

09-07-18 Loving the Lakes Continues

Sometimes life is rewarded with generosity. This happened recently in Halifax, all for the Love of the Lakes. Back in July I wrote about the need for a few volunteers, for only a few hours a year, to help with the lakes. In particular, there was the need to fill a couple positions on the Central Plymouth County Water District's Advisory Board. The CPCWD was established as part of the act of legislation from 1964 that allowed, as "an emergency", water to be drawn from Silver Lake in Kingston to supply the City of Brockton. The additional water bodies of Furnace Pond and the Monponsett Ponds became Tributaries to the Surface Water Supply of Silver Lake.

My plea for a few people to come forward for this small effort to make possible the larger efforts and achievements of others was rewarded with three immediate responses.

Before I tell you about the three generous responders, let me tell you of Marianne Moore. Marianne is a full-time nurse and on the Executive Board of the Monponsett Watershed Association. She had been working diligently for several years as both the chair and secretary of the CPCWD Advisory Board. Do you know what her most daunting task was, or so it seems from my perspective anyway? Contacting and re-contacting and re-contacting members of the six town representatives attempting to get a quorum. I say six representatives, but it was supposed to be seven. We never had anyone from East Bridgewater, despite the efforts of many people asking for one.

Marianne realized that she was too busy and needed to step down from the Advisory Board and focus her efforts on the Watershed Association. We are so grateful to her for her time and efforts!

The irony here is that our new helpers solved the problem! Many hands make light work comes to mind. First, Helen Corcoran offered to represent East Bridgewater. She was willing to take an evening to visit the East Bridgewater Board of Selectmen meeting in hopes of being appointed. I guess our unintentional strategy worked after years of failed attempts by many, for they appointed their health agent, Bob Philbrick. Thank you, Helen and thank you, Bob!

Halifax was blessed by two offers for the Advisory Board. Peter Veneto lives on Silver Lake and Laurie Monahan is a new comer to Halifax and lives on

the East Monponsett Pond. At the recent Halifax Board of Selectmen meeting, Peter was appointed to the Advisory Board and Laurie was appointed as an alternate. Not only was it great to finally meet them in person, our recent meeting of the Advisory Board easily had a quorum with the new members!

Having a quorum means that we have a legal meeting. Having a legal meeting means that we function according to the 1964 legislature. It might be a broken, outdated piece of legislation for an emergency that should have been temporary, but it is what we have until it is amended or tossed, and we need to use it while it is in place. We on the Advisory Board can research to, as the title implies, advise the Commissioners but, if nothing else, we have the important role of appointing the three Commissioners who represent all seven towns of Plympton, Halifax, Hanson, Pembroke, Whitman, Kingston and East Bridgewater.

In addition to this great news of new volunteers, two residents recently decided to be proactive and act regarding their septic system without any legal requirement to do so. One longtime resident requested a perc test as the first step in replacing his grandfather's hand dug cesspool. Kudos to him!

Within the same week, a resident walked into my office because of the East Monponsett Pond being closed due to high cyanobacteria counts. I was braced for explaining algae circumstances and for empathizing with the fact that this is a new situation needing a new plan. What he told me shocked me. He did not want to contribute to the problem! He wanted to know what he could do to find out if his old septic system was leaking into the East Pond. He asked if someone could put dye in his system to see if it arrived in the pond. This was incredible! Yes, I had red dye. I have asked residents with known failing systems if I could use it, just as an experiment, to see where it showed up. No one has ever asked me to use it!

We talked about several other options such as testing the pond water for E. coli. This is a fairly inexpensive test, at \$15 for each sample. Also, the man was willing to have a full Title V inspection. Talk about doing the right thing! I was astounded and delighted and thankful.

While the Monponsett Ponds certainly do have problems, it was certainly a good sign last week that people cared enough to come forward and do something because they love the lakes! May the love spread and continue!

*Cathleen Drinan is the health agent for Halifax. She can be reached at 781  
293 6768 or [cdrinan@town.halifax.ma.us](mailto:cdrinan@town.halifax.ma.us)*