Awakening the Wetlands

Alliance Matters…..

Awakening the Wetlands ….A Dream Comes True by Paula Thoma

Memorial Day weekend marked the beginning of the "summer' season. Cottages and homes line the waters edge and dot the green hills and valleys, gleaming with a sparkle of renewed life.

On Saturday, May 26, 2018, Loon Lake Watershed friends gathered to celebrate the opening of the Loon Lake Wetlands Preserve. After the ribbon cutting, nearly 40 people participated in guided walking tours led by Eric Busch, Alice Publow, and Zane Simonowiez. The tours included explanations of earth moving begun by the joint efforts of Steuben County, the Town of Wayland, and community members to remove fill and restore the water flow to its natural state. The fill included improperly disposed of items such as shingles, appliances, and tires.

Visitors also observed some new inhabitants in the trio of birdhouses that stand as a promise for new homes for our wildlife. Two new bat houses constructed of recycled materials look down from the poplars in tribute to local boy scouts that joined the community effort.

Rows and rows of newly planted trees, pussy willows, and other plantings donated by Trees for Tribs, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and local community members wait for time and nature to establish their roots. Over one hundred milkweed plants and seeding pollinator wildflowers have also been established as part of the *Monarch (Butterfly) Watch* program.

The Loon Lake Wetlands Preserve is approximately a 10-acre parcel that borders Chapel Road, Route 21 and includes the stream that abuts Davis Road and makes its way to the lake. This land holds historical value for many long time residents. Restoration offers enjoyment of a natural habitat for all creatures small and large. It more importantly means healthier water flow into the lake as the properly restored wetland does its intended job.

Please watch, enjoy and pitch in as this restoration project unfolds. As noted above, much work has already begun. A planning committee of the LLWI Alliance has authorized the dismantling of the large barn, and is working with the Lake Association and Town to utilize the pole barn as a winter home for the new weed harvester.

Many community members have donated money to help make this dream become a reality. However, more donations are needed to help with immediate costs incurred to meet the purchase price, garner insurance for visitors, and to continue the cleaning process. Please consider a donation, large or small. Every dollar counts. To inquire or to make a donation, please contact an Alliance member, or send your donation to LLWIA P.O. Box 372 Wayland, NY 14572.

Donations may also be made by participating in the summer long silent auction. The auction began during the wetlands open house, and remains open all season long. Information will be available through the Loon Lake website: http://www.loonlakesteubenny.com or by emailing LoonLakeFinds@gmail.com. See the auction page in the Loon Lake Link for more information.
Thank you to all for your support in making the Loon Lake Wetlands Preserve a reality. Our dreams have come true.

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