

WILDWOOD in Tolland, Massachusetts

By Madeleine H. Lawrence

Foreword

This is a completely unauthorized, unabridged,
unexpurgated and biased story.
Additions and corrections will be appreciated.
Madeleine Lawrence, July, 1991

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOO !

- o To God, for entrusting us with the care and nurture of each other, and of this amazing and beautiful planet;
 - o To Ken, my non-gambling husband, who took a gamble and bought a lot at Wildwood in the fall of 1966 and designed and built our cabin;
 - o To Joy Illig, who started me on this project, and whose intact file of Wildwood Newsletters has been the main source of reference.
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WILDWOOD TODAY

Wildwood today (1991) is a pleasant retreat from city life. Our environment here is a fragile balance between modern amenities such as paved roads, and the natural beauty of the two lakes surrounded by tree-covered hills. A great deal of creative planning designed this community; it didn't just happen.

The main entrance to Wildwood follows the original Beetle Road from Colebrook River Road. Most residents and construction workers use this entrance. The "back entrance" is the other end of Beetle Road which intersects Hartland Road, and is handy for the residents in the Otter Pond area. In the summer at intervals convoys of Army vehicles travel south on Colebrook River Road - reserve units train in the forested area owned by the Hartford, CT Metropolitan District Commission. Jet transports can often be heard on their way to or from Bradley International Airport some 25 miles east in Windsor Locks, CT. But most of the time we feel blissfully isolated from the press of humanity.

Wildwood has about 740 acres of mostly wooded land, surrounding Cranberry and Otter Ponds. There are about 11 miles of paved roads, a clubhouse, manager's house, laundry, three tennis courts, a large playing field for sports such as softball, five beaches with bathhouses, and a small camping area.

The clubhouse contains the Association's office, kitchenette, living room and bathrooms; the basement provides space for a game room, a small laboratory used for testing lake water, furnace, and storage space for equipment used by the staff. In the balcony is an informal library. Down the road beyond the laundry is a large shed storing heavy equipment used for roadwork.

There are about 210 houses now at Wildwood; some are small, strictly summer cottages, more are year-round substantial homes. At the main entrance to Wildwood are two groups of mailboxes. Mail is brought from the Granville Post Office, ten miles east. The tiny booth on the north side of the road was originally the shelter for the only public telephone before the clubhouse was built. And the house facing the entrance to Wildwood was the sales office of the original developers.

None of these features was here in 1963 except Cranberry Pond, then much smaller than today. At that time the area which is now Wildwood consisted of four separate properties. Straggly stone walls running through the woods are about all that remain.

How did Wildwood evolve to its present state?

PURCHASE OF PROPERTIES

In the 1960's the developers of Wildwood purchased four properties to make a vacation community:

- A. The largest, about 330 acres, has very irregular topography - much ledge and swamp. Little is suitable for farming, but it was well timbered. The west end of Beetle Road runs through part of it.
- B. The next largest piece, about 200 acres, was known as the Fowler T. Moore farm. The old farmhouse was on the south side of what is now Route 57. Behind it was pasture; the family had a pathway going south to the blueberry meadow. By periodically cutting off competing brush, the Moores ensured that the high-bush blueberries would produce abundantly.
- C. The third piece, about 100 acres, lay along the west side of Hartland Road, and included a swampy area where the developers later created Otter Pond.
- D. And the fourth piece, about 60 acres, was the "Beetle, or Bettle place," once a farm, then purchased by Mott Emigh (pronounced Amy) about 1910 for hunting.

Who were the developers who put together these properties to create Wildwood?

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Jack Galanek and Doug Jack had been friends from boyhood. They grew up in this area; both families had summer homes at Big Pond in Otis, where they had become acquainted.

Jack's father, John Galanek, was in the lumber business in Southwick and Jack worked for him as he grew older. His father sometimes leased, sometimes bought land.

In the fall of 1963, while looking over timber in the Cranberry Pond area, Jack noticed that beavers had built a large and also a small dam which had enlarged the pond. His father purchased 330 acres owned by Joseph Musial (A above) in February, 1964, planning to cut the timber. But Jack had begun to think the area would be ideal for a vacation community, and persuaded Doug Jack to join him in this enterprise.

In 1964 the two men formed a corporation for this purpose. Doug Jack envisioned a Swiss village theme, and so the name "Chamonix Chalet".

TOLLAND, Mass, in the early 1960's

The four properties purchased by the developers of Wildwood (acreages are approximate) Properties, Incorporated" was chosen. They renamed the pond Lake Chamonix, and set out to buy the surrounding properties.

First they acquired the 330 acres from Galanek's father. Then they purchased the Duncan property along Hartland Road. They were able to make a verbal agreement with Ray Cowl, a friend of the Galaneks, to sell the "Fowler T. Moore farm" which lay between Route 57 and through the blueberry meadow to the swamp surrounding most of Cranberry Pond.

The most difficult part was acquiring the 60 acres in the middle of these properties. It was still known as "the Beetle place" although Mrs. Beetle, or Bettie, had sold it in 1894. The owner, David Masters, who was living in Rochester, NY, did not want to sell. But obviously no vacation community could come to pass unless this key piece of land were acquired. Galanek and Jack finally drove to Rochester. They learned that the property had been in Masters' family since his grandfather's time, and the children and grandchildren had spent many happy vacation times at the hunting cabin built by the grandfather. Galanek and Jack finally persuaded Masters to sell, but at a much higher price than they had expected to pay.

When they returned to Ray Cowl, he asked them what Master's price was, and then insisted on getting the same price per acre. And so the four properties were merged to become one unit which, when surveyed, totaled about 740 acres.

THE DESIGNING OF WILDWOOD

Galanek and Jack agreed that the best site for the dam was the one chosen by the beavers. A landscape architect from Simsbury, CT was hired to lay out roads and beaches in such a way as to preserve the natural beauty as much as possible. But his design when complete included an eighteen-hole golf course, and a large marina. Incensed, Galanek and Jack refused to pay. The architect sued; the judge permitted the developers to pay only half the fee, as the architect had not followed specifications. Another unexpected expense.

Another landscape architect designed a small area comprising what is now District 1. He insisted that through traffic should not be routed next to waterfront lots; that is the reason for some dead-end roads.

Then another landscape architect, Vcevoud ("Sevvy") Strekalovsky, completed plans for the entire property. Cluster zoning resulted in rather small individual lots, but with green belts, right-of-ways, and other common property comprising about 40% of the total area. The blueberry meadow was not divided into lots, but is still

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providing berries for enterprising pickers. Plans included a second pond, beaches with bathhouses, a clubhouse, tennis courts, a softball field, and a rope ski tow. In keeping with the Swiss village theme, the developers planned to restrict the type of cottages. The name Wildwood was chosen by Galanek; it reminded Doug Jack of a rather wild town in New Jersey, but he finally agreed.

Since the enlarged lake would cover part of Beetle Road, the developers had to get permission from the town to abandon at least a part of it. They discussed this with the Tolland Selectmen, and after gaining their permission proceeded with their plans.

“There were no by-laws regulating the size of lots or the creation of subdivisions. Only the vagaries of state law guided the development, and through subtle assumption and the ambiguous consent of the Town Meeting and the Selectmen, Beetle Road was flooded and displaced.”

So wrote Tolland’s historian, Joseph J. Clark, and so felt many of the townspeople. With a population of just over 100, they were upset to learn that plans had been made for perhaps 400 families to move into just one part of the town. The town then formulated zoning laws, to prevent any future developers from having such freedom of action. Their adoption in 1974 was a result of the impact of Wildwood upon the town.

BUILDING THE DAM

The developers asked the Soil Conservation Service of the Department of Agriculture to design the dam. At that time (1964) destruction of wetlands was not a concern; the purpose of any dam was to impound as much water as possible. After repeatedly breaking the beaver dam, and finding it rebuilt each morning, the Soil Conservation Service finally succeeded. They completed the dam in 1965. But the gate valve was kept open while the future shoreline was bulldozed clear of stumps and vegetation. The partially-built house of Joseph Musial beside the present flagpole was razed—only a bit of concrete foundation now protrudes through the soil. For the developers, a brick house looked too much like a year-round home; it did not fit in with the Swiss chalet concept.

A new section of Beetle Road was laid out east of that spot, crossing the dam and intersecting the old road near Fox Den Beach.

By this time Jack Galanek had married Connie Burke, and this city girl became very involved with the development. “After Jack and I met at a cocktail party,” she told an interviewer, “we had our first date at Wildwood riding the bulldozer for four hours while he plowed roads. We had this very romantic honeymoon touring competitive second-home communities in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Connie learned to drive the bulldozer and the tractor used for snowplowing. She and the two men chose the names for the roads. (Originally “Fiddlehead”, referring to a young fern, was named “Burke’s Village, in Connie’s honor. The new name was voted at the 9/79 Annual Meeting of the WPOA.)

Civil engineers surveyed the property and laid out the roads and lots according to the plans. But afterwards these were modified in order to skirt large trees or rocks. For boundary markers the developers bought from Westfield’s Savage Arms Factory gun barrel rejects at a nickel apiece.

As trees were cut down by the fiddle head fern barrel marker workers hired, one of the men found that a felled tree contained the nest of a family of flying squirrels. He took the mother and helpless babies, climbed a nearby topped tree and made another nest in its hollow. The substitute home stood at the corner of Deer Run and Stone’s Throw: an ungainly stump about twenty feet tall. It was cut down during the winter of 1991, and only about five feet remain.

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In November of 1965, the gate valve on the dam was closed, and “Lake Chamonix” began to fill for the first time, fed by its tributary streams and springs welling up from the bottom.

Connie had written for NEC in Hawaii, and in Hartford had been press representative for the Connecticut Bank and Trust Co. She took charge of the advertising and publicity for Wildwood, focusing on the media she was best acquainted with. So it was that the people who began hearing about this community were readers of The Hartford Courant and listeners to the radio and TV stations there.

SALES BEGIN

Sales of lots actually began on a cold Sunday in March, 1966. The developers had no office. Galanek remembers that near the present flagpole they set out sawhorses and laid planks for a desk. Doug Jack had brought his typewriter; the master plan was held down by a rock for a paperweight.

The first buyer that day was Jim Warmolts, of East Hartford. He had seen the ad in The Hartford Courant, and had decided it would be good to own a place instead of renting a friend’s cottage for vacations, as he and Betty had been doing. Jim remembers there was snow on the ground, and it was difficult to get around to see the two areas open. Lots on The Meadow road, Porcupine Point, and The Quill were accessible. Beetle Road had been relocated from the point where the flagpole is now as far as the Right-of-Way between the two ends of Fox Den.

Beyond that point was a hardly distinguishable trail leading eastward up to the knoll where Hetties’ farm had been, and then continuing to Hartland Road. (Robert and Marie Bettle, or Bedle, apparently never pronounced their name as Beetle.) Since the Bettles’ home had apparently burned and was abandoned, the town had made little effort to maintain the public “highway”. The cellar hole remains, and foundations of a barn, and a few straggly apple trees. Someone has propped up an ancient rusted coffee pot at the site. Marie’s Coffee Pot?

Several hundred feet northwest of the Settles’ cellar hole was an old hunting cabin, difficult to find through the brush and trees. This was built by David Master’s grandfather, Mott Emigh (pron. Amy). David’s father often brought his family there for vacations, and when he died in 1961, age 80, David scattered his ashes near the cabin. That was why David had been so reluctant to sell the property to developers. They razed the cabin, but the chimney remains at the intersection of Lakeside Drive and The Grove.

The early buyers were willing to take a gamble as they bought lots fronting Cranberry Pond. (The name “Lake Chamonix” never took hold here.) No buildings had been constructed, most of the roads were just on paper, and already pieces of the lake bottom were surfacing as floating islands, some as big as houses. And like ice cubes, only a fraction of their bulk showed above water. The developers had cleared the edges of the lake of brush, but not the large central area. As the vegetation rotted in the compacted swampy

soil, it developed gas which brought large masses of peat-like material to the surface. A large one floated up right next to the Lodovico’s lot on Beetle Road. It was quite a while before it was removed; the developers appreciated the family’s patience. But for several years the lake water was murky, and swimmers noticed their body hair had very fine mud clinging as they came out of the water.

The land sales contract used by Chamonix Chalet Properties specifically stated there was no guarantee that a lot would pass a percolation test. This was part of the gamble purchasers had to take. Percolation tests, however, were not as restrictive then as later on. And state laws then required a minimum distance of only 50 feet between a well and the nearest septic system. Now 100 feet distance is required.

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IMPACT ON TOLLAND

In the early 1960's work at Wildwood provided much employment opportunity for just about anyone in Tolland who wanted it. Local men were employed to build the dam and the roads; the swampy area east of Cranberry Pond was scraped clean and another dam built, creating Otter Pond. No floating islands there!

But for this small town to discover that over 400 houses might be built here of course caused resentment. Since Beetle Road was a town road, some residents wanted to use it for access to the enlarged Cranberry Pond for fishing.

Tolland's historian, Joseph Clark, wrote:

"There were problems, of course. After all, this WAS all new to the townspeople, and every time permission was given by the Selectmen for the developer to do something, the Selectmen looked at each other afterward and said, 'What did we do, anyway?'"

Soon Galanek and Jack erected a "plywood-floored little building laughingly called corporate headquarters," as Connie said. An interviewer from The Hartford Courant wrote:

"Her desk is a typewriter stand and she shares her room with Marge, the bookkeeper; the bookkeeper's dog, Timber; and a family of field mice born in Connie's typewriter . . . a far cry from the slick look of Constitution Plaza (in Hartford)."

This little building was sold and moved to a vacant lot east of the dam for storage purposes by the owner. Later a more adequate office was built at the entrance of Wildwood, which is the house you face as you come in from Colebrook River Road. As this was on land claimed by the town as being part of old Beetle Road, the title was questionable for many years.

FORMATION OF WPOA

The developers, Jack Galanek and Doug Jack, planned from the beginning that after the physical changes had been made to the area, the responsibilities of maintaining it would belong to the owners of the properties there. A formal association was needed for this. In the summer of 1966, just a few months after the first lots were sold, they invited the lot owners to a meeting in order to form an association.

The meeting was held in a chalet-style cottage on The Meadow road (Block 1, Lot 3), which had been built as a sales model.

On September 24, 1966, the first meeting of the Wild-wood Property Owners Association was held. Of the then 26 property owners, 21 attended the meeting. The first officers were Frank Murtha, President; Louis Lodovico, Vice President; Denton Smith, Treasurer; and Lyman Potter, Secretary. There were no dues. Items discussed were: electric power, drinking water, membership cards and stickers, island removal, lake lowering, bylaws. Following the meeting, a cookout was hosted by Chamonix Chalet Properties, Inc. (Newsletter of 8/79)

These officers met regularly with the developers or their representatives to make sure that the interests of the property owners were being taken care of.

As more people purchased land, it became evident that many of them did not need the services of a builder; they were Do-It-Yourselfers. They were permitted to build their own cottages, as long as they conformed to the developers' views of what a Swiss chalet might look like. This disappointed Doug Jack, who was a builder and planned to do much of the construction here. It was not long before he decided to move elsewhere; Galanek bought out his interest in the corporation, and carried on alone as president of Chamonix Chalet Properties.

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By 1969 several committees within the WPOA were formed to take charge of various responsibilities. Clark Smith volunteered to work on a committee concerned with fish stocking and weed control. For a few years, CCPI and the WPOA shared equally in the cost of fish stocking. (Dues had become necessary!) Cranberry and Otter Ponds have provided a healthy habitat for fish. Although rainfall here continues to become more acid, the limestone through the Berkshires neutralizes the lake waters. Fishermen can be grateful that millions of years ago a warm sea teeming with life covered New England. The tiny skeletons accumulated in calcite oozes which when compressed became limestone. Springs welling up through this have prevented the over-acid conditions which have killed fish in other areas.

Water snakes were numerous those first few years. Galanek assured property owners that “increased people activity in the area would tend to reduce the presence of snakes. The contribution of snakes to the balance of nature was duly, if unenthusiastically, noted.” (Newsletter of 6/69)

By 1969 committees were chaired as follows: Long-Range Planning - Chet Hushak; Aquatic Vegetation Control - Jim Warmolts; Fishing - Clark Smith; Safety - Carl Weidiger.

As the officers looked forward to the time when Chamonix Chalet Properties would turn over its deed and responsibilities to the WPOA, they needed legal advice. In 1970 they met with an attorney from Springfield to help them with some pressing problems. Topics discussed were:

1. WPOA areas of responsibility and liability now and after the developers leave the area.
2. Transfer of certain properties which the developers have indicated will be transferred to WPOA when the leave.
3. Revision of WPOA bylaws. (Board letter of 11/3/70)

Originally the developers had thought that Wildwood would be completed and responsibilities transferred to the WPOA in about five years (1971). But this transition did not occur until May, 1975.

CREATING WILDWOOD

The developers had an enormous amount of work to do during those early years to carve out a vacation community from swamp and forest. Following their master plan, they extended the roads to go all around Cranberry Pond, and they created Otter Pond. The first beach to be completed was down the

Meadow Bathhouse hill from the blueberry meadow, and the bathhouse there was built at the same time (1970). This building with its large deck, served as the location for a few annual meetings before the Clubhouse was built.

The second beach was the main beach, next to the dam. By May, 1971, the developer reported:

“Five new villages of woodland home sites have been opened since the fall -all off Deer Run: The Thicket, The Slope, The Traaack, Otter Pond Trail, and Robin’s Rest.” Two more beaches were created on Cranberry Pond and a fifth at Otter Pond, each with bathhouses. (Some road names do not correspond with those of today.)

In 1973 the developer reported that more new roads had been opened and graveled: Lakeside Drive, The Hill, The Path, West Otter and the Beach Road. “Permanent road signs have been installed with a few remaining that are on order; and in addition, we need names for “D” and “E” Villages.” (Developer’s report of 9/16/73)

D and E villages have become South Village and The Forest. Wildwood was fortunate to have a commercial artist, Frank Wycke, as a year-round resident. He designed almost all of the signs around Wildwood at that time.

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Until the Clubhouse was built, in 1970, the only public telephone available was located in the booth at the tennis parking lot. That lot has also been used as the turn-around for the school bus whenever school-age children have lived at Wildwood.

1973 marked the completion of the beaches and bathhouses at Otter Pond and Fox Den Beach. Also all the beaches were “renourished” with truckloads of sand; enclosures for first aid signs and emergency horns were built, and buoys carrying lines to enclose small swimming areas for children were installed. Because of the lack of telephones in many areas, members were instructed that three blasts on a car horn or a beach horn meant some sort of emergency; anyone hearing that signal was to go immediately to the source to help. Parking areas were completed for the beaches except for the Lakeside Beach, where none was planned.

A small camping area was created behind the Clubhouse so that people could stay at Wildwood while building their own cottages. In 1970 work was begun clearing a 6-8 acre recreation area behind the Clubhouse. By 1973 two tennis courts were available, and the large outdoor grill was built.

WINTER SPORTS

From the beginning, Wildwood was advertised as a “four-season community”. For that reason the bathhouse at Meadow Beach was “winterized and heated” so that the bathrooms could be used until the clubhouse was built. In February, 1970, Galanek’s letter to the property owners exclaimed:

“Wildwood’s Chamonix Ski Area is now open! Located at the end of Deer Run (on what is now The Brook), the slope and rope tow can be enjoyed by our property owners and their guests Saturdays and Sundays from 11:30 A.M. to 4 P.M., weather permitting.”

“Ski equipment (skis, boots and poles in a variety of sizes) is available at the bath house, free of charge to Wildwood property owners. . . Our heated bath house, with sanitary facilities, will serve as a warming hut this year. Next season a warming hut will be provided at the slope.”

A more sober communiqué was sent by Galanek in January, 1971:

“On our slope’s opening day, a 13-year-old boy broke both legs skiing. He’ll be hospitalized for 2 months. The following day another incident occurred which put a 9-year-old on crutches temporarily. Therefore “No one under 16 years of age will be permitted to ski without a parent or responsible adult present with him at the slope.”

A small building containing toilet facilities was available in January, 1973, and a parking area that fall, above the ski slope. Also, a marked trail was created from the parking lot to the State Forest via Hartland Road for trail bikes and snowmobiles.

For several years the ski committee organized a work group each November to clear the ski area, Freeman Danforth, a year-round resident, was regularly on hand during the snowy season to operate the rope tow. Ed Stringham also ran the ski tow at times. A cross-country ski trail was completed, and in 1976 was blazed by Dan and Liz Vullemeier. It was about six miles long, running around the periphery of Wildwood.

In 1977 the ski committee chairman, Skip Avery, designed an addition to the warm-up hut. Under the supervision of manager Nick Baker and Skip, the hut was considerably enlarged, using the budgeted \$2,000 and a great deal of donated labor and materials. A “Liberty Bell stove heated many a cup of soup and mug of cocoa . . . Cross-country enthusiasts, too, have used the warm-up hut as a warming hut midway stop in their trek around the six-mile trail.” (Newsletter, 2/78)

But the cost of liability insurance for skiing rose precipitously, and in 1985 the Board discontinued the use of the ski slope. Brush started growing up; a pair of foxes made a den one year at the base of an old stump there.

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Ice skating has sometimes been possible at Wildwood. Often Cranberry Pond's ice is not thick enough and the water too deep to be considered safe for skating. Sometimes Otter Pond has been used, as it is much shallower. And sometimes the clubhouse parking lot has been flooded for skating. Occasionally people have used sleds on the blueberry meadow.

So for hardy people who don't go to Florida for the winter, outdoor fun is still available.

CLUBHOUSE

Early meetings of the WPOA were held at the Meadow Bathhouse. But in 1970 the Clubhouse was completed, and by December Galanek could announce: "Good news.... we now have heat and furniture in Wildwood's clubhouse, and the building has been appropriately decorated for the holidays."

The Clubhouse was first used for an Annual Meeting in June, 1971. (It was in Clubhouse 1972 that the decision was made that Annual Meetings should be held in September rather than in June.)

The bathrooms at the Clubhouse were used by people at the main beach and by the campers in the small campground behind the clubhouse. In 1972 Galanek furnished the office and kitchenette.

In 1973 Bob Hensel urged that testing of the lake water be done on a regular basis. The Board of Directors provided money, and Bob purchased and set up equipment in the clubhouse basement for this purpose. For many years he was in charge of the Lake Management Committee, taking samples from nine spots in Cranberry Pond and three in Otter Pond three times each summer. The committee has followed his procedures ever since, monitoring the quality of the water in the two lakes so that we can be sure it is safe for swimming.

The Clubhouse has been graced with many donations from loyal members over the years. In 1976 George Recor contributed the glassed-in bulletin board in the screened porch. Also in that year Norm Sokol donated two large coffee pots, as well as a machine for hot chocolate. The large colored map was made in 1977; in 1979 the office acquired a telephone answering machine. The large plaque showing the names of WPOA officers was designed by Frank Wycke in 1980. In 1982 the Youth Group donated the wall clock. The library in the clubhouse balcony was started with donations from members in 1983. In 1985 a new typewriter with memory capability was purchased for the office. But it was not until 1988 that the crotchety old mimeograph was replaced with a modern copy machine.

The first wedding at the clubhouse took place in 1976. The son of Wildwood members M/M Joseph LeClair, David, married Tracy Burke on August 6, with the big living room beautifully decorated.

The clubhouse has been the scene of many parties and potluck suppers. A post-Christmas party has become a tradition, as has the potluck suppers the night before the spring and fall meetings. It was in 1983 that the September potluck conflicted with Yom Kippur. Since then, the officers have made the effort each year to plan ahead so that no one will be put in the position of having to choose between the supper or the meeting, and religious observances.

The clubhouse has become, as was intended, the focal point for communications and social events at Wildwood.

NEWSLETTER

During the early years the developers and later the Board of Directors sent letters to the members at irregular intervals to notify them of major developments. It was in 1972, while Joy Illig was Secretary of the WPOA, when the idea of a regular newsletter became a reality. Although other secretaries have succeeded Joy, she has kept on as editor of the newsletter through all these years. Without her deft summaries of events of concern to members, this history of Wildwood would have been absolutely impossible.

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A later secretary wrote that the Board of Directors was considering buying “a truck with a wench.” A director claimed that his wife told him to vote against it.

LAUNDROMAT

Concern about maintaining the integrity of the water in the watershed which supplies our lakes and well water led to the adoption of an additional deed restriction in 1972. At the Annual Meeting that year, the members voted the following: The installation and use of automatic (high water usage) clothes washers and dish washers in residences is prohibited.

Laundry Facility

For that reason, a laundromat was built in 1973, with two coin-operated washing machines and two dryers. With the growing membership, additional washers and dryers have been added. There are now five washing machines at the laundromat. Some families have put in dryers at their residences - this is fine - they do not put a burden on septic tank and leach field as do washing machines. And a few solar-powered dryers are used in the form of clothes-lines. Living at Wildwood means doing without some conveniences to which we have become accustomed. But because the soil is so thin, and lots small, keeping our lakes free of pollution must take priority.

FLOATING ISLANDS

A major problem during the early years has continued, at a lesser pace, ever since - the floating islands in Cranberry Pond. Since the developers did not completely clean out the central area of peat and swamp vegetation before allowing the enlarged lake to fill, each year as the warm weather came, masses of the lake bottom would rise to the surface. Their appearance, of course, would hurt property sales and was upsetting to the owners of property here. So the developers tried to get rid of them any way possible. Some of the huge ones had to be blasted into manageable sizes, and hauled to shore near the Chimney. Some of this peat-like material was used as a base for the Lakeside Drive Beach, and some was carried away and dumped and was the beginning of the brush dump near Otter Pond.

In 1970 the WPOA officers met with an attorney, and among other things he recommended that aerial photographs be taken as a graphic record of the problem. This was done (see above); the possibility of their being published put pressure on the developer to spare no expense. Sinking the islands with sandbags was only a temporary expedient; they had to be removed.

In December of 1970, Galanek reported:

“Our entire work force has been occupied with the floating island removal project. We are happy to report that 97% of the existing islands are now resting at the lake’s edge. They are being loaded out by heavy equipment, some as large as a house.”

Work continued each year after the lake was lowered in the fall. In December, 1973, the developer’s representative reported,

“There is about one more month’s work on island removal.”

September, 1974:

“Removal of islands is continuing.”

And in February, 1975, Galanek had to promise:

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“For a period of five years from the date of transition, Chamonix Chalet Properties, Inc. will remove substantial floating islands that appear in Lake Chamonix to the best of its ability.”

August, 1978 (Three years after the transfer of Wildwood to the WPOA:

“The Board of Directors will investigate the feasibility and costs for removing some or all of the large islands which have resurfaced.”

August, 1980:

“The Board has continued study of the island removal problem, having ruled out the possibility of using a contractor with heavy equipment due to the cost.”

August, 1982:

“A preliminary estimate places the cost at up to \$9,000 for removal of the islands that appear each summer in Cranberry Pond. The Board felt this to be excessively expensive, and will investigate other alternatives.”

In July, 1986, the President’s Column in the newsletter rejoiced:

“The islands have been successfully ‘sunk.’ The manager and his crew have weighted down the islands with boulders. The cost involved was about \$300 for labor, compared to the 1979 Island Removal reserve of \$4,000.”

But it is likely that we’ll see occasional islands each summer for a long time. They remind us of one of the major difficulties faced by the Wildwood developer and the Boards of Directors in the early years.

MANAGER’S HOUSE

In preparing for the transition of Wildwood from Chamonix Chalet Properties to the WPOA, it was necessary to plan for the hiring of a manager. Once the major physical aspects of Wildwood had been realized - the roads and beaches built, and the clubhouse and other buildings - the question was what work would be necessary to maintain and care for the community. A manager was needed who would live at Wildwood - although as yet there was no house for such a person.

The directors wanted a house at the same intersection where the Chamonix Chalet Properties’ sales office was located. This would have been the corner where the longer line of mailboxes is now. But the legal plan of the developers showed that as part of the green belt, so no Manager’s House building could be permitted. The developer then bought a couple of acres west of there from Dominick Morvidelli, who owns the house and land on the northeast corner of Colebrook River Road and Beetle Road.

MANAGERS AND SECRETARIES

In the meantime, Nick Baker had been hired as manager in January, 1974. He and his wife, Ruth, had a cottage on Owl’s Nest, so sold their home in Agawam and moved to Wildwood. By December, 1975 the manager’s house was completed, and the Bakers moved in.

When the transition was made of Wildwood from the developer to the WPOA in May, 1975, it was necessary to hire a part-time secretary as well. Nick’s wife Ruth was hired for this post in June, 1975. The Bakers continued at Wildwood until December, 1982.

Since Wildwood owned no heavy equipment, major road repair and maintenance was done by outside contractors. Maurice “Tuffy” Campetti was a familiar face as he rode his backhoe and deftly removed boulders

WILDWOOD in Tolland, Massachusetts

By Madeleine H. Lawrence

raised by frost in the roads, or drove his heavy truckload of hot patch for Nick and volunteers to spread. Outside contractors such as Tuffy's son-in-law, Bill O'Brien, helped with snowplowing after major storms.

Nick was empowered to enforce WPOA rules, and was also a constable, required to uphold town regulations. In the summer, additional help was hired.

In the spring of 1975, about the time that the WPOA took over responsibilities from the developer,

“It was found that the water-control gate, located at the dam, could not be closed properly. In the course of solving this underwater problem, Robert Recor (son of Wildwood members) offered his services as a scuba diver. The problem has been temporarily corrected, and the lake has filled to capacity.” (Newsletter, 7/75)

After the lake had been lowered in the fall, repairs were made by Nick. But winter storms pushing ice against the gate valve made major problems. The coffer dam was raised by 11/2 feet in the fall of 1977 to prevent damage to pipes at the gate valve. However, more trouble occurred in the fall of 1978. The lake was lowered as usual, but Nick found that when he wanted to stop the flow of water, the valve would not close. The shaft was bent. Repairs were made by Nick, with the help of Dan Vullemeier. But in the spring when the lake level was permitted to rise again, the trouble recurred.

During Memorial Day weekend (1979) the bottom half of the gate valve casting broke. To prevent further loss of water, sandbags were used. This allowed minimal loss for the remainder of the season. During the last week of July, a leak in a pipe joint was found and successfully sealed. A consulting engineer advised the Board to replace the broken valve with a heavier model which would give less trouble. The cost was about \$6,000, recovered by a lot assessment of \$13 each. Cranberry Pond was therefore lowered right after Labor Day. However, due to shipping delays, un-cooperative weather, and other unforeseen problems, the work was not completed until the first week in January, 1980.

The newsletter of April, 1980 reported:

“It was only due to the stubbornness and persistence of Nick Baker who spent most of his ‘waking days’ down in ‘The Hole’ that the installation was finally completed.”

Nick also installed heavy fencing around the gate valve and overflow pipe at the dam, to protect them and also to prevent anyone from falling in.

Can you imagine Wildwood with just a small pond surrounded by mudflats? That possibility loomed large until Nick succeeded in putting in the new gate valve.

Nick patrolled the Wildwood roads daily, and soon knew every property owner by name. When any emergency arose, he or Ruth would respond immediately. Many early property owners remember their help with gratitude.

We had become so used to Nick and Ruth Baker as Manager/Caretaker and Secretary that it was a shock when they gave notice that they would be retiring as of December 31, 1982. Bill O'Brien took on Nick's duties on a temporary basis, and his wife Candy was temporary secretary. After diligent work, the Personnel Committee headed by Sue Moore chose Guy Poulin for Manager/Caretaker, and recommended that Candy continue as permanent part-time secretary.

Guy worked as manager/caretaker until June, 1990. A full-time assistant, Wes Greene, was hired in 1989 and has continued since. Candy O'Brien gave up her post as secretary in August, 1987, but has continued as bookkeeper ever since. Carol Ericson became secretary until the winter of 1989, when Claudia Barney, a year-round resident of Wildwood, took the position.

Secretaries are often taken for granted, but how would any organization manage without them? Ruth Baker and Candy O'Brien remember anxiety as they used the cantankerous old mimeograph machine used for putting out

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letters to members. After a stencil was typed, it was necessary to ink the cylinder, then place the stencil CAREFULLY on it, and start it rotating. If the stencil was slightly out of position, it would wrinkle or smudge, and typing a new stencil would be necessary. Since Carol Ericson had come here from a real estate office, she was disconcerted with this antiquated equipment. She persuaded the Board to invest in a modern copy machine. This has saved an enormous amount of time for the staff.

The accomplishments of the manager/caretaker are much more visible than those of the secretary. The plowing and maintenance of roads has been a major concern, and cleaning up beaches and bathhouses. The Board has budgeted money for purchasing heavy equipment so that much of the roadwork could be done by the manager rather than by outside contractors.

Guy really took pride in his work in many areas. Some of his accomplishments were enlarging Fox Den Beach, widening paths, building steps, major renovations of the clubhouse and laundromat, building a third tennis court. Less visible but just as important were replacing septic system of the clubhouse and repairing the leach field at the manager's house. He did a great deal of roadwork - digging the side ditches deeper for better drainage, and building new culverts, as well as the usual patching of potholes and repaving where necessary after storms and damage from frost.

During the winter of 1983 the Board asked him to research the question of whether Cranberry Pond had ever been considered a "Great Pond," which would enable anyone to have access to it. He spent a great deal of time at the registry of deeds in Springfield, the county seat, and in libraries, gathering material. His report enabled the Board to give the necessary information to the State Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (now called the Department of Environmental Protection). The DEP wrote that they were very busy on studying hazardous waste sites, and the Board has heard nothing since. But it is pretty clear that Cranberry Pond was never 80 acres, the size considered a Great Pond. So the few Tolland residents wishing access have not been able to use that as a reason.

Since June, 1990, Will Greene has been the manager/caretaker, with his nephew Wes Greene continuing as assistant. With the ever-growing population at Wildwood, our staff members have managed to keep up with demanding responsibilities.

FIRE PROTECTION

Any rural area is subject to the terror of fire. In a letter written to Wildwood property owners in May, 1973, Galanek wrote:

"It is in my own best interest, and indeed necessary that I provide modern and efficient fire protection for . . . Wildwood . . . And it seems only reasonable to share this capability with the town."

Everyone in Tolland was aware of destruction caused by fire, as the many cellar holes attest. Joseph Clark wrote:

"Tolland has always been in the situation of being helpless in time of fire . . . The newspapers of years ago were always filled with horror stories of places burning down with no opposition and of the neighbors pitching in to save the furniture and belongings."

The first meetinghouse in Granville (of which Tolland was a part until 1810) burned in 1750, just a few years after it was built. Writing in 1879, Louis H. Everts lamented,

"Much that is valuable and interesting in the history of Tolland has been lost to posterity through the destruction by fire at Northampton of the town records between the years of 1810 and 1849."

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(At that time Northampton was the “shire town”, or county seat; only later was Springfield accorded that honor.) When the Fowler T. Moore homestead was struck by lightning and burned in 1938, Tolland lost its post office and store, as well as the home of one of its prominent families. (That farm was purchased by Wildwood’s developers - see Property B, page 4.)

“Tolland’s Fire protection for many years consisted of only a truck-pulled pump with no tank, kept at the small garage at the school (which was located on the northeast corner of Route 57 and School-house Road). It was later replaced with a portable pump. But in 1973, the town voted, with some dissension, to accept a gift of a huge truck from Wildwood. From the start there was criticism that the fire truck was too big for the town’s back roads.”

So commented Joseph Clark. Galanek reported in September, 1973:

“A volunteer fire department composed of Tolland townspeople and some year-round Wildwood men is now being trained.”

Finally the insurance rating bureau in 1975 changed the rating for fire insurance from “F” to “E”. The location of the fire-fighting equipment had been changed from its former site on Route 57 to the present town garage complex on Colebrook River Road. This houses the school bus and road maintenance equipment as well as the fire trucks. (The entrance to the town trash compactor is just north of this area.)

But even with the better equipment and trained volunteers, it was not possible to save the newly-renovated school building when it suddenly burned in May, 1976.

A fire with a happier ending occurred in 1977. The June, 1977 Wildwood newsletter reported:

“Skip Avery May 17 saw smoke coming from burning brush near Fox Den exit. He called Nick (the manager here), who called the Fire Department - who came within 10-15 minutes. Also several Wildwood residents helped, having been called by Ruth Baker. The fire was caused by burning electric wire insulation which was dropping to the ground and igniting the dry brush. The Western Massachusetts Electric Co. came within 30 minutes with foam to extinguish the wire fire.”

In 1977 Jimmy Shea and Billy Walsh of the Windsor, CT fire department were instrumental in the donation of used fire coats and hats to the Tolland volunteer Fire Department. And in 1981, Dan Vullemeier, a year-round Wildwooder, made a generous donation to the fire department -

“toward the purchase of a high frequency radio communication system. This system will reduce the possibility that volunteer firemen will not hear the fire alarms.” (Newsletter 8/81)

The sound of the fire siren going off at 7 pm used to remind us that it was Tuesday. But now with the radio communication system, the volunteers don’t need the sirens to announce their meeting- and practice-nights. These committed people have rebuilt a 1967 5/4 ton military 4x4, and a 1977 Ford truck for the fire department’s use. They are hoping that in 1992 the town will approve the purchase of a completely new fire truck to augment or replace these elderly vehicles. Tolland’s residents and property owners are better protected against the ravages of fire than they were in days gone by.

TRANSITION

Originally the developers had thought that Wildwood would be completed and transferred to the property owners’ association in about five years (1971). But this transition did not occur until May of 1975. One of the main reasons was that islands kept surfacing all those years, and a great deal of labor and the use of heavy equipment was needed to get rid of them. But finally the WPOA and the developers worked out compromises so that the transition could be effected.

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Association members were urged to attend the special meeting held at the clubhouse in May, 1975. Attorneys for Chamonix Chalet Properties Inc. (CCPI) and for the WPOA were present, along with the representatives of CCPI and officers, directors, and members of the WPOA. At this meeting, Jack Galanek formally presented the deed from CCPI to the WPOA.

This meeting was the first of what became the annual spring meeting; subsequent May meetings have been held for the purpose of an exchange of ideas between the officers, directors, and the members. Usually no business has been transacted.

CHAMONIX CHALET PROPERTIES' TROUBLES

Some people had purchased their lots and had paid in full, but some had just made down payments, and then were sending regular payments to the Chamonix Chalet Properties, Inc. as required by their contracts. After Doug Jack sold his interest in CCPI to Jack Galanek, the latter had financial difficulties which had major repercussions for those who had not completed payments on their Wildwood Properties.

In October, 1976 Sue Moore, then Vice President of the WPOA, sent out an urgent notification to the property owners: the WPOA Board learned that

“Tax liens by the Internal Revenue Service have been placed against Chamonix Chalet Properties, Inc., which holds title to several parcels of land for which some property owners are under installment land sales contract to Jack Galanek. . . The Board reports that . . . the Great Barrington Savings Bank, which holds first and second mortgages on properties, has assured WPOA that it will act in the best possible interests of property owners . . .”

“Advice from our attorney is that individuals involved should continue to make monthly payments to the bank involved, as it is a legal commitment to fulfill the contract between such individuals and the bank.”

“WPOA holds the deed to Wildwood’s community property; thus, community property at Wildwood is not affected by the liens.”

The WPOA does not have a listing of owners who have purchased their property under land sales contract . . . The WPOA Board encourages property owners to seek information from the WPOA because this is a common problem . . .”

There were about 150 lots at Wild-wood, out of a total of 561, under land sales contract to Chamonix Chalet Properties. The Board held a special meeting on November 10 to address the crisis for these property owners. Since CCPI had also not paid taxes due the town of Tolland, the town planned to take for non-payment all the lots owned by CCPI. The Board notified as many involved members as possible, and by Friday afternoon a good deal of the tax money had been collected.

The Bank was influenced by the WPOA action, and decided to pay the tax bills, even the taxes, which were due soon, for 1977. Unfortunately state and federal tax liens were also clouding title to all lots under CCPI land sales contract.

In February, the Board notified property owners that the bank is foreclosing on the lots as one parcel to prevent any outsider from bidding on any individual lot, and is prepared to bid on the whole parcel to the amount of its interest in the property. According to the WPOA attorney, the agreement is a victory for affected lot owners.

This action enabled the lot owners to either pay in full to the bank, or to sign a promissory note to pay the money at the bank’s then residential mortgage interest rate. The owners then received their deeds free and clear of any encumbrances.

In November, 1977, Sue Moore, then president of the WPOA, summed up what had happened:

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“The past year was especially difficult as the Board’s attention was turned away from matters of Wildwood’s growth and management towards other unexpected problems concerning Chamonix Chalet Properties’ financial troubles. The following progress was reported. Tolland personal property taxes are to be billed to those responsible for their payment. Properties mortgaged by Great Barrington Savings Bank, held under land sales contracts, are now free from attachments.”

And in August, 1980, the newsletter noted:

“Many properties formerly held by the banks have been purchased by new Wildwood owners - a healthy sign for the area.”

When Wildwood was formed, the IRS and the State [sic] of Massachusetts claimed we were liable to their taxes. Negotiations were unsuccessful for a while. The December 1976 newsletter reported:

“This year WPOA applied for and was denied tax-exempt status with the IRS . . . Our federal and state tax liabilities for 1972 and 1973 are still being worked out. WPOA’s membership in the Community Association Institute will be helpful as we negotiate tax liabilities for the years beginning 1974.”

But in February, 1977, Wildwood’s CPA explained that under new (1976) Federal legislation, WPOA qualified retroactively to January 1, 1974, as a Homeowners Association, exempt from tax under section 528 of the Internal Revenue Code, except for the tax on interest earned.

The WPOA thereupon paid their obligations, and a revised accounting system was put into effect in January, 1977, to more easily provide information needed to prepare subsequent tax returns.

So ended a very stressful period for the WPOA.

BEETLE ROAD CONTROVERSY

When Wildwood was started, the developers and the Town of Tolland agreed that the developers would build a new section of Beetle Road replacing the section under water from the expansion of Cranberry Pond. The new road around the south edge of the lake was to be considered a private road, and the town would discontinue its right-of-way along the old Beetle Road. But action by the town was not taken for many years, so Beetle Road as it lay originally through Wildwood was still technically a public way. Wildwood had been advertised as a “private community”; obviously the question of who owned the road had to be resolved.

In 1978 Joseph Clark reported in the Westfield Evening News:

“A great deal of public opposition to the transfer of the road has been based on the fact that Cranberry Pond . . . was a popular fishing spot made accessible by Beetle Road . . . Legal and mechanical technicalities, accompanied by charges and countercharges involving the original developer, have blocked a solution to the problem.”

Adding a bit of spice to the arguments, a Tolland resident who owned property at Wildwood but refused to pay the dues, said in 1982 he planned to use the Beetle Road right-of-way to get to Cranberry Pond. The selectmen explained that the exact location of the right-of-way had not been legally determined. The man said that he planned to try to put a boat in Cranberry Pond to challenge the Property Owners’ Association restrictions, and that if necessary, he would take a rope floats to mark out the exact course of Beetle Road and the town right-of-way under Cranberry Pond, and would follow that course exactly with the boat.

However, since a surveyor would have to be hired to mark out the right of way, that scheme came to naught.

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A different tack was taken by a few Tolland residents who petitioned the state Attorney General to have the state rule “that Cranberry Pond is a Great Pond” and that public necessity required that access to it be granted. This caused the state Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (DEQE) in Boston to ask for information about Cranberry Pond. Our manager, Guy Poulin, had to spend a great deal of time researching and developing responses to the questions. Also the WPOA had to spend money on unanticipated attorney’s fees. A public hearing was held in Tolland by the DEQE on March 11, 1983. At that meeting testimony and documents were submitted by the people who had signed the petition, and by the representatives for the WPOA.

A year later the WPOA received a letter from the DEQE that the department was “heavily involved in a state waste-storage site study delaying its addressing the great pond issue.” This question is still pending. In Massachusetts, a Great Pond must be 10 acres or more, and any changes to it, such as building a dam, must be approved by the state rather than local authorities. Cranberry Pond has never been listed as a Great Pond, and the building of the dam in 1964-5 was not questioned by the state.

In 1986 the WPOA began a new effort to having the Beetle Road right-of-way section discontinued by the town. Betty Goucher, head of Wildwood’s Town Relations Committee worked with the WPOA Board of Directors and the manager, Guy Poulin, as well as with representatives from the Town of Tolland to resolve the issue. Finally an agreement was made on a land swap.

The WPOA would give to the town a parcel of land of about eight acres located at the corner of Route 57 and Hartland Road and extending westward. This was the part of the Fowler T. Moore farm on which the old homestead was located. It had burned after being struck by lightning in 1938; only a cellar hole remains.

In exchange, Tolland would give up the Beetle Road right-of-way that is not maintained as a town road through Wildwood, starting at the intersection of Beetle Road and The Meadow (where the flagpole is), passing through the property of the original developers’ old office building, under Cranberry Pond, through Fox Den Beach, and continuing eastward to Hartland Road.

The Town of Tolland specified that the eight acres would have to pass a percolation test in order to be acceptable, as they were planning to build its new town hall there. But the land failed to “perc”, and the Town withdrew its offer.

However, Betty Goucher and the Board of Directors renewed the land swap offer. The Town began building the town hall diagonally across from the WPOA land, and finally the proposal was accepted in April, 1988, and their voters confirmed this at the town meeting in June, 1988.

Thus “Old” Beetle Road as it originally ran through Wildwood was voted “discontinued and abandoned” by the Town, from the mailbox area to the eastern end of The Forest. That section reverted to the WPOA or abutting WPOA owners’ properties. The short span between the end of The Forest and Hartland Road remained under Town ownership, although it is maintained by the WPOA.

Thus ended the controversy that had gone on for over 20 years. A happy result of the settlement was that the title to “the old office building” at the main entrance to Wildwood was finally clear. For years the place had been neglected, a dead tree was prominent, and weeds flourished. But it was purchased by Lou Lodovico, Jr., the son of WPOA’s first vice-president. He has converted the old structure to an attractive home. In 1990 he and his wife and little girl moved in. So instead of the former eyesore, the home and cheerful landscaping greet people entering Wildwood.

Description of Properties in Proposed Land Exchange

(from Newsletter of 4/86)

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By Madeleine H. Lawrence

DISSENSION WITHIN THE BOARD

In 1975-76 allegations were made by a Board member against Sue Moore, then Vice-President and chairman of the Finance Committee. This particular Board Member later became President, but had strong opinions on how the WPOA should operate which were not shared by the rest of the Board. As dissension increased, the members became uneasy as to what was happening. 200 members attended the September 18, 1977 Annual Meeting, and with long questions and answers, the meeting was prolonged to a record time of 4 1/2 hours. However, when it came to voting on the recommendations of the Nominating Committee, the members approved the following slate of officers:

Sue Moore, President
Irv Pollitt, Vice-President
Phil Lecrenier, Secretary
Norman Sokol, Treasurer

A special task force was appointed to investigate the charges against Sue, which had to do with her handling of WPOA money. After several months they reported to the Board that they found no validity in the allegations. The Board accepted the report, and sent out a letter to all members of the Association to clear her name.

At the September 1979 Annual Meeting, Bob Hensel, whose term as a Director was ending, spoke on his satisfaction with the operation of the Association, and elicited a round of applause in special recognition for the quality of Sue Moore's leadership, Norm Sokol's work and Treasurer, and Nick Baker's professional management.

At the Annual Meeting of September 1980 the following resolution was unanimously voted, with hearty applause:

“Be it resolved that Susan Moore be recognized by the Association as ‘The Wildwooder of the Decade’ and that a properly developed plaque proclaiming the recognition be placed on display in the Club House.

“Sue has earned this recognition by her tireless devotion to Wildwood's development throughout the seventies, during a rapidly changing panorama encompassing Developer operations, adoption of Association By-Laws, property transition to the Association and subsequent incorporation and the evolution of successful Association development to its present state.

“Her contributions have been marked by her service as Association Treasurer, member of the By-Laws Committee, Vice-President, and President. Sue's rare combination of interest, judgment, diligence and intelligence has resulted in contributions to Wildwood's development deserving special recognition.”

As the newsletter of 11/80 commented, It isn't surprising that the resolution, presented by Bob Hensel, was unanimously voted.

And at the Annual Meeting of September, 1981, the plaque proclaiming Susan Moore and “the Wildwooder of the Decade” was presented to her by Frank Wycke on behalf of the Association. It had been designed and made by Frank, and was to be displayed in the clubhouse. A happy ending to a controversy created by one officer.

RECREATION AT WILDWOOD

Wildwood seems to provide all things for all ages: peace and quiet for the stressed-out adults from the cities, varieties of walking routes, trees, flowers, birds, ferns for the nature lovers, swimming, boating, tennis, and beaches for sun-lovers.

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By Madeleine H. Lawrence

A special category of people are the youth - full of energy, bored with their parents, impatient with rules, seemingly very self-centered, yet with surprising bursts of thoughtfulness.

Organizing activities where they can meet each other and have fun together without disturbing others is a real challenge. What parent in his right mind is willing not only to cope with his own young ones, but also to reach out to others of this volatile non-group?

Hank and Celia Savioli did for several years, and later Marsha Arest. We owe them a great deal of gratitude for their skill and efforts in helping the youth have good times as well as a sense of responsibility to all at Wildwood.

As head of the Lake Management Committee, Ken has been monitoring Cranberry and Otter Pond water quality for ten years now. Because of the original developers' concerns, power boats have been banned from the beginning, green belts have slowed heavy water run-off toward the lakes, and people have been encouraged to keep their waterfronts as natural as possible. Both ponds have springs welling up from the underlying limestone as well as tributary streams. They are thus buffered from the acid rain which has killed life in lakes in other areas. Our lakes have stayed at a consistent level of about 6.6 since 1982 when Ken began testing for pH. However, the rain has become increasingly acidic: 5.2 in 1982 to 4.15 in 1990. This puts stress on trees and the rest of the greenery. All of us can learn more about conserving power and using less of our natural resources, to keep Wildwood green.

Phil Lecrenier has been a property owner here since 1966, and served as secretary to the Board from 1968-70. He wrote in November, 1988:

“As secretary I remember the long Board of Directors meetings, (especially when weather outside was such that one would rather be outside on a precious weekend) . . . In addition to the challenges and problems with the developers, there were . . . unpleasant times, conflicts, and feuds . . . for example, the finding of enjoyment with harmony among nature and neighbors rather than the attitude of being out in the country excusing any odd or selfish behavior re dogs, B-B guns, motorbikes, noise, delinquent dues, etc. . .”

“However, and as a tribute to Jack Galanek's original concepts and efforts, Wildwood mostly has been superb as a recreational woods and water community for us and our children.”

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WPOA OFFICERS

1966-67 P Frank Murtha VP Louis Lodovico S Lyman Potter T Denton Smith	1967-68 P Frank Murtha VP Louis Lodovico S Lyman Potter T D Smith	1968-69 P Denton Smith VP Louis Lodovico S Phil Lecrenier T Robert Hensel	1969-70 P Robert Hensel VP Ken Lawrence S Phil Lecrenier T Ernest Jordan
1970-71 P Chester Hushak VP Al Wells S Ed Fedorick T Ernest Jordan	1971-72 P Al Wells VP Brian Fletcher S Helen Hushak T Susan Moore	1972-73 P Al Wells VP R. Gilchrist S Joy Illig T Susan Moore	1973-74 P George Winkler VP Dick Meister S Joy Illig T Susan Moore
1974-75 P George Winkler VP Dick Meister S Joy Illig T Susan Moore	1975-76 P Walter Hampton VP Susan Moore S Pat Gardella T Grace Recor	1976-77 P Tim O'Keefe VP Susan Moore S Mary Ellen Cleary T Grace Recor	1977-78 P Susan Moore VP Irv Pollitt S Phil Lecrenier T Norman Sokol
1978-79 P Susan Moore VP Irv Pollitt S Phil Lecrenier T Norman Sokol	1979-80 P Susan Moore VP Charles Baskin S Phil Lecrenier T Norman Sokol	1980-81 P Charles Baskin VP Carol Wisneski S Woody Higgins T Norman Sokol	1981-82 P Charles Baskin VP Carol Wisneski S Woody Higgins T Norman Sokol
1982-83 P Woody Higgins VP Richard DeGarmo S Lorraine Parmelee T Gilbert Ahrens	1983-84 P Woody Higgins VP Hank Savioli S Lorraine Parmelee T Gilbert Ahrens	1984-85 P Ruth Buchanan VP Hank Savioli S Lorraine Parmelee T Gilbert Ahrens	1985-86 P Ruth Buchanan VP Norman Sappol S Lorraine Parmelee T Jeffrey Arest
1986-87 P Ruth Buchanan VP Norman Sappol S Carol Hubert T Jeffrey Arest	1987-88 P Ruth Buchanan VP Larry Isaacs S Carol Hubert T Jeffrey Arest	1988-89 P Larry Isaacs Jeff Arest VP Jeff Arest Carol Hubert S Carol Hubert T Art Fishman	1989-90 P Jeff Arest VP Carol Hubert S Norm Sappol T Art Fishman
1990-91 P Jeffrey Arest VP Carol Hubert S Norman Sappol T Art Fishman			