

Ending on a sweet note

St. Therese's vacation Bible School ended with an ice cream party last week. Before digging in, youth guides Sandy Krogulski, Aaron Katyl and Amanda Coleman cavorted in front of the building with campers Ranya Grzybowski, Theresa Ann Restaino, Sara Krogulski, Gianna DeGraba, Kayle Shovlin, Katie Mantelone, Kathryn Reinert, Nicholas Lombard and Leigh Hillman. Below, serving up the goods, from left, Brigitte Henry, Donna Matthews, Bruni Saxon (behind), and Mary Jane Henry.

POST PHOTOS/ CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK



Foul water

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the time and we haven't gotten sick," said Bruce Leskowitz, a pharmacist and Harveys Lake homeowner. He is more concerned now, he said, after the cancellation of the triathlon swim, and is careful not to drink the water. "I wish people would stop feeding the ducks," he adds.

Due to problems with water quality in previous races, the triathlon coordinators tested the water precisely where the triathletes would be swimming, from Sandy Beach into the lake. Nearly 500 athletes participated in the race, and that concentration of swimmers was expected to churn the water and lake bottom releasing more pollution. "I can recall there were ducks being fed off the bridge," mentions Carmon.

Paul Marmo, Environmental Health Specialist for the Department of Health, reports that three beaches in Harveys Lake are regularly sampled by the people who run the beaches, and they use independent labs. Marmo has heard no complaints this year. "It can vary over the lake, and day by day," says Marmo. Because there are no public bathing beaches, the state does not require routine water testing.

Doubts have existed for some time regarding the efficiency of the sewer system in Harveys Lake Borough. At a recent Borough meeting, a resident complained that during a storm she saw feminine hygiene products floating out of a sewer lid and towards the lake. The system often overflows at certain points after heavy rains. Moreover, fecal coliform bacteria is found in human, bird, and all warm-blooded animal waste.

In this most recent incident, however, human waste seems unlikely as the source of the bacteria. No rain fell for nearly two weeks before the race, and no problems with the sewers had been reported. "We don't have the data to precisely say it's the

ducks," says John Levitsky, EAC member. This year, EAC will be collecting and summarizing lake water data from various agencies. In addition, EAC will run a study to identify if the birds are the source of the pollution problem. "My anticipation is that this problem is from the birds," says Levitsky.

Levitsky, an engineer and wildlife technologist, has watched birds ever since he could hold binoculars. "The key issue is to stop feeding the birds," says Levitsky. He estimates the current population at 100 Mallard ducks and 35 Canada geese. In the winter, the population swells to 300 ducks and 80 geese.

The birds have become permanent residents, and no longer migrate or behave as wild fowl should. They no longer travel from lake to marsh to field, spreading their waste. They eat non-traditional foods such as pizza crusts, popcorn, and bread that, through spillage and their wastes, pollute the lake. Three Canada geese produce as much waste as one human, Levitsky states. Five to six ducks also equal one human.

The easy food creates concentrated duck populations which are more at risk for avian botulism, avian flu, fowl cholera, and plagues. Poor water quality also affects the birds and other lake life. People who feed wildfowl, says Levitsky, are, in reality, doing something very negative.

EAC will begin a public education campaign to stop the feeding

of wildfowl in the lake. "We want to ban excessive feeding of the



Kim Chollak, Rebecca Parry, Emily Kleinfelder and Amy Parry posed on a water slide before hitting the lake last week.

ducks," says Mike Daley, Chairman of EAC. Their next newsletter will address the problem, and the threat feeding poses to the health of birds, humans, and the lake. Duck waste, in addition to containing fecal coliform bacteria, also contains phosphorus, which contributes to noxious algae blooms in the lake, according to Daley.

Lake Silkworth, in Lehman Township, has recently banned all wildfowl feeding in an attempt to improve water quality. The Lehman Township Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance in 1997 that prohibits all wildfowl feeding in Lake Silkworth, with fines of \$50 to \$300. Many lakefront property owners had complained about the ducks and geese, reports Don Kivler, Secretary/Treasurer of the Lake Silkworth Protection Association. Water tests conducted on July 2 showed an improvement in water quality from previous tests. "There is a lesser amount of ducks," says Kivler, "although there's still a lot of geese."



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