

HRA Newsletter

September 2006 –

The HRA meeting was held on August 26, 2006. Chris McCooe, President, opened the meeting and thanked the many people who have been working hard recruiting new members and those involved in the fund raising. The fund raising committee was recognized for doing “a great job” making the Pig Roast fund raiser such a huge success. Refreshments for the meeting were provided by Jim and Rose Kenney and, as usual, were terrific.

Treasurer’s Report. The pig roast netted \$3118.71. “Save the Lake Fund” has collected \$6387.11 since starting late in 2004. Tom Sargent will be retiring from the Treasurer’s position this year. HRA would like him to know what a terrific job he has done in the past and will be missed. Tom will remain active in HRA events. Thank you, Tom.

Membership – Membership is down from last year. (166 vs 210 in 2005) Chris McCooe asked each member present to recruit at least one family into HRA next year. There are over 400 homes on and around the lake – everyone enjoys the lake and should be a member of the association that supports the preservation and maintenance of the lake. It is up to the HRA to keep the movement going. Membership fee is \$35 starting in 2007.

Dave Sears will arrange to have newsletters and notices sent to members via email. Please include your email addresses when sending in your 2007 membership. Communication via email will save the HRA time, printing and postage costs. The newsletter will continue to be mailed to those without email access. See Page 3 for the 2007 membership form.

Lake Oversight Committee. (LOC) Lynn Arnold reported that the changes in dock maintenance by-laws discussed at the last meeting are not yet in effect. The changes, including more clear penalties for failing to remove docks by the end of October are on the agenda for a vote at the next Holland town meeting.

LOC received the 604B Pioneer Valley Planning Commission grant for almost \$30,000. Pioneer Valley will manage the funds and will enlist residents to do some of the work. The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife held a meeting to train residents to conduct the surveys (to be completed by the end of October) at main tributaries as well as smaller streams in the Hamilton Reservoir watershed. A group will also assess the effect unpaved roads have on the lake. Pioneer Valley Planning will use these surveys to create maps showing problem areas and will, using the grant money, hire an engineering firm to provide best management practices for those areas. The engineer’s findings will be turned over to the Town highway department to be implemented.

The 604B grant project will have a positive affect when applying for 319 grant in March 2007. The work done with the 604B grant will help prove that we have are making a serious effort to monitor and improve existing problems in the lake.

Entirely due to the efforts of the HRA, Senator Brewer secured \$50, 000 in Massachusetts state funds to be used exclusively for sediment and weed control in Hamilton Reservoir. While the money is being given to the Town of Holland, the Lake Oversight Committee hopes to work with town officials to find the best ways to use these funds.

New England Land and Lumber (NELL), a company planning to develop land including the old Rebecca’s restaurant site, has requested a special permit from the town of Union CT. to blast and level a 3.5 acre area

of the property (including the restaurant building) This would be only the first phase in their development of the property. The total blasting project covers approximately 10 acres and is estimated to take 2-5 years. The company owns 19 acres in Union, 73 acres (zoned commercial) in Holland and about 400 acres in Sturbridge. The development of the Union acres will give the company access to the rear acreage for an undetermined use.

A petition was circulated to HRA members for signatures asking the Town of Union to deny approval for that special permit. The petition will let Union Planning and Zoning know that we have concerns for the lake, surrounding homes, air quality, wells, noise, etc. (200 houses are situated within one mile of the project). Public hearings have already been held at the Union town hall and a decision will be made within 65 days. Any use of the acreage in Holland will be subject to special permit approval by the Planning Commission. The petitions were delivered to Zoning & Planning Commission in Union on August 30th.

The Holland Conservation Commission commented that they have reviewed the project and found no probable adverse effects to the wetlands and ground water in the area of the Rebecca's project. They found that noise and disturbance concerns are valid.

INVASIVE WEED UPDATE - In order to apply for Milfoil weed treatment next year, the Connecticut DEP required a survey be done to determine if an endangered plant (*Potamogeton pusillus* ssp. *gemmae*) was present in the Connecticut portion of the lake. A study was done by the Northeast Aquatic Research, LLC and no evidence of this endangered species were found. However, the report indicated other invasive weeds were present. The HRA paid \$1750.00 for the required study.

The HRA pays for the Milfoil treatment in the Union portion of Hamilton Reservoir. Chris McCooe will contact any Union members when treatments of other invasive weeds are scheduled. If these members want to hire the environmental company and piggy back on what Holland or the HRA pays for – that can be arranged. The Watershield treatment was not contracted in Union last year because the areas of weed that were removed were only in areas where residents whose homes abut the lake could not use their waterfronts. Watershield is not considered a bad weed – therefore not all areas of the lake were harvested.

Total costs for all weed treatment are approximately \$18,000. In 2006, the Town of Holland paid \$8,000 for Milfoil treatment, HRA paid \$1,600 for Milfoil in Union, and the HRA paid \$1,500 for a test harvest of the *Vallisneria* in the South basin as well as a chemical treatment of *Phragmites* on the North basin.

Lee Lyman (Lycott Environmental) was at the meeting offering well water testing to members. A container was supplied so that samples could be collected and brought back to him for testing. If you missed this opportunity, Howlett Lumber is now selling water test kits.

Fund Raising Report - Bev Aube reported that the pig roast was very successful. Volunteers are needed to work on the next events. See page 4 for upcoming events.

Non-profit status. Applications for non-profit status have been filed and a tax number received for "Friends of HRA, Inc." Final approval for non profit status may take up to one year. Officers are: Chris McCooe, President, Lynn Arnold, VP, Dave Sears, Treasurer and Carol Denning, Secretary. The non profit group will work with HRA as a non profit fund raising arm. HRA will still operate as it has in the past.

COLAP (Congress of Lakes and Ponds). HRA paid for 7-8 people to attend the COLAP seminar in Lee. **LAPA-West 8th Annual Workshop "Protecting the Future of Your Lake"**

Marti Tabb, Jackie Proko, Richard Haller, Chris Haller, Agnes Gallerani and Jacqueline Korzenewski attended this workshop in Lee, Massachusetts on September 9th. Although, at 6:45AM, attending this

workshop did not seem like the best decision ever made, it turned out to be a very informative day, spent with great people.

Sessions attended by the group from HRA included: Public Waterfront Act (Chapter 91)/ Wetlands Protection Act, Native vs. Non-native Aquatic Plant Identification, Plant Replacement: Extending your Investment in Plant Control, Hand-Pulling the Weeds: They Said it Couldn't Be Done, How the Generic Environmental Impact Report (GEIR) Impacts the Permitting of Your Next Lake Project.

Updates from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and from the Massachusetts Environmental Police and a Keynote Address concerning "Potential Invasive Aquatic Plants of Concern in New England" were attended by all.

The group from HRA left the workshop very excited about, "Hand-Pulling the Weeds." Associations from Center, Yokum and Greenwater Ponds (in Becket, MA) shared their varied approaches to this process of dealing with milfoil, loosestrife and phragmites.

Chris Haller, VP of Environment, will share information about this workshop at the meeting in June, 2007. People can email her with questions: chrishaller@cox.net

DRAW DOWN - Scheduled to start October 10, 2006 – While it depends on the weather, the lake goes down approximately 2" per day for a total of 24 inches. HRA will be notified if additional drainage is necessary to repair a damaged culvert on Mashapaug Rd. We will post any notices on our web site (www.hamiltonreservoir.com) and cable TV – channel 15.

Election of officers

Chris McCooe-Hanson, President	Charlotte Landgren – newsletters
Kathy Blackford – Treasurer	Ray Polverari, Fund Raising Chairman
Janet Lunig –Secretary, HRA	Rose and Jim Kenney, Refreshments
Chris Haller, VP Environment	Lynn Arnold, VP Safety
Lou Aube, Ray Polverari, Jerry Tabb - Harbor Masters	

The year printed above your name on the address label indicates the last year your membership was paid. Please check if your membership is due.

**2007 HRA Membership Form – Membership Fee \$35.00 per year per family
Return to: Hamilton Reservoir Association, PO Box 17, Holland, MA 01521**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Holland Phone: _____ Home Phone _____ North Basin _____ South Basin _____

Lake Address _____ Email Address _____

Your membership DOES make a difference in preserving our lakes and all the properties surrounding them. Whether you attend our meetings or not – the HRA needs your support – more importantly our lakes deserve to remain clean, safe and enjoyable for all.

**UPCOMING FUND RAISING EVENTS:
All proceeds benefit "Save the Lake" fund.**

Poker Run – Sat., September 16th (rain date Sept. 17th) – Starts at 9 am at PJs in Holland. Run will begin at 10 am. Best poker hand wins \$100.00 (cards collected at each stop of the ride). Cars are allowed along with the motorcycles. A meal will be served at end of ride. Raffles will be held. Contact Chris @413 245 3666 for tickets \$15. Tickets are available the day of the run from 9 am to 10 am. Your ticket must be present at the dinner.

Mohegan Sun Bus Trip – Sat. Oct. 14, 2006. from 4 pm to 11 pm. Tickets are \$25 per person and include a \$10 voucher for food and a \$10.00 voucher for gambling. The trip is limited to 50 people. Call Bev 413 245 0194 or Jackie 413 245 7035 for tickets. Benefits “Save the Lake Fund”

MARK YOUR CALENDAR –next year’s HRA meetings: JUNE 2, 2007 and August August 25, 2007 at Holland Elementary School – 8:30 am Refreshments. Business meeting starts at 9 am. Membership forms, newsletters, boat regulations & other information can be found on HRA website. www.hamiltonreservoir.com