

♦ The Watershed News ♦

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Summer 2000

A Quarterly Publication of the Ossipee Watershed Protection Project Published by the Green Mountain Conservation Group

Watershed Weekend will focus on Forestry

The public is invited to celebrate “**Watershed Weekend 2000: Forestry in the Watershed**” on Saturday, August 12, at Camp Calumet on Ossipee Lake in Freedom from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Green Mountain Conservation Group particularly invites area foresters, loggers, wood lot owners and town officials to participate.

A daylong series of lectures, panel discussions, outdoor hikes and boat trips will explore the philosophy of forestry, the state of forestry in New Hampshire and Carroll County, and the importance of good forestry practices for protection of watershed ecosystems.

Keynote addresses will be given by State Forester Philip Bryce and Mary Tyrrell, program director of the Yale School of Forestry’s Center for Coastal and Watershed Systems.

A panel discussion on “Good Forestry, Stewardship, Enforcement and Logging in New Hampshire” will feature UNH Cooperative Extension county forester Peter Pohl, NH Timberland Owners Association executive director Eric Kingsley, Forest Ranger Bob Boyd and Rick Lessard, a forester and logger from Tamworth.

A second panel discussion will address “The State of Forestry in New Hampshire.” Panelists will be State Forester Philip Bryce, UNH Cooperative Extension forestry specialist Karen Bennett, Appalachian Mountain Club forest ecologist David Publicover, and local foresters and loggers Steve Danielovich and Fred Lavigne.

Featured speaker will be UNH Cooperative Extension wildlife biologist Ellen Snyder, who will give a presentation on “Forest Management for Wildlife Habitat.”

Geoffrey Jones, director of land management for the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, will give two presentations, one on “Logging Aesthetics” and the other on “Good Forestry in the Granite State.”

Nancy Christie, executive director of the NH Lakes Association, will describe the group’s Watershed Stewardship Program.

Canoe and pontoon boat trips on Ossipee Lake will be led by Audubon Society of New Hampshire biologist Laura Deming, NH Fish & Game Department wildlife biologist John Lanier, UNH Cooperative Extension wildlife biologist Ellen Snyder, and local forester Scott Aspinall.

David Anderson, director education for the Society for the Protection on NH Forests, will lead a hike on “Reading the Forested Landscape,” and Dan Stepanauskas, a forester and Madison resident, will explain to hikers “The Effects of Acid Rain on the Forest.” The Nature Conservancy will lead a hike in its Pine Barrens Preserve adjacent to Camp Calumet.

Throughout the day, representatives from dozens of environmental groups and state agencies will be on hand to staff information booths. See enclosed brochure for a full schedule of Watershed Weekend events.

Sunday hike to explore UNH forest lands

Watershed Weekend will continue Sunday, August 13, with a tour of UNH forest land from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The University of New Hampshire owns several tracts in the Ossipee area that have been managed for forestry, often by UNH students undertaking silvicultural research studies.

These lands were recently the subject of a proposed sale of properties by the University System. Half-day and full-day tours to 3 sites on two of these properties will be led by Dick Weyrick of the UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture; Dan Stepanauskus, consulting forester and GMCG Board member; and Dave Anderson of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests.

The hike will begin at the UNH Bearcamp River tract,

which features productive pine stands and a unique silver maple floodplain forest rich with ferns and vernal pools in the oxbow river meanders. Other stops along the way include the steep, east face of Rattlesnake Ridge in the Nickerson Mountains abutting the Lord Pines State Forest; the 425-acre “Lord Farm” tract, which includes frontage surrounding Mud Pond on Pine Hill Road, a hidden bowl of glacial boulders harboring excellent bear den sites amidst exceptionally large white pines; and the 385-acre “Lovell River” tract, which offers an easy walk along a woods road to a scenic view of the Lovell River.

To register contact Dave Anderson at SPNHF at 224-9945.

The Watershed News

The Watershed News is a quarterly publication of the Green Mountain Conservation Group, a non-profit, 501(c) 3, charitable organization established in 1997 and dedicated to the preservation of the natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed. The towns of Effingham, Freedom, Madison, Ossipee, Sandwich and Tamworth make up the boundaries of the Ossipee Watershed Protection Project. This watershed includes one of the largest and deepest stratified drift aquifers in N.H. It covers 47 square miles and receives drainage from a 330 square mile area. It is a critically important resource for existing and future community water supplies.

The GMCG's purpose is twofold:

1. To provide an organizational structure for a coalition of citizens and local officials interested in identifying sensitive areas within the Watershed in need of protection;
2. To offer public educational events about conservation concerns and possible solutions regarding the preservation of this unique natural resource.

Through education and advocacy we strive to promote an awareness and appreciation of our natural resources and encourage a commitment to protect them.

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Special Places

Feisty Effingham residents save church bell

Editor's Note: *Special Places* is a regular feature of the Watershed News, highlighting an historical or cultural resource within the six towns of the Ossipee Watershed. GMCG has endorsed Citizens for NH Land and Community Heritage, a broad coalition of more than 100 grassroots organizations whose aim is to build support for the increased public and private commitment to conservation of our natural, cultural and historic lands and resources. For more information on Citizens for NH Land and Community Heritage, contact Brian Hart at 230-9729.

BY BARRY HILL

One of the prettiest sights in New England is on Lord's Hill in Effingham, where sits the Lord's Hill Church with its accompanying "parade" (green) and bandstand. The church, with its imposing belfry, has elements of both the Georgian and Federal styles in its architecture and a beautifully-furnished inside, with a high pulpit. Religious services are held there now only in July and August.

Though chartered in 1749, the Congregational Church still had not been built by 1798. Effingham residents worshiped in homes around town and, strangely enough, in Carl Leavitt's tavern. Finally, the church construction was put out to bid and Israel Lord, who owned the hill on which the church would be built as well as the tavern across the street, was the winning bidder. Lord deeded the land and church to the town for \$10 in 1821.

After that, residents attended regular religious services, as well as town meetings, in the church, summoned by the ringing of the enormous bell in the belfry, about which there is an interesting story. The bell was cast in the foundry established by Paul Revere in Canton, Massachusetts, and weighs 1100 pounds. Although undated, it bears the inscription "Revere-Boston."

Many years after it was installed in the belfry, the town ceased using the church for meetings and there was a movement to auction the bell off. The auction was held and Thomas Drake put in the winning bid of \$4.00. It seems the people on Lord's Hill considered the bell their own and trouble developed when Drake showed up with

several men and a two-horse team to take the bell down. The men of Lord's Hill were away, working on a road, and the only opposition to Drake came from Deacon Robert Clark, who climbed up to the belfry and sat on the bell. Despite this, Drake's men were able to winch the bell down from the belfry and haul it away to Drake's home.

It was not long before the men of Lord's Hill found out about the bell removal because a Mr. Leavitt (somewhat like Paul Revere) rode a horse at full gallop to the place where the men were working, shouting at the top of his lungs "the bell, the bell." Although the men, in the heat of the moment, considered stronger action, they went to court and obtained a writ requiring the return of the bell. The court officer who served the writ on Thomas Drake was accompanied by a crowd of men from Lord's Hill and they repossessed the bell and installed it back in the belfry. Later, the court determined that the bell belonged in the church and there it has remained to this day.

Restoration of the church has been undertaken by several parties, including the Effingham Preservation Society, which has participated in the painting of the church and soon will work on landscaping the grounds around the church. Money for the restoration was provided by a local family trust and requires matching funds from the Preservation Society, which they are now trying to raise. If you would like to make a donation toward the funding, contact Arlene Gertsen at 539-6027.

The folks of Lord's Hill give us an example of what people working together can accomplish when they really care about something, even as simple as a bell.

Barry Hill is president of the Ossipee Historical Society. For more information, call him at 539-2161.

Forestry in the Watershed

Work with Nature, not against it

BY DAN STEPANAUSKAS

The origins of forestry were designed to imitate nature. As forestry practices have evolved over time, we have progressed further from our origins. As foresters, all that we have learned about the growth and nurture of forests we have learned from the natural world. A forest does not need a forester, for to allow that we are above nature's master plan is presumptuous. We have to mingle two often dichotomous goals — the health and preservation of nature and the economic needs of humanity. Foresters are needed to keep the demands of mankind from overwhelming the ability of the forest to remain a healthy, natural community.

In our region, for example, we have well over 20 commercial tree species and over 40 soil types. The correct correlation of tree species to soil type can be essential to your forest's productivity, and each quarter acre of land can be different. Incorporate wildlife management, watershed management, wetland protection, tree utilization, and log marketing, and you begin to see the very complex picture of forestry today.

In considering the effects of

modern forestry practices on our watersheds and water resources, the depletion of calcium from our soils by acid rain is the single most harmful effect occurring in our watershed. Calcium is the primary buffer to soil and water acidification. The limbs, tops and foliage of a tree have twice the concentration of calcium as the rest of the tree. Many modern forest harvests include whole tree chipping. The benefit of whole tree harvesting (chipping the understory, slash - limbs and treetops) of the forest is primarily aesthetic. There is a tradeoff. Detailed research done by Bill Leak, a widely respected name in northeastern silviculture, and others at the Northeast Forest Experiment Station in Durham, has shown that conducting early thinnings produces no economic benefits over allowing the forest to reach a merchantable age with no intervention.

At a recent conference, "The Effects of Acid Deposition on Northeastern Forests," sponsored by Hubbard Brook Experiment Station and The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, it was stated that the best thing foresters can do to counteract the depletion of our soils by acid rain is to leave as much biomass (the tree tops, foliage and understory) as possible in the

forest.

Landowners frequently say that their land has been managed, meaning they have had it "selectively cut." This often translates to having most of the valuable (cash valued) trees removed. An analogy might be to weed out the tomato plants of a garden, leaving weeds for your desired crop. Forestry is a complex science and a complex business. Matching the trees that are best adapted to a specific site, and growing trees to maturity, both imitates nature's design and provides for our economic needs. The market's demand for wood appears insatiable, and the pressure on landowners is never-ending.

Let's take care in how we manage our forests. Practicing forestry with nature, and not against it, is all that's needed.

Dan Stepanauskas is a consulting forester and a member of the Board of Directors of the Green Mountain Conservation Group.

New Group Preserves Land on Big Dan Hole Pond

Residents, campers, visitors and friends of Big Dan Hole Pond in Center Ossipee are protecting over 200 acres of forestland, including 3000 feet of lake front along the south shore of the Pond. The sponsors have formed a new land trust, The Dan Hole Pond Watershed Trust, to purchase the property and preserve it in its natural state. The objectives are to preserve the natural beauty of the pond, protect it as habitat for plants and wildlife, and maintain the water quality of the pond which flows into Ossipee Lake via Dan Hole River and the Pine River. The acquisition will also help to insure the viability of the Pond as a breeding site for loons, which have bred chicks there for the past couple of years.

This is the Dan Hole Pond Watershed Trust's first protection project. They hope to protect additional land in

the watershed in the future. The effort is being assisted by the Lakes Region Conservation Trust which has provided planning and fundraising advice. The LRCT sees protection of this property as augmenting its strategy of protecting forest land throughout the Ossipee Mountains.

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the Green Mountain Conservation Group provided valuable advice to the new trust's sponsors last year when they began this project.

The Dan Hole Pond Watershed Trust has begun a fundraising campaign to pay for the land. Tax deductible contributions large and small are welcome. For further information please call Bob or Alix Pratt at (603) 539-2073.

Conservation Conversations

Editor's Note: This feature, *Conservation Conversations*, is intended to provide a forum for the Conservation Commissions in the six towns of the Ossipee Watershed to share news of their activities and an opportunity to find creative solutions regarding watershed issues. It is the goal of the Green Mountain Conservation Group to encourage the six towns together to create a strong voice as a united watershed community. **Think Locally; Act Watershed.**

Ossipee

The Commission has asked the selectmen to alert them about all property that the town will post for sale. The Commission then plans to identify land that is important as wetland, forest, drinking water protection or other natural resource. It is the Commission's hope to encourage the town to consider keeping important land or putting conservation easements on this land before selling it.

The Commission has written to Commissioner Bald at DRED opposing the proposed ATV trails in the Pine River State Forest. This land was purchased in the 1970's for passive recreation only.

In an effort to reduce the use of pesticides, the Commission has encouraged residents to build bat houses. Plans for these houses may be obtained by writing to the Conservation Commission c/o Ossipee Town Hall, Center Ossipee 03814. To date they have received nearly 30 requests for plans.

The Commission and GMCG have completed designs for an informative sign at the public access to Ossipee Lake on the Pine River on Route 25. This sign will inform the public about the importance of the Ossipee aquifer, as well as point out the unique features found along the Ossipee Lake Natural Area. The NH Department of Resources and Economic Development has agreed to install this sign.

Tamworth

The Tamworth Conservation Commission recently contacted the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) about trash dumping at White Lake State Park. DRED has agreed to erect a gate blocking off road access to Black Spruce Bog by vehicles.

DRED has placed signs explaining the recent clear-cut in Hemenway State Forest near the summit of Great Hill. The Conservation Commission has trails in the area and maintains the old fire tower for public use.

Students at the White Mountain Academy have just completed a self guided nature trail brochure for Jackman Pond. It will be printed and then placed at the trail head to the pond.

The Commission voted to support an ordinance regulating communication towers to mitigate aesthetic impacts and to address studies that thousands of birds are hitting these towers and being killed.

Effingham

After learning of a proposal by the Portland Water District to stockpile and spread Class B sludge on a parcel of land on the Effingham, NH and Parsonsfield, ME, border, the Effingham Conservation Commission voted to contact the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection expressing concerns. The Conservation Commission informed the DEP that this site was just a few hundred feet from Effingham, was located on a stratified drift aquifer, and could negatively impact homes in Effingham where there is a ban on Class B sludge. Three members of the Commission attended the public meeting in Parsonsfield where over 250 people gathered. With great relief, Portland Water District surrendered its license for this project.

Larry Leavitt, chairman, suggested that the Commission propose petitioning the town to turn some town owned land, mostly wetlands, over to the Commission.

Madison

The Madison Conservation Commission will soon share computerized maps with the Planning Board. Through computerized town tax records they will identify land owners who have their land in current use. They will next identify where these lands are located in relation to other parcels that might be good candidates for conservation easements.

The Commission has invited the Silver Lake Association president to talk with them concerning the Association's activities.

The Commission pledged \$250 to send a Madison Elementary school teacher to the American Ground Water Trust's *Ground Water Institute for New Hampshire Teachers of Science* in July.

The Commission will invite the contractor of the Madison Transfer Station to explain why Madison does not recycle paper, tin cans, or plastic bottles.

The commission plans to meet with the new Code Enforcement Officer to review the issuance of different types of permits.

For Madison's Old Home Week in August, the Commission will lead a walk on the McNair Conservation Easement on Stacey Mountain and address issues surrounding the creation of conservation easements.

Sandwich

A gravel walkway was recently constructed by the trailwork training group at the poorest part of the path to Beede Falls. More graveling needs to be done and it is hoped that the Wonalancet Outdoor Club will get to it later this summer. Kathy Stark reported that she is searching for good locations for frogging this summer. The study needs 50 frogs from one pond.

WATERSHED ACTIVISM

"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something."

Edward Everett Hale

Write to DRED about Pine River ATV trails

The Effingham and Ossipee Conservation Commissions and the Selectmen in both towns oppose the proposal by NH Department of Resources and Economic Development to build 12 miles of ATV trails in the Pine River State Forest. The Seven Lakes Snowmobile Club also opposes the proposal.

Commissioner George Bald of DRED recently visited the Pine River State Forest, where he viewed the erosion problems caused by illegal ATV use. This erosion has hindered the snowmobile club's ability to groom the trails in the winter, has exposed rocks, cobbles and tree roots making it dangerous in places for horseback riders, and has prompted the illegal ATV riders to cut new trails to avoid the damaged trails. The increase in illegal ATV use has not been met by increased enforcement by state officials.

The New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory recently released a report on significant natural features in the Pine River State Forest. The summary states, "The Pine River State Forest contains an exemplary northern sand plain ecosystem dominated by three native pine species: pitch, white and red pine. This combination is regionally rare...the alluvial terraces and floodplains along the Pine River corridor form an exemplary complex of river terrace forest communities...one of only two recently confirmed sites in the state for the uncommon to rare *Sphagnum wulfianum* is found in the corridor...."

Other important finds include the uncommon to rare *Sphagnum riparium*

found in a small but exemplary seepage swamp. Two rare plant species were also identified, *Isotria medeoloides* and *Eriophorum angustifolium*.

The summary states, "The PRSF presents a unique opportunity to protect and restore an ecologically functional example of a regionally rare sand plain forest...the extensive acreage in public ownership, the lack of major soil disturbances, and the lack of non-native vegetation have maintained the potential for protection and restoration efforts."

If you would like to review the study, contact the NH Division of Parks and Recreation at 271-3254.

*If you would like to express your opinions about ATV's in this Forest and encourage DRED to protect this unique area please write to:
Commissioner George Bald, DRED,
P.O. Box 1856, Concord, NH 03302.*

Sludge spreading proposal brings watershed together

GMCG received a call in May concerning a proposal to stockpile and spread an unlimited amount of Class B Portland Water District sludge on a parcel of land in Parsonsfield, Maine, just a few hundred feet from the New Hampshire border.

Because the site was above the same aquifer that concerns GMCG's mission, the Board of Directors voted to look into the issue. The Parsonsfield site was situated on a slope of 13% grade with exposed bedrock and poor drainage; there were wetlands and springs on the site; the runoff from the site was into the Emerson Brook; and the same important stratified drift aquifer was located on this site, GMCG agreed to participate in the public sessions held in

Parsonsfield, Maine.

GMCG also contacted others in New Hampshire and Maine who are concerned about natural, cultural and historic preservation as well as other activists working on the issue. GMCG determined after reviewing the site that it was not appropriate for the application of Class B sludge. This was the first time that GMCG had participated in an aquifer issue in another state and it reinforced our belief that our natural resources know no political boundaries.

The final public session was attended by more than 250 residents from Parsonsfield, Effingham and neighboring towns in both states, and included presentations from Wheelabrator, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, hydrologists, geologists, local officials and activists. GMCG's position was that DEP had overlooked a significant piece of information — the presence of the sand and gravel aquifer — in agreeing to the sludge spreading project. Dr. Robert Newton, who is working with GMCG on an aquifer recharge lands project, also mapped the aquifer in the Emerson Brook area in 1998. GMCG presented this map to the DEP officials at the public meeting.

After the public meeting, Portland Water District agreed to surrender its license.

In light of this issue, GMCG is pursuing ways to work cooperatively with Maine conservation groups to protect the greater Ossipee Watershed.

Watershed Birder

Birding your own backyard

A Poem

BY JILL M. PIEKUT

In the meadow by the sea
The rabbit lives
so peacefully
The rat
The mouse
The birds
And all
Until they build a big, big, mall

They're planning one
So tall and wide
Seven floors
They can not hide
The animals
They'll lose their homes
Where will they go?
No building zones?

I can't believe it
But I can't hide
From the fact
The world is wide
They'll have to go
So far away
They won't come back
Another day

So go away before you die
You birds go up
And fly
And fly

Yesterday they were so near
And now I shed one single tear
For the rabbit
The rat
The mouse
The birds
The cats
And the grouse

Jill M. Piekut, age 10, lives in Effingham.

This spring the Watershed Birder took a trip to Texas for 10 days. Texas, you say; why Texas? To bird, of course. Texas has more birds than any other state. I keep lists of birds seen on my different trips. The Texas trip produced a list of 194 different species in 10 days. Thirty of these were "lifers," birds I'd never seen before anywhere. These have been carefully added to my "Life List," which now numbers just over 500 birds.

All of this list making started one winter between Christmas and New Year's when I spent a snowy day indoors watching a bird feeder at a friend's house. I had been writing notes for a project of some kind in a spiral ringed notebook and just for the fun of it started a list on the back page of the notebook of the different birds I'd seen at the feeder. Thus started my "New Hampshire List." It has a notebook of its own now and includes the names of 223 of the 342 birds regularly seen in the Granite State. According to Alan Delray in the American Birding Association (ABA) Birdfinding Guide to New Hampshire, there are 70 permanent resident nesting species, 116 summer resident nesting species, 13 summer resident non-nesting species, 42 winter resident species, 53 migrants (within their normal range in NH and 48 "vagrants" (outside their normal range.)

Four or five years after that snowy day, I bought land in Madison and started building the house I live in today. By then the habit of keeping lists of birds was fairly ingrained and I started what has turned out to be my favorite list: My Backyard List.

Carroll County is a wonderfully "birdy" place to live. Whether you are in the woods, surrounded by open space, or in the middle of town, there are probably

birds year round. The secret is to look and listen. And, if you want to join the fun of listing, keep track of what you see and hear. Robin, crow, black-capped chickadee, goldfinch, blue jay, hairy woodpecker. You'll be surprised how fast the list grows.

Backyard lists don't have special rules. Make up your own. My rules for my list are as follows: If the bird is seen in my yard, or flies over or through my yard, it goes on the list. (So, common loon is on the list, even though I'm not on a lake.) If I'm in my neighbor's yard and see the bird in my yard, it counts. If I recognize the bird's song or call note, then I put it on the list followed by (H) for heard. The motorcycle-like drumming of the ruffed grouse was on my list for several years before I finally saw the bird in the yard.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University takes advantage of all the birders who watch their feeders and make lists. In 1987, the Lab began Project Feeder Watch as a winter survey of the birds that visit backyard feeders in North America. The information collected each year helps ornithologists track changes in the abundance and distribution of bird species. If you sign up to be a Feeder Watch participant, Cornell sends a booklet to record your sightings, a wonderful color poster showing common eastern winter feeder birds, and instructions on how to count birds for inclusion in their data base. Anyone can participate. If you are interested contact FW/Cornell Lab of Ornithology, P.O. Box 11, Ithaca, NY 14851-0011 or call 1-800-843-BIRD.

Susan Lee is an avid birder and a long-time resident of the Ossipee Watershed. Share bird sightings or comments with her by e-mail at: leegull@landmarknet.net

Your membership will make a difference

The year 2000 has already been a busy one for the Green Mountain Conservation Group. In addition to our **monthly educational events** and **quarterly newsletters**, we are working on a **watershed-wide Natural Resource Inventory** with UNH Cooperative Extension; working on **mapping the important recharge land** to the aquifer with a grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services with the goal of offering workshops for land owners about the importance of land protection for drinking water; and partnering with the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development and Ossipee Conservation Commission to **design an informative sign** for the put-in on the Pine River that leads to Ossipee Lake. We also are continuing our activism work on environmental issues throughout the watershed including the Pine River State Forest and the proposed ATV trails, New Hampshire's solid waste policy and the proposed UNH land sale.

We need your help to continue these efforts. Through education and advocacy we strive to promote an awareness and appreciation of our natural resources and encourage a commitment to protect them. **Help protect the Ossipee Watershed by becoming a member of the Green Mountain Conservation Group today. Your donation at the highest level possible is greatly appreciated.** We look forward to seeing you at upcoming events!

Please Join Today!

*Members are invited to attend the annual meeting, vote on policy issues and elect the board of directors and officers.
(Please make tax deductible contributions payable to Green Mountain Conservation Group)
P.O. Box 95 South Effingham, NH 03882*

Raindrop \$10 **Puddle** \$15 **Vernal Pool** \$25
(kids membership)

Stream \$50 **River** \$75 **Pond** \$100

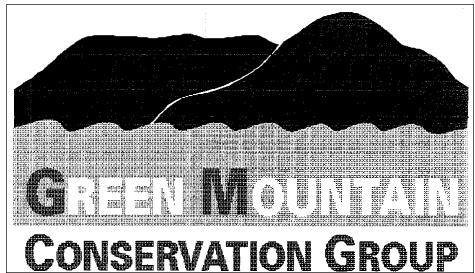
Lake \$250 **Aquifer** \$500 **Other**

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ECRWSS

The Watershed News

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the above address or phone
603-539-7926.

EVERY PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND EACH PERSON SHOULD TRY.