



Milfoil subsides in Brant Lake; Lake Association effort paying off

By David Cederstrom
Chronicle Staff Writer

In recent years, some areas of Brant Lake were "like a forest of milfoil," says Luc Aalman, milfoil coordinator for the Brant Lake Association. But he told the group's July 9 meeting that success in fighting the invasive water weed has reduced the numerous dense beds to some small 'spots and individual plants.

"We are down to strands, not beds" for the most part, agreed association president Doug Paton.

The Brant Lake Association has been battling milfoil in the 5 1/2 mile long lake for five years. This is the third year it has hired Aquatic Invasives Management (AIM) to do hand-harvesting, said Harvey Leidy, the group's director of communications.

Mr. Leidy notes that the Town of Hori-con also granted \$40,000 towards the effort, and Mr. Aalman said that another key factor has been volunteers who have "become very efficient in making and putting in mats" to cover dense beds of milfoil.

Last year, AIM divers spent seven weeks hand-harvesting. Eight divers spent four weeks just in one cove, Mr. Aalman said.

This year, four divers are covering the whole lake and they expect to reduce the

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Brant Lake Association lake steward Caitlyn Kenny (right), with association president Doug Paton (left) and association milfoil coordinator Luc Aalman, at the boat launch near the eastern end of the lake. **Not present:** Lake steward Dan Hill, who was away at a basketball camp.
Chronicle photo/David Cederstrom

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scope again next summer, he said.

Past-president Mark Lustic said that now when volunteers remove some of the mats installed over milfoil beds, they don't have any more dense beds to put them on.

Mr. Aalman also urged vigilance in keeping out of the lake other invasive species such as zebra mussels and Asian clams.

The association has started a lake steward program at the boat launch near the eastern end of the lake. North Warren High School students Caitlyn Kenny and Dan Hill act as stewards. With the boat owner's permission, they inspect boats for invasive species, and they provide education about invasive species.

The association divided the Brant Lake shore into 14 segments. Individual members are responsible for reporting milfoil sightings in each segment, Mr. Paton said.

They also started a "hotline" for reporting milfoil, (518) 532-4454.

The association seeks donations and volunteers for the anti-milfoil effort, as well as seeking new association members.

The association currently has 180 members, Mr. Paton said.

"It's involved in every aspect of the lake, [but] we're apolitical." It also holds a number of annual social functions, such as a party, a boat parade and a golf tournament (Friday, Aug. 5, this year).

Info: www.brantlakemilfoil.org;
www.brantlakeassociation.org.