



Echoes from Our Lake

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WALKER LAKESHORES LANDOWNERS
ASSOCIATION
DECEMBER 2020
VOLUME 150

President's Remarks

Hello to all Walker Lakeshores Landowners Association members. The year is coming to an end quickly, and it is a year we will never forget. All our activities were cancelled due to the pandemic. We will resume our social activities when it is safe and legal to do so.

The Board of Directors, however, has been busy conducting our community business electronically.

Here are a few highlights from this year:

- An underwater inspection of our dam was completed and the findings submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The inspection revealed that the emergency outlet valve piping, which is used to lower the lake, is in need of repair. We are waiting for the state to issue a permit for this repair. Our target date is October 2021.
- We also submitted a new Emergency Action Plan for our dam. This plan is required by the state in case of a dam failure. It lays out road closures that may be required and important information for the community.
- The beaches remained open for the swimming season with the exception of a few isolated days due to water quality issues revealed by our periodic testing.
- The tennis court has been repaired and reopened for members in good standing.
- The drainage water system in the vicinity of Clubhouse Beach has been improved to prevent damage to the beach from severe storms.
- The boat storage area near the dam has been organized and cleaned. Boats from non-members have been removed.

We are seeking volunteers to join the Board of Directors and our committees. Community participation creates a better community environment.

Many other improvements are under consideration: security, lake quality, roads, etc.

I wish everyone to be safe and healthy as we move into 2021.

— John Weber

A Note from Your Treasurer



As we say good riddance to 2020, I would like to take just a minute of your time to bring you this quick update regarding WLLA finances.

1. Your board adopted the 2021 budget and assessments at its November 21st meeting. This is a very strong budget that continues to build on the base that we've developed in recent years and also includes plans for the necessary upcoming work at our dam.
2. 2021 assessment rates were established, maintaining Lake and Member charges at \$325 & \$50, respectively, and maintaining Road at the 2020 levels. Road assessments in our community, whether paid to WLLA or to our own pool of neighbors, have historically been based on our rights of ingress to, and egress from, our property, but what about the road usage associated with deeded rights to use WLLA amenities? That access, though it is one thing common to us all (with the exception of Maple Park's deeded access via West Shore Beach only), was predominantly born by those who were assessed Road charges by WLLA. A new assessment in 2021 is an Amenity Access Fee, set at \$50. The Amenity Access Fee will support our ingress and egress associated with deeded rights to use WLLA amenities like Clubhouse Beach and the boat landing via WLLA-maintained roads. As with the change to a 6-tier Road assessment in 2020, the goal of the Amenity Access Fee is a fairer distribution of the support of our Roads. Our guiding principle continues to be that those with the right to use have the obligation to pay.
3. The Maple Park Pro Rata Share for 2021 is yet to be determined. Since it is dependent upon the income and expense for the prior year, the numbers through year end 2020 will need to be complete for the calculation to begin.
4. The final draft of the 2019 audit is expected at any moment and will be posted on our website as soon as it becomes available.
5. Collection efforts continue, with 20 judgments awarded in our favor to date, and additional action in progress. If you are behind or if we have a judgment against you, please make every effort to get current so that such proceedings can be avoided.
6. 2021 assessments will be billed out January 1.

Here's to a very Happy and Healthy New Year for all!

— Carol Gillen, Treasurer

Thank You So Very Much!

Despite only being able to hold two meetings, the Women's Club was able to make 177 masks for donation to the Delaware Elementary School.

Thanks to Christine Cancemi and our Ladies of the Women's Club!

Winter Storm 2020



Opportunity Knocks

Shortly after my parents bought our home at Walker Lake 50 years ago, they had an opportunity to purchase an adjacent parcel on favorable terms – and they took it. They had the idea that whoever our neighbors on the other side of that parcel might be, it would be smart to have a buffer if only to add to privacy and preserve undeveloped land. Though those neighbors are on my short list of “the finest people I know,” we’ve said many times how grateful we are to mom and dad for having had the foresight to acquire that parcel. You may be able to do the same – on very favorable terms!

Check the middle of the OFFICIAL NOTICES page on our website at <https://www.walkerlake.com/official-notices> -- You can find a list of some 52 properties in the Walker Lake community that are up for Judicial (tax) Sale. All are vacant lots. You can check if any of them borders your property or is otherwise of interest by going to <https://gis.pikepa.org/>.

At that site, on the left is a dashboard. Go to either 2A) Search by Control/Account Number (general), or 3B) Search by Map Number (detailed) and copy in either the Control # or the Map # from the list. Click on Search and detailed information concerning the property will appear. Click on the box in the bar on the left of the information panel and the location of the property will display in the map on the right in very clear fashion. More information, including bid sheets, can be found at www.pikepa.org/tax.

Your WLLA Board of Directors hopes that providing this information might create opportunity for interested adjacent property owners to acquire these properties. — Bob Fisher

Snow and Winter Related Reminders



While last winter was very mild with not a lot of snow, we still must stay ready for a real northeastern Pennsylvania winter and major snowstorms. So here are a few winter reminders:

First and especially important, our regulations stipulate that no ATV or snow mobile use is permitted in the development or on the lakes. Please do not take an ATV or snow mobile on the frozen lake. There are fines for those that violate these rules.



When it comes to winter operations, Empire State Excavating, our snowplow contractor for the past two years, has been signed to a new two-year contract, so we are in good hands. RJ, the owner of Empire, takes pride in his company's work and has proven to be dedicated to a very high level of performance.

Empire will start plowing once there is an accumulation of 2 inches. That does not mean every road gets started when there is 2 inches of snow, it just means they will start plowing in the community.

Empire will have at least two trucks plowing and will add a third in heavy storms, if needed. Also, Empire will begin plowing the roads that are on hills, starting with the upper tier off Birch, before going to the flat roads located off Walker Lake Road. It is much easier to navigate a flat road in snow than the one on a hill.

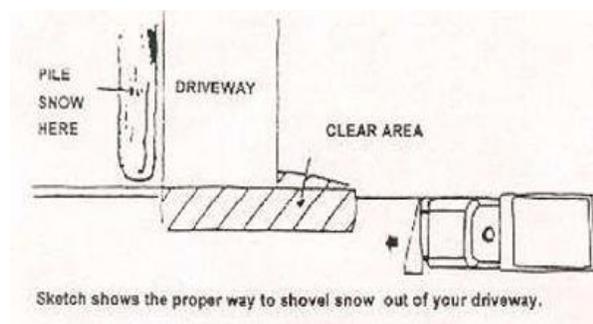
For the safety and convenience of all residents, we ask that you do not blow or shovel the snow from your driveways into the roads themselves. Doing this creates hazards for others using our roads.

Please bring trash and recycling cans back off the road once they are emptied to keep them from being in the way of the plows or, worse yet, plowed away in heavier snow.

If you have a plowing issue or emergency, please call, or e-mail, the WLLA office or you may post your concern on our Friends of Walker Lake Facebook page which is monitored regularly.

Driveway Shoveling Tip

How many times have you shoveled out your driveway only to have the plow come by and leave a pile of snow at the end of your driveway? While it may not totally eliminate that from happening, here is a little tip that can greatly reduce the amount of snow that gets plowed back in front of your driveway:



When you shovel your driveway, clear an area to the right of your driveway as shown in the diagram on the left. This will create a space in which the blade of the plow can empty the snow before it gets to your driveway. It may take you a couple of iterations to figure out how much of a clear area you will need. Remember the more snow, the larger the clear area that is needed.

— Michael DeVita, Director and Chair, Roads Committee

Walker Lake Renaissance Man

Like the rest of us, Scott Rando's been wearing a mask a lot lately; just not when he's handling rattlesnakes. "It creeps up and obscures my vision when handling the snake in the restraining tube such that I might put my hand in the wrong place," he matter-of-factly explained. Scott handles these snakes as part of a catch-tag-and-release project he's working on that monitors the population of rattlers in our area. "They are a 'species of special concern,'" he said, "— a declining population."

"Most people who think of rattlesnakes as vicious wouldn't mind if they just declined right out of existence," he said, "but, you know, they'd rather get out of our way than expend on us venom they would otherwise use to capture prey." If a rattlesnake is encountered, Scott advises, "just walk around it, staying at least 5 feet away."



Scott Rando (left) and Dr. Tom LaDuke, herpetology professor at East Stroudsburg University, prepare to measure, weigh, and PIT-tag a timber rattlesnake as part of a PA Fish and Boat Commission Timber Rattlesnake Assessment and Monitoring Project. The snakes are processed and released, then monitored during subsequent years.

Snakes aren't the only wild creatures that Scott, who writes a bi-weekly column on insects, reptiles and amphibians for *The River Reporter*, pays attention to. He's also been intimately involved in the phenomenally successful project to re-introduce bald eagles in the Delaware Valley. The 73-mile stretch of the Valley, from Hancock to Port Jervis, he says, "is a pristine environment, protected as it is from disturbances by the Wild and Scenic and Rivers Act. The river has a lot of fish, and eagles, though they will eat small mammals, are generally piscivores – fish eaters."

Back to the eagles in a minute....

Born in Texas, Scott moved with his family to Staten Island, and then, when he was 12 or 13, to Birchwood Lakes from which he attended Delaware Valley HS. Following a stint in the Army in 1973-76 during which he maintained aircraft in Germany (Scott has a private pilot's license), Scott was employed by the Heath Company, makers of HeathKit-brand build-your-own electronic-devices, and "got into computers," teaching himself programming.

He went on to work as a service engineer and, later, as a technical support manager, for Kratos Analytical, Inc., a manufacturer of analytical instruments such as mass spectrometers, which are used to calculate the exact molecular weight of the components of a compound material by separating ions according to their mass. "If you know the molecular weight of something," Scott says, "you can probably identify it."

In the late 1990s, Scott met Peter Nye, the famed eagle biologist who, at the time, was head of the Endangered Species Unit with New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Peter pioneered a project to reintroduce eagles into the Delaware Valley starting in the late 1970's. Young eagles were re-introduced into NYS from Wisconsin and Alaska.



The eaglets were housed in “hacking towers” each of which contained several caged compartments positioned 60-70 feet off the ground with doors that open out. Volunteers clad in ponchos climbed to the towers each day with food for the eaglets. Ponchos, so the volunteers would not look like humans, because, Scott says, “if you take a wild animal and start feeding it, your human form gets ‘imprinted’ in the animals’ minds as a parent or a friend, someone they come to depend on to provide their food.”

At 10 weeks, the caged compartments are opened, allowing the fledglings to step out onto branch-like bars, still within the caged space, and begin to open and exercise their wings. Eventually, the birds are released into the wild in hopes they’ll survive and have families.

If so, they’ll have to build nests that could weigh several hundred pounds atop “canopy pines” – towering white pines strong enough to hold those nests. In 1996, the first nest was spotted a few miles north of here in the Valley. By 2010, there were 18 nests; now there are 21 or 22, Scott reports.

Around that time, a municipal parks agency working in partnership with the NYSDEC had released some young eagles (again, hacked) from their park and tagged them with backpack radio transmitters so that NYSDEC and other researchers could keep track of their movements. The trouble was that those transmitters were incompatible with any of the NYSDEC telemetry equipment on hand at that time. Scott was able to modify a receiver to pick up the parks agency telemetry transmitters.

A great nature photographer– another skill Scott learned in the Army where he did aerial photography and developed pictures in his own darkroom – Scott contributes to programs hosted by The Audubon Society and the Sussex County Bird Club, among others.

He’s also served as a volunteer with the Shohola Fire Department and almost lost it when, in a burning building he heard “popping sounds” nearby. It was ammunition going off.

A former WLLA director serving on the Lake Committee, Scott gives the current board good grades. He believes the lake is “well-managed” (“they’re staying ahead of the game so we don’t have problems later on,” he says of the Committee). And he says Board members are, “probably doing what they can” after the Art Politano episode “hurt us,” and “sowed a lot of distrust.”

Asked to identify some of the highlights of his life, Scott readily said that one was, together with a friend, sailing a small craft across the Atlantic from Holland to Florida. Can you guess what this photographer, amateur radio operator, computer programmer, naturalist, and general roustabout taught himself on an adventure like that? Celestial navigation.

Another question: Know where Scott lives? Hint: Look for a house topped by a radio tower. Scott uses his aviation and radio skills as a volunteer with the Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS), a Department of Defense program that provides civilian “contingency communications support” to military pilots.

That’s Scott Rando, renaissance man and multifaceted Walker Lake treasure.

— Bob Fisher

The Problem with Lawns in Our Watershed

If one has a lawn, it gets fertilized.

There are many streams, wetlands and lakes in our watershed. The problem is fertilizer, lime, pesticides or whatever else is used on a lawn is carried by rain during a storm to bodies of water. The nitrogen and phosphorus in this stormwater runoff lead to algal blooms. Algae thrive, die then decay. In the decay process, lots of oxygen dissolved in the water is used up. The oxygen that fish and other aquatic animals need to survive gets consumed.

Equally serious, the growing number of deformed frogs is caused at least partially by runoff. Nitrogen and phosphorus in the runoff fuel a cycle that results in a parasitic infection of tadpoles leading to deformities in adult frogs. The increased algal growth in a body of water causes an increase in the snail population that thrives on the algae. The increased number of snails provides a breeding place for the parasites which are then released into the water where they infect tadpoles forming cysts that inhibit the proper development of their legs.

It is true just a small amount of pollutants may come from one household, but the cumulative effect of many households adds up and can lead to serious problems in the waterways of our watershed.

When landscaping consider these alternatives to lots of lawn:

- If building a new house, keep land clearing to a minimum.
- Maintain a natural buffer zone of vegetation along a shore. Grass does not have deep roots like the plants that tend to grow at the water's edge. The deeper rooted plants absorb runoff and assimilate nutrients before they reach the water. As an added bonus the taller plants discourage geese from feeding and defecating on your property.
- Reduce the amount of lawn and add color plus excitement to your landscape by planting native plants. Native plants are defined as ones that were here before settlers arrived. Native plants are adapted to the area, are insect resistant and will thrive without fertilizer and watering. The possibilities are many. Follow the link on the Twin and Walker Creeks Watershed Conservancy's website, www.twcwc.com to *Other resources*, then to *Native Plants to Use in Landscaping* for over 90 showy flowers, trees, shrubs and ferns that covered Penn's Woods and can be a part of your landscape today.

— Joyce Laudise, TWCWC October 2007 Newsletter

Please take note:

The community again requests property owners to clear ditches and culverts on their property borders with Association-maintained roads, so drainage flows freely alongside the roads and not on the roads. Thank you.

Walker Lake Wildlife



Courtesy of Scott Rondo



Courtesy of Jen Fisher

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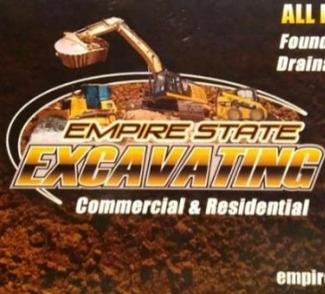
LET'S TALK TRASH!

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LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED

Keeping Up-to-Date

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Walker Lakeshores Landowners Association
100 Walker Lake Drive
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