

One Green Ridge Road
Pittsford, New York
14534-2408
July 17, 1987

Mr. William Donnelly
12 Birchwood Drive
R. D. #2
Clifton Park, New York 12065

Dear Bill,

To answer your question which you expressed to some riders in your boat last week-end -- No, we do not have electricity, nor does anyone on the Crown Point side of the lake. (Water does carry words, even above the sound of outboard motors!)

About the "Little green bugs" or algae which you asked about last year, and about which I did nothing in the way of sending you copies of the correspondence:

First, I would recommend that you get the liquor carton which has all the records of the Association from Joe Kane, as the majority of my correspondence is in it -- as well as many other things which you should know about.

Second, I am hard pressed to send you copies of the correspondence because it is so voluminous. I have a file which is about three inches thick about the total problems. However, after writing the last sentence, I went through the entire file and enclose the majority of those papers which I deem are pertinent.

To be very blunt with you, I hope that you can stay President for a couple of years, at least, because we need some continuity in handling some of these problems. Witness the septic leakage survey which never was completed -- and the local septic/sewer system study which was never completed, etc., etc.

I was President in 1978/79, followed by Dave Warren, Esther Herbst and Ann Conklin. I volunteered to continue working on the study of the "Little green bugs", which led to the septic surveys, etc., etc., but no final resolution was made because some people were afraid to require certain others to take the dye test in their septic system. I still have some of the dye capsules in my house, if they are ever wanted. The State inspector left them with me, just in case. I suppose they still are good. You may remember that someone touched me off at the annual meeting in 1985, and I offered him some of the capsules to try in his own system, but he demurred. My adrenalin hadn't flowed quite that strongly for years! I was really angry!

Many people agreed to someone else coming on to their property and performing the test, but only just when they opened up their camp, i.e., when the septic system was basically empty and not in full use. Others agreed to it only in the winter

(you can't see the dye under the snow-covered ice). Some refused point blank to allow the tester on the premises at all. Note that the tests were done by "friends and neighbors" after instruction from the State/County inspector. The State/County purposely refrains from getting involved except in the training and in the evaluation of the testing. I do not remember who all the testers were, but I think that Graham Davis could probably tell you. He worked on it -- although I have a letter from him stating before it was done, that he thought a non-resident should do the testing: possibly a college student working on a thesis, in order to avoid the problems of hard feelings, possible favoritism, etc. Maybe that is why it wasn't completed, although I know there is at least one person who will never allow someone in his house.

I am telling you all about this and not about the "Little green bugs" because apparently one led to the other. In other words, if it were not for the prior high level of phosphates in the lake (before New York State banned phosphates), they wouldn't have proliferated. Of course phosphates never leave the lake. They are food for the algae and weeds. Then when they die they rot, giving additional food for the new weeds and algae to come.

The above is very simplistic. The details are in the letters and reports which I have enclosed. I suggest that you read them in sequence by date, to get the best understanding and thinking at the time. Included you will also find a copy of a letter I sent to everyone on the Crown Point side of the Lake, as well as Al Runge, Mr. Stubing and Mr. Ruck, because, since these people draw the water from the lake for cooking and washing, (and some people for drinking), I thought they should have a report at that time. However, there is more and more and more, which, as I say, you will see.

Something which does not show in the reports and letters, however, are a series of tests which Ed Thomson ran for years, but no longer does. He would take samples of the lake water just off of his point when he arrived in June, and again in August. In June the water would test all right, but in August definite levels of B. Coli were evident. No one ever pinned down where it was coming from, but due to the general flow of the lake, it has always been thought that it came from the bay, caused by bad septic systems. If that is so, it certainly would show the reason for the phosphates getting into the lake, as well, and the reason that people resisted (read: "refused", in many cases) having their septic systems checked.

But I rant on!

As you read the documents in chronological order you will note that originally there was a disagreement between the gurus of New York State and those of Connecticut as to the identification of the "things". George Conklin had taken sample to Connecticut for identification, and I had sent them to New York, both in 1978. In the long run, when we finally got the New York State people interested, they had to agree that the Connecticut verdict was correct.

E. THOMSON WATER
TEST E. COLI

By the way, these critters are not common, apparently, and how they actually got into the lake is still a mystery. Interesting thought: Why don't the Paradox people have them? After all, the water flows from Eagle to Paradox! Or maybe they are just getting started and don't think about it. You might want to check with Whit Daniels.

In 1980, Victor Putman from Essex County came to our annual meeting to discuss individual septic tanks and sewage systems. You will see a copy of his letter dated July 14, 1980, in that regard. Nothing ever came of it. I have many booklets and brochures which he left me and the others on the committee at that time: "Waste Treatment Handbook -- Individual Household Systems," put out by the NYS Dept. of Health; "Small Waste Water Systems -- Alternative Systems for Small Communities and Rural Areas," put out by the USA EPA, Bulletin No. FRD-10; "Alternative On-Site Systems Handbook -- Options for On-site Disposal of Household Wastes," put out by Madison County Planning Dept. Then we also got information from Vermont to see what they were doing about these problems. I have booklets entitled "Lake Eutricification: An Abundance of Life," about a 28 minute film Vermont has available; "Algae and Weeds in Farm Ponds," Univ. of Vt. Extension Service (\$0.25); and "Vermont Lay Monitoring Manual -- 1979 Water Quality Surveillance Series, Report No. 6," put out by State of Vt., Agency of Environmental Conservation, regarding how "lay" people can monitor lake quality as we were trying to do.

Later I gave Vic Putman the mailing list for the Association so that he could send information to everyone, which he did not do, and you will see why in reading his letter. He send to me and a few others, however, "Essex County Comprehensive Wastewater Management Study, Newsletters I" through "III," I think. A copy of "II" is included. However, you will note in his letter of January 1981, the Town of Ticonderoga did not think it necessary to participate, although it would have cost them nothing. C'est la vie!

I think that this is about all I can tell you at the moment. Obviously nothing has changed since 1980/81. I think it is time to get something going again. Lots of luck in this regard!

(Brilliant thought: How about asking Henry Bartlett to head up (or be) a sub-committee to look into the Sewage and Septic problems? Since he asked last year and again this year, he can become the instant expert! I hear doing that is called something like "The Army Game," but you would know more about that than I would! Maybe he can contact Vic Putman and we can get brought up to date.)

By the way, I will send you the up-to-date membership lists, as promised, when Peter gets me the new changes. I saw him last Monday evening but he didn't have it completed then. By the way -- please send me any changes you hear about. I would rather have them from two people than not at all. But when you do send me new addresses, please identify the map location that

the person is involved with, based on Walt Ploski's corrected map.

Please feel free to call me at home any time. I work out of my house and am usually here except when I am traveling on business or research. The number is (716) 586-7042.

Thanks, and as I said, Good Luck!!

Sincerely,

Robert C. Stevens

Encs.