

## ABOUT THE LAKE...

You may recall that last year we began implementing the initial stage of a long-range process to rehabilitate our lake. Upon the recommendation of our Town's Environmental Coordinator, Stephen Coleman, we retained the services of Jeri D. Barrett of J.D. Barrett & Associates, Environmental Scientists from Easton, Connecticut. This organization has considerable experience and a solid reputation for achieving excellent results with ponds, lakes and other waterway preservation projects in Westchester County and elsewhere. As the result of conducting site inspections, water studies, in-water observations, laboratory and other research involving our lake, J.D. Barrett & Associates developed a long-range plan for saving our lake.

Our lake was/is being inundated with coontail and Brazilian elodea weeds. Left to run rampant, the weeds would soon turn our lake into a marsh and the death of our lake would be certain. How did Brazilian elodea, the worse kind of elodea, which can grow an inch-a-week under ideal conditions, ever travel to and become entrenched in our lake? The environmental scientists tell us that this particular weed is commonly added as a decorative plant by fish tank owners. And, they conjecture that someone might have emptied their fish tank into our lake numerous years ago to clean it. Nature then took control and attached the weed to the bottom of our lake where it flourished undetected until recently spreading throughout our waterway.

Jeri. D. Barrett's initial recommendation included a mechanical hydro-raking process. In a hydro-raking process, a large motorized barge outfitted with a powerful underwater mower, harvests the lake weeds and deposits them on dry land. Upon receiving the approval of the New Castle Environmental Committee and the appropriate permits from New York State, we implemented that procedure with the services of Aquatic Control Technologies, Inc. of Sutton, Massachusetts.

Both Brazilian elodea and coontail reproduce through vegetation propagation. It is not feasible to completely remove all of the plant matter with a single hydro-raking. We were told that regrowth would likely occur and possibly reach nuisance densities again and that a second

hydro-raking might be necessary. Taking a conservative approach, we waited to see what would happen this year. The elodea came back with a vengeance. In the early spring, we were advised by our consultants that it would not be practical to attempt a raking/harvesting operation this year because the New York State Environmental Protection Office for our zone had been down-sized because of budget cuts and that it would take 10-15 weeks to obtain the necessary permits. Furthermore, the earliest possible date for the operation would be late September - and our consultants believe that the elodea will start to die back in the cold weather and fall out of the water column to the lake bottom by mid-October, thereby removing the unsightly plant masses from view. We accepted their rationale and believed it would be fiscally prudent for us to wait until spring 2004 to revitalize the rehabilitation process.

J. D. Barrett & Associates and Aquatic Control Technologies will submit the necessary applications for our New York State permits in December 2003 so that we will be ready to "GO" in the spring of 2004.

Old Farm Lake is rich in culture and tradition and we value our environment. Please be assured that your Board is committed to keeping our waterways at the top of our agenda. We appreciate your continued support.

Larry Pauline  
September 15, 2003