



# LGA NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the Lake George Association

Winter 2010

## Winter on Lake George: Ice Safety and Ice Eater Tips

Have a safe and fun time out on the lake this winter.

These numbers (right) are for good, clear (often looks bluish-black) ice. If white, bubble-filled ice makes up part of the ice thickness, you should double your numbers.

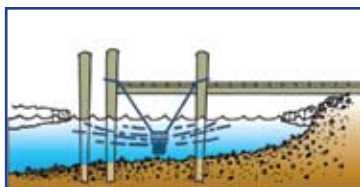
Always check the ice before you go out on it. Use an ice auger, spud bar, or even a cordless drill to make holes. Ice does not form uniformly across a water body. If the ice along the shoreline is cracked or squishy looking, stay off. Avoid ice that is honeycombed or piled up. Ice is thinner near running water – so avoid shoreline areas near stream channels or ice eaters on docks that are creating a current.



Image used by permission of the Minnesota DNR

### Remember:

- Never go out on the ice alone.
- Dress in layers, and don't forget a good hat and gloves. Wool and fleece are great insulators - even if they get wet - but a wind and water proof outer layer is a good idea.
- Always be sure to test the ice thickness and avoid areas that look thin.
- Don't congregate in large groups, build a fire, or drive a large vehicle onto the ice.
- If you do fall in, reach for solid ice, lay your arms on the ice and kick hard. Don't stand up right away once you are out – instead, roll away until you are on more solid ice. To watch a video on how to do this, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysnKtuUTt8k>



Ice eaters work by propelling warmer water from the bottom up to the surface, which along with agitation, keeps ice from forming. Ice eaters are commonly hung off of a dock with a rope or other mounting system.

### Safe and Effective Use of Ice eaters.

**Remember:** Ice eaters can help protect your dock from ice damage, but only when used properly. They can also create safety hazards for wintertime lake users. Use a timer and thermostat, place the ice eater so that it points vertically, and turn your ice eater off before the ice starts to melt and break up in the spring. For more tips on how to use ice eaters safely and effectively, check out our website for a brochure on the use of ice eaters.



Overuse of ice eaters to protect docks can actually cause dock damage!

# English Brook Watershed Update

The English Brook watershed has recently received some much needed stormwater attention. The Lake George Association (LGA) in conjunction with Warren County Soil and Water Conservation Department (WCSWCD) have advanced three projects within the watershed that were originally identified in the 2008 Watershed Assessment Report developed by the WCSWCD.



*Locations of the three projects we worked on this past year within the English Brook Watershed.*

The first such project was a design plan for a potential sediment basin at the mouth of English Brook. The plans were completed this past fall. The WCSWCD designed the basin to be approximately 150 feet in length and 50 feet wide. The basin will be about 6 feet deep with a capacity to trap over 700 cubic yards of material. It is estimated that once the basin is installed, it will need to be cleaned out every 1 to 2 years. The basin was designed so that a long reach excavator will be able to access and remove the material out of the basin from the south side of the brook. No construction date has been set at this time.

Moving upstream, we continued to work off of the 2008 Report and looked at the drainage area around Exit 22, Lower Hubble Lane and Route 9N. This sub-watershed of English Brook is limited to what stormwater retrofits can be added due to shallow soils and bedrock outcrops. For this reason, Jarrett Engineering was hired to evaluate the small watershed and determine what the best type of stormwater separator that could be used. Through the generosity of the Lochlea Estate, a small section near Route 9N was selected for this proposed project. A test pit determined that we would have enough

room to place an Aqua Swirl Concentrator. This unit will remove gross pollutants by the swirl concentrator followed by the removal of fine sediments and water-borne pollutants by the filtration chamber. As this project moves forward we are working with the Department of Transportation to tie in the existing infrastructure on 9N.

**“This is such a difficult area to work in as the depth to bedrock is so shallow. Fortunately we were given permission to use the site and the Aqua Swirl unit fits well. The unit will capture runoff and remove pollutants from this concentrated area of developed land that previously wasn’t addressed.”**

Randy Rath, LGA Project manager

The final project addressed was the Hubble Reservoir. The Town of Lake George has maintained this old reservoir along with oversight from WCSWCD, but recently it has become a burden to dewater the site due to a non-functioning sluice gate and valve and lack of a permanent dewatering pipe. The LGA hired Patrick J. Galusha Construction to remove the sluice gate and valve to determine if it could be repaired or if it would have to be replaced. Since the pond was completely dewatered, we took the opportunity to completely remove the sediment that has accumulated in the reservoir. Almost 600 cubic yards of material were removed. The sluice gate is no longer in working order and we are seeking additional solutions to replace it.

These projects could not have taken place without the generosity of the Helen V. Froehlich Foundation, New York State Department of State and the Environmental Protection Fund.



*Almost 600 cubic yards of material were removed when Hubble Brook Reservoir was cleaned out this past October.*

# Goose Management on Lake George

As winter has taken a firm grasp on the lake and the Canada Geese that we have seen on our shorelines, islands and beaches all summer and fall are quite far from being on our minds, a recent meeting with a federal agency, better known as “Wildlife Services,” has opened our eyes to some growing concerns, as well as some possible solutions related to geese around the lake.

USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services is a cooperatively funded federal agency that deals strictly with human/wildlife conflicts. They typically work for cities and towns, as well as with individual homeowners or homeowner associations solving wildlife conflicts. New York Wildlife Services receives hundreds of calls per year dealing with complaints from woodpeckers to woodchucks and do their best to provide advice and assistance to solve the problem.

The geese that are creating the problem are “resident” Canada geese, which means that they spend basically all year in New York. They arrive in early spring, nest, raise their young throughout the summer months, taking advantage of our mowed lawns, beaches, and docks, and they stay until the water freezes, or their food supply runs out. They are quite different than the migratory geese that only stop over briefly on their flight south for the winter.

According to the DEC, the target population for Canada Geese in New York State is 85,000 birds, although currently the goose population is estimated to be around 200,000 birds, which translates into a significant overpopulation. This overpopulation of Canada geese is what causes damage to our lawns, shorelines, beaches, and water quality.

In New York, Wildlife Services has been conducting goose management for over 15 years, and according to their staff, there are 3 essential components to Canada goose management.

1. Population Stabilization
2. Population Reduction
3. Harassment



*Wildlife services uses trained dogs to harass Canada geese as part of their program.*



*Geese are very protective of their nests. Be prepared if you try to approach one.*

The first, and most important one, Population Stabilization, is accomplished through egg oiling. In the nesting season USDA employees search for and find all Canada Goose nests on a site and apply corn oil to the eggs. This activity prevents the eggs from hatching and dramatically reduces the number of goose goslings that are born in the summer. The second step is Population Reduction. When the adult geese lose their wing feathers and their ability to fly in mid summer, they can be easily captured and removed in large groups. Finally, for any geese that remain, a Harassment program should be implemented. Remote control boats, dogs, and noise making pyrotechnics are used to deter the geese from specific areas.

Wildlife services can provide technical advice or management work. When a goose is harassed they only go 3 miles away – so they are more than likely just a problem somewhere else on the lake. This is not a long term solution for our geese problems. The most cost effective approach is to follow all three steps outlined above. However, if you were to pick just 1, the population stabilization is the most important - as it will slow population growth. Once a female goose has a successful nest, she will go back year after year. However it will take time to see results by just doing 1 step. If you want to see quick results, you should consider a program with all three steps. Wildlife services can round up about 300 birds a day – from an area as large as 2 miles!

If you are a homeowner or belong to a homeowners associations that is having Canada geese problems and would like help in dealing with the issue, please give Emily a call at the office at 518-668-3558. We are planning on setting up some meetings with Lake George homeowners and Wildlife Services this spring. Wildlife services staff will explain what actions you can take on your own, and they will also explain what actions they can be hired for. We also have a number of fact sheets about Canada goose management available at the office as well.

# West Brook Conservation Initiative Update

The West Brook Conservation Initiative continues to gain momentum on the site of the old Gaslight Village amusement park and Charley's Saloon in the heart of Lake George's commercial area. Our project partners New York State's Department of State and Department of Transportation have agreed on the design for the south parcel phase of the stormwater management project. We expect to see this aspect of the project going out to bid in the spring. Project funding is in place from DOT and DOS.

Project funding for the environmental park and amenities has been substantially raised through a grant which the LGA secured for the Village of Lake George.

Our joint fundraising for the purchase of the Conservation Easement progresses slowly. Several very helpful pledges came in during 2009, but we have a long way to go to meet our goals. The next major milestone is our \$2.1 million dollar loan – a joint commitment of the LGA and Fund for Lake George – which comes due in early 2010. A \$614,000 grant, which the LGA secured

through the help of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, will apply toward offsetting the cost of the Conservation Easement.

Debate continues among the municipalities over what to do with the Cavalcade of Cars and Opera House buildings on the site. We are keeping our distance from that issue since it is more of an aesthetic consideration than a stormwater management concern. The portion of the site where those buildings are located is not essential to our stormwater project, but it does constrain our ability to fully realize the park-like atmosphere we have been promoting all along.



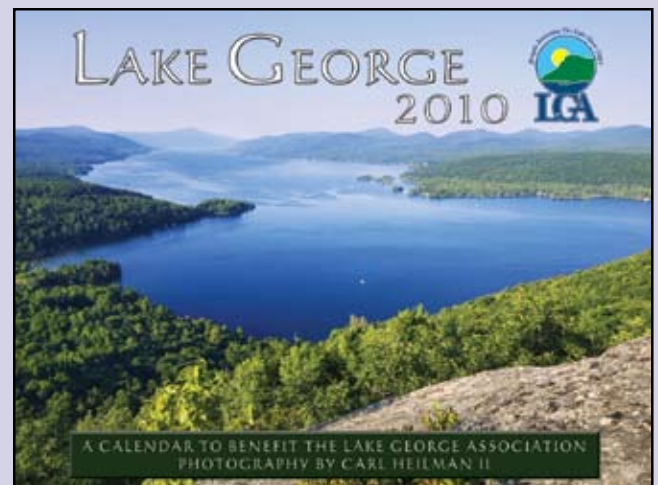
## Best CSLAP Secchi Disk Reading for 2009

Since 2004 the LGA has been coordinating volunteers to participate in the Citizen Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP) sponsored by the New York Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) and the NYSDEC. Volunteers collect water quality samples all summer on lakes across the state and the data is compiled over the winter. This data is used to help manage and assess trends in New York's many lakes. The secchi disk data has been reviewed for the season – and we just got the good news!



On September 2nd, Peter Leyh, LGA member and CSLAP volunteer who samples water near Gull Bay on the north end of the lake, recorded a 13.55m secchi disk reading. Peter's notes for the weather that day were that the lake was "dead calm". No other CSLAP lake could match it! NYSFOLA manager Nancy Mueller even checked with the Onondaga County Health Department to see how Skaneateles Lake fared and the best they recorded for 2009 was around 12m. There were 113 lakes that participated in the CSLAP program this past year. Lake George was the hands down winner for 2009 - thanks Peter! (And thanks of course to all of our other very dedicated CSLAP volunteers as well!)

Buy your 2010 LGA Calendar today!



**Featuring 12 beautiful Lake George photos by renowned Adirondack photographer, Carl Heilman II.**

Proceeds from sales of this calendar will go to support the LGA's Lake Saving Programs and Projects.

**Only \$ 10**  
(\$ 13 for calendar with S&H)

# Effects of Fireworks on Lake George Water Quality

It might be hard to remember those warm summer nights this time of year, but every summer Lake George is host to numerous fireworks displays. In addition to the well-known displays in Lake George Village, other town parks such as Bolton and private organizations and hotels also have fireworks displays. While private shows are typically smaller than the Village ones, we seem to be seeing more and more of them over the years. Exactly how many is hard to know, since there is no permit or registration needed.

Discussion about the effects of fireworks on Lake George is not new. However, due to a number of shows right in a row in 2008, interest in the matter arose again, a bit louder this time. As a result, the LGA hosted a meeting last October to discuss the matter with a number of local officials. LGA staff then followed up with a meeting with Jeff Alonzo, owner of Alonzo Fireworks. “We discussed the idea of a registration system to keep track of the number of shows that go off over Lake George each summer,” said Emily DeBolt, the LGA’s Director of Education. “The idea is to keep it simple, but just to have a way of knowing how many shows there are, where they are, and what products are being used. Alonzo said they had no objections to such a system.”

However, we still didn’t know if there was really cause for concern or not. So the LGA decided that it made sense to try to gather some data of our own. We collected water samples from three sites in Lake George Village before and after five fireworks events this past summer.

We had the samples analyzed for perchlorates, barium, and antimony – contaminants associated with fireworks. We also collected sediment samples from Lake George Village and compared them to sediment from near Shelving Rock, an area with similar sediment type and water depth that from our best guess had not been host to any



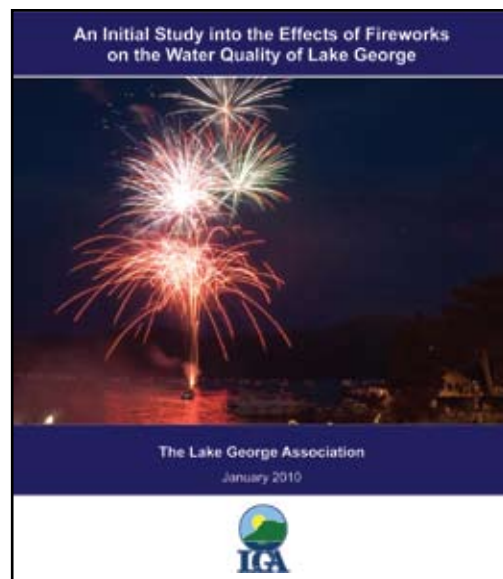
*Thanks to summer employee Jason Smith and LGA Educator Kristen Rohne for waking up early to go out and sample this past summer!*

fireworks displays in the past. Our full report, including background information on contaminants associated with fireworks and references for available scientific studies is available by request and is also posted on our website. However, the long and short of it is that we didn’t find much – which is a good thing!

There is no federal or NYS drinking water standard for perchlorate. In 2006

Massachusetts was the first to set such a standard, and set the drinking water standard for perchlorate at 0.002mg/L. Part of the problem is that there isn’t really much agreement on what is or isn’t a safe amount of perchlorate. But for the purposes of our study we used 0.002 mg/L as a reference point. Our results showed no change in perchlorate, with perchlorate levels less than 0.002 mg/L for all tests, before and after firework events. We also did not find a change in antimony levels, and while barium levels slightly fluctuated, the results were also not significant. We also found perchlorate levels of less than 0.002 mg/L in the sediment samples from both locations.

We would still like to caution that this study was by no means comprehensive, so we can not know for certain if there is need for a concern over perchlorate or not. We can only weigh our options based on the knowledge we have available to us and do our best to protect Lake George and the economic viability of the region. Perchlorate-free fireworks are available for use, however they are much more costly than traditional fireworks, and it is still unclear at this point if such an additional expense is necessary or not. What does at least seem to make sense at this time is to track the fireworks displays that occur over Lake George every year, so that we can have a better idea of the number and locations of these events. This is at least a starting point. And then in the mean time we can look for answers to some of the questions that are still out there.



*LGA Lake George fireworks study report is available on our website or by contacting the LGA office.*

# Do You Know Where Your Septic System Is?

With all the talk about stormwater, we haven't forgotten about wastewater!

We spend a lot of our time here at LGA working on stormwater management. Our project manager oversees a number of projects around the lake each year to fix runoff problems in specific areas. And much of our outreach to homeowners focuses on reducing the effects of runoff, such as by using no-phosphorus fertilizer or installing a rain garden or shoreline buffer. One of the reasons behind our focus on stormwater management is that the most recent phosphorous budget developed for Lake George found that the majority of the phosphorous loading is in the surface runoff. So it makes sense that stormwater management should be the focus on phosphorous reduction efforts around the lake. And while the study found septic systems to be a surprisingly small part of the phosphorous budget, estimated at only 1% of the total annual phosphorous load - that does not mean that we should let wastewater management be forgotten!

While septic systems might not have a large lake-wide effect on the total amount of phosphorous entering the lake, a failing septic can have a significant impact directly along the shoreline near its location. And a failing septic doesn't just leak phosphorous, but it also can leak harmful bacteria such as E. coli as well as nutrients such as nitrogen, so it can be a human health concern as well as an environmental water quality concern.

In order to get a better idea of just what the septic situation is around the lake, we are working on developing a survey. We hope to survey all homeowners within 500 feet of the lake about their septic systems and water source. Then, once we compile the results, we can use the survey to better inform any future outreach activities focused on septic systems and wastewater management.

While more and more houses around the lake are moving to sewer systems due to the sewer



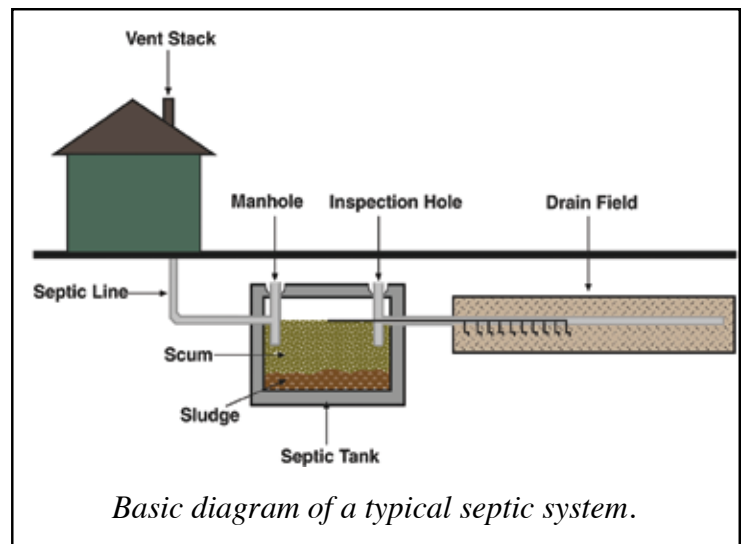
Advanced systems such as this Puraflo system that uses peat moss can help get around physical constraints such as small lot size or bedrock.

projects in Hague and on Black Point Road in Ticonderoga, there are still a number of houses on septic systems. How many? We don't know! That is what we want to find out with our upcoming survey. There are some situations which make some septic systems priorities in terms of water quality and health concerns, and most likely we would want to focus any sort of efforts on these types of systems first.

Such systems may include:

- Lots where older, seasonal camps are updated into larger, year-round homes. The existing septic may not be adequate for such **increased use**. However, depending on the town, one may not be required to have the septic inspected or upgraded even though it might very well need to be.
- Soils, bedrock, the groundwater table, and small lots. These **physical constraints** can make it difficult to place a septic system, especially when drinking water wells or neighbors are close-by.
- **Proximity to the lake, a stream, or a wetland.** The closer a septic or piping is to a body of water, the more important it is that the system is in good working order. Even just a small leak could get right into the water.
- Some older cabin colonies have **shared septic systems** that add up to more than 1,000 gpd, meaning they need a SPDES permit from the NYSDEC. Many of these systems do not have the necessary permit and so their efficacy is not known.

Stay tuned for the results of our survey later this year!



# Save The Date!

Join us as we celebrate  
125 years  
of protecting Lake George

July 16, 2010

The Inn at Erlowest

*It's the party of the summer, you won't want to miss it!  
This event will fill quickly so make your reservations early!!*



## Make the protection of Lake George a part of your legacy...

**Remember the LGA in your will with a gift and become a member of the Helen V. Froelich Legacy Society.**

A charitable bequest is one of the simplest ways to make a gift, and often at a level not possible during ones lifetime. A bequest can be made for a specific amount or a percentage of your estate. Your gift can consist of cash, securities, real estate, or personal property.

**Or consider a donation of securities or stock.**

*As always, it is recommended that you consult with your personal tax advisor or attorney.*

**Contact us for more information about ways to give to the LGA today!**

*Donations made through the LGA website are protected by Authorize.Net, a leader in the industry of secure online payment gateways.*

### Join the LGA Today and Help Protect the Beauty of Lake George for Years to Come!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Address \_\_\_\_\_

Seasonal Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes! I would like to become an LGA Member: (Check Below):**

\$10,000    \$5,000    \$2,500    \$1,000    \$500    \$250    \$150    \$100

\$50 Individual (1 person only)    \$25 Student (Under 18 only)

**Payment Type:**  Check enclosed. (Please make payable to Lake George Association Inc.)

Charge my credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_ VISA/MC/AMEX # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ 3 digit CCV# \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: **Lake George Association, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 408**  
**Lake George, NY 12845**

Or make a donation online at  
[www.lakegeorgeassociation.org](http://www.lakegeorgeassociation.org)

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*All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

*Cover banner photo by Carl Heilman II.*

**Our Mission Statement**

*“Working together to protect, conserve and improve the beauty and quality of the Lake George Basin.”*