



## ON THE POND

## SUMMER 2014

### President's Message

First, I want to thank you all for the excellent feedback I received on my first newsletter this spring! I have been up to camp every weekend since Memorial Day and I have to say, it has been nice reconnecting with neighbors and friends.

As summer gets into full swing, we'll be hosting the usual 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities around the pond. Full details on each of the events can be found in this edition of the newsletter. Jen Carbonneau and I would also like to host some additional activities for children throughout the summer. Some ideas include an outdoor movie night, an ice cream social, a kickball tournament, and more. We'll be looking for some feedback on this at the annual Camp Association Meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup>.

We will keep members informed of any new programs and events by email, on the association website ([www.NealPondVT.org](http://www.NealPondVT.org)), and through our Facebook page at [www.Facebook.com/NealPondVT](http://www.Facebook.com/NealPondVT)

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### Nesting Loons Update

Submitted By Eric Hanson, VCE Biologist

After years of paired and unpaired loon activity, the loons attempted to nest in the south marsh near the outlet in 2013. Unfortunately, the nest failed due to flooding. It looks like the loons are attempting to nest there again in 2014.

The Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE), which manages the Vermont Loon Conservation Program, will be placing two floating nest warning sign buoys at the entrance to the cove to give the loons a quiet period for their 28 days of incubation time.

In future years, these signs will likely be placed ahead of time in May. We will not put any signage at the boat access on the trail leading to the marsh, but we ask that people avoid this trail in later May and June and possibly into early July.

Loons can handle the occasional disturbance. The adult might leave the nest if disturbed, but once people leave the area, he or she will climb back on to the nest (male and female share nest sitting duties). It is repeated disturbances that cause problems.

If there is a nest failure, pairs might re-nest, thus nesting can continue into mid-July in some years. However, once the chicks hatch out, the family usually leaves the nest within 24-36 hours and the signs will be removed shortly thereafter.

Please be aware and respectful of our loons as they attempt to nest this year.

There were fewer than 10 nesting pairs of loons in the State of Vermont in the early 1980s. Through the continued efforts of the VCE and increased public awareness, the loon population has risen to

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Please take a moment to update your contact information by using the form on the Neal Pond website at [www.NealPondVT.org](http://www.NealPondVT.org) to be sure we know how to reach you with the latest news.

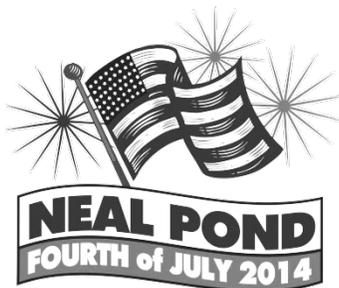
I would like to take a moment to thank both former President Dave Gauvin and former Secretary Joan Vars for their years of service to our organization. They have been extremely helpful in making this transition a smooth one.

I hope you find this edition of "On the Pond" as interesting and informative as the last one. Feel free to reach out to me directly at [jpratt@townisp.com](mailto:jpratt@townisp.com) if you have any questions or ideas.

See you on the pond!

*Jackie Pratt*

NPCOA President ☺



## Dues are Due

Quadrant officers will be visiting each camp prior to July 4th to collect Camp Owners Association dues and to sell flares for the 4th of July as well as tickets to the Camp Owners Association BBQ on July 12th.

Dues remain at \$10 per year. The best deal is \$20 for dues, two flares, and two people at the cookout. Neal Pond Calendars will be also available for \$10 each. Please Note: Calendars will be available in limited supply.

Please renew your membership to ensure we will continue to have a strong organization that will monitor water quality, represent camp owners to local and state government, and maintain membership in the Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds. Our group will continue to explore new ways to improve water quality and foster strong community relationships. ☺

## Fourth of July Events

July is peak time for many of our members who will be busy with family gatherings to celebrate Independence Day. If history is any indicator, we'll

have more guests on the pond over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July than at any other time of the year. This year's NPCOA-sponsored events are listed below:

### Friday, July 4, 2014

- 1:00 – 4:00 pm Poker Run – A family-friendly event! Boat to each of the five numbered docks indicated by a balloon/ball and pick up one card at each dock. When you have collected one card from each dock, meet back at dock #1 at 4:00 pm to determine who has the best poker hand. Prizes will be given to those with the top three hands.

Rules: One hand of cards per boat. Be respectful of dock owners and other boaters. No opening envelopes or trading cards. Please paddle safely and use an appropriate life preserver/PFD as required by law.

- 7:00 pm Boat Parade –The boat parade will begin at the boat launch and proceed counter-clockwise around the pond. Get in the spirit of the holiday and dress your boat in the most patriotic decorations you can find! Nothing gets the crowd cheering more than good old red, white, and blue! Please DO NOT throw anything from your boat during the parade.
- 9:00 pm Flare Lighting – A horn will sound when it is time to light the flares. Each camp should place their flares in a safe location down by the water's edge for all to enjoy!

### Saturday, July 5, 2014

- 6:00 – 11:00 am Kid's Fishing Derby – The Carbonneau family will once again host their annual fishing derby for kids up to 14 years of age. Stop by their dock to register the morning of the derby or register during the poker run on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Fish should be brought ALIVE to their dock on Boys Camp Road for official weigh-in. This catch-and-release derby is free to all Camp Association members and their guests.

Prizes will be awarded in a variety of categories. All participants should meet back

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## Wildlife Sightings

Rumor has it there is a nesting pair of bald eagles down at the north end of the pond. Keep your eyes open and you may spot the baby eaglet.

Loons appear to be nesting at the south end of the pond again. Please keep out of the area near the outlet to afford them privacy while they nest.

While moose visit the pond less frequently than they did a few years ago, one was recently spotted in a yard on Lake Road.

Ever heard a fisher? Trust me, you'll know if you do! We heard one screeching and howling away just the other night. They are known to feast on porcupines and they make a racket when hunting.

See something good? Snap a picture and share it with us! Send an email to [jpratt@townisp.com](mailto:jpratt@townisp.com) 📷

## 2014 Photo Contest

We are now accepting submissions for the 2014 photo contest! Email your best pictures from Neal Pond in the following categories to [jpratt@townisp.com](mailto:jpratt@townisp.com) by July 7, 2014.

### Judging

Pictures in each category will be presented at the annual Camp Owners Association picnic on July 12th, where members will vote for the winner in each category.

### Categories

- People - Show us what you love to do at the pond and who you do it with.
- Landscapes - Did you catch a great sunset or a spectacular rainbow? Share it with us!
- Wildlife – Capture the moose, loons, herons and other animals that call Neal Pond home.

### Rules

Photos should be of the immediate Neal Pond area taken from July of 2013 to present, and must be appropriate for viewing by all ages. All photos submitted to the contest may be used by the NPCOA in a future Neal Pond calendar or on the [NealPondVT.org](http://NealPondVT.org) web site. 📷

more than 60 nesting pairs in Vermont today.

### What can I do to help?

Loons can be amazing to watch, but use binoculars or let them swim to you. Adults with chicks and on nests are much more sensitive than adults by themselves.

Never pursue loons by boat. Move quietly if they get close. Slow down whenever you see loons. Loon chicks are difficult to see and cannot dive well. Wakes from boats can overwhelm young chicks. Anglers should reel in when loons are diving nearby as they will take live bait and lures. Pick up discarded fishing line and drop it in the fishing line recycle bin posted at the boat ramp.

### How do I know if I am disturbing the loons?

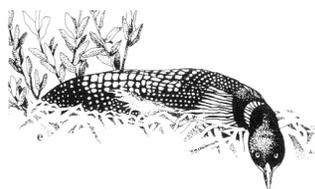
1. If a loon "crouches" or "hides" with head extended low...
2. If you separate the adults from the chick(s)...
3. When loons begin laughing (the tremolo—alarm alert call) or yodeling (the male territorial call)...
4. When they dip or raise their bills, and act agitated...
5. When they splash water, often while doing their calls (penguin dance, wing rowing)...



Penguin Dance



Wing Rowing



Hiding on Nest



Hiding on Water

**\*\*\* If you see people disturbing loons on the water or at a nest, please ask them to back away \*\*\***

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jackie Pratt, Gail Kimball or Janis Falabella on Neal Pond, or Eric Hanson, VCE biologist, at 802-586-8064 [ehanson@vtecostudies.org](mailto:ehanson@vtecostudies.org) or visit the VCE loon website at [www.vtecostudies.org/loons](http://www.vtecostudies.org/loons) 📷

## Blueberry Grants Still Available

Through a Vermont Fish and Wildlife Watershed Grant, The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds (FOVLAP) is working with five Neal Pond Camp Owners Association members to plant blueberry bushes on their property this year.

Grantees will receive four blueberry bushes and will be provided with training on planting and maintenance as well as erosion prevention, shoreland vegetation, and lake health. The cost of the program is \$50 for each grant recipient (50% off the regular price).

We will schedule a delivery and training date for some time in late July. If you are interested in participating in this program, please email [jpratt@townisp.com](mailto:jpratt@townisp.com). Grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis to the first five respondents.

**\*\*\* WE STILL HAVE TWO SPOTS AVAILABLE! \*\*\***  
Please let me know ASAP if you want to register. 🍷

at the Carbonneau's dock at 11:00 am for prizes, snacks, and crafts. This year, the kids will have the opportunity to make a cool tie-dyed camp flag.

Please have a happy, safe, and healthy 4<sup>th</sup> of July and enjoy the fireworks! 🍷

## Annual Meeting Information

The annual Neal Pond Camp Owners Association meeting is scheduled for Saturday, July 12, 2014. We will provide updates on many of the questions posed at last year's meeting, elect leaders, and address a host of new topics including grant opportunities, new laws, and other issues.

- 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Business Meeting
- 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Association BBQ

The meeting and BBQ will be held at the McGuire Camp located on the west side of the pond at 210 Boys Camp Road as it was last year. Special thanks to the McGuires for hosting us again! 🍷



## Other Notes

- **Website Updates** – [www.NealPondVT.org](http://www.NealPondVT.org) has been updated to include information on all 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities.
- **Facebook** – Follow Neal Pond Camp Assoc. on Facebook at [facebook.com/NealPondVT](https://facebook.com/NealPondVT) to stay abreast of what's going on at the pond and to keep in touch with your neighbors.
- **Personal Watercraft/Jet Skis** – Please note that jet skis (a.k.a. personal watercraft) are prohibited on the pond. Be sure to remind guests and renters of this to avoid any problems this summer.

- **Neal Pond Gear** – Visit our online store for Neal Pond T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and more! Click the Neal Pond Gift Shop link on the left menu at [www.NealPondVT.org](http://www.NealPondVT.org)
- **Wood Duck Boxes** – I will be coordinating a kids' event to build wood duck boxes that will be placed somewhere along the north end of the pond in the fall.

A likely time for the build will be over Labor Day weekend. If you are interested in participating, please email me at [jpratt@townisp.com](mailto:jpratt@townisp.com) so I can coordinate a time that will work for everyone.

- **Fishing Line Recycling** – The fishing line recycling bin has been placed at the boat ramp.

The drop bin will be checked on a regular basis by volunteers and all line collected will be sent to Berkley for recycling.

This bin is for fishing line only. Please report any abuse of the drop off location to Camp Association Officers. If frequent abuse occurs, the drop bin will be removed.

- **Other Ideas?** – Feel free to reach out with any ideas you may have for improving our pond, protecting our water, or just having fun! 🍷