

DEEP CREEK DISPATCH

Summer 2006

Newsletter of the
Property Owners' Association
of Deep Creek Lake, Incorporated

Lake Water Level

The POA has received preliminary information from Brookfield Power Company which owns and operates the Deep Creek Dam that the lake water level will be drawn down to a lower than normal level within the next few months to permit repair and maintenance of the dam and power plant. This draw down will be done sometime after mid-October but as of now the exact timing, the amount of draw down, and duration have not been determined. The primary purpose of this action will be to install new inlet control valves for the generating station but other maintenance work will also probably be performed at the same time. As the time approaches, please check the POA website (www.deepcreeklakepoa.com) or local newspapers for the latest information.

PWC Survey

The POA Board of Directors recently mailed a survey to its 1362 member families concerning the use of personal watercraft (PWC) on Deep Creek Lake. The survey response was approximately 50% (670 surveys returned) and based on the results of this survey, the Board acknowledges: (1) that the members desire continued restrictions on the hours of PWC use, and (2) that the members desire that heavier PWC's not be allowed to be beached or placed on shore stands, and therefore (3) the Board recommends to the DNR and the Lake Policy & Review Board (P&RB) that an effective and enforceable regulation be passed to manage and control the growth of PWC's on the lake regardless of weight in order to promote a positive recreational experience, safety and a clean environment.

We thank all of those who participated in the survey and a special thanks to the many members who provided us with additional write-in comments on this important subject. We will keep you apprised of the status as the DNR and P&RB address this concern. As you are probably aware, several of the POA Board members are also members of the P&RB.

Deep Creek Volunteer Fire Department

The Deep Creek Lake Volunteer Fire Company has initiated a special fund raising drive to maintain and hopefully expand their fire fighting capabilities. In 2005, they responded to 675 emergency calls, up from 275 in 2000. The Deep Creek Department protects 80% of the Lake properties and their Fire and Rescue boat covers the entire lake. The County Government currently provides 25% of their budget with the balance coming from contributions and fund raising activities.

Earlier this year, the Department encountered a major setback that makes the special funds drive critical. They contracted with New Lexington Fire Apparatus of Pennsylvania to replace the 21-year-old deteriorating body of their rescue truck for \$101,000. New Lexington was paid 1/3 of this amount as a down payment with the balance due upon completion of the work. Several months later, New Lexington closed leaving the Deep Creek Department and 17 other fire departments in a ten-state area without the repairs being completed and without the return of any of the down payment. The State of Pennsylvania and the United States Attorney are prosecuting the case but any recovery could take years. In the interim,

the Deep Creek Fire Department is crippled for funds to operate and desperately needs help.

At the August 12th POA Board Meeting, the Board voted to contribute \$5,000 to the Deep Creek Fire Department and to provide another \$5,000 in funds to match contributions from property owners. This is obviously a serious situation and we encourage your added support of the Deep Creek Volunteer Fire Department, 1906 Deep Creek Drive, PO Box 419, McHenry, MD 21541.

DNR Topics

The staff at the DNR Deep Creek Lake Management Office (301-387-4111) requested that the following reminder be included in the *Dispatch*. While enjoying Deep Creek, everyone needs to be aware that motorized vehicles are prohibited on the state property that surrounds the lake. Golf carts and ATV's are considered motorized vehicles and are not allowed on the buffer strip for transporting supplies and equipment or any other purpose without written permission from the Lake Management Office. Those individuals with documented and legitimate mobility impairment may request permission from the Lake Management Office to use some form of mechanical assistance to access the buffer strip or their dock site. The regulation governing the use of the buffer strip is on the DNR website at: <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/08/08.08.03.01.htm>.

Gypsy Moth Problems

During May and June 2006, the Maryland Department of Agriculture conducted aerial spraying for gypsy moth caterpillars in selected areas of Garrett County treating approximately half of the acreage in the County. Despite this action, the gypsy moth problem in the County was bad this year and many local citizens expressed their frustration with the MDA at a late July meeting of the Garrett County Commissioners. The discussion concluded that the gypsy moth problem had not been solved by this year's "piecemeal spraying of the pests" and more complete coverage is required. Ernie Gregg (Chairman) said that the Commissioners would set up a public meeting with the MDA to discuss the problem and provide the MDA with direct input

from the citizens as they begin their planning for 2007.

Bob Tichenor, chief of forest pest management at MDA, had not been invited to the Commissioners meeting and therefore was not in attendance but addressed some of the concerns later in an interview with the *Cumberland Times-News*. He said that their limited budget affects how MDA sprays for the moths and that certain areas are prioritized to ensure that the most critical properties are treated first. "We prioritize higher gypsy moth populations and higher percentage of oak, high-use recreation land, state forest lands and resource areas. We also try to target some residential areas." Last year the MDA asked the Commissioners for a total of \$50,000 to plan and help offset the 2006 spraying costs in Garrett County (which the Commissions quickly approved). It is now clear that the MDA did not adequately estimate their needs and the scope of their spraying was far below what was needed.

The public meeting that the Commissioners set up with the MDA was held on August 1st. Bob Tichenor said that in 2006 about 14,000 acres were sprayed in Garrett County mostly in Savage River State Forest. Tichenor said that funding for 2007 from federal government sources would probably be less than in 2006. The citizens at the meeting stressed the critical nature of the problem and suggested a cost-share program with landowners as has been done at times in the past. The MDA said that the first step is an egg mass survey that will cost at least \$10,000 and then the details of the spraying coverage and its cost can be established. The Commissioners will monitor the MDA 2007 plans and assist in establishing funding as required probably including some sharing with the property owners.

2008 Comprehensive Development Plan

The Garrett County Planning and Land Development Office will be leading a project to create a Garrett County Comprehensive Development Plan to be adopted by late 2008. The plan is a policy document used by state and county agencies to ensure healthy future growth and development and is usually reissued every six to ten years. One of the key elements in the plan will be

the residential and commercial growth in and around the Deep Creek Lake watershed area. The POA Board will have representatives monitoring the progress of the plan and assuring that the interests of our members are appropriately addressed. The *Dispatch* will keep its readers updated as the plan development proceeds.

Thousand Acres Development

At a public hearing on June 1st, the Garrett County Zoning Appeals Board approved the request of Thousand Acres Development Inc (TAD Inc) for a proposed golf course clubhouse on the north shore of Green Glade Cove with two exceptions—the Board required bear-proof trash containers and reduced exterior lighting to only the entrances and exits. At the same meeting, the Zoning Appeals Board rejected the request for a special exception for a private membership club with boat launching ramp, lakeside pavilion, and transient docks.

On July 17th, a group of local residents in the Green Glade Cove area submitted a petition for judicial review of the decision to approve the clubhouse. The petitioners assert that the location of the clubhouse will affect them and others in the surrounding area and the public in general more adversely than would another location for the clubhouse. The Garrett County Circuit Court will set a date for the judicial review of the Zoning Appeals Board hearing.

POA Notices

This edition of *The Dispatch* along with the Fall edition are sent only to dues paying members. We will be sending the Winter issue to all current members plus new property owners who have purchased lake area properties recently and who we hope will join our organization. Information on the POA is available from Bill Nickles, Membership Chairman (telephone number and email address are shown in the list of Board members in this newsletter).

Property Taxes

The property tax bills for fiscal year 2007 were mailed in early July and will raise nearly \$30 million in taxes for Garrett County. Of the

county's 18 tax districts, over 60% or nearly \$18 million comes from the 6,574 properties in the Deep Creek Lake district. The top 20 taxpayers in the County pay more than \$1.3 million in real estate property taxes with DC Development LLC being the top taxpayer with \$43.5 million in county assessments and a tax bill of \$417,756.

DCL Art & Wine Festival

The 2nd Annual Deep Creek Lake Art & Wine Festival will be held September 8th to 10th benefiting the Western Potomac Chapter of the American Red Cross. The Festival highlights include handcrafted works by local and regional artisans, wine tasting from Maryland and national wineries with grape juice tasting for children, live music, and wine pairing dinners. Other children's activities include face painting, carriage rides, duck bobbing, and helping to paint a large mural designed by artist Lynn Macy.

The Festival begins Friday night, September 8th with participating area restaurants offering special wine pairing dinners and wine tasting. The Festival continues on Saturday, September 9th from Noon until 7 pm at the Garrett County Fairgrounds. Over thirty professional artisans and craftsmen will display and sell their art. National distributors and Maryland wineries will offer samplings of a variety of wines. Attendees may purchase the wines at the Festival store, with net proceeds donated to the Red Cross. Rounding out the afternoon is live entertainment by local and regional musicians and a silent auction that features donated wines, wine accessories, art and children's gifts. Planned live entertainment includes music by Jimmy Flanigan, Dmitry Kubin, The Remedy, and Boathouse. Sunday brunch will be offered at participating restaurants, and the Savage River Lodge will be featuring more wines with brunch.

Tickets for Saturday's Festival are \$20 for adults (21 and over) and include the entry fee, ten wine tastings, and a commemorative wine glass. Guests under 21 and entry only tickets (no wine tasting tickets) are \$5 and children five and under are free. Complete information on the Festival and a list of participating restaurants is available on the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce website at www.garrettchamber.com or by calling the Chamber at (888) 387-5237.

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Cultural Event Highlights

GLAF (20th Anniversary) Call 866-356-0445 toll-free for tickets and information or buy tickets on-line at www.artsandentertainment.org (Cost: Adult/Student/Youth): **Nov. 4th—Midori** (Violinist), Garrett College Auditorium, 7:30 pm, \$25/\$7/\$3.

Music at Penn Alps (14th Season) (Web www.musicatpennalps.org or call 301-895-4250)—Concerts are held at 7:30 pm on Saturday nights at Penn Alps (\$12). **Sept. 2nd Chesapeake Trio** (Violin, Cello, Piano); **Sept. 16th Bobby Mitchell** (Piano).

P.O. Box 816, McHenry, MD 21541
Deep Creek Lake, Inc.
Property Owner's Association of

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