

GSLA Year End Letter - 2012

Dear Association Members,

The Board of Directors of the Great Sand Lakes Association is pleased to provide you with a report on the activities and accomplishments of the Association during 2012. Much of what we accomplished was due to the funds at our disposal, the result of the Membership voting at the annual meeting in June of 2011 to increase the dues to \$60. Much was also accomplished through the efforts of members working as volunteers.

Our primary focus and responsibility as Board Members is to keep Bucks and John Joseph Pond healthy and minimize the further decline of Sand and Kidde ponds. Unless we do that, our recreational opportunities decline, the scenic beauty of "our little corner of Heaven" fades, and our property values decrease. Keeping the ponds healthy requires continued vigilance by all of us to do our part to minimize nitrogen and phosphorus from entering the ponds, which come from the use of fertilizers near the pond, feeding wild fowl on the pond, road run-off into the pond, and other sources.

Among the activities undertaken this year are the following:

- We have replaced the failing retaining wall on the Vacation Lane beach. It was expensive, but not as much so as we feared. We asked for your authorization to spend up to \$7,700.00 but were able to have the work done satisfactorily for about half that amount. This should significantly reduce the damage caused by erosion and run off at this beach.
- In response to our lobbying the Town of Harwich, five catch basins were installed to capture rain water which has previously had puddled or run into the pond.

- At long last, we found a relatively inexpensive and safe way to provide access from Paradise Path to the beach between the two ponds ("the spit") with a post and rope walkway.

- We replaced both flags on the flagpoles within the Association, and also repainted the Great Sand Lakes Association sign off Rte 39.

- This year, as always, some members volunteered to clean up the beaches, especially in the early days of the summer season. In addition we pay to neaten the "bird" beaches off Queen Anne Road (Hummingbird, Bluebird, etc.) and to have trash and fallen trees removed from the larger Association beaches.

- Others test the water quality during the summer to provide data to the Harwich Water Quality Task Force.

- Volunteers created the parking permits for Clearwater Beach and delineated the parking spaces so that residents do not find themselves shut out of the parking area when they go to use the beach on a hot summer day. In addition, they continue patrol the parking area at Clearwater Beach to make sure unauthorized vehicles are not occupying the spaces.

- We continue to provide liability insurance against injuries in the ponds and on the beaches.

- We continue to pay Barnstable County to test for bacterial presence on our Association beaches, none of which were closed last summer.

We have worked to elevate the profile of the Association by having meetings with the Town's Police Department, the Highway Department, and the Conservation Agent.

The two social activities that are organized by the Association are the annual picnic and the annual holiday party.

- We had a successful summer picnic. Those who came to that event enjoyed hamburgers and hot dogs supplied by the Association as well as delicious side dishes and desserts brought by members. Volunteers organized the tables and tents and grills and flipped hamburgers and helped with clean up and with the kayak and sailboat races.

- We had a very successful holiday party in December. The turnout was the largest in recent memory. The food was excellent and the event enjoyable for those who participated. The Holiday Party also gave the Board an opportunity to remind members of the important work of the Association.

We have big plans ahead. For example,

- We intend to make changes to some of the access points to several of the Association beaches in order to reduce rain run-off and beach erosion.

- We have commissioned planting plans for several of the beach areas, and we will execute those plans this Spring to hold the soil and sand.

- We intend to arrive at a plan with the Highway Department to prevent rain water from rising over the insufficient berm at Clearwater Beach.

- We are working out the method to reduce the boat storage problems on the Association beaches.

- And most excitingly, we are developing the Great Sand Lakes Association web site, which we hope will be up and running within several months. Stay tuned.

We think we have some momentum. Please help us by volunteering, by continuing the membership at its current high number, and by paying annual dues now billed on a calendar year basis - a small amount which is your fair share of the expense of keeping the ponds healthy and the community strong. We need your shoulder to the wheel!

Yours respectfully,

Ted Borman

President, Board of Directors