a number of community events were enjoyed by our residents, and our youth. However, participation continues to be limited; we need people to actively participate in our community and get involved. If you have suggestions about future events, we would welcome your input!

Our final goal was to educate residents about invasive aquatic plants and how to control their spread. As I noted in my earlier report on weeds and Anne's report on Loosestrife; the Board remains committed to educating people about invasive aquatic and surface vegetation and implementing appropriate management strategies. If you are interested in assisting the Board in this critical effort; please let us know; we would love to have enough people come forward on this issue that we can appoint an ad hoc committee.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve as your president; it has been an honor. Due to a number of other commitments, I am unable to continue as President, but I leave the office in the very capable hands of Neal Sullivan. I am honored to be able to serve you again next year on the Board of Directors; and sincerely hope that next year we will see the increased

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involvement of residents. Working together, I am confident that we will continue to protect and improve our wonderful, unique community.

**Capital Asset Reserve Fund - J. Kutarnia**

The C.A.R.F. Board of Trustees has now been in place for six years. The objective of this committee is to manage and control a reserve fund that would be used for emergency repair work on the dam structure. I am pleased to report that this fund remains intact and has increased by \$ 4,373 during the past twelve months. We want to thank the contributors for their donations this year. We have had forty contributors of which seven have contributed \$100.00 or more for total contributions of \$1,642.

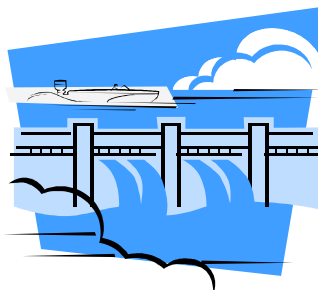
CD Investments	\$ 53,670
Bank Saving Account	109
Fidelity Cash reserve Account	23,990
T. Rowe Mutual Fund	10,541
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 88,311</b>

I am pleased to report that we continue to grow this fund and even though we have reached our short term goal of \$75,000 we still have a long way to go to reach our long term goal of \$150,000. Thank you again for your continued support of this fund with your contributions.

**Dam Report - J. Kutarnia**

During the past twelve months we have once again continued to make improvements on our dam. These improvements are in conjunction with the dam inspection report completed by Tighe & Bond September 2006. The most significant improvement was the cutting of trees, removal of stumps and hydro seeding of the down stream banking between the emergency spillway and Mulpus Road. We also contracted a mason to repair cracks and fill holes on the bridge embankment adjacent to the pool at the bottom of the dam. We began the clearing of brush on the earth embankment across from Woodland Drive. This had to be done so the rip rap could be placed on the banking and the grass and weeds cut on the embankment along Townsend Harbor Road.

In addition to dam improvements we had an unforeseen expense of updating the dam's Emergency Action Plan. The cost was approximately \$6,000 and would have been a few thousand dollars more if it wasn't for the work contributed by Paula and Tom Bertram along with some volunteers. Our next required State dam inspection will be on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, this Monday and will be completed by



Tighe & Bond. I do not foresee any major problems and hope that it goes smoothly.

In the up and coming year we will continue to budget \$15,000 to cover the ongoing maintenance on the concrete dam and spillway; complete the rip rap work across from Woodland Drive; cut down the remaining trees next to the concrete dam; and have all the stumps removed.

Once we complete the general maintenance our plan is to have a hydro analysis study completed to determine the precise draw down capacity of the dam and spillway. At this time our dam is estimated to be approximately 1/2 of what the State Department of Dam Safety requires. We do not know the ramifications this study will bring but hope to have a good idea of what is in store for us at the next annual meeting.

**Lake and Property Report - C. Kimball,**

N. Sullivan, J. LeBlanc, & W. Parquet

This year motorized winter traffic density on the lake was observed to be down from last year. Perhaps this was due to the normal ice and snow season, which allowed people to expand their lake usage over many weeks as opposed to the very condensed season we had in 2007.

Beach clean up is an important spring ritual here at Hickory Hills. Anyone who is anyone makes an appearance at these events! Brookview Beach cleanup was accomplished by the unseen cast of invisible beach sweepers. The Hemlock Beach was cleaned up by the team of... well we don't really know, but thank you! The Island Road Beach continued to fare well during the winter four wheel and snowmobile traffic season due to the continued work of the local snowmobile club to control traffic and mark acceptable routes across the beach to access the lake during winter. The beach cleanup crew this spring included many of the usual suspects: Charlie Kimball, Bill Kenerson, Chris Albert, Brian Sanderson, Neal Sullivan, and their families. Throughout the summer, trash and maintenance were taken care of by John D'Agostino. Arnie Shattuck again put in a great deal of time and effort mowing and trimmed around the beach areas and picked up trash.

Unfortunately there was some continued vandalism at the Island Road Beach with graffiti painted on

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**\*\*BREAK - INS\*\***

The BOD wants to be sure residents are aware of the recent break-ins in our neighborhoods. Some of you may have read about them in the newspaper or heard from your neighbors. They are occurring during the day and gaining access by breaking glass in windows and doors. They then take laptops, computers, TVs, video games and jewelry. The police are making more frequent patrols but our efforts to secure our homes and being extra observant are some things we can all do to help catch these culprits.

Remember to secure your homes, lock all windows and doors. Even if you are only going to be gone for a minute, one resident was broken into while they were out for lunch, another just went for groceries. Call the police if you see anything suspicious; a car or truck at a house during the day that usually does not have one; someone that keeps driving by that you don't know. The information line for the Lunenburg Police is 978-582-4150.

Some other suggestions are: Notify your neighbors when you will be away and ask them to check your property; Use timed evening indoor and outdoor lights; Put your jewelry and valuables in a less obvious places...90% of women store their jewelry in a dresser drawer or closet.

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the office on three occasions. Each time Walt Parquet painted over the graffiti. We continue to attempt to address this vandalism through increased vigilance by security and residents.

Nashoba Associated Boards of Health conducted weekly E-Coli testing on our beaches (per state law). Due to the heavy rains of the summer, the Hemlock Beach tested high for E-Coli on a couple occasions; this is an annual occurrence and is caused by the run off during the heavy rains feeding this beach directly from the surrounding wooded hillside. Logs continue to popup at the end of the summer. Several were removed from little island and from the open part of the lake to the main beach where they were removed. Thanks to all residents who identified and marked these navigation hazards.

The "No Wake" buoys were repaired, numbered and placed at five key points across the lake, and for the most part, are obeyed by boat traffic. An additional "No Wake" buoy was added to the Woodlands cove this year. The Big Island (Big Lizard) continues to be a popular

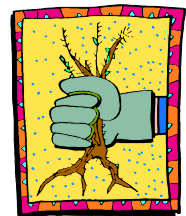
spot for both daytime and nighttime activities. The primary access point is heavily trafficked and significant erosion which began last year was repaired, using large stones and sand during the winter by Bret, Jim and Tom. Unfortunately, due to a lack of understanding that these stones were intentionally placed to prevent erosion, these stones have been taken from the island. It is the board's intent to have them replaced. The island is being better maintained by those using it; much less trash and glass has been observed. Thanks to all who visit the island and use it responsibly. Weed Control and Purple Loosestrife are also major lake concerns. Please refer to reports by Anne Davis and Jim LeBlanc.

**Purple Loosestrife - A. Davis**

The invasive purple loosestrife continues to flourish around the lake and everywhere else in town. This summer Sharon and Charlie Kimball, Walt Parquet and I pulled and dug out loosestrife along the shoreline of the lake. We try to get to it before each plant matures and sends out 2 million seeds per plant for next year's crop.

Loosestrife appeared in the same areas as previously pulled; however, the plants didn't seem to be as large or dense, so hopefully we are keeping it from becoming more widespread.

More residents are becoming aware of loosestrife and have joined the cause by pulling it out along their own shoreline. On Island Road; I know the Clarks, MacDonalds, Nowds, and Andellas have removed plants, as well as some residents at the Woodlands, under Walt's suggestion and guidance. This is a tremendous help, as it is very difficult for just a few of us to do the whole lake each year. If this plant is not controlled, it will eventually kill off wetland plants that provide food and shelter to native birds and other animals. It also changes the chemical composition of the water where it grows. So we need continued vigilance every summer to keep this invasive plant under control.



**Beetle Project - A. Davis**

Some of you may have read the article in the Lunenburg Ledger a few weeks ago regarding the BEE

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TLE PROJECT in loosestrife control. Arnie Shattuck and I attended a workshop in March at the Nashua River Watershed Office in Groton and, volunteered to become “beetle farmers”, This program was supervised by Beth Suedmeyer, biologist, from the State office of Coastal Zone Management - Wetlands Restoration Program and the Nashua River Watershed. There are two European beetles which feed exclusively on loosestrife, and after extensive research one of these beetles (“Galerucella”) was approved in 1990 by the US Dept of Agriculture for use in loosestrife control. It was shown that release of this beetle causes no harm to ecosystems or humans.

Andrea and Carl Strathmeyer also attended the spring workshop and because of Carl’s suggestion, a 20 acre wetland filled with loosestrife beyond the Holman Street cemetery in Lunenburg was chosen and approved by State and local authorities as a Treatment Site. This area is one of the headwaters of Mulpus Brook, which feeds Hickory Hills Lake, and probably is one source of loosestrife coming into our lake, so we were very pleased to have this site chosen.

In April the program was started by digging up many loosestrife plants from a boggy marshland in Groton, then dividing and repotting into 150 individual containers. Folks took plant pots home, put them into a kid’s swimming pool filled with water to ensure constant wetness so the plants would flourish. It seemed weird to be growing and carefully tending loosestrife in the front yard, when we have worked hard pulling it out around the lake!

Later a group of us gathered to sew the “sleeves” or cages to put over the plants when they reached 18” in height. Plants were staked, cages put over the pots, and we waited for the arrival of the beetles. In May the State provided a vial of 10-20 “starter” beetles for each pot, the plan being for these beetles to mate and eventually produce many more beetles.

In June, Arnie, Carl Strathmeyer, and several others gathered to mark the site into 5 quadrants, 4 feet square and 10 meters apart for monitoring purposes. All loosestrife stems, cattails, grass, other plants were all carefully counted to establish a baseline for future comparison. Because the beetle is non-native, authorities want to monitor where and how the beetles are used.

Just overnight early in July a multitude of tiny beetles

appeared under the tops of the cages, so July 2<sup>nd</sup> Arnie took our 14 pots with cages intact and 7 pots from Groton to the site and released the beetles to do their work. There were a total of 23 pots of beetles released in this area. It is estimated that these pots will produce about 23,000 beetles (1,000/per pot).

The end of August (20<sup>th</sup>) monitors went to the site again to count all plants within the quadrants. This visit showed almost no impact to date, but that is to be expected on a site this large. It probably will take 3-5 years to see a significant impact on the loosestrife. The site will be monitored each spring and fall to see the amount of “damage” done by the beetles.


Next year we will need more folks to raise beetles and participate in this program, so if anyone might be interested, please let me know!

**Harvester Operation Report -J. Leblanc**

I hope the thunderstorms didn’t interrupt your summer as much as it delayed the weed harvesting in July and early August. This year we got out in July and got off to a good start clearing the Hemlock and Brookview beaches and Mrs. Smith-Peterson. Then we headed up the shore and did the designated spots on Brookview, Cliffview, the condo’s and Hemlock Terrace. Then the harvester broke and Jay did a great job repairing it by the middle of August.

In the 12 years I have lived here I don’t ever remember the harvester operating in late August. I then attended a class the lake offered on Lake and Weed Management. This is a great class for people interested in trying to identify invasive aquatic plants and prevent them from being introduced to the lake. The

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**Board of Directors for 2008-2009**

	President	Neal Sullivan
	V. President	Charlie Kimball
	Treasurer	Anne Davis
	Clerk	Lisa Normandin
Directors:	Chris Albert	Mario Andella
	Paula Bertram	Jack Kutarnia
	Jim Leblanc	Walter Parquet
	John Pesenti	



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instructor informed us that our native weeds most likely spread by seeds. We need to find out more definitely when these seeds mature. He also gave us a link for lake management to help us determine when the best and most effective times are to use the harvester.

This coming year we will study the weed report and try to harvest the lake in a fashion that will prevent us from spreading weeds by harvesting. In the instructor's opinion when the lake is mowed and the clippings are not picked up we are definitely spreading the weeds.

I would like to remind you all about the dangers of introducing invasive aquatic plant species and your role in being a watchdog about cleaning the bottoms of your boats when you bring your boat or kayaks from other lakes or waterways and then put them into our lake. Once an invasive species enters this lake the harvester will no longer be useful to us and the weeds you think are annoying now will be a fond memory of the good times.

All residents who donated to the harvester but were not mowed this year will be mowed first next year. Remember the harvester is only a mower and the only way to remove weeds permanently is to pull them up by the roots. I promise that every decision I make in regards to our lake will always be in the best interest of the lake to the best of my knowledge. Thank you for all your help and understanding.

**Harvester Maintenance - J. Simeone**

This spring the harvester had it usual service work done on the engine and hydraulics. There were a couple of minor items that needed attention. The harvester was launched the end of June.

In August the idler roller for the front conveyor belt broke. This is basically a 4" tube that wore through. It appeared to be original to the machine. We took the assembly to a local welding shop and they were able to replace the tube and reuse the mounting stubs. New bearings for the roller were able to be purchased locally. A couple of links were removed from the conveyor belt as well to take out the slack in the belt.

New hydraulic lift cylinders were purchased for the conveyor table. The old cylinders were worn out and leaking.

New pipe stakes were made for the harvester trailer to help guide the machine on to the trailer. A section of the side plates on the trailer were cut back to avoid interference with paddle wheels when the machine is on the trailer.

Thank you to everyone who made donations to the Har-

vester Fund, it makes these repairs possible.

Thank you to Dan Proctor & his crew for transporting the harvester and their help with unloading and loading the harvester each spring and fall, and for storing it for us!

**Weed Management -P. Bertram**

The primary role of the Board of Directors is to protect and maintain the health of Hickory Hills Lake. One of the issues that the Board faces every year is weed management.

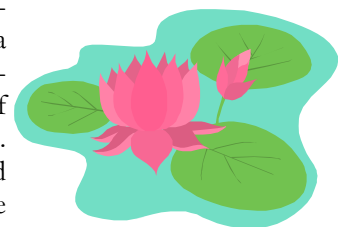
Aquatic plants, or weeds are a vital part of our lake ecosystem, they provide habitat, refuge and food for a wide variety of organisms. Our lake is a constantly changing environment based on biological organisms, chemical compounds, hydrological processes and human actions. Lakes, like people, undergo a natural aging process, and without intervention will eventually die. However, lake aging can be controlled through a wide variety of lake management techniques. The Board has taken a very pro-active stance on the management of aquatic vegetation through monitoring and appropriate management strategies.

**Weed Study by Aquatic**

Every other year a weed survey of the lake is done by *(con't on next pg)*

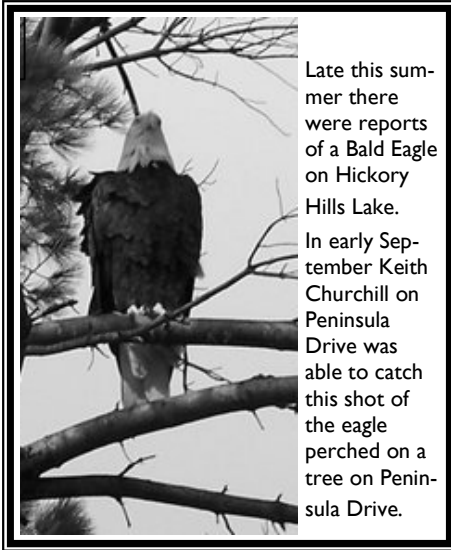
**Lake Management Group  
An opportunity to be involved**

At this year's Annual Shareholders Meeting there was a great deal of discussion regarding the management of weeds in Hickory Hills Lake. Several residents expressed interest in learning more about the process and participating in proper lake management.



The BOD has decided to organize a committee chaired by a Director and chartered to investigate a variety of issues relating to the overall health of the lake such as invasive species, weed management, pollution and storm water issues. The Committee will review the issues and explore solutions in order to make recommendations to the BOD.

If you are interested in participating in this Group please send an email describing your interest to the office at [hickoryhills@net1plus.com](mailto:hickoryhills@net1plus.com).



Late this summer there were reports of a Bald Eagle on Hickory Hills Lake. In early September Keith Churchill on Peninsula Drive was able to catch this shot of the eagle perched on a tree on Peninsula Drive.

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Aquatic Control Technologies who is accompanied and assisted by Anne Davis. Aquatic views the entire lake and takes a water sample to measure a number of water quality parameters. This year the survey was done on September 16<sup>th</sup> and took about 4 hours. The survey confirmed

that our lake remains in a healthy state with a diversity of native aquatic plants and fish. No invasive plants were found; native vegetation, bladderwort, tape grass and many types of pondweed (ribbon leaf, large leaf and floating) were noted. A formal report will be completed by Aquatic which will include their observations and a map of the entire lake denoting plant life. Continued monitoring of vegetation is vital to the health of the lake. Anne Davis should be commended on her work for protecting our lake from invasive species and for all of her efforts working with Aquatic.

All of us must be alert to any weed that looks out of place or different and notify the Board of Directors. During the survey, Dominic Meringolo of Aquatic told Anne about a lake in Massachusetts which had some fanwort and 2 divers were hired to hand pull all plants at a cost of \$5,000. Despite these efforts, within 2 years fanwort had taken over the entire lake. A number of years ago during the weed survey, fanwort, was observed in the middle of the boat launch area at Island Road. The weed was hand pulled and we have monitored the area carefully since. All of us need to be on the alert for any new plants and make sure all trailers, boats and motors going into the lake are clean of any vegetation that may have come from another lake.

In addition to monitoring, we must continue to implement appropriate management strategies. Last year the Board of Directors allowed the second chemical treatment at Little Hickory to combat unwanted vegetation. However, we recognize that chemical treatment may not be the best long term option and we continue to encourage Little Hickory residents to explore other options such as benthic barriers; harvesting etc. This year we continued our education efforts by organizing a "weed watchers" seminar given by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. A number of Little Hickory

residents attended along with several Board of Directors and members of the Lake Shirley Improvement Corporation. Residents that would be interested in attending future weed seminars are encouraged to notify the office.

As you know, harvesting continues to be the number one management strategy we use to control aquatic vegetation. The harvester was purchased in 1986 through special assessments and donations. Prior to purchasing the harvester, the Board of Directors at that time explored many other options such as hydro raking and in fact in the summer of 1983, three acres of the lake were hydro raked; the conclusion was that the hydro rake gave only short term benefit with a high return rate of weeds and diminished the recreational use of the area due to displaced silt.

The Association owes many thanks to Jay Simeone for all of his hard work on the harvester. As with all methods of aquatic management, harvesting has advantages and disadvantages. Harvesting is one of the best methods of achieving "area selective" control of nuisance vegetation and as stated in the Practical Guide to Lake Management in Massachusetts, repeated harvesting may reduce seed-producing species. The possible spreading of nuisance vegetation through fragmentation exists; which is why proper collection of the weeds once they are cut is critical; many thanks to Jim LeBlanc for his diligence in making sure the harvester is operated properly. Several residents have some concerns regarding weed growth and the Board will continue to investigate concerns moving forward, but we need some help; interested residents are encouraged to contact the Board to discuss their concerns and to work with the Board in exploring appropriate technologies. Prior to the implementation of any management plan, the approval of the Board of Directors is required and in addition, local and State permits may be necessary.

In addition to implementing appropriate management strategies; we must all be aware that our activities can have a significant impact on the lake environment. Human activity can unduly accelerate the process of lake aging by introducing pollutants. Responsible landscaping is vital, fertilizers should not be used near the water, and any products that are used should be organic and contain no phosphates. Septic systems need to be maintained, and detergents should never be used near the water.

The Board is confident that through continued education, diligence and pro-active manage-

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ment Hickory Hills will remain a beautiful, healthy lake for many generations to come.

**Office & Public Relations** -L. Normandin

It has been a pleasure to serve as Clerk for the Hickory Hills Lake Association this past year. The Board of Directors is a hardworking group of dedicated individuals serving your Lake Community.

The March Mixer was held at the Eastwood Club this year, the food was plentiful, it was very well attended and many of the guests danced all night. Thanks to all of the people that worked so hard to make it happen and to everyone who contributed the wonderful variety of raffle items. The event netted a five hundred dollar profit.

The adult volleyball group continued this summer at the Island Road beach. If you like to play volleyball feel free to join the group on Thursday evenings next summer.

This year the Lake Association held the second annual Pig Roast on August 23rd. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet the people in the community and come together on a beautiful summer afternoon. Hopefully we can engage Cowboy Jim again next year. I would like to thank Charlie Kimball for all of his hard work in coordinating this event.

We continue to publish the Waves newsletter quarterly to keep the residents up to date and to provide a means to share information. We welcome the submission of articles from residents of the lake community.

The Lake Association held a Welcome meeting for new residents last fall. These meetings are a great way for the new owners on the lake to learn about the lake rules and the history of Hickory Hills. Keep an eye on the Waves for a meeting in the future.

On August 20, 2008 the DCR held a Weed Identification Seminar at the Lunenburg Public Library. Paula Bertram coordinated this event. Three Board of Directors and several members of the lake community attended this worthwhile program. It was a hands on seminar and we were taught how to identify various varieties of plants and weeds. Anyone wishing to attend a seminar in the future or to look over the valuable handouts that were offer may contact me or visit their website. To date this year HHL issued 652 boat stickers, 587 ID cards and 116 car stickers, in addition there were 9 real estate releases filed.

There are currently 320 shareholders and the HHL Board welcomes the following new residents and shareholders for 2008:

John & Debra Sawyer 441 Townsend Harbor New  
John Deery & Holly

Leeming Deery 10 Trillium Court Transfer

In closing I would like to thank our outgoing President Paula Bertram for all of her dedication and hard work. In addition I would also like to thank my fellow Board of Directors and our Office Manager for all that they do behind the scenes for the corporation and community.

**Youth Program** - P. Bertram

This year HHL is proud to have been able to offer a summer Youth Program to children and grandchildren of Hickory Hills residents ages 5-12. The program was run by Diane Nowd, one of our recently retired teachers here in Lunenburg. Diane did an absolutely amazing job, we have heard from many residents that their children loved the program. Two teenagers assisted Diane, Sierra D'Agostino, and Nick Priest. They did a terrific job, Diane expressed how wonderful her assistant were and what a great help. Although a salary was offered, Diane did not to be paid for her efforts, instead she volunteered all her hours. HHL and all the children who were able to participate are deeply thankful for Diane's efforts and as a small token of our thanks we have presented Diane with a group photo of the children and a gift certificate to a restaurant at one of her favorite spots in Maine. Thank you Diane!

**Roads Report** - M. Andella

The 2007/2008 winter was particularly harsh with too many wet snowfalls followed by freezing temperatures, making road maintenance difficult throughout our region. Most towns' plowing and paving budgets were strained.

The Lunenburg DPW did their best to keep our public roads plowed, sanded and patched within the constraints of rising costs and limited budgets. However, further repairs are needed. Jack Rodriquez, the director of Lunenburg's DPW, assures us he has developed a plan to address these needs. He will present his plan to the Board of Selectmen soon. I would encourage you to share your opinion regarding the road paving budget with our Selectmen.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Bertram for his fine efforts coordinating snow plowing and sanding of our private roads.

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For this autumn and winter, please try to keep storm drains near your home clear of leaves, snow and ice. The unimpeded flow of water from our roads into culverts is a crucial component of road maintenance. If you and our neighbors are unable to do this, please contact us, and we will ask for volunteers to assist.

Also, if you notice a problem with any of the public roads within Hickory Hills that may be hazardous to our neighbors or vehicles, call the DPW. Don't assume your neighbors have already called.

### Security Report - Walt Parquet

Security on the lake this summer was performed by two college students: Calyn Jones and Ryan Spain. They were supervised by me with a backup by Security Liaison Volunteer Frank Maynes. The Board of Directors was also available via a rotating on call list to handle any serious problems if Frank Maynes or me were not available.

Security made several trips, on a daily basis, around the lake checking for boat stickers, offering assistance as needed, inspecting the islands and marking logs. They also did daily road patrols and checked the association beaches for residency ID cards. Security wrote up a daily log of their activities that were reviewed by me and any needed action was investigated or acted upon.

Thankfully, no major problems or incidents occurred on the lake or beaches. It was a pretty quiet summer on the lake.

The only area of concern was the thefts of several aluminum boats, a canoe and one outboard motor. The association office was once again sprayed with graffiti. And of course the annual ritual of tipping over of the portable potty at Island Rd beach.

### Finance Committee — N. Sullivan

Membership consists of lake residents and shareholders: Jane Blake, Caroline Fortin, John Male, John Morse, Jim Shearer and Neal Sullivan. The committee charter, as defined by the HHL BOD is to: compare our community's financial structure with other similar communities focusing on fee structure and historical progression of fees; understand the impact of new recreation/office facility as it will impact finances with respect to it's construction & maintenance costs and assess the impact of projected costs for maintenance of the dam

HHL has maintained a balanced budget since the organization's inception and in past years have even run a surplus which has been donated to the Capital Asset Reserve Fund.. Lately costs have been rising and since 2004-2005 expenses

have been rising 14% per year. Fee structure for HHL has remained remarkably stable for 18 yrs; maintaining \$165 lakefront and \$110 non lakefront over that time-frame as compared to the cost of living which has increased 68% since 1990.

The assessment of communities with similar lake size and organization, many of which are private, produced some surprising results. All lakes surveyed had experienced fee increases over the past 18 yrs and many had additional assessments for major work.

1. In MI: Whispering Springs Lake Assn ([www.whisperingspringslake.com](http://www.whisperingspringslake.com)) – Fees have increased 50% since 1986

2. In NE: Woodcliff Lakes Inc. ([www.woodcliffakes.com](http://www.woodcliffakes.com)) - Annual Fee \$687.60 – They support a part time maintenance person as well as security for the community. The BOD is allowed to increase the annual fee max 15% / year without requiring shareholder approval. The lake had a \$200 Special Assessment for all residents in 2008.

3. Another NE: Capital Beach Lake ([www.capitalbeachlake.com](http://www.capitalbeachlake.com)) – Annual fees have increased from \$120 in 1986 to \$400 in 2005. The association also had a series of annual assessments, to each lake resident, for extraordinary expenses such as dam and lake maintenance in 1992, 1999 and 2002; in 2003 the assessment amounted to \$3800; in 2004 the amount was \$690 and in 2007 \$700 was assessed.

4. In Ashburnham, MA: Sunset lake - Annual Fees \$600 / year.

Looking at the cost of living increase over the last 18 years and the fee increases at comparable lake communities it is logical to ask how the HHL community managed to avoid annual fee increases. Three main cost mitigation strategies are responsible:

1. The first was to institute tight financial controls over fee collection, the main source of income for HHL. These controls consisted of new software to track and project this income as well as a concerted education and communication effort with lake residents. The result was more than 20% increase in revenue for HHL during the period from 1998 to 2003 which has remained consistent since that time.

2. The second method used to mitigate fee increases is through the use of volunteer time. The BOD has donated well over 1600 hours to work projects around the

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lake. This work consisted primarily of beach, lake and dam maintenance; various fund raising activities, community outreach and associated education and training. Assuming nominal hourly rates, the volunteer time spent by the BOD is equivalent to more than 25% of the annual budget!

This assessment does not include volunteer time spent by other lake residents who participated in beach and dam maintenance, log removal, and fund raising activities, as the data was not available.

3. The final component of the fee mitigation was to work with area service providers who are sympathetic to the HHL community as well as the many financial donations made by residents to HHL.

Looking forward the HHL community is faced with several liabilities that can be somewhat volatile and difficult to predict. The most important of these is dam maintenance. With recent near-failures of area dams, the State of Massachusetts has placed a significant emphasis on dam inspection, maintenance and the capability to sustain 100 yr or even 500 yr flood conditions. While the HHL dam has consistently performed well in these inspections over the years, it is anticipated that major work may be required if the State were to choose to enforce the worst case metrics. The remaining liabilities include: lake maintenance, capital & repairs, harvester, security boat and office equipment.

The final large potential liability is the community building. In 2005, the HHL shareholders voted to proceed with the construction of the Office/Community facility. In the original presentation for that approval, the costs were expected to be offset to a large extent by the sale of land that the HHL had acquired. Unfortunately, due one resident's resistance to the land sale and the associated legal difficulties with obtaining building approvals, the land sale was postponed and as of this date remains unsold. The modifications and the delay required by the legal wrangling have proven to be a significant financial setback (anticipated to be as much as \$100k) to the community center's funding. Thus, if the center is to be realized, alternate sources of funding must be found.

The income that the community must rely on to fund all of these liabilities is to be found primarily in the annual fees. However, other sources such as: income from the sale of the 11 Beachview Rd property, fundraising activities (e.g. March Mixer, pig roast) and donations (Building Fund, Memorial and C.A.R.F.) can also have significant impact.

Given the volatile nature of these primary liabilities, it was not possible for the finance committee to come up with an

accurate financial projection for the HHL community for the next five years. Instead, the committee decided to develop a financial model, into which the liabilities could be inserted as they became known, that would allow for a more consistent and accurate projection to be developed. The current (2007-2008) HHL budget was used in the model as a starting point. Two examples of how this model can be used are described.

1. The first represents a status quo projection, whose main assumptions are: for expenses: only the septic system for the community center is completed at a cost of \$30k; 5% annual increase in costs for all expense categories and additional Dam costs beyond the present budget at a moderate level of \$3k. This case assumes no Extraordinary Income (e.g. from the land sale). In order to balance the budget, in light of the assumptions described above a fee increase to \$250 for lakefront and \$165 for off-lake would be required

2. The second case is somewhat more aggressive with respect to the office and more pessimistic for cost increases. The assumptions in this case include: complete construction of the Office Building to cost \$230k; a 15% annual increase in costs for all expense categories; additional dam costs beyond the present budget at a high level of \$10k; new building maintenance costs of \$4k and an annual loan payment of \$7.5k. This case also assumes extraordinary income from the land sale of \$75k and from a building loan of \$75k. In order to balance the budget, in light of the assumptions described above a fee increase to \$370 for lakefront and \$250 for off-lake would be required.



It is important to note that the forgoing projections are only made to demonstrate the capability of the model and are only as good as the assumptions that have gone into the model. The HHL community will face several financial challenges in the coming years and it is the hope of the Finance Committee that this work will support the decision making process. As we move the next fiscal year the committee will strive to: 1. Obtain clear understanding of dam financial requirements; 2. Obtain clear understanding of Community Center/Office financial requirements; 3. Determine financial viability of installing septic system for

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Island Road in 2009; 4. Solicit/inform lake residents and propose course of action at 2009 Annual Meeting for approval.

At the conclusion of the financial report, a shareholder in the audience, put forth a motion that the shareholders vote to approve a non-binding resolution in for an immediate increase in the yearly fees to \$250 (lakefront) and \$165 (off-lake) in anticipation of the projected financial requirements of HHL and to begin to build contingency for the expected (required) dam improvements. The BOD greatly appreciates the support demonstrated by the shareholders in passing this motion, and is in the process of incorporating more accurate financial data towards a new financial projection. If this projection, to be completed in early 2009, supports the present projections, the BOD may call a special meeting of the shareholders to discuss specific financial proposals.

End of reports



AUGUST 2008  
6 1/2 POUNDS, 21 "

Walter Parquet, one of our Directors from the Woodlands of Hickory Hills, is pictured here with one of his best catches of 2008 season. A 21 inch bass weighing in at 6.5 lbs.



The BOD would like to thank Dave MacDonald for his generous donation of materials and labor for a

new tile floor in the office building. The rug in the office was very musty and held a mildew odor. The new flooring makes the rooms much brighter and we were able to move files around to get a much bigger feeling and better use of space. Thank you again Dave and to your crew! We would also like to thank our Director Mario Andella for supervising this activity over the 2 days.



**Land For Sale:**

Large wooded corner lot on beautiful Hickory Hills Lake, 2.75 acres. Approved 3 bedroom septic design, water view and lake rights, \$119,900. Contact the Linda Marble at 978-537-6401 or email at [linmarble@verizon.net](mailto:linmarble@verizon.net).

**Donations are always appreciated !!!**

The following residents have donated to...

**Capital Asset Reserve:**

- Wally & Noreen Berry
- Anonymous donation in memory of Jack Gorman

**Harvester:**

- Cheryl Lauziere
- Nancy Rimpas
- Richard Clark

**Building Fund:**

- Wally & Noreen Berry



**Fall + Winter office Hours**

Monday & Thursday 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Call the office before arriving, 978-582-6365. If necessary, appointments may be made for a more convenient time.

**EMAIL ADDRESSES:**

We recently sent an email out warning residents of the recent break ins. We are missing some residents email addresses, if your did not receive the email from HHL or have changed your address recently please update the office by sending you current email address to [hickoryhills@net1plus.com](mailto:hickoryhills@net1plus.com). Thanks!