

Newsletter Summer 2013



Raymond Regatta and Family Fun Day

The Lamprey River Elementary School in Raymond sits on a beautiful, slow stretch of the Lamprey River. Many people might not know that a nice little beach is located between the school and the river. This beach was once a popular town recreational area. On occasion, the water at the beach has sometimes failed to meet state standards for swimmable water. The cause of the problem seems to be related to the abundant water fowl of the area and late summer river flow that doesn't adequately flush the pond. As stated before, the problem is occasional and the beach is safe and fun most of the time as shown by water testing by the Lamprey River Watershed Association for the last three years.

To encourage people to enjoy this nice spot and to celebrate the river as a whole, the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee, the Lamprey River Watershed Association, and Raymond Recreation joined forces to offer the Raymond Regatta and Family Fun Day on June 1. The day was a broiler, so the contestants who raced out on the river and back had an opportunity to cool off as they impressed the spectators. In the meantime, the less competitive visitors had a variety of activities explore: handling turtles and a snake with a NH Audubon naturalist, learning about bicycle safety and practicing their skills at the bike rodeo, learning about efforts to stock trout in the river and how to tie tiny flies to catch them, practicing casting for fishy prizes, and speaking with volunteers who are working hard to protect the Lamprey River.



The Bull Frogs (left) crush the Musers?



Painted turtle and Boy Scout say hello.

Photos by Dick Lord

The Raymond Boy Scouts cooked up a camping feast and kept everyone well fed and hydrated. Town volunteers from the police and fire departments, National Honor Society, and recreation department were on hand to help run activities and keep everyone safe. Thanks to all who helped to make the day fun!

Cute as a Button (Sedge)



photo by Dan Spurduto

"The beauty of the natural world lies in the details." — Natalie Angier

The button sedge is a yellow/green flower that forms colonies in fens, bogs, and wet roadside sandplains. Sedges resemble grasses and rushes, but their stems are triangular in cross-section. Southern New Hampshire marks the northern-most extent of the button sedge's natural range along the Atlantic seaboard. Even though the plant is extremely rare in New Hampshire (State Endangered), Epping is fortunate to have a robust population.

In addition, the button sedge found in Epping is fortunate that it is growing on land protected by a conservation easement. The Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee is happy to have been involved in protecting this plant and its "exemplary natural community" (state designation indicating best or only remaining examples in New Hampshire) near the Lamprey.

Take Me to the River

With the kids home from school and visitors from away looking for things to do this summer, why not take a Lamprey River tour? The Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee has a free recreational map and tour guide available to help you find key points of interest and what you can do along the way. The guide covers highlights in Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket. They also show where public access points are, such as Mary Blair Park in Epping, Wiswall Park in Durham, the Piscassic Boat Launch in Newmarket, and for the tidal section, Schanda Park in Newmarket. The maps and guides are available for downloading at www.lampreyriver.org under the recreation tab or you can pick up a copy at the recreation department or the town library. See you out there!

Riverfest at Mary Blair Park Highlights New Playground and History Trail

In 2012, the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee awarded two Small Grants for projects at Epping's Mary Blair Park. One grant was used to fund planning for a natural playground and necessary surveying work. The other grant was used to plan a trail featuring mill and dam history as well as a separate nature trail. The two grants generated excitement and cooperation among many diverse groups in town. In early June, volunteers from Timberland and Liberty Mutual prepared the land and installed the history trail, trail signs, and much of the playground. Families taking part in the Second Annual Riverfest on June 23 were able to walk the trail and try out the new equipment.

You can read the historic trail signs here http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/Folsom_Mills_trail_signs.pdf, but you have to check out the playground in person. Go outside and play!

"The opposite of play is not work. It's depression."
Brian Sutton-Smith,
contemporary
American folklorist



Photos by S. Petersen

Field Test for the Revised Curriculum

Retired teacher Debbie McNelly put in a lot of time and effort to revise The Lamprey River Curriculum for her 2011 Small Grant. On June 7, she led the first

class to try out the new activities. Despite the rain, the students, teachers, and chaperones had a great time practicing techniques to study the river's chemistry and flow as well as how to look for signs of trouble, such as invasive plants, erosion, and pipes discharging to the river. To see the new curriculum for yourself, visit <http://www.lampreyriver.org/education>. Lessons and activities for both elementary school students and middle/high school students can be found.

The Big Ideas for 2013 Small Grants

For the fifth year, the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee is pleased to fund Small Grant projects that enhance outreach efforts:

- Dawn Genes will produce a video that features the history and key volunteers responsible for protecting the Lamprey River for the past three decades.
- Kevin Martin will create a Big Tree Mini-Tour for the Lamprey River as part of his larger tour for New Hampshire. He will lead walks to these champion trees along the Lamprey and publish on-line and paper copies for public use.
- Christine Destremes will work with local schools to create a public work of art that demonstrates student awareness of water issues on both a global scale and on a Lamprey River scale.

Stay tuned for the results of these creative projects!

Macallen Dam Update

A routine safety inspection of the Macallen Dam completed in 2010 revealed that the dam was in need of significant repair. Although the Town of Newmarket initially planned to invest in repairs that would leave the dam impoundment as it is today, residents of Newmarket voted to investigate other options. Key options now include removal of the dam and modifications to the dam that would result in a lower impoundment.



photo by Dawn Genes

Whatever course of action is ultimately selected, the dam will continue to play a key role in the hydrology and ecology of the river and the surrounding area both upstream and downstream of the dam. Findings of the study are available at <http://www.newmarketnh.gov/content/view/2258/393/>. Scroll down to June 2013 packets to view.