U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 3

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(f) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

===	=======================================		======				
1.							
	NBT Bancorp Inc.						
		irst)				-	
	52 South Broad Street						
	Norwich New York					-	
			 (Zip)			-	
	=======================================	,	,				
2.		ng Statement (Month/Da					
	August 16, 1999 =========						
		y Number of Reporting					
	16-1268674 ============		=====	========			
	Issuer Name and Ticke						
	Lake Ariel Bancorp, I	nc. (NASDAQ NMS: LABN)		========			
5.		ting Person to Issuer					
	[] Director [] Officer (give t	itle below)	x]] 10% Owner] Other (specify	y below)		
	=======================================		======	==========	======		
ô.	If Amendment, Date of O	riginal (Month/Year)					
===	=======================================				======		
===	Table I No	n-Derivative Securitie			======		
		Amount of Securities	D	wnership Form: irect (D) or			
1.	Title of Security (Instr. 4)	Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	(ndirect (I) Instr. 5)	4. Natui (Ins	re of Indirect Beneficial O tr.5)	wnersnip
	N/A						
						======================================	

Table II -- Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

	========		:=========		==========		=========
	2.Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)		4. Conver-	Owner- ship Form of Derivative Security:	
1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	(Month/Da		Title	Amount or Number of Shares	sion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	Direct (D) or Indirect (I)Ownership (Instr. 5)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficia
Stock Option	*	*	Common stock,	965,300	\$11.375	D	
			par value				
			\$.21 per share				
· -							
· -							

Explanation of Responses:

* In connection with the Agreement and Plan of Merger (the "Merger Agreement"), dated August 16, 1999 whereby Lake Ariel Bancorp, Inc. ("Lake Ariel") will merge with NBT Bancorp Inc. ("NBT"), Lake Ariel has granted NBT an option to purchase up to 965,300 shares of Lake Ariel's common stock. The option is exercisable only in the event of certain circumstances involving transactions with third parties, acts of third parties, or break-up of the Merger Agreement. If the option were exercised in full, NBT would own 16.6% of Lake Ariel's then outstanding common stock. NBT disclaims beneficial ownership of these securities, and this report shall not be deemed an admission that NBT is the beneficial owner of such securities for purposes of Section 16 or for any other purpose.

/s/ Daryl R. Forsythe

August 18, 1999

President of NBT Bancorp Inc.

Date

- ** Signature of Reporting Person
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space provided is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.