



Rainbow Lake Association News Summer 2007

Contents:

Membership Update
Tag Sale
RLA Members Picnic
Spring Dock Launching
AGM Report
The Beaches

Lake Treatment
Boats on the Beaches
Beach Committee
Dam Repair
Contact the RLA

Membership Update

The 2007 membership drive so far has raised just over 85% of the funds that are needed to cover our expenses for this year. To date, 100 households have joined the RLA. In 2006, we had 110 families subscribing to the RLA; we hope to reach at least that number in 2007. To further increase our membership, we will be sending out reminder postcards and will be using additional outreach strategies to contact non-members and families who have not yet renewed their membership.

If you've already sent in your dues, thanks! If you haven't yet sent in your membership contribution (and can't find the letter that was sent to you), a link to the membership form is available on our home page at rainbowlake.org. Membership checks can be sent to the RLA c/o Betsy Hill, 27 Lake Road, Ridgefield, CT 06877.

Please talk to your neighbors who may not have joined the RLA and let them know the importance of contributing to the Association. We all like living near a healthy lake but to maintain it is not cheap; we rely on membership contributions to allow the RLA to be effective.

Tag Sale

The RLA Tag Sale, held on May 19th, raised over \$1,000 despite the inclement weather and the inconveniences that were associated with the storm that hit Ridgefield a couple of days earlier. Thanks to all of you who participated in the sale either by donating or purchasing items. Additional thanks go to the neighbors and Board members who made the sale happen. We are particularly grateful to Dean and Susan for allowing the sale to be held on their property.

RLA Members Picnic

The tradition continues—the RLA Membership Summer Picnic and Community Get-Together is planned for 1 pm, Saturday, August 4th at Crescent Beach. Please join us for a time of food and fun. We are planning to have games for the children, hotdogs, burgers, corn on the cob, and beverages; but best of all, you'll get to spend a lakeside afternoon with friends and neighbors.

We are looking for volunteers to help with the picnic—if you can spare some time to organize the children's games, coordinate the food and drinks, and so on, please get in touch with us through rladmin@rainbowlake.org or speak with any one of the Board members.

Spring Clean and Dock Launching

On the 14th of April, several members of the RLA responded to an e-mail request for assistance to get the lake ready for summer. The docks, which are pulled in on to the beach each winter to prevent ice damage, were all launched, and the areas at the beaches were cleaned up. Big thanks to all the members who responded to the request for assistance. And because of the good turnout, we were able to get all the work done quickly. Good work!

AGM Report

The Annual General Meeting of the RLA was held at the Ridgefield Recreation Center on May 5th. At the meeting, the budget for 2007 was presented along with a report on the state of the dam repairs, a membership report, and a summary of lake treatments. Also, a proposal to allow local residents living outside the boundary

defined by Lake Association bylaws the opportunity to become non-voting RLA members (with the provision that they would need to be sponsored by an RLA member) was voted down by those present at the meeting.

Summer Around the Lake

With the onset of warmer weather, more people are walking, cycling, and playing on the shores of the lake and on the surrounding roads. Please drive slowly when you are in the neighborhood—especially in the vicinity of the beaches on Crescent and Lakeshore Drives.

Recently, some residents have reported seeing either Golden or Bald Eagles around the lake. If you think you may have seen an eagle near the lake, please let the RLA know and we'll inform interested parties.

The Beaches

One of the benefits of being a member of the RLA is that you get to have usage of the beaches on Crescent and Lakeshore Drives. If you are going to use the beaches, please leave them as you would expect to find them. A number of neighbors have brought toys to Crescent Beach for the community to use; if your children play with the toys, please return them to the containers that have been provided.

During the summer months, the RLA pays for garbage collection at the two beaches; please make use of the trash cans provided.

Lake Treatment

In February, the RLA Board accepted the weed and algae treatment proposal of the Massachusetts-based company Aquatic Control Technologies (ACT); subsequently, ACT sent a permit request to the CT Department of Environmental Protection. ACT received the permit on May 16th and performed the first part of a two-stage treatment for weeds on May 23rd with a follow-up treatment performed roughly two weeks later. We owe our thanks to Representative John Frey for following up with the DEP to ensure the timely granting of the permit request.

Keeping Rainbow Lake free of weeds and algae is a challenge, since nutrients flow into the lake from a wide area upstream and the shallow depth of much of the lake means that the water temperature rises rapidly in the summer, creating an environment conducive to algae growth. In an attempt to reduce the nutrient load in the lake, the RLA has attempted in the last several years to work more closely with ACT to inform them when weeds and algae start to develop. The hope is that by not allowing the vegetation to get out of hand, the amount of nutrients released when a treatment is

performed can be reduced. Over time, it is hoped that by pro-actively managing the lake treatments, the total number of treatments might be reduced. In 2006, we started to see some evidence that this strategy might be working since there were two fewer algaeicide treatments performed than in 2005.

Over the years, the predominant weed species in the lake has changed. As little as three years ago, the weeds in the lake were mainly Slender Pondweed (*Potamogeton pusillus*); today however, the dominant weed is Curly-Leaf Pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*). The reason for this switch in species is not known, although similar changes have been seen in other lakes.

Boats on the Beaches

Members of the RLA are entitled to leave their boats on the two beaches. We do ask, however, that members clearly label their craft so that we can identify any boats that do not belong on the beaches. All RLA members receive a sticker upon payment of their dues—please use this sticker to identify that your boat belongs on the beaches.

Join the Beach Committee

Local resident and RLA member Chris Westman has offered some of his time to improve the infrastructure at the two RLA beaches: repairing fences, fixing notice boards, securing the docks, and so on. If you are interested in helping Chris, please contact him at westmanc@aol.com or 203-438-7802.

Dam Repair

Some five years ago, neighbors of Rainbow Lake woke to the prospect of a drained lake—the boards holding the water at the dam had broken. Since that time, a team of residents installed a temporary sluice gate, and the RLA worked with the DEP to secure a permit to install a permanent fix for the sluice gate and to repair sections of the dam and the area immediately downstream. The next step in the process will be to secure bids for the work; however, before that can be done we need to be sure that the costs of the repairs can be covered. While over the years, the RLA has accepted contributions to its Lake Improvement Fund, the money in the fund does not come close to covering the recent estimated cost of the repairs, and therefore, the RLA is working with local representative John Frey to look into whether some State funding can be secured for the project.

Contact Us

If you have any questions regarding the RLA, send us an e-mail to rladmin@rainbowlake.org.