

ROTARY CLUB NEWS: Dam Duck Race is in the works

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Lake Placid Rotary Club members gather the rubber ducks for the annual Dam Duck Race. (Provided photo)

You don't think the rubber ducks careen over the Mill Pond Dam at Lisa G's and race to the finish line in the Chubb River all by themselves, do you?

Four or five minutes of cheering and excitement represent the culmination of months of planning by the Rotary Club of Lake Placid. Like any major event, planning for the next one starts almost immediately at the conclusion of the race. As you read this, we're probably six months away from the 2023 Dam Duck Race (the "DDR"). Let's take a look at the behind-the-scenes activity.

For many years, the DDR was expertly guided by Debbie McLean and the late Tina Leonard. In 2022, the baton passed to Heather Perkins, Tracey Coolidge and Harris Semegram. First things first — set the date and the venue. We have been privileged that the management and

staff of Lisa G's restaurant has graciously let us use their premises for the event for 18 years. We can't thank them enough. The DDR committee sets a date and coordinates this with Lisa G's management.

Did you know the DDR is a regulated gaming event? The Rotary Club files for a gaming license with the state Gaming Commission. This gives us permission to sell tickets, regulates the conduct of the event and requires our club to report on the income for the race and how funds (net of expenses) are distributed to the many local organizations that benefit from the race. In 2022, proceeds from the DDR benefitted the Lake Placid-North Elba Historical Society, AdkAction, Lake Placid High School Robotics Team, Lake Placid Ecumenical Food Pantry and the North Elba Community Christmas Fund, among others. Our club will be having another round of giving in the spring.

The club contracts with entertainment providers and community groups to have music and games leading up to race time. We work with Lisa G's to provide a delicious community meal at a reasonable cost. Very soon, we will form committees to secure sponsors, solicit advertising, form the budget, conduct merchandise sales and oversee the entire event. Supposedly there's a secret group that seeks to ensure the weather is perfect — but we've said too much already about that.



A crowd watches rubber ducks race down the Chubb River from Lisa G's restaurant.
(Provided photo)

Publicity for the DDR is a big job as it's to everyone's benefit as it's through the sales of the raffle tickets that we raise funds for our donations. Plus we want to create a very family-friendly atmosphere with things for both young and old to enjoy — besides the race, of course. To our very generous DDR sponsors, we hope you will continue your sponsorship in 2023. With your help, the 2022 DDR was able to have over \$20,000 available to give back to the Lake Placid/North Elba community. Thank you.

It's all hands (or webbed feet) on deck on race day. There's so much to coordinate to make sure the event runs smoothly, with transactions accurately recorded carefully because an accounting must be provided to the Gaming Commission.

We'll announce the 2023 race date soon, and we hope to see you there.

(Harris Semegram is a member of the Rotary Club of Lake Placid.)