



# Friends of Green River Reservoir

## Spring 2018 Newsletter

# Common Dragonflies of Green River Reservoir

BY RON KELLEY

**G**reen River Reservoir State Park contains a diversity of habitats, from the lake itself to adjacent streams, bogs, kettle ponds and beaver ponds. This results in a wide variety of dragonflies and damselflies. There are a number of mostly medium sized and dull colored dragonflies that can be spotted in early to mid-summer but the larger, showier ones tend to become most abundant in August and September. This article will feature the three most common on the reservoir.

One of the most common and easily recognized dragonflies is the **Slaty Skimmer**. It is commonly seen throughout August and can be recognized by its slate-gray color and black head when mature. Skimmers are so-called because the females skim along the surface of the water, periodically dipping the tip of their abdomen into the water to deposit eggs. The females are seldom seen but the males frequently perch on vegetation in sunny areas around the reservoir, where they are easily identified and photographed once they land near you.

Another common large dragonfly is the **Black-shouldered Spineyleg**. It is also seldom seen during the month of August. It is a mostly black clubtail, meaning that the tip of the abdomen is swollen and club-like. Males like to fly about a foot over the surface of the water, sometimes hovering for short periods. They often try to land on the front of your canoe or kayak. I've even had them dive-bomb my head when swimming. They appear to be totally black on the fly but have some interesting blue markings and widely separated eyes when seen up close.

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**Black-shouldered Spineyleg**

RON KELLEY

## Slaty Skimmer



RON KELLEY

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— SPRING 2018 —

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### Dragonflies *cont'd from page 1*

The largest and most beautiful dragonflies commonly seen are the darners, with the most common species on the reservoir being the **Canada Darner**. It usually becomes abundant from mid-August through September. If you notice a large dragonfly with blue spots on the abdomen fly by, it

is probably a Canada Darner. Males are typically seen patrolling the edge of the reservoir, where they consume their prey in flight, but trying to get them to land for a picture can be very challenging. Females tend to keep to the forests except when mating and laying eggs. They insert their eggs into the stem of submerged or partially submerged plants.



Canada Darner



Canada darner inserting eggs into a blue iris stem.

RON KELLEY

RON KELLEY

## Using the new wildlife resistant food storage containers

BY SHEILA GOSS

**W**hen you head to your campsite at GRRSP this summer, you may notice the new large metal boxes on some of the sites, placed by Vermont Department of Forests and Parks with a matching grant from the FGRR!

They are designed to keep campers and wildlife safe from unwanted encounters. Please follow

the guidelines posted on top of each locker. They are large enough to keep your food, beverages, and scented or flavored toiletries safe from bears and other animals. Be sure to latch the pocket style bear resistant latch when you leave the site. If you want to lock the locker, you will need to bring your own

padlock. And use caution with your children – although there is a child safety release inside, don't let the kids climb in! The purpose is to keep odors from attracting wildlife. Let us know what you think! Our expectation is that they will prevent animal problems from developing.



# Update on the Green River Dam Relicensing Appeal: 23 March 2018

BY MICHAEL WICKENDEN

The Friends of Green River Reservoir Board (“the Board”) continues to closely monitor Morrisville Water and Light’s (MWL) appeal to the Vermont Superior Court, Environmental Division (“the Court”) of a water quality certification issued by Vermont’s Agency of Natural Resources (ANR). The water quality certificate is required by the Federal Energy Regulations Commission (FERC) and is used by FERC to establish the conditions for the renewal of a 30-year Green River Reservoir Dam license. FERC is the ultimate authority that regulates both the construction and operational phases of hydro-projects.

MWL’s appeal raised over a dozen issues in regards to the certificate. Principally, MWL claims that ANR has not accurately applied Vermont’s water quality standards. A consequence of ANR’s alleged inaccuracy is their recommendation for a significant decrease in the amount and timing of water released that would be available to produce winter hydro-power. MWL states that if they have to abide by the conditions of ANR’s water quality certification for Green River Reservoir, the profitability and utility of the dam will be compromised. If that is the case, MWL has publicly stated that they may consider asking FERC for permission to remove the dam and return the reservoir to its pre-reservoir natural condition. A FERC dam removal legal proceeding is typically an expensive, multiyear exercise, which would also require Vermont ANR

approval, and seems unlikely to be achieved.

The appeal trial date has been set for April 2 – 13, 2018. On April 2, the case will begin with a short discussion to set a date for a site visit. Hearings will begin on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be held in the Costello Courthouse on Main St. in Burlington. The parties will present their evidence in the following order: Morrisville Water and Light; American Whitewater/Vermont Paddlers Club; Vermont Natural Resources Council/Trout Unlimited; Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.

Many issues raised in MWL original appeal have been the subject of recent court orders. For example, on June 13, 2017, the Court ruled that “state and federal water quality laws do not authorize consideration of economic or social factors.” Consequently, lost hydro-power production and the resultant decrease in MWL revenue as a result of decreased winter water level draw-downs is not a factor that the Court will consider when it evaluates MWL’s appeal. What remains to be decided by the Court is whether ANR’s water flow recommendations accurately result in achieving Vermont’s water quality standards, or, as MWL and American Whitewater’s and Vermont Paddlers Club’s expert witnesses will testify, ANR’s requirements limiting winter water draw-downs are overly restrictive. The Court’s decision is expected by the fall of 2018.

The Friend’s fundamental mission remains the preservation of Green River Reservoir’s highest environ-

mental standards consistent with the long-term preservation of the dam. To advance that mission, the Board hired Anthony Iarrapino, Esq. to be the Friend’s legal counsel and enable our participation in the Green River Dam Relicensing and Appeal. The Board periodically meets with counsel to review legal filings and plan strategy. In February 2017, members of the Board met with MWL Trustees and participated in a MWL sponsored public hearing at People’s Academy. In addition, the Board reached out and met with Julie Moore, the Secretary of ANR; with VNRC’s Jon Groveman, Esq., Public Policy and Water Program Director, and B.T. Fitzgerald, Dam Project & Vermont Dam Task Force Coordinator; and with Christine Hallquist, former CEO of Vermont Electric Coop. Our discussions have centered around how we can collectively come together to reach a beneficial and reasonable solution. What we can confirm is that all parties share the long-term vision of a safe, functioning dam and reservoir that meets or exceeds state and federal water quality standards. What is still unclear is the appropriate application of those standards to the Green River Reservoir and how their application will affect the dam’s future operations. Rest assured that the Board will remain active in keeping its membership informed and working with any and all interested parties to achieve a solution that preserves an environmentally sound reservoir.



# Dog Paddling on the Reservoir: Tips for safe and enjoyable canoeing and kayaking with dogs

BY SHEILA GOSS

**M**y husband and I are avid paddlers at Green River Reservoir and are advocates for safe and fun outdoor adventures with dogs. We paddle over 100 days a year (always with our rescue mutts) from the end of April until November. We enjoy multi-day canoe camping trips, day trips, picnic paddles, and love exploring new waterways. We usually paddle the beautiful lakes of northern New England and the Adirondacks, but have paddled as far west as Banff National Park in Canada. Even after all those excursions, Green River Reservoir remains a favorite, close to our hearts!

We enjoy helping others develop a love of paddling with dogs, so we offer to you a few pointers to help your dog become a happy paddling pup. We are extremely fortunate to have Green River Reservoir available for sharing adventures with our four-legged companions! We have found that the dogs love the peaceful movement of a canoe or kayak. They get to see wildlife, explore islands and beaches, camp out with us, and splash around to cool off.

We use a 16½-foot tandem canoe for some trips, but most of our outings involve the use of a 13-foot solo canoe and a 12-foot kayak. For canoes, we suggest you start with a stable, family-suitable canoe. Because aluminum canoes can get very hot and noisy, best to avoid those for use with dogs. When selecting a boat, you should be sure that there is adequate room you to paddle, and for your dog to safely and comfortably sit and lie down.



SHEILA GOSS

When checking out canoes or kayaks prior to purchasing, bring your dog to have the pup try out the boat for size. Go for a test paddle and bring your dog along – both of you wearing a life jacket, of course.

You should have a non-slip covering on the floor of the boat. Your dog will be uncomfortable and insecure if he slips. You may use yoga mats, backpacking pads, and foam, but with many of these, once water gets under them, they will slide. Our preferred solution – a section of indoor-outdoor carpeting which is cut to fit – protects the interior from the dogs' claws and is easy to clean and roll up for storage. For kayaks, we have high praise for adhesive traction mats sold for Stand Up Paddleboards.

Be a confident paddler before you take your dog out in the canoe or kayak! You do not have to be an expert, but even on quiet waters, you are going to have a miserable (and dangerous) time if you and your dog are both uncertain and inexperienced.

When introducing your dog to paddling, a lake such as Green River Reservoir is perfect. It is a usually

quiet, calm body of water, with an easy access launch site. Choose a time of day when there are fewer other boaters or dogs around; the fewer distractions, the more successful your initial trips will be.

For all dogs we suggest the use of a dog life jacket. This jacket can provide thermal protection, provides a nice handle should you need to lift your dog, and it makes your dog visible to other boaters. Even a strong swimming dog can get fatigued in a long swim.

Do not forget to wear your PFD! No matter how strong a swimmer you may be, not wearing a PFD could hinder your efforts to help your dog should you capsize. Have your dog practice swimming in his life jacket, to get him familiar with swimming in it.

Have your dog well versed in basic obedience commands, such as sit, stay, down, and “hup” (you select a command for getting in and out of the boat). Work on these skills, in the boat, on dry land before going on the water. Rock and wiggle the boat, and praise him for remaining in position.

Each of our dogs began his canoeing career by sitting in the same canoe compartment with the stern paddler. The dog was secure, easy to hold, and there was less chance of unexpected motion from the dog. The dog then “graduated” into riding in his own section, once he had demonstrated reliable canoe behavior.

Practice good paddling etiquette with your dog. Do not allow the dog to bark while in the canoe or kayak.



You may paddle near some amazing wildlife, and would not want dogs to harass the loons, beaver, herons, moose, or other animals or paddlers.

Have a standard routine for getting in and out of the boat. Our dogs are taught that we decide when they enter and exit the boat. Most capsizings happen within 10 feet of shore and keeping a strict routine for entry/exit can help prevent this. The dogs only get in and out of the boat when we decide it is safe for all of us.

If your dog has trouble settling down in the canoe or kayak, you may want to take him for a run, or a short exercise session first. Let him take care of any potty business before he gets into the boat! Be sure to clean up after your dogs, as we are responsible for them, and for keeping our waters clean.

Always have a leash handy, since in many areas, such as the access area at Green River Reservoir, your dog is required to be leashed. We suggest you not use a leash on your dog while it is in the boat, since any hanging lines could cause entanglement if the boat goes over. NEVER tie your dog to the boat!

It is a good idea to carry drinking water for dogs because they can get quite hot in the boats. Yes, they can lean over the gunwales to access water, but you do not always want the dogs

drinking from the water you may be paddling across. It also can become quite the “tippy-canoe or puppy, too” experience if your dog suddenly decides to drink the lake.

It is also smart to carry a dog first aid kit. Unfortunately, even in remote canoeing areas we have found bottle caps and broken glass on launching and landing sites. In addition to your own first aid supplies, add some Vet Wrap, helpful for bandaging an injured paw.

If you are fortunate enough to be camping with your dog at, be sure to follow GRRSP rules, follow Leave No Trace principles; clean up after your dog, do not let him bother wildlife,

and keep him under control and within sight, so that he does not wander and get into nearby campsites. Please do not leave a dog unattended at your campsite, and be sure that the dog does not engage in frequent barking.

One of the most important elements to having a successful dog paddling expedition is your attitude! Have fun, and remember that this activity may be a bit unsettling to your dog. Go slowly...start with short trips, so your dogs can earn your praise while he practices his canoeing skills. Take Photos! You will want to look back some day and realize how far you and your dog have come and laugh at your adventures (and misadventures)!



SHEILA GOSS



## – Friends of Green River Reservoir – Annual Meeting of Membership

**Thursday July 26, 2018 • 6:30 PM**

**Butternut Mountain Farm, 37 Industrial Park Drive, Morrisville**

Join the FGRR Board for a potluck supper (bring a dish to share and your own plate & utensils), good conversation, the latest on the Morrisville Water and Light appeal of the VT Agency of Natural Resources dam permit, a summary of the past year, and a brief business meeting. Thanks to all our members for their support!

*–The FGRR Board*



# Last Season at Green River State Park

Susan Bulmer (VDFPR Northeast Parks Regional Manager) and Nick Caputo (VDFPR Regional Operations Manager) came to the FGRR February Board meeting to update us on the past season and the plans for the coming summer. Their annual “state park year in review” is a highlight for our Board, and we very much appreciate their taking the time to meet with us.



**2017 Park Attendance** was excellent. Day use was 5,089 people, the highest since 2009. Campsite attendance was the highest on record, with 8,224 campers. Revenue for the Park was \$86,534 and operating expenses for were \$85,478. State Parks subsist on the park fees and a percentage of ski lift tickets – generally the revenue and expenses run relatively close, although for years this park did not break even.

The percentage of campsite occupancy is high at GRRSP – weekends are booked months in advance. This was one of the best staffing years the Park has had, with a cohesive team. Ross Bryant will be Park Director again this coming summer.

**Reservation System:** People can book their reservations year-round through the call center; the only reservations that must go through GRRSP directly is the group site. People can still call the Park directly for reservations during the summer season.

**Firewood Policy:** Staff ask if guests have brought firewood with them, as only wood from Vermont can be brought in. Any out of state firewood is bagged and given to forestry to incinerate. Acceptable firewood is stocked. Kiln dried wood is mostly what is being used now. Currently about 7½ cords (\$3,000) of wood is used a season at GRRSP.

## — Projects —

**Bear Lockers:** The largest project was the installation of the seven food lockers – that was a challenging project. Each locker weighs 360 pounds and getting them out on sites was a challenge. VYCC Parks and Restoration Crew assisted with the placement of the lockers. Possible consideration of smaller units for the sites with the smaller number of occupants. Susan is okay with a FGRR sticker that says – partially funded by a grant from the Friends of Green River Reservoir. Most of the reports last year were racoon. There were bear at site 9 and a mother and couple of cubs at the entrance road, so preventing problems from developing with the bear-proof lockers is wise.

## Other Projects:

- Two Kiosks installed at Zack Woods.
- One red worm toilet was installed at one of the campsites.
- Ongoing ADA trail maintenance
- Protection foresters marked hazardous trees and those were cut (~30). First cutting is usually done in September.
- Generator shed was installed by the maintenance staff towards the end of the season.

**Map:** On the revised map, sites 10/11 were combined. A date has been added to the bottom of the map to allow revision tracking. Group campsites now have a symbol.

## 2018 Woodshed Workshed Plans:

The timeline and scheduling will be reviewed in the coming weeks and will go out to bid at some point this winter. There is permitting that still needs to be done. The project should be under construction this summer/fall. Funding should come from the capital infrastructure fund – it’s a shovel ready project. Very exciting!

**2018 Pricing adjustments:** There is a change in fees proposed for Green River Reservoir, shifting more towards the standard pricing. The minimum fee is currently \$18 per site and a per person fee on top of that if over three people. Adjusted, the fee is going to \$20 per site and up to four people. The six or seven-person site will be charged \$5 per person above the base. Pet Fee stays the same – \$2 per dog. Day use remains unchanged. The change will likely happen mid-season.





## Friends of Green River Reservoir Annual Lecture

### TOM ROGERS ON GRRSP WILDLIFE

# Wildlife of Green River Reservoir in a Time of Changing Climate”

Friday 12 October 2018 • 7:00 PM

Green Mountain Technology and Career Center  
at Lamoille Union High School/Middle School, Hyde Park

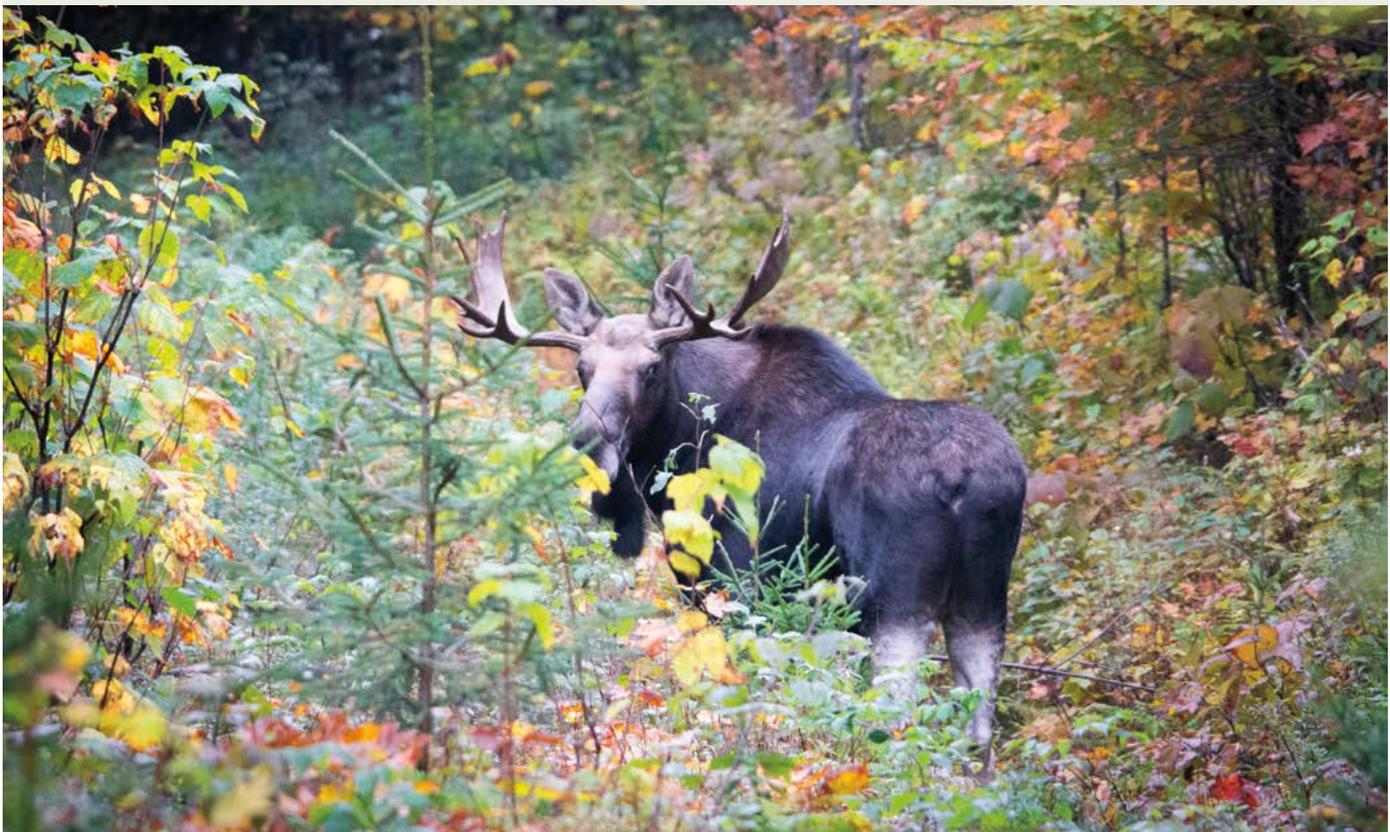
**T**om Rogers is a biologist who has worked on a variety of conservation projects, researching zebras in Kenya, Golden-winged Warblers in New York, Sage Grouse and Bald Eagles in Wyoming, and grizzly bears in Montana. Tom currently works in outreach for the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, connecting the public with fish and wildlife through writing, speaking, and photography.

Through colorful photos and captivating stories, the audience will come away with a new understanding of how climate change is affecting wildlife in Vermont and specifically in the Green River Reservoir area. Rogers will talk about what people can do to help

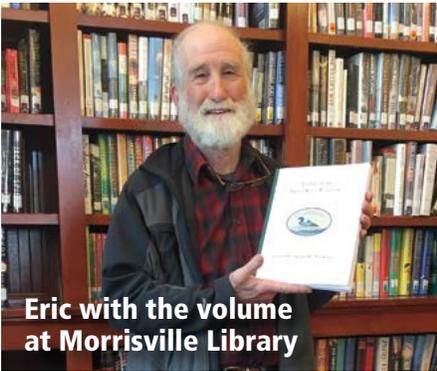
conserve biodiversity in Vermont in the face of these new threats.

“From warmer, wetter winters to increasingly severe storms, wildlife faces a variety of challenges from a changing climate,” said Rogers. “We’ll discuss how different species might continue to respond to many of these challenges and what conservationists are doing to address them.”

Don’t miss this exciting program! Free and open to the public.



## FGRR NEWS



LISA DIMONDSTEIN

Eric with the volume at Morrisville Library



LISA DIMONDSTEIN

Amy Olsen receiving the newsletters for the Lanpher Memorial Library.

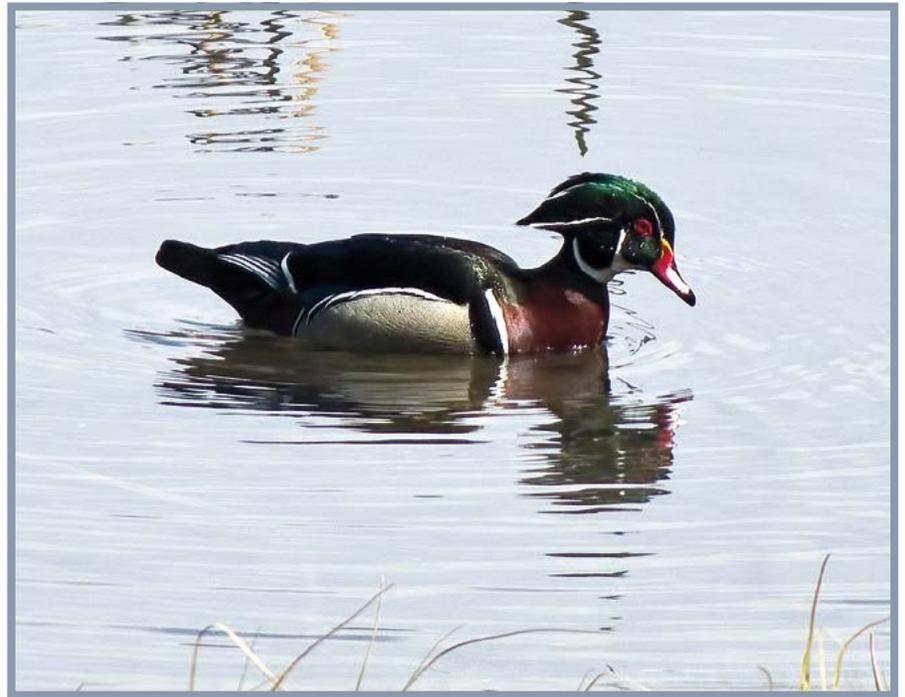
### FGRR Newsletters Archives 1999-2016

Thanks to the excellent work of Board Member Sheila Goss and her husband Duncan all the FGRR Newsletters for the past eighteen years (1999–2016) have been scanned and are now available on the website! This is a wonderful record of all our organization has accomplished. The Board had four bound copies made as well (one of which was awarded to Bill Bartlett at last year’s annual meeting, as well-deserved recognition for his key role in the organization). This winter the FGRR Board presented bound copies to our local libraries – Morrisville Centennial Library and Lanpher Memorial Library in Hyde Park – so that permanent records will be there as well. The presentations were made by Board members Lisa Dimondstein and Eric Nuse last month.

### Wood Duck Boxes Successful

BY RON KELLEY

The two wood duck boxes that Bob Malbon and Ron Kelley installed on Zack Woods Pond three winters ago were finally occupied this past year. A recent inspection revealed that both boxes had a mix of hatched and unhatched wood duck eggs from 2017 inside. This suggests that the cold wet spring of 2017 was not very favorable for total nesting success. The boxes have been refreshed with cedar chips so they are all set for the hopeful return of the ducks this spring.



RON KELLEY

### Gift Membership Offer

For the next year – Oct. 2017 through Sept 2018 – the Friends of Green River Reservoir Board is offering each renewing member the opportunity to give a free gift membership, and will include that notice in each membership renewal. If you choose to enter someone as a member, the gift membership will run for one year. It will then be up to that person to renew or not. We hope to increase our membership this way and have more support for all the work ahead!

### Membership Renewals

Memberships run for a year from the month that you join. Volunteers (us Board members) send reminders – first electronically and then by snail mail a few months before your renewal is due (and again and again, if members don’t respond to the first notice). Renewing immediately saves stamps, time and energy and we thank those that renew on the first notice.