



A Little Spot of Heaven

The Laurel Lake Ledger

Laurel Lake Association

37th Annual Newsletter Spring 2024

STORMWATER RUNOFF MITIGATION PROJECTS

The leading cause of lake water quality degradation is stormwater runoff. Runoff allows contaminants such as oil, road salt, septic leaks, animal & pet waste to enter the water, increasing the amounts of potassium and nitrogen in the water which, in turn, leads to an increase in plant life which threatens the oxygen levels of the water and a thickening of unwanted plants. Runoff also allows silt & soils to enter the lake and it is the leading cause for cyanobacteria blooms.

The primary goal of the Laurel Lake Association is protecting the water quality of the lake. In the fall of 2023 and spring 2024, 3 major projects were driven by the Association (with much help from others) resulting in significant improvements in runoff control. Here are the details:



Project One: Erosion at the town beach, caused by runoff from Howeville Road, and clogged drainage culverts controlling the lake's water levels. Specific issues were: Howeville Road was sloped at an angle that directed water runoff towards the lake. After heavy rains, the water washed across the road to the area of the town beach, causing the sand to erode and wash into the lake, along with any contaminants in the runoff. This also pushed the sand and silt into the area where a culvert went under Howeville, causing it to be clogged and impacting the dam which controls the lake water level. **What was done:** Pat Deyo and Tom White engaged with then Highway Department Director Glenn Smith to discuss the problem and explore options. Fortunately, Howeville Road was planned for repaving so changing the slope of the road could be incorporated into the plans. Additionally, the culvert under Howeville Road, which regulates the water level, was partially collapsed and blocked by silt. Pat and Tom worked with the State to get wetlands and culvert permits and the Association paid for the permits. Abutting land-owners (and Association members) approved the removal of trees and rocks to allow for the regrading of Howeville. Granite curbing was placed by the roadside of the beach, fresh sand was brought in and the culvert under the road was replaced. **Result:** This winter brought several significant rain storms and all the project phases were great successes in diverting runoff away from the lake.

Regraded Howeville Rd., facing up from the lake. Notice slope to the right, toward culvert & away from lake. (Kathy Olson photo.)



Left: Erosion at Town Beach before road work.

Right: Beach area after regrading & adding curb.

(Pat Deyo photos)



Project Two: Runoff down Whites Grove Road & Castle Court into the north end of the lake by Sandy Beach. The specific issues here are Whites Grove Road & Castle Court are fairly steep, straight dirt roads which end at the edge of Sandy Beach and a small kayak/canoe launch area. Runoff brings dirt & silt down the hills and into the lake. Old culverts that used to divert the water into drainage areas had collapsed over the years so water just went where it wanted.

What was done: Three major improvements were done: (1) The culverts were replaced and rocks were installed to create a catchment area to collect runoff and allow it to slowly percolate into the ground, rather than flowing straight into the lake. (2) Water bars – or road humps – were built along Whites Grove Road to slow down water runoff and divert it to the side of the road. Year-round homes are at the bottom of the road and many summer camps so the water bars may need to be rebuilt regularly to maintain their effectiveness. (3) A berm was installed at the edge of Whites Grove Road just before Sandy Beach to divert runoff into a wetland area. In all cases, permits were obtained from the State and impacted property owners were consulted for their permission and help with the work.

Result: Again, the heavy rains of the winter tested the redesigns and they worked as planned, slowing down runoff and diverting it from the lake.



Whites Grove Rd. after regrading & new culverts. (Pat Deyo photos)



End of Whites Grove Rd. before Sandy Beach with a diversion berm on the left to divert water to a wetlands area.

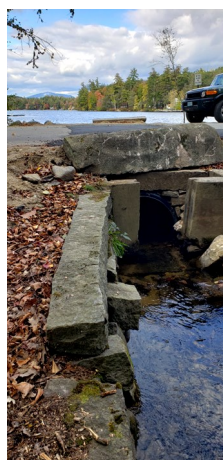
Project Three: Public boat ramp redesign due to erosion at the current ramp and boat caused turbidity. This is the most expensive and complex project and is still ongoing but design work and expense estimates have been established. Specifically, additional concrete logs will be added to the left side of the ramp, matching the logs on the right side—creating a uniform concrete platform. Large dimension rock will surround the concrete logs which will stabilize the structure. The project will make it easier and safer to launch, reduce turbidity and extend ramp longevity. The Laurel Lake Association worked with Highway Department (Glenn Smith and Mary Kisinger) to engineer the redesign, get state permits and develop the materials & labor estimates. Special thanks to Mary Kisinger for her leadership in securing a State Grant to fund the project. Although the project completion date is pending, due to personal changes to the Highway Department, the planning and funding is approved for 2024.

Kudos: Many people contributed to these major projects, providing design work, pushing to get things done, providing materials, labor, money and persistence. I want to cite these folks as they deserve our thanks for their efforts in protecting and hopefully improving the water quality of Laurel Lake. Thanks to the work crews, technical experts and funders (through cash & supply of materials & equipment): Pat Deyo, Tom White, Glenn Smith, Mary Kisinger, Jim Wood, Joe Pelkey, Ryan Geddes, Kevin McGuirk, Pete Lyman, Lauralyn White-Gurski, Robert Woodruff, Gus Hoyland, Maureen Moore, Gary and Judy Deyo, Septic Pro, Lee Dunham, John Holman, Town of Fitzwilliam Selectmen & DPW staff, NH DES. My apologies to anyone I missed.



Left: Installing new culvert under Howeville Rd. (Gail Connelly photo)

Right: New culvert & the dam regulating the lake water levels.



Kathy Olson

(With thanks to Pat Deyo & Tom White for technical details.)



A Note on Association Communications

As of The Ledger going to press (May 6), the 3rd major stormwater project—the boat ramp—has not been given a start date by the town selectboard. The work is estimated to take at least 3 days and the ramp will be closed during that time, which may impact when you can launch your boat or have lake access for fishing. We (the Association) want to keep everyone in the loop on this significant project and other future activities. So, we encourage you to log into our website—LaurelLakeAssn.com—to get status updates. Chip Yensan has done a great job in redesigning the website and keeping it current so check there for news updates. We also submit a monthly update



Beautiful Mountain Laurel on the Lake in 2023

in the Fitzwilliam Newsletter but you may not subscribe to that and the news is 2 weeks old by the time it is published. We will be developing a communication plan to present to the members at the annual meeting and welcome your thoughts on that. Email links to Association officers are on our website (click on The Association Board & Officers).

2024 SUMMER EVENTS—LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION

JUNE

1st- 9:00 AM - The Board of Directors will meet at Camp Fleur de Lis (members are welcome to attend).

JULY

4th - **9:00 PM** - Celebrate the Fourth of July with the traditional lighting of flares around Laurel Lake. Flares are available for purchase at Pottery Works (Rt. 119)

13th - 10:30 AM - The **Annual meeting** will be held at White's Field, Laurel Lake Campground, Keene Ave. Our featured speaker is Dode Gladders, UNH Extension Forester for Sullivan County. (Details page 11.) Association business will also be addressed. And, we are being treated to a fabulous chicken barbeque after the meeting. Bring a chair (none provided). Note: in case of terrible weather, the meeting will be moved to the restored train depot building in Fitzwilliam Depot, next to the fire station.

20th– 6:30-8:00 PM - Concert on the water at Joe Pagano's (east side of lake at Laurel Lane). Michael Holmes, singer/songwriter and acoustic performer will be performing. Boat on over for some great music.

27th- 11:00 AM - The **33rd** Annual Canoe/Kayak Race at White's Field, Keene Ave. Registration starts at 9:30 AM. Kids race at 11:05 a.m., other categories are timed afterwards.

AUGUST

31st—10 AM The **36th** Dresser-Friedman Regatta (Rain date Sept. 1). Contact Tom White (President@laurellakeassn.com) for details

SEPTEMBER

7th - 9:00 AM - The Board of Directors will meet at Camp Fleur de Lis (members are welcome to attend).

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This past year was extraordinarily successful in terms of improving the water quality of the lake. Three important projects were completed, all of which will have positive benefits. First, the Howeville Road drainage improvements. Pat Deyo worked tirelessly with the town and the state to insure this project got off the ground and was successfully completed. The Association provided permitting & planning communication with abutters and coordination. This work involved removal of several trees that obstructed the drainage, installation of underdrains and side drains to remove and direct the stormwater runoff, reprofiling the road to avoid salt and runoff from entering the lake, replacement of the overflow culvert, and resurfacing the roadway.

The next improvement included the replacement of two cross drains on Whites Grove Road. This work was performed by a work party of Association members and funded by donations. In addition, the roadway was graded to direct water off the roadway instead of down into the lake contributing to turbidity and silting.

And finally, after several second-place finishes, a watershed protection proposal grant was approved at the State level to study and recommend runoff improvements to further enhance the lake water quality. The proposal is still working through Federal government approvals and we are optimistic that we will get final approval by our annual meeting. Special thanks to Barbara Green who has championed this project for years.

Pat Deyo is also working on improvements and erosion control at the town boat ramp and hoping for a spring execution.

I want to thank all the members who helped us this past year in participating and/or supporting the testing, events, meals, work parties and facilities that make Laurel Lake an enjoyable summer experience. It is rewarding to be a part of the Laurel Lake Association as it continues its goal to maintain the quality of the lake and provide family-oriented programs.

Remember the Association works well because of your help. We continue to provide a full schedule of activities as the ever-changing conditions permit.

As always we need help with Lake Host Volunteers and all the summer's activities and look forward to everyone being involved this year.

See you soon!

Tom White

Loon Update

Gail Connelly reported the loons returned to Laurel Lake March 27 and provided these great pictures of our favorite lake friends.





2023 DRESSER-FRIEDMAN REGATTA HIGHLIGHTS

The 2023 Dresser Freeman Regatta was well attended this year with six boats in the race. Commodore Bruce Hill officiated the race setting a triangular course. This year's participants were: Bill Chase, Matt Poulin, Tom White, Mike King again sporting his black pirate sail, Patrick McNamara, and Joe Pelkey. The winds were light and variable so being in the right spot when the



The Start of the Race

wind did blow made all the difference. At the end it was Patrick McNamara and his tactician daughter Emilia who brought the coveted trophy home for the winter with Mike King finishing second, followed by Matt Poulin, Tom White, Bill Chase and Joe Pelkey. It was determined after the race that Joe Pelkey's boat was half full of water, providing quite a handicap. Joe learned to always check things carefully before you borrow from the Whites. A good time was had by all with the after party held by last year's winner Tom White.



As always it is more fun the more boats in the race. Make sure you put next Labor day's race on your calendar early so you can join in the fun. If you are like me and can't lift the sunfish any more, we have a few trailers and helpers and we can get your boat to the water and back to your camp after the race. Just let Tom White or Commodore Hill know in advance.

If you have a sunfish under your camp, clean it off enjoy the day with us. And if you need sailing lessons, call Tom White and he will be happy to give you a quick class. The Regatta is open to all sailors and non-sailors alike who live on the lake.

Tom White

THE BLUE MARBLE PROJECT

Editor's Note: For the past several years an annual meeting tradition has been the passing along of a blue marble to represent gratitude for work that benefits the planet. The 2022 recipient was Nan Fey-Yensan who presented it to Luanne & Pat Deyo for their work in protecting and beautifying Laurel Lake.

The marble award originated with NH Lakes and started here at Laurel Lake with Lucy Pierannunzi. It has been passed along to the following folks: Barbara Green, Perry Nadeau, Kathy Olson, Ken DeBlieu, Nan Fey-Yensan & Luanne & Pat Deyo.

Right: Nan Fey-Yensan awarding the blue marble, Tom White to the right.



CANOE/KAYAK/SUP RACE

The 32nd canoe/kayak race was held July 29 on another pleasant day, with similar participation to last year. There were 41 boats with 52 participants, including 23 children. The wind & water must have had some magic as times were better than last year for most of the 1st place winners. Thanks as always to Charley Brackett and all the volunteers who make this big event happen.

Race Results (Category, Winner & Time):

¾ Mile Children's Race:

- Girl's Kayak: Hazel Haigh, 14:42
- Boy's Kayak: Braxton Gardner, 16:17
- Girl's Canoe: Leah Suzuki & Aly Finizio, 15:51
- Girl's SUP: Lacey Fraser, 15:42



2.5 Mile Race:

- Women's Kayak: Marci Kelly, 40:25
- Men's Kayak: Kenny Brand, 32:35
- Women's Canoe: Gail Connelly & Pat Spicer, 35:59
- Men's Canoe: Kyle Freeman & Bruce Hill, 31:18
- Family Canoe: Lila Pelkey & Joe Pelkey, 34:13



7.5 Mile Race:

- Men's Solo Racing Canoe: Michael Melnikin, 1:09:54
- Men's Racing Canoe: Charles Chapman & Mark Williams, 1:16:15
- Mixed Racing Canoe: Mary Hamilton & Tim Garland, 1:03:34
- Jr/Sr Racing Canoe: Jackson Erali & Dave Dugas, 1:12:10
- ICF Kayak: Adam Beyer, 1:02:58
- Men's Touring Kayak: Bob Balla, 1:21:11
- Women's Touring Kayak: Pam Browning, 1:18:39

Kathy Olson



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT GRANT PROPOSAL

Led by Barbara Green, the Laurel Lake Association has applied for a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to determine sources of pollution impacting Laurel Lake water and develop solutions to address them. The grant money is allocated through the state of New Hampshire (DES) and the program is administered by NH's South-west Region Planning Commission. Our proposals were well received the first two submittals but funding went to lakes which had serious water quality issues needing to be addressed. Funding rules have been modified so that money is also allocated to lakes which are working to keep their water quality good. As such, our 3rd proposal was approved to continue on through the funding review process. We hope to have a final approval this summer. The long term work by the Association and its members—through decades of water testing, embracing the Lake Host program, surveying for invasive species—certainly strengthened our proposal. Our membership numbers and positive collaboration with Fitzwilliam and State departments should ensure success with this proposal.

Kathy Olson

ICE OUT!!

The 2023 Ice Out date for the lake was March 8, per Dave Streeter, our official declarer of the date. This is the earliest ice out date since Dave's grandfather, Art Rousseau, started keeping records in 1963. Next earliest was March 11, 2016. Latest was April 28, 1970. We'll look to put together a trend chart for a future Ledger.

WATER TESTING REPORT

We continue to do a fourth sampling date in May in order to learn more about the impact of spring runoff into the lake, along with our June, July & August sampling. Results of the 2023 testing are on the next two pages. The results are also posted on the Laurel Lake Association website, along with instructions about how to read the report.

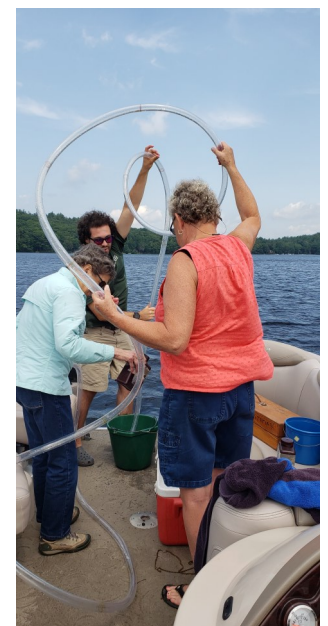


Thank you to our great 2023 sampling team and volunteers who delivered samples to the laboratory in Concord: Gail Connelly, Kathy Olson, Pat Spicer and Phyllis Lurvey.

Barbara Green

Left: July 2023 Water Testing Team: Gail Connelly, Barbara Green & NH DES intern Liam Bonyman.

Right: Collecting a water sample for integrated water testing





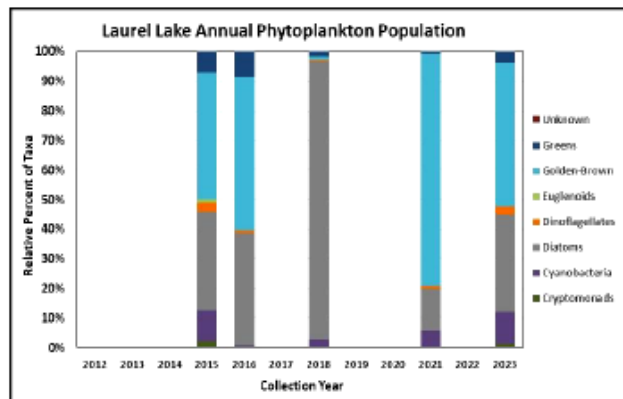
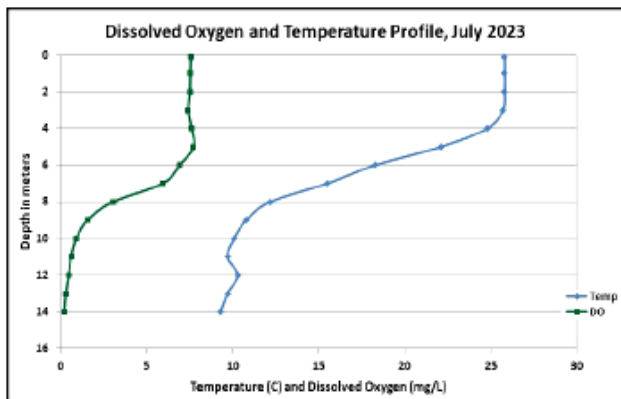
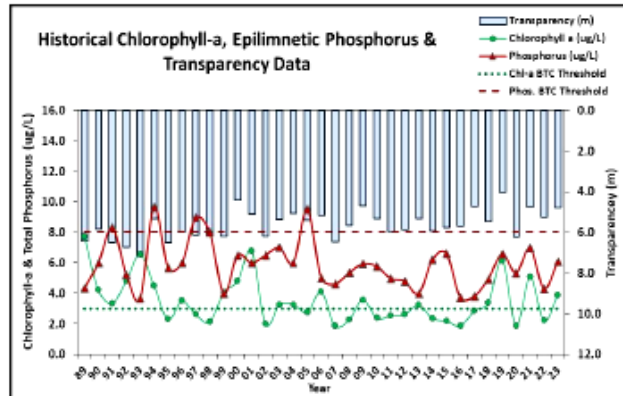
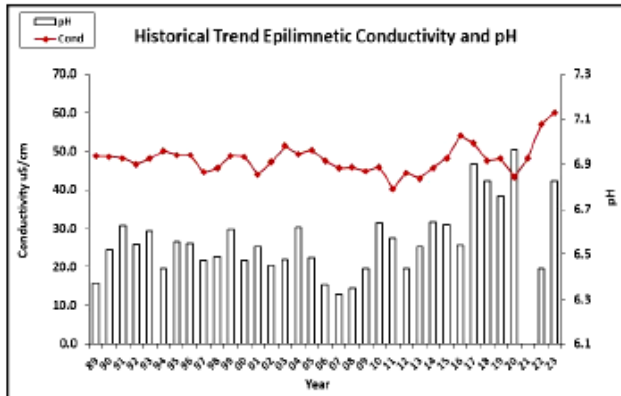
2023 VOLUNTEER LAKE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM INDIVIDUAL LAKE REPORTS LAUREL LAKE, FITZWILLIAM

Recommended Actions: Great job sampling in 2023! May sampling revealed higher nutrient levels in the lake following significant rainfall and may be indicative of the negative impacts of stormwater runoff. Similar to 2021, excessive summer rainfall resulted in higher levels of nutrients (phosphorus) and algal growth (chlorophyll) in the lake. This highlights the importance of [managing stormwater runoff](#) within the watershed. Great job on continued efforts to develop and implement a watershed management plan to help protect the lake from future degradation. Encourage lake front properties to be certified [LakeSmart](#) through NH LAKES' lake-friendly living program. Great job adding a sampling event in May to evaluate spring nutrient loading and continue May monitoring in the future. Keep up the great work!

HISTORICAL WATER QUALITY TREND ANALYSIS

PARAMETER	TREND	PARAMETER	TREND
Conductivity	Stable	Chlorophyll-a	Improving
pH (epilimnion)	Stable	Transparency	Worsening
Phosphorus (hypolimnion)	Stable	Phosphorus (epilimnion)	Stable

HISTORICAL WATER QUALITY GRAPHICS





2023 VOLUNTEER LAKE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM INDIVIDUAL LAKE REPORTS LAUREL LAKE, FITZWILLIAM

OBSERVATIONS (Refer to Table 1 and Historical Deep Spot Data Graphics)

- ◆ **CHLOROPHYLL-A:** Chlorophyll level was low in May, increased to a slightly elevated level by July, and increased to an elevated level in August. Average chlorophyll level increased from 2022, was less than the state median, and was slightly greater than the threshold for oligotrophic lakes. Historical trend analysis indicates significantly decreasing (improving) chlorophyll levels since monitoring began.
- ◆ **CONDUCTIVITY/CHLORIDE:** Epilimnetic (upper water layer), Metalimnetic (middle water layer), Hypolimnetic (lower water layer), and Keen Ave. Trib conductivity and/or chloride levels were slightly greater than the state medians yet within a low range for NH lakes. Historical trend analysis indicates relatively stable epilimnetic conductivity levels since monitoring began.
- ◆ **COLOR:** Apparent color measured in the epilimnion indicates the water was lightly tea colored, or light brown.
- ◆ **E. coli:** North Beach, South Beach and Swim Club E. coli levels were low and much less than the state standard for public beaches.
- ◆ **TOTAL PHOSPHORUS:** Epilimnetic phosphorus levels fluctuated within a low range and were highest in May. Average epilimnetic phosphorus level increased from 2022 but remained less than the state median and the threshold for oligotrophic lakes. Historical trend analysis indicates stable, yet variable, epilimnetic phosphorus levels since monitoring began. Metalimnetic phosphorus level was slightly elevated in June. Hypolimnetic phosphorus levels were slightly elevated in May, July and August. Historical trend analysis indicates relatively stable hypolimnetic phosphorus levels since monitoring began. Keene Ave Trib. phosphorus level was very low in July.
- ◆ **TRANSPARENCY:** Transparency measured without the viewscope (NVS) was average in May, remained stable in June, decreased (worsened) in July following significant rainfall, and increased (improved) slightly in August but remained low (worse) likely due to elevated algal growth. Average NVS transparency decreased from 2022 but remained higher (better) than the state median. Historical trend analysis indicates significantly decreasing (worsening) NVS transparency since monitoring began. Viewscope (VS) transparency was higher (better) than NVS transparency but was also low in August due to algal growth.
- ◆ **TURBIDITY:** Epilimnetic, Metalimnetic and Keene Ave Trib. turbidity levels fluctuated within a low range. Hypolimnetic turbidity level was slightly elevated in August potentially due to formation and accumulation of organic compounds as the summer progressed and dissolved oxygen levels were depleted.
- ◆ **pH:** Epilimnetic and Keene Ave Trib. pH levels were within the desirable range of 6.5-8.0 units. Historical trend analysis indicates stable, yet variable, epilimnetic pH levels since monitoring began. Metalimnetic and Hypolimnetic pH levels were slightly acidic and less than desirable.

Table 1. 2023 Average Water Quality Data for LAUREL LAKE - FITZWILLIAM

Station Name	Alk. (mg/L)	Chlor-a (ug/L)	Chloride (mg/L)	Color (pcu)	Cond. (us/cm)	E. coli (mpn/100mL)	Total P (ug/L)	Trans. (m)		Turb. (ntu)	pH
								NVS	VS		
Epilimnion	4.3	3.87	10	27	60.2	-	6	4.79	5.48	0.29	6.82
Metalimnion	-	-	-	-	59.8	-	8	-	-	0.75	6.34
Hypolimnion	-	-	-	-	62.5	-	14	-	-	1.06	6.11
Keene Ave Trib. In Lake	-	-	-	-	58.8	-	3	-	-	0.38	6.64
North Beach	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
South Beach	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-
Swim Club	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-

NH Median Values	
<i>Median values generated from historic lake monitoring data.</i>	
Alkalinity: 4.5 mg/L	Chlorophyll-a: 4.39 ug/L
Conductivity: 42.3 uS/cm	Chloride: 5 mg/L
Total phosphorus: 11 ug/L	Transparency: 3.3 m
pH: 6.6	

NH Water Quality Standards	
<i>Numeric criteria for specific parameters. Water quality violation if thresholds exceeded.</i>	
Chloride: > 230 mg/L (chronic)	Turbidity: > 10 NTU above natural
E. coli: > 88 cts/100 mL (beach)	
E. coli: > 406 cts/100 mL (surface waters)	
pH: between 6.5-8.0 (unless naturally occurring)	

Lake Host Program: Our First Line of Defense Against Invasive Species

[2023 Summary Annual Report](#)

The Lake Host Program is a state-wide courtesy boat inspection program administered by NH Lakes. This program is jointly funded by an annual NH Lakes grant and matching LLA funds and is administered by both paid and volunteer Lake Hosts. It is our first line of defense against aquatic invasive species hitchhiking into our lake on boats and trailers.

The 2023 Lake Host program at Laurel Lake experienced another successful season! One weed specimen, removed from a boat trailer by paid Lake Host Vinnie Pierannunzi in early July, was determined to be Eurasian Milfoil – a nasty invasive. It was logged as one of nine official state-wide “saves” for the 2023 NH Lakes Lake Host Program. Paid lake host coverage was provided over the Memorial Day and July 4th holiday weekends as well as approximately 18 ramp coverage hours a week between June 16 and August 22. Paid Lake Host hours, in combination with volunteer hosting, contributed to 297 total ramp hours and 403 total inspections for the season. Seven volunteer Lake Hosts contributed to 175 of the 297 ramp coverage hours, including coverage during all three major holiday weekends. Sincere appreciation is extended to all our 2023 Lake Host volunteers.

2024 Paid Lake Host Is Hired & Volunteers Are Still Needed!

Lily Pierannunzi has been hired as the 2024 paid Lake Host Inspector. Lily is a senior at Maine Maritime Academy and spent summers on Laurel Lake at her grandparents’ place. We are very pleased to have her as part of our Lake Host team! Lily will begin her lake hosting duties at the boat ramp the third week of May and will continue thru late August. Join me in welcoming Lily and please feel free to stop by and say hello to her when you are doing your ‘round-the-lake walks.



Vinnie Pierannunzi

WE NEED LAKE HOST VOLUNTEERS! The key to keeping our Lake Host program strong is through volunteer involvement by our lake community. Without active volunteers to put in just a few hours of hosting time at the ramp, we cannot attain the level of “clean, drain, and dry” education and boat inspections that we need to put up a solid defense against invasives entering our lake. Also, future NH Lakes grant funding depends on our program success each year. And, each Lake Host volunteer earns a free Lake Host t-shirt for the season. Learn more about Lake Host volunteering at <https://www.laurellakeassn.com/water-quality-environment> and join the 2024 volunteer team!

Announcing the 2024 Lake Host Local Business Sponsorship

This new local business partnership opportunity provides sponsoring businesses with front-and-center advertising exposure and high value community engagement with the Laurel Lake community as well as local and regional vacationers. Lake Host Program local business sponsors receive business name and/or logo placement on various Laurel Lake Association media and publications including its website, Facebook page, and seasonal newsletters at Silver, Gold, and Lifetime levels. Local business partners will play an important role in protecting Laurel Lake from invasive weeds and animals through its Lake Host Program. Protecting the lakes we love and enjoy is a mission we can all rally behind. More information about this local business sponsorship program is at <https://www.laurellakeassn.com/news-events> or drop a note to lakehost@laurellakeassn.com.

Chip Yensan, Lake Host Committee Chair



Annual Meeting Speaker Topic



Many folks have noticed that the hemlock trees in the area are dying, primarily due to the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid insect. A couple of years ago Tom White reported at the annual meeting information on some steps that could be taken to slow down the impact of this disease but treatment is difficult. We've asked the University of New Hampshire Extension Service to provide us with a speaker to talk about what is happening with the Hemlocks and other trees and what replacement trees are suitable if you have to remove your Hemlocks. Dode is a Forestry Field Specialist at UNH with bachelors degrees in forestry and natural resources economics from University of the South and a masters degree in forest resources product & management from University of Georgia.

Above: 2023 annual meeting speaker Dr. Robert Goodby, Franklin Pierce Univ.



Lake Visitors Photos thanks to Gail Connelly, official Ledger photographer!



Eagles on Lake, March 2024



A Mob of Mallards, December, 2023



Common Mergansers, March 2024

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Welcome everyone to Membership New Year 2024! As you can see by the articles in this year's Ledger the LLA has been hard at work for the benefit of our beloved Laurel Lake and we are not stopping. So, you can imagine how important is your continued support. Please use the membership form in the back of this issue or use PayPal on our website laurelakeassn.com. It's only \$15.00 per adult and \$5.00 per child.

Good news: we increased our membership last year from 201 to 230 individuals and 93 households to 102.

Of additional interest, there are almost 100 lakefront properties on Laurel Lake. Two years ago, only 46% of those households were members. Last year we successfully increased that to 63% participation. I'm truly surprised that we do not have 100% membership enrollment! Of course, one certainly doesn't need to reside on Laurel Lake to reap the benefits of the Association's work given our outreach and support of the public beach and boat ramp. So why wouldn't everyone join?

That's where we need You! Talk to your neighbors, your friends, your fellow boaters, swimmers, and fishermen and encourage them to join. At last year's annual meeting we discussed what the top benefits were to joining our association so that we may go forth and encourage others to get on board. Here's what we said:

-LLA works to protect and preserve the health of the Lake through it's yearly active committee work with Water Testing, Lake Host boat inspecting, Invasive Species watching, collaborating with the Town of Fitzwilliam for watershed protection, boat ramp and beach improvement, and applying for State grants for protection studies.

-Protect and preserve Lake Activities like swimming, boating, fishing, water skiing and more.

-Protect and preserve Nature like the loons, eagles, osprey, fish, otters, turtles, migrating ducks and geese and the native plants.

Thanks for your efforts and your membership!

If you have any questions regarding LLA membership or have any suggestions on how to increase our membership please email me, Gail Connelly, at membership@laurellakeassn.com

Thank you for your support!

Gail Connelly

Right: 2023 Annual Meeting crowd





TREASURER'S REPORT

2023 Income (Deposits):

Description	Amount
Merchandise Sales	\$714
Membership & Donations	\$5,632
Flare Income	\$405
Canoe Race In-come (raffle & registrations)	\$1,012
Total Income	\$7,763

Expenses (Checks Written):

Expense Description	Amount
Dues/Lake Host Program	\$1,600
Water Testing	\$230
Ledger Printing & Mailing	\$759
Canoe Race	\$1,495
Sailboat Regatta	\$171
Southwest Region Planning—LOI	\$950
Flares	\$300
Merchandise	\$374
Website Maintenance	\$276
Annual Meeting & Cookout	\$388
Previous year expenses paid in current year	\$300
Total Expenses	\$6,843

Details:

Income (Deposits) less Expenses (Checks written) = **Net Increase of \$920**

Savings and Checking Account Balances (M&T Bank/PayPal) as of April 30, 2024

Checking Account balance: **\$10,374**

Certificate of Deposit (Service Credit Union) as of April 30, 2024

Total account balance: **\$4,887**

Savings Balance (Live Oak Bank) as of April 30, 2024

Total account balance: **\$20,744**

Total Association Assets as of April 30, 2024: \$36,005

Ashley Marshall, Treasurer



2023-24 OFFICERS

Tom White	President	Kathy Olson	Vice-President
Ashley Marshall	Treasurer	Liz Young	Secretary
Perry Nadeau	Past President	Beth Samuels	Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charley Brackett	2024	Bill Townsend	2025
Jeffrey Prunier	2024	Patrick McNamara	2025
Bill Chase	2024	Gail Connelly	2026
Patrick Deyo	2024	Jack Dumont	2026
Barbara Green	2025	Joe Pelkey	2026
Bill Samuels	2025	Terry Silverman	2026

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Kathy Olson	Editor Laurel Lake Ledger
Barbara Green	Water Testing Committee
Bobby Williams	Aquatic Invasive Species Survey Committee
Chip Yensan	Lake Host Program
Jack & Barbara Dumont	Annual Meeting/Family Picnic
Charley Brackett	Canoe/Kayak Race
Bruce Hill	Commodore Dresser-Friedman Sunfish Regatta
Joe Pelkey	LLA Logo Products - T & Sweatshirts & Hats
Gail Connelly	Membership
Barbara Dumont	Nominating Committee
Terry Silverman	4th of July Celebration Flares
John Fitzwilliam	Swim Club Representative
Joe Pagano (Concert Master)	Concert on the Lake

Visit Our Website: LaurelLakeAssn.com



IN MEMORIAM

Ray Gehling, 93 of Sandwich, MA passed away May 5, 2023 (just missing the publication of last year’s Ledger). Ray and his family were long time summer folks near Sandy Beach and he wrote about “The Quiet Lake” in the 2005 issue of the Ledger. He referenced his grandmother’s cottage having been built in 1899. Ray had degrees in wildlife management, taught science for several years and was the first Supervisor of Conservation Education for the Mass. Department of Education. He is survived by his wife Betty, daughters Lynne & Wendy and several grand and great grandchildren.

Gerry Callahan, 78 of Troy, passed away May 18, 2023. Gerry was a Navy Seabee during the Vietnam War and ran his own construction business in this area for over 30 years. He and his wife Anne had a summer place at Laurel Lake Campground and he was a valued handyman to many of us lake folks. He was active in the Troy community, as selectman, budget committee and Fire Department. He is survived by Anne, their 3 children and many siblings.

Barbara Dresser, 97 of East Hartford, CT, passed away Oct. 11, 2023. Barbara came to the lake in the 1940s after meeting her husband Gardner Dresser. She raised her daughters Debbie (McNamara) & Hannah (Minietta) at the lake house on Laurel Lane in the summer and later her grandchildren Jillian & Patrick McNamara. Barbara was active in the Lake Association and in Fitzwilliam where she was a member of the garden club. She was also active in DAR events at the Cathedral of the Pines. The Lake Association’s 36 year old sailboat regatta (Dresser-Friedman) was named for her late husband Gardner. She leaves behind her daughters, grandchildren & great grandchildren.



Laurie Mullett of Keene passed away Dec. 21, 2023 at the age of 69. Laurie was a long time area realtor and active in the Keene community in the Elks and Emblem clubs. Laurie was a lifelong lake summer visitor with a camp in Whites Grove. She leaves behind her sons Reid and Ryan and granddaughter Alyson.

Peter Minietti, 65 of Glastonbury, CT died unexpectedly Jan. 13, 2024. Peter was a custodian in the Glastonbury school district. His summer vacations were spent at Laurel Lake after meeting his wife Hannah (Dresser). He would have his daily walk around the lake, chatting with folks and having his lunch on the bench outside the former Depot Store. Peter is survived by Hannah, brother Paul and sister-in-law Deb McNamara.



Winter (left Feb. 24, 2024) & Spring (right—Ice Storm March 23, 2024) at the lake. Photos from Gail Connelly.

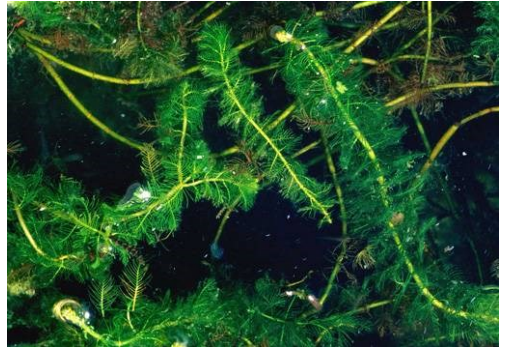


AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES REPORT

One of the ways we protect our lake is through regular monitoring for invasive species.

Three times a season, the volunteers of the Aquatic Invasive Species committee do an inventory of the plants growing in the lake, to determine if any such exotic species have arrived in the lake. This is intended to provide an early warning in the event of a new invasive arrival.

Invasive variable milfoil is a particularly high-risk plant that has affected many lakes in New England, covering large expanses of water with mats of vegetation that pose a hazard to boats and shade out native aquatic species. In addition to being an ecological nightmare, a milfoil infestation would be very expensive to mitigate, with a potentially significant effect on property values around the lake.



Eurasian Milfoil photo courtesy of New York Invasive Species Information



Yellow Iris photo courtesy of Wikipedia

An example of an invasive plant that we already have growing around Laurel Lake is yellow iris. While the iris is indeed very pretty when it blooms in early June, it has a tendency to spread widely and take over shoreline, pushing out native species wherever it grows. If you have yellow iris growing on your lakeshore, pull it out!

Glossy Buckthorn is another plant we see growing around the edge of the lake, and is taking over the understory of some of the surrounding forests. While this is a terrestrial invasive plant, rather than aquatic, one of the ways it spreads is by dropping its round, black berries into the lake. The berries then wash up on shore, causing buckthorn to spread to more areas. Again, if you have these plants growing on your property – particularly if they are close to the shore – please remove them to prevent further ecological damage.



Glossy Buckthorn photo with immature & mature fruit courtesy of Wikipedia

I want to express my appreciation to the members of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Committee for taking part in our invasive species monitoring. In 2023, the committee included Caitlin Stewart, Bill Townsend, Erin Anderson, Cat Strahan, Tricia LeClaire, Phyllis Lurvey, Barbara Dumont, Nancy Fey Yensan, Gail Connelly, Chair Bobby Williams, and Chair Emerita Beth Samuels.

For summer 2024, the AIS Committee is in need of several more volunteers to continue its monitoring of the lake for invasive species. Each volunteer is assigned a portion of the lake to monitor three times over the course of the summer and is trained on the identities of all the plants so that a full inventory can be taken. It's a great way to learn about the lake ecosystem and to contribute to maintaining the quality of our lake's natural environment.

Won't you join us? If you are interested in helping with this important lake monitoring, please email me, Bobby Williams, at spikewilliams@gmail.com.

Bobby Williams, Chairperson, Aquatic Invasive Species Committee



Laurel Lake Logo Products and Online Store

When it comes to Laurel Lake Logo Products we have all the bases covered for you. There is a supply of pre-printed shirts, sweatshirts, hats, mugs and much more and these will be available for sale at the annual meeting July 13, at the canoe/kayak race on July 27 or by appointment.

In addition to the limited supply of pre-printed items we have an online store through a local screen printing and design shop located on Winchester St. in Keene NH. The company is Bulldog (a quick internet search for them and you will find the amazing things they are doing to help Cheshire County Communities). Their website is <https://bulldog-design.com/>. Along with their website there is also a special online store setup specifically for the Laurel Lake Association so you can purchase Laurel Lake Logo Products. The web address for the online store is <https://laurellake.itemorder.com/> (as of your reading the store is open for business and you can see many items that can be purchased). How this works is the store will be open until July 1st. At that time Bulldog will close the store and put into production all the orders that were placed, with the products being available 2-3 weeks later, in time for the canoe/kayak race July 27. In addition to normal Laurel Lake Logo Products there will also be canoe/kayak shirts. There are many ways to pick-up your gear and they include curbside, pick-up at the canoe race, shipping to you (extra charges may apply). I will also be willing to pick up for anyone and we could do curbside pick-up at my camp at 14 South Pond Rd. (off of White's Grove Rd. on the east side of the lake). Anyone that needs assistance ordering please contact Bulldog at 603-352-7217. If there are product selections you'd like to see please share those thoughts with me and I will see what I can coordinate with Bulldog.

The online ordering was very successful in past years with two separate online store offerings throughout the year: one in the spring/summer and one in the fall just in time for the holidays which we will also offer in 2024. (Dates will be posted on the Association web site—LaurelLakeAssn.com—later in 2024).

Joe Pelkey

[Jpelk20@yahoo.com](mailto:jpelk20@yahoo.com)



Annual meeting crowd. Notice the Association logo tee shirts and Lake Host shirt worn by Chip Yensan, Lake Host Coordinator.

Elliot Institute Concerts on the Fitzwilliam Common Summer 2024

These concerts are made possible by the generosity of the Elliot Institute Trust Fund, established in 1927. All performances will be from 7:00-8:30 pm. In case of inclement weather, the venue will be upstairs in the Town Hall or at the Emerson School Gymnasium. **(Please check the signboards).**

July 11 “The Mark’s Brothers” A four-piece danceable, rock'n'roll jam band...classic rock at its finest!

July 18 “Soggy Po Boys” A seven-piece band playing New Orleans jazz and Caribbean tunes as well as funk, soul, and brass band/street beat music...they will “bring the party!”

July 25 “Walt Sayre Ensemble” A five- piece band performing a variety of ballads, jazz, and show tunes!

August 1 “Martin & Kelly” A standout crossover country four-piece band. Jilly and Ryan’s songs bridge traditional and new country music with performances in Nashville and throughout New England.

August 8 “Tom Foolery Band” A seven-piece band playing rock, big band and jazz music...classic rock at its finest! This group is popular throughout Cheshire County.

August 15 “Ardaigh” A five-piece Irish band playing a full musical basket of Irish jigs, reels, hornpipes, waltzes, airs, and songs!

August 22 “3-Gen” A classic rock cover band with newer music...all performed by the Grasewicz family (3 generations) from Fitzwilliam.

Fitzwilliam Farmers’ Market

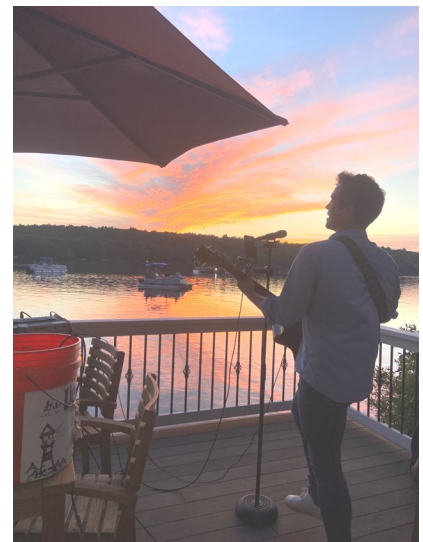
The Farmers’ Market season begins on Saturday, May 18, 9am to 1pm on the Fitzwilliam common and will be held the 1st & 3rd Saturday of each month through October 5. The common will be hopping twice a month and local foods (veggies, meats, jerky, sauces, breads, sweets, baked goods, fruits) and crafts will be available and some music to entertain. Join the fun & get some of your groceries at the market this summer!

Concert on the Lake

Right: 2023 performer Rob Thackeray entertains lake folks from Joe Pagano’s dock. What a gorgeous evening on the lake!

Boat over for the 2024 concert on July 20, 6:30-8 pm with Michael Holmes.

Photos courtesy of Emma Pagano





LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

www.LaurelLakeAssn.com

MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$15.00 for adult membership and \$5.00 for children under 18 yrs. old

LAUREL LAKE LEDGER: Each household of paid members will receive a copy of the Laurel Lake Ledger via USPS or email (please select delivery method below). Ledgers will be posted on the Laurel Lake Association website with password access.

FOR THE YEAR: 20 _____

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	ADULT	CHILD	AMOUNT
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

If you wish, you may also include an additional donation to help support the Association.

Donation Amount: _____

Total: _____

PERMANENT ADDRESS

Street: _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

SUMMER ADDRESS

same as above

Street: _____ Apt: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

LEDGER DELIVERY PREFERENCE

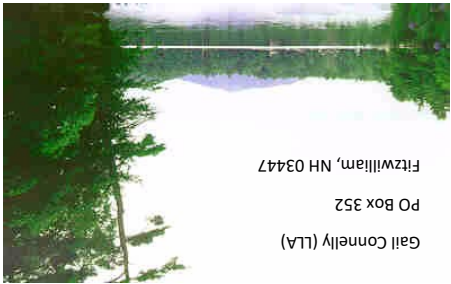
I would like to receive the Ledger via email address: _____

I would like to receive the Ledger via USPS delivery.

Make checks payable to *Laurel Lake Association*. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION!**

Please mail all membership forms and checks to:

Gail Connelly – Laurel Lake Association
PO Box 352
Fitzwilliam, NH 03447



Fitzwilliam, NH 03447

PO Box 352

Gail Connelly (LLA)