

LAKE DAMON NEWSLETTER

JULY 2025

Interested in Joining the LDC Board?

We have a number of potential board vacancies, so this is a great opportunity to get involved! If you're a stockholder in good standing (your name is on the stock certificate and your camp's dues and dam assessments are current), you're eligible to serve. The stock certificate can still be modified before the annual stockholders' meeting. One person on the stock has to be an owner, but a second person can be added or changed by the owner(s). The process for changing the stock is found in the by-laws, or you can notify the nominating committee for the details.

Becoming a board member is a meaningful way to connect with neighbors, contribute to the care of the pond, and stay informed about what's happening in our community. Board meetings are held once a month on Saturday mornings and can be attended remotely.

Most current board members whose terms are ending are interested in continuing, and we're excited to have them back, but we're also hoping to welcome new candidates for a couple of open seats. We already have one candidate that has offered to take on the role of Treasurer if elected!

If you'd like to be included on the slate, please reach out to the board (email contacts listed to the right). You're also welcome to nominate yourself—or be nominated—from the floor at the annual meeting on August 9.

We'd love to have you on board! Please reach out to Aram, Carol or Sherrill if you are interested or just want more information.

2025 LDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Denise Beltz- President
Aram Flores - Vice President
Cassandra Celatka - Clerk
Cynthia Burr - Treasurer
Bruce Schwartz- Dam Master
Carol Blanchard
Allyson Brown
Matthew DiRocco
Ethan Fenn
Mike Frost
Robert Gosselin
Marianne Hoag
Sherrill Redmon
Steven Stathis
Christine Willis

Lake: Mike Frost...chair
(413) 568-4176
molly.frost@gmail.com
Robert Gosselin
Steve Willis

Land: Carol Blanchard...chair
(413) 296-4212
cblanch93@verizon.net
Ethan Fenn
Sherrill Redmon
sherrillred@gmail.com
Janet Scully

Dam: Bruce Schwartz...Dam Master
(413) 531-4567
bhschwartz@comcast.net
Matt DiRocco
Allyson Brown

Buildings: Aram Flores: VP and chair
(917) 756-5487
aramflores@icloud.com
Christine Willis
Marianne Hoag
Steve Stathis

We hope to see you at the Annual Stockholders meeting!

Saturday, August 9th

1:30pm

At the Mill

Potluck Dinner

August 9th

6pm

At the Mill



Did you loose a yellow paddle at the end of June? The paddle in the picture floated into the cove at camp 4. It is in our garage, waiting for someone to claim it. Contact Dwight at dbaghdoyan@me.com.



A number of LDC residents play and Diana and Aram offer free coaching to all newbies when they come. It's held at Russell Park (across from the Post Office) and is fun, nearby and extremely welcoming.

Lake Updates

- Have you noticed the new benches and the freshly power washed and sanded picnic table at the beach? A big thanks to the lake committee for these upgrades.
- Our weekly water testing has shown that the bacteria levels have been good. We hope everyone is enjoying the swimming area this summer.
- Join the stockholders meeting for a slideshow about the weed boat!
- The turf and netting added to the raft seems to be keeping the wasps away. Please be gentle with the netting around the edge of the raft, it is easy to tear.

Dam Updates

- The Emergency Action Plan has undergone its annual update and has been submitted to the Office of Dam Safety.
- Down To Earth, the geotechnical engineering firm, is in the process of analyzing the borings taken in May. Once completed, this analysis will be forwarded to our engineer, Dave Battista, for completion of the final dam design.
- The Board is hoping to have an estimate for construction for the stockholder meeting.
- Upon receiving the final dam design we will begin to work on the necessary permits and then a construction grant to the MA Dam and SeaWall Program.

Land Updates

The scheduled road work was completed before the fourth of July. The contractor had been given a specific amount for the work and the bill was less than a dollar under that amount! As the budget is finalized for the year, the Land Committee has spent money on a culvert, grading some roads, trap rock, mowing around the dam and swimming area and brush hogging the field.

The board recently discussed the unfortunate mowing of the low bush blueberry patch. The board has agreed that stockholders need to contact the Land Committee or the board about changes you personally want to make to the landscape on LDC property. Please remember this land is owned by all of us.

Recently, there was a tree stretched across Bray Rd, preventing passage by large delivery vehicles, and a tree that fell on Don Emerson Road that needed attention. Again, a reminder that these emergencies should be taken care of by stockholders, since hiring out for this will further deplete the budget and probably take longer to get done. Unfortunately, the Land Committee does not have a list of willing stockholders to call in an emergency; it is up to the rest of us to step up. So thanks to Roslyn Malkin and Peter Scully for trimming the Bray Rd branches so people could drive through, and to Doug Fraser for cutting it down. Many thanks to Aram Flores for stepping up with a chainsaw on Don Emerson Rd, and to the Schnepf family for helping to remove the tree and debris. And thanks to any other people who helped out without the knowledge of the Land Com.

-Carol



Mountain Holly



Photo by Denise Beltz

What's Growing on the Land?

Always wondering "What plant is this?" I added a few plant ID apps to my phone: Plantnet Plant Identification, Seek, and Picture This. I have had mixed success, but using different apps helps narrow it down.

Along the shore where I live, there are winterberry bushes, and a related plant, mountain holly. Low and high bush blueberry shrubs and mountain laurel are prolific. Also near the water is smooth witherod, a type of viburnum, and spireas, including a short shrub with pink flowers and a tall white meadowsweet. Some have reached maximum height, since I started wrapping the bushes against beaver harvesting a while ago. I was hoping to locate a summersweet (clethra) bush that had been taken out by the beavers. Had it grown back? There has been no evidence of its cloyingly sweet smell, and no physical proof either.

If you are an expert on plant identification or are having fun with plant apps, please keep your eyes peeled for invasives. There is garlic mustard and multiflora rose near the farmhouse, and oriental bittersweet along Farmhouse Rd. Across from the dam is Japanese knotweed. Birds spread their seeds easily. If you see these plants, please feel free to remove them, and let the Land Com know what you found. While we cannot eradicate invasive plants, we can try to keep their numbers down.

Note: There are specific approaches to eradicating invasives. For instance, if bittersweet is growing up trees, and you cut it at the base of the plant, it doesn't actually help; the plant just produces more shoots from the ground. Spraying an herbicide on the cut part helps kill it. The process to kill invasives is specific to each species. - Carol

Ponderings

When I walk down to my dock these days I invariably scare up a couple of dragonflies. If I stay for a few minutes the number climbs to about a dozen, not counting their dainty blue cousins, the damselflies swaying in the tall grass. I know those ominous looking flying dragons aren't after me though, they've figured out over the millenia that mammals like me attract what they really want, which is flies; deerflies, horseflies, houseflies, whatever dipteran menace I attract they would love to chase, capture, and chew their little heads off, then come back for more. And they are pretty well equipped for this mission. Long and streamlined with two pairs of powerful wings and oversized eyes, they resemble fighter planes of the 40's sitting on the runway. They're not only fast flyers that can outmaneuver their flying prey, but they can hover and fly backwards as well. Dragonflies have 6 legs that were not made for walking, but for catching prey on the wing and holding the fractious fly up to the oversized serrated mouthparts for rapid decapitation and consumption. Yummy. Each leg has cleverly designed sidespurs and when flying they come together to form what resembles the business end of a lacrosse stick capable of scooping up innocent flying bugs with ease. Though they are formidable insect hunters they are harmless to people and only bite if you try to kiss them without permission. They belong to the Taxonomic Order Odonata, which means "toothed one" because of their large mandibles.

You've probably observed a pair of dragonflies flying united, a mating pattern also called "the wheel", exchanging genetic material. The female then drops the fertilized eggs into the water or deposits them on overhanging vegetation. The eggs hatch into tiny wingless nymphs that live in the water for up to five years. During that time they are fierce hunters whose diet includes boatloads of mosquito larvae (another reason to like dragonflies). The lucky ones that don't get eaten by fish crawl out of the water on spring and summer nights (to avoid hungry birds) and will often climb the first vertical surface they encounter, which could be a beached boat, a tree or building where it hangs out until dry. Then it splits its brittle exoskeleton and clumsily crawls out. You can find these ghoulish dried skins, called exuvia, on tree bark and exterior walls. The now adult dragonfly then "pumps up" its wings-which can take a few hours- before it can finally take flight. They learn to fly quickly or become tender snacks for the kingbirds and phoebes that are fluttering along the shore these days.

There are over 5000 dragonfly species worldwide roughly divided into groups labeled Darners, Cruisers, Spiketails, Clubtails, Emeralds, and Skimmers. Personally, I'm partial to the Skimmers, which are commonly found on sunny docks, lily pads, boat seats and fishing rods usually perched in the horizontal position, or skimming on the water surface dining on emerging mayflies, mosquitos and other Damon Pond delicacies. Skimmers are medium sized, about an inch and a half in length, with wings that can be clear or have distinctive black patches like the Common Whitetail which also has a puffy white abdomen making it easy to identify for beginners. Other pond skimmers around this summer are the Blue Corporal and the Chalk-Fronted Corporal, so named for the white corporal's stripes on their shoulders.

Try to identify a Skimmer the next time you're near the water and while you marvel at its aeronautical and hunting skills remember that they have been performing this act for 300 million years. Coming soon: Tips on How to Train Your Dragonfly. Mike Frost



Photo: google



Photo: Mike Frost



Photos: Christine Willis



Four legged neighbors

Photos by Carol



Share your pictures with the community!
You can email them to
cscatko@gmail.com

