

2nd Quarter 2004 Newsletter



FRIENDS OF THE LAKE

Friends of the Lake (FOTL) is a non-profit group of concerned citizens who care about the management, safety and recreational uses of Lake Lillinonah and wish to develop a lake community to encourage the continued protection of its natural beauty and wildlife. The objective is to work closely with the Lake Lillinonah Authority, elected officials and residents of the bordering towns to increase awareness, foster stewardship and solicit additional funding for prioritized projects in order to reduce debris and pollution so that we may protect and maintain the quality of Lake Lillinonah now and for future generations

Save the Lake Day Re-cap:

On June 5th over 100 people turned out for the first annual Save the Lake Day. The volunteers combed the shores of Lake Lillinonah picking up trash and debris. People and groups from the 6 towns all pitched in, including boy scouts, brownies, schools groups, church organizations, fishermen and town residents. Thank you to our friends at Northeast Generation for dropping the lake level, which provided a great shoreline for the volunteers.

The volunteers collected over 35 tires, an empty keg of beer, lots of wood with nails, and bags of loose garbage, glass and even a kitchen sink. Enough trash was collected and brought to the 133 Boat Ramp to easily fill the 30 cubic yard container Waste Management generously donated.

Thanks again to our sponsors: Northeast Generation, Waste Management, Lake Lillinonah Authority and the Housatonic Valley Association. In addition, we would like to thank other supporters: Bridgewater Chocolates, Arby's Inc., Joseph Merritt & Company, Bridgewater General Store, Inland Water Sports, Candlewood Valley Golf Course, The Valley Angler, Marketing Resources, Inc., Phuture Design and RJM Group.

Debris update:

We have all been waiting for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to issue their recommendations regarding the re-licensing of the Shepaug dam that forms Lake Lillinonah. A significant victory has been achieved by the users of Lake Lillinonah late last month due to the publishing of the "Final Environmental Impact Statement" (FEIS) by FERC for Northeast Generation's re-licensing of the dam and lake. The FEIS recommends that a "Debris Management Program" be developed and implemented to clean up the woody debris, etc for the lake. This recommendation has a huge future positive impact on the lake and ties in nicely with our initial clean up efforts at the recent Save the Lake Day on June 5th.

There are many questions to be asked and a lot of work to be done on such a program. Funding, scheduling, equipment utilization, etc. all have to be worked out before FERC agrees to and mandates a final program in the future. We, at Friends of the Lake, expect to stay on top of this very important program.

You may want to take a look at FERC's FEIS regarding their clean up recommendation and the many other recommendations in the report. We have a copy that you could review available through a link on our website.

Water Quality update:

FOTL has retained Hydro Technologies, Inc. of New Milford to perform a study on the influence of the Still River upon Lake Lillinonah algae blooms. This watershed drains urban areas of greater Danbury and flows north to join the Housatonic River near Lover's Leap gorge at the head of the Lake.

Samples from seven locations are being taken monthly from March to September and early results indicate that the Still River is indeed a significant negative factor on our water quality. Hydro is also providing a GIS computer generated map of the Still River watershed which will help the public and regulators visualize the sources of pollution.

FOTL will make the data available via the website and in our quarterly newsletter upon completion of the study this fall. Hopefully our findings will result in specific action items to improve water quality in Lake Lillinonah.

Development Update:

As we continue to meet with elected officials and governmental agencies to gain support in protecting the land that surrounds Lake Lillinonah, it is important for each of us to understand that there is a great deal each of us can do. FOTL is in the process of compiling a watershed landscape/treatment package for you and your neighbor to follow. We encourage each of you to follow these guidelines and to please pass them on to your neighbors and landscaper. Each little bit goes a long way in preserving our lake by reducing the amount of nitrogen going into it. This will be available on our website in the beginning of July and will be distributed in our next newsletter at the end of the summer.

Lake Lillinonah Authority Update:

The LLA is pleased to report that the Police Patrol Boats are on the Lake and in full swing for the boating season under the leadership of Police Chief Kevin Seeley. The Lake Patrol and the LLA can be contacted at (203) 264-2360. If it is an emergency, the Lake Patrol can be contacted at (203) 740-9743.

LLA has requested a permit for the treatment of the weed problem this year and pending approval will target late June for the treatment. When details are available we will post on our website

Savingthelake.com Update:

The website continues to expand at the request and suggestion of our membership base. On the home page you will find the FERC report, along with a direct number to Northeast Generation to obtain additional information on the Lake's water level over the next 48 hours. The site also includes past lake studies, articles and links to other organizations which our membership will find useful. Please visit our very informative website.

Membership Drive:

In just 9 months, membership has grown to over 100 family and friends. In addition, FOTL has been mentioned in newspaper, radio and TV stories. A number of these articles can be found on the website under News and Events section.

FOTL will be hosting a one year anniversary celebration with a cocktail party for **members only** at the home of Jeffrey and Amy Silverman in Bridgewater on Tuesday, August 24th at 6pm. Members will be receiving more details in the middle of July.

Friends of the Lake would like to continue to thank its patrons, sponsors and partners in helping make the first 9 months exceed our wildest expectations. If you are not currently a member, please join now and encourage

your friends and neighbors to join us too! *The challenges that lay ahead of us are great, but the task is not insurmountable!*