



Published by the Highland Lake Watershed Association - A Nonprofit Organization Dedicated to the Preservation and Protection of Highland Lake

Spring 2014

President's Message by Dick Labich



As I was writing this article, it was snowing and I saw a beautiful red fox trotting across our yard, very briskly and with purpose. I couldn't help thinking of what a wonderful place we are living in and wondering how long the wildlife will remain around the lake. We are truly blessed.

This has been a long and cold winter, and I am sure everyone is looking toward an early and much warmer spring. I believe my winter "cabin fever" pastime has been watching our oil tank empty at an unusually rapid pace. It was even worse this year watching the start of the professional golf season open in Hawaii and the west coast. We must remember things will get better and change is good.

The national and state economies are seemingly improving, albeit very slowly. Hopefully this economic improvement will be experienced in Winchester as well. However, one of the detriments standing in the way of reaching the goal of an improved economic reality is the simple fact the town is afflicted with blight, as seen in the broken windows, graffiti, empty factory buildings not kept in repair, and empty storefronts. Winchester has a blight ordinance, and for some time the accepted "truth" has been we cannot enforce our blight ordinance in town since it is not up to snuff legally and we need to rewrite the ordinance. That costs money which we do not have, so we will have to live with the blighted properties in town as well as around the lake.

Blighted properties have an adverse effect on your property values and makes selling your property extremely difficult if you have a neighbor with a blighted property.

The so-called "accepted truth" also states we have to live with blight since the Town owns Lambert-Kay, which is probably one of the worst blighted properties in Winchester. If we tried to enforce a blight ordinance, Lambert-Kay would be used as a successful legal objection.

Well, we now know this is not true. Recently two "friends of the lake," who are lawyers and members of a very large and successful law firm, doubted this accepted truth. On their own they studied the issue of the blight ordinance. They spent a lot of time and effort in researching the blight ordinances in other towns and they presented me with their conclusions:

- 1. This is not a legal issue; our present blight ordinance is legally correct and does not need to be rewritten.
2. It is merely an issue of enforcing the ordinance. They pointed out there are seven or eight blighted residences on the lake as well as many throughout the town. If the ordinance is enforced, the properties on the lake would have their tax base increased by an estimated \$50,000 each.
3. Referring to Lambert-Kay as a legal issue preventing the enforcement of the blight ordinance is not an applicable argument. Those homeowners or landlords cannot use Lambert-Kay as a reason not to clear up their own blighted properties.

Welcome a new advertiser on page 15! And check out all our other wonderful advertisers!

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**President's Message (cont.)**

- 4. Enforcement of our blight ordinance will have an immediate increase on our tax base. It's a win-win situation as it will also improve the look and feel of the Town and Highland Lake for those who want to invest in Winchester or want to settle here and raise families.

I presented this information to the Board of Selectman and the Town Manager at the Board of Selectman meeting on January 6, 2014. The Winchester Economic Development Commission has also joined the fight and passed a resolution to support this initiative, and they will continue to push for enforcement of these blight ordinances.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will come across two items provided to the HLWA by Milly Hudak, the President and Curator of the Winchester Historical Society. Milly is one of Winchester's most devoted citizens, and occasionally she will send me historical documents I might find interesting. This issue will include a poem written about the lake in 1882 (see page 9). In addition, we will be starting a series of articles which contain the remarkable story of the development of Highland Lake (see page 5). I believe you will find information on how the lake evolved that you have not read or heard before reading these articles in the newsletter.

I couldn't finish this article without thanking and applauding the volunteers who came out to face the bitter cold on February 8 to serve refreshments to the plungers and the spectators at the annual Penguin Plunge. We have a wonderful bunch of volunteers led by Patty Masucci; be sure to read more about the event on page 7. You can also see more pictures posted by our webmaster, Terry Platt, on the HLWA website.

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**Legacy Program**

*by Jen Perga, President, Winchester Land Trust*

**Open space land acquisition to preserve our water quality, scenic views and property values**

The next time you take a stroll along East Wakefield Boulevard or explore the paper roads on the east side of the lake, be on the lookout for these two boundary markers on the trees. The Winchester Land Trust (WLT) and HLWA have slowly been acquiring land in the Highland Lake watershed, and these markers indicate which parcels have been preserved.



Boundary markers:

The HLWA has just over 30 parcels totaling 3.97 acres, while the WLT protects 14.3 acres in the Highland Lake watershed. The largest WLT parcel, Long Pond Ridge along West Wakefield Boulevard in second bay, was acquired in a joint project of the HLWA and

WLT. Both organizations benefit from working together, and the WLT looks forward to preserving more land together.

Why is it important to preserve these properties in their natural state? Keeping land forested reduces runoff to the lake. Runoff transports silt, sand, road salt, fertilizers and pesticides into the lake ecosystem. These substances adversely affect water quality.

As you may have read in past HLWA newsletters, many day-to-day activities enable algae, weeds and other organisms to thrive in Highland Lake. By protecting land in the watershed, we will prolong the life of our lake.

The WLT and HLWA are making great progress to permanently protect land around the lake. Join us by limiting the use of any soaps, fertilizers, and pesticides. Pick up after your pet. And donate land or funds to the Legacy Program or the WLT. With continued generous donations, both organizations are able to acquire more land. If you like walking the land, please consider becoming a "steward." A steward walks protected properties, picks up trash and generally watches out for the land. With your help, the lake will be enjoyed by many future generations.

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**Progress of the Highland Lake Signage**

*by Raymond Juros, Marketing Director*

Happy new year 2014! We are still as proud as ever of our beautiful snow-covered lake and feel its four-season beauty should be properly identified with signage of its own. The timing is appropriate inasmuch as the Town of Winsted has installed the town signs, and we are now getting ready to construct and install the lake signs.



The Planning & Zoning and Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission applications have been filed, permits granted, and bond posted. We are good to go, except for the funds.

**The fundraising is slow, and we have only 27% (\$3,500) of the needed \$13,000.** We will be mailing a fundraising appeal this month to the residents and businesses that service the lake to participate in this **appeal** so we may start construction and hopefully installation this spring.

Getting permission from the State of Connecticut to put up a sign on Taylor Brook Park has been very difficult to obtain, but we are talking with our state legislators who sound hopeful to date. We are also considering permission from private landowners in that area.

**Recap of the Signage Project:** Our fundraising goal is \$13,000 for the design, fabrication, installation and landscaping. Each sign will be surrounded by a natural stone wall with plantings.

The fundraising drive is under way for construction of the three signs. Individual signs can be donated for a \$4,350 donation. **However, your nickels and dimes are also needed to build these signs.** Signage donations will be individually acknowledged and also in the quarterly *Highland Lake News* when the lake signs are installed.

You are encouraged to send your **tax-free** donations to Highland Lake Watershed Association, P.O. Box 1022, Winsted, CT 06098. Please "note" the donation is for "**Lake Signage**"!!!!

## Water Quality Update

by Clare Stevens, Water Quality/Environmental Committee Chairperson

### What Is the Difference Between Lake Maintenance and Lake Restoration?

I have often written about the need for you, as a lake watershed property owner and steward, to preserve lake water quality by practicing effective methods of maintenance such as refraining from using fertilizer containing phosphorus and planting vegetation that will reduce harmful erosion of soil. I have drawn the comparison between keeping our personal medical records to track our vital health information and keeping a health chart on the water quality of Highland Lake. Whether we are managing the health of our personal body or that of the lake's waterbody, we have to know when we need to utilize maintenance practices or restorative measures. In order to do so, water quality testing for contents such as phosphorous, nitrogen, oxygen and alkalinity is vital.

Highland Lake is a middle-aged lake as defined by lake scientists who analyze such factors as the amount of phosphorous, nitrogen and oxygen in the water. Technically, Highland Lake is identified as "mesotrophic"; it is in the middle between a young lake (oligotrophic) and an aged lake (eutrophic). All through our personal lives, there are times, such as when we contract the flu, when we have to work to restore our health. The same is true for lakes; there are storm events that call for immediate action such as lowering the water level or removing debris such as the "mud island" that floated into the shore in first bay several years ago. However, there are chronic conditions that have to be dealt with on a maintenance basis, such as the infiltration of soil into the lake that creates shallowness and promotes weed and algae growth.

### Restoration via Improved Drainage

Two lake restoration measures that have been studied for Highland Lake are the drainage around the perimeter of the lake and dredging in the lake to remove collected silt, sand and other debris. In 1991, the Town of Winchester hired consultants to conduct a "**Drainage Feasibility Study.**" It is a comprehensive study regarding how storm water flows into Highland Lake and recommends the replacement of 188 drainage pipes with "catch basins" that will collect some of the sand and debris before it washes into the lake during rain events and thawing of ice and snow.

When Highland Lake was originally developed, the practice was to divert excess road and land surface water by installing drains at the road's edge with underground pipes that lead directly into the lake. This system served the purpose of removing excess water to enable safe travel on the road. However, over the years, these drains have also brought huge amounts of sand and debris into the lake and caused it to fill. Particularly vulnerable were the coves where the lake was naturally shallower and areas where streams would become engorged and deposit large amounts of soil into the lake. Since the Drainage Feasibility Study was released, the Highland Lake Watershed Association has been

working with the Town of Winchester and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to fund the replacement of the storm drains with catch basins to alleviate the filling of the lake with soil and debris. HLWA has also worked with the Public Works Department to remove road sand quickly after spring thaws, clean the catch basins and eliminate the use of sand by using the product "Ice-B-Gone" to avoid further filling of the lake. Since catch basins are extremely costly, we have spent many years working on this restoration project and nearly half have been installed.

### Restoration via Dredging

A second restoration method is to remove excess soil and debris on the lake bed by **dredging**. In 1993, the Town of Winchester had a "**Dredging Feasibility Study**" conducted by professional engineers. Dredging of a lake is a complex process and definitely falls into the restoration category much as heart bypass surgery. It was determined it would be feasible to dredge the five shallow coves in Highland Lake using the "dry" technique. The dry method entails lowering the water level as far as possible and removing accumulated soil down to the lake's original bottom. This is a less costly and time-consuming process than the "wet" technique where barges bilge soil from the lakebed. There are a myriad of permits needed and, no doubt, a new study would have to be conducted.

The 1993 study estimated the number of cubic yards of silt that would be removed; surely we have a much greater quantity today. Factors such as the timing of such an extended drawdown, the impact on the wildlife that lives in the shallow areas of the lake, possible impact on residents' water wells, and where the watery sludge can be placed to dewater and ultimately located are just a few of the issues that would need to be resolved. It was not positively determined whether it is feasible to perform dredging all of the coves in one drawdown or if it would necessitate multiple drawdowns. Finally, the cost in 1993 was approximately one million dollars. I can't begin to extrapolate what the cost would be today. The fact is dredging does not "cure" a lake's accumulation of soil nor does it eradicate the infestation of native and invasive weeds. Soil will continue to infiltrate from the watershed and seeds from weeds are deeply planted in the lakebed and cannot be removed totally. Thus, we have not seen any lake in the State of Connecticut dredged as a restoration measure; small ponds are more manageable to restore through dredging.

### Restoration via Oxygenation

Another restoration technique deals with the potentially dangerous levels of oxygen depletion that Highland Lake has been experiencing for several years. The technique involves installing a **hypolimnetic system** in the lake that removes oxygen-depleted bottom water, filters it, and oxygenates it before replacing it in the lake. Most hypolimnetic systems require the installation of a long pierced pipe in the bottom of the lake in order to take up the water. Strong pumps deliver the water to the filtering and oxygenation facility and return the water to the lake. About twenty years ago, Lake Waramaug in New Preston, CT installed such a system. Not only was the original equipment extremely costly, but the electricity to operate the pumps and replace them as they

failed has pushed the price even higher. Again, oxygenation methods are most feasible on small ponds such as are built on golf courses as opposed to large, deep lakes such as Highland.

**Maintenance Is Vital**

Thus, I return to what may be our best defense for our lake water quality, i.e., maintenance. **Water quality testing and analysis is the most important aspect of lake maintenance.** It allows us to track the amount of phosphorous and nitrogen that feed aquatic weeds and algae. The amount of oxygen is important to know as it relates to phosphorous levels and is needed for a healthy fish/wildlife habitat. By analyzing water quality data, our limnologist, Dr. George Knoecklein, has developed a lake management plan for us to follow.

As the winter thaw and spring rains come to deliver loose soil on our watershed, I urge you to examine your property for areas where you can prevent erosion. Sometimes building a simple rock barrier will break the flow of surface water and spread it over a broader area to allow for it to be absorbed instead of carrying soil into the lake. If you have a storm drain or catch basin near your property, please take it upon yourself to remove leaves and twigs from the grate so it can function effectively. And, as you prepare to do spring yard cleanup, please refer to the HLWA website [www.hlwa.org](http://www.hlwa.org). Click on the Environmental tab and read the article **“Things You Can Do to Preserve Highland Lake and Be a Good Steward of the Watershed.”**

Finally, I would like everyone to know HLWA has worked very hard for 55 years to preserve our lake water quality. However, it serves another very important purpose. The watershed association has created a wonderful quality of life for those who are involved. When my husband and I were faced with serious health issues last summer, we found our “Highland Lake Family” came to our aid and support in so many generous and gracious ways. Friends and neighbors came with meals, did our laundry, took our trash to the landfill, removed our float, and provided emotional comfort. The compassionate care they gave to Gerry and I touched us deeply and gave us the support we needed to carry on. We are grateful for and cherish the gift of the love and friendship of our Highland Lake Family!

**Is Your Home a Mystery to Find?**

*by Dick Labich*

**Can it be found quickly?**

- In an emergency?
- When every second counts?
- Especially at night?

Unfortunately, emergencies can and do happen. When precious seconds can mean the difference between life and death, you want to be sure you’ve done everything you can to put the odds in your favor. For \$20, the price of a delivered pizza, our reflective signs can help.

- **Our reflective address markers offer these benefits:** Better visibility. Especially at night when reflected by headlights and when it counts the most. Help 911, fire and law enforcement find your home quickly.

- Low cost and peace of mind - an inexpensive way to help ensure home safety and security.

**Do I really need one of these address signs? My house already has numbers on it!**

To find out, drive or walk up and down the street in front of your house. Put yourself in the position of a rescuer who is racing to your house in a life-or-death situation. Can your address be seen clearly and easily from the street, at a distance, and especially at night? Wasted minutes and seconds can mean all the difference.

*(Perhaps you don’t believe me and have ignored our pleas to secure your safety, but the above message is posted on the website of the Fire Department of McMinnville, Oregon. This issue is life or death, coast to coast. Help yourself and your loved ones by making sure your home can be found quickly and easily. We have also told you a Winchester Town ordinance requires you have an address sign on your dock. Now it’s up to you!)*

Please note the home address signs come with a post (for \$8) and the necessary hardware (free), and I will deliver them to your home.

If you would like one of these house address signs, a dock sign or the larger green sign, you can call me at 860.738.0167, or you can fill out the following information and mail it with your check payable to the Highland Lake Watershed Association to:



Dick Labich  
418 East Wakefield Boulevard  
Winsted, CT 06098

The signs and posts will be delivered to each homeowner as soon as they are completed.

**Order Form** (please print) (also on our website [www.hlwa.org](http://www.hlwa.org))

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

House Number Desired: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one or more of the following:

- 1) \_\_\_ I would like to order a vertical numbered panel (street). \$20
- 2) \_\_\_ I would like to order a horizontal (dock) panel.....\$20
- 3) \_\_\_ I would like to order the large green panel..... \$105
- 4) \_\_\_ I would like to order a metal post.....For each: Add \$8

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Highland Lake Nature

by Mary Barbro

The animals outside my house have been especially quiet it seems this winter. We're lucky we have the birds to keep us company, because they seem to be our only companions right now save the two squirrels that returned from we will never know where, but we are happy to see them again.

A red fox(es) is seen on occasion on East Wakefield and wonderful eagle sightings and pictures are happening on West Wakefield. I'm sure our resident eagles delight many all over the lake. Grackles have been seen around, and the mornings are again filled with the beautiful sounds of resident and returning birds. I don't know exactly how this happens, since I don't have a birdfeeder, but my yard two days ago was suddenly filled with not one type of bird flying in, but many kinds all at once! I looked out to see many, many robins, a medium and a large woodpecker, a goldfinch, and many other ones flying around too quickly for me to even identify them, but there were flurries of brown, white, gray, red, blue and yellow. With all the snow cover at the time of this writing, I felt they must be sorely disappointed at what they were seeing.

The ice fishermen must not be too disappointed since they keep on fishing no matter what the weather. They have been huddled out there in their little tents many times this season with the temperatures low and the wind howling. They have the seagulls and crows ever watching to keep them company. Ah yes, my favorites, the crows. They never leave us and are always there with us no matter what. They often announce our arrival in the mornings when we walk by the lake. I'm part of a group of three who walk at 7:00 in the morning down by the lake, and I have to say I have walked at different times, but it is wonderful at that time. There is, of course, no time or season the lake isn't beautiful, but there are always surprises. This year is the first time I saw ice rainbows, and I'm so happy Terry Platt also saw them and took the pictures. Check out the HLWA facebook page and website to see the incredible eagle, rainbow ice, penguin plunge and other outstanding nature shots she captured this winter.

I know we're all more than ready to move on to spring, but there were some great moments of beauty and sparkle this winter. That being said, I am looking forward to the feeling of walking out into spring air and seeing the uptick in nature activity around our lake.

## The History of the Development of Highland Lake - Part One

by Dick Labich

*This is the first of a series of articles on the development of Highland Lake taken from historical records supplied by Milly Hudak of the Winchester Historical Society. This article describes the lake at the time of the first settlers until 1874 and describes early discussions regarding a boulevard around the lake.*

The history of the development of Highland Lake as a pleasure resort is a long and interesting story. The aboriginal red man was attracted to its waters by the good fishing which he found there. To the early settlers of distant towns, its wooded slopes and banks soon became known as good hunting grounds for bear and other wild animals. David Austin, the first permanent settler on Lake Street, was attracted to the lake by the promise of unlimited water supply for his grist mill. Later, as the villages of Winsted and West Winsted grew and finally merged into one Borough of Winsted, the water from the lake, which had furnished such a large part of the power for turning the mill wheels, was called into the new service of providing fire protection and household water supply.

Caleb P. Newman, Winsted's first Chief-of-Police, or "Bailiff" as he was called, was a source of much information regarding the early history of Winsted, and to him we are indebted for the statement that in 1833, when Rockwell and Hinsdale were leading merchants and manufacturers, they used thousands of bushels of charcoal. For this purpose, they had wood cut on the shores of "Long Pond" and transported it on flat boats or scows built for the purpose. These boats were 30 by 15 feet in size and could carry from ten to fifteen cords of wood. Once, on a Fourth of July, about 40 persons were transported to Hatch's Landing at the south end of the lake, for a picnic. Mr. Newman recalled the first round bottom boat was put on the Lake in 1858 by William Seymour.

It is therefore a mistake to think there was no thought of any use of the lake for recreation and pleasure during those early days, or there were none who had visions of its use for other than utilitarian purposes. Commenting on the fact the hotels of the town were crowded with summer boarders during the hot weather, Thomas Clarke, the first editor of the Winsted Herald, suggested a summer hotel at the lake might very well become a popular and paying project and prophesied that were such a building put up, the town would then proceed to build a road around the lake. In June of the same year, 1858, he wrote an editorial proposing a community picnic on the shore of the lake, at which time a discussion should be held on the subject of giving a name to the lake which might be more appropriate than Long Pond, the name by which the lake was then generally known. He also thought it would be a good plan to make such a meeting an annual event, to be celebrated as a community project. But years passed by with no progress in the matter, although an occasional newspaper reference to a boulevard shows that some people still dreamed of such a possibility.

In his Annals of Winchester, John Boyd pays a great honor to Eliphaz Alvord, the Town's first Town Clerk, for the splendid way in which the town records were kept by him. A grandson of Eliphaz Alvord, Mr. Coridon Alvord, a book publisher in New York City, used to visit in Winsted frequently and in the October 30, 1874 number (edition) of the Herald appeared a most remarkable letter from him regarding a boulevard. Not being a resident nor a property owner, he disclaimed any financial interest in such a project but thought if anyone would do as he had done, climb up to the top of Pratt Hill and look down on the lake from that elevation, they would feel we had a wonderful beauty spot here which we were in no wise (ways) appreciating. He said, if that

view failed to impress one, he would advise taking another look at the lake from Gobble Hill. "The lake is the thing," said he, "no shore resort on Long Island Sound could compare with it." Continuing, he proposed the formation of a \$60,000 corporation; the purchase of all the land about the lake in a strip a half-mile wide; and the building of a boulevard driveway 100 feet wide, "just like Central Park." A competent landscape engineer should be secured to lie out and supervise the work, and orchards and vineyards should be planted to provide fruit for the cottagers who would flock to this splendid resort. Mr. Alvord died in Hartford a few weeks after this most suggestive article. We can have little doubt the influence of this man's idea had no small part in the formation of a public sentiment of a lakeside drive.

*(The summer newsletter will contain another article on the history of the development of Highland Lake and will describe the early boats on the lake and the completion of the boulevard.)*

## Membership Services

by Patty Masucci

Again and still, Membership Services is looking for people to volunteer to make the year living at Highland Lake a fun and healthy one for the residents of Highland Lake. We have a few events planned for your enjoyment.

First is the Winter Dinner/Dance being held on March 1. By the time you read this, the dance will have already happened and I will be telling you about the great time we all had. I'll be sure to include pictures.

Next is our spring cleanup planned for April 27. A group of about 25 people wearing the HLWA logo t-shirts given out to all volunteers will clean a section of the lake between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. If you plan to volunteer and are in need of a t-shirt, please call Patty – they are free to the workers. All filled garbage bags will be left at the property area of Terry and Willie Platt at 111 West Wakefield Boulevard. Patty will call the Town of Winchester Public Works Department who will then pick up said trash on the following Monday or Tuesday. At 12:30 we will gather at a location to meet one another, bring a dish and have a luncheon together - we are in need of a place to hold it. Call Patty at 860.379.2303 to volunteer.

Our tag sale will be held May 18, 2014 at Resha Beach. Read Jean's article on page 8 to see what items you should be saving to donate to this cause. All proceeds go to benefit water quality.

The Laurel Festival is normally the second weekend in June. We usually volunteer to sponsor one young Winsted girl who is vying for the Laurel Crown. We pay her fees and give her a float to ride on or a car decorated by my committee in conjunction with her family. It is important for the girls to help with this float - it is part of the judging and part of their requirements to be in the contest. The winning girl receives a \$1,200 scholarship. The runners-up win \$1,000 and \$800, respectively. We have been fortunate to sponsor three winners thus far, but each and every young lady is really a winner just for participating. They have many requirements to fulfill in order to enter this event. Besides being a good student, they must be well rounded and must go through a short interview with the judges.

Next is our HLWA annual meeting open to all residents of

Highland Lake watershed and anyone who would like to hear what HLWA is doing today and accomplishing. Donuts and coffee are available at 8:30 a.m., with the meeting starting at 9:00 a.m. It will be held at St Joseph's Center next to St Anthony's School on Oak Avenue. That same night we will again have our boat parade with prizes awarded to the best decorated boats and the most enthusiastic participants. Candy Perez and Nora Mocarski have volunteered to judge the contest again this year. Membership Services will provide the prizes.

Karen and Stew Jones have volunteered their home to host our big fundraiser – the HLWA food and wine tasting. The date for this event is August 23 and the location is 199 East Lake Street. Mary Barbro is in charge of decorations and Gay Schempp is in charge of the art show that again this year will be accompanying the event. Anyone interested in displaying their craft or art should contact Mary Barbro at 860.379.3119. We started this part of the event last year, and everyone in attendance was thrilled with the attention the event received. Mary will send you information on requirements to enter. This event costs \$50 per person to attend but is so worth it. A beer table and a cocktail table will also be available for sampling.

Right now we have September 17 set aside for our "ItsAllAboutFun" Relay Race. However, Tricia Twomey, the Winsted Recreation Director, has resigned from her post, and we are not sure if the new director will want to support this event. We will have more information for you in the next newsletter.

October finds us cleaning up the roadways again. We decided this should take place in early October before the leaves fall and hide all the little nips bottles and trash that get thrown from people's vehicles. Why do people litter? How can we make people more thoughtful of where they leave their trash? We keep trying to educate the general public. Does anyone have an idea they would like to share?

In December we will once again be Christmas caroling and helping Santa on Main, which is a Friends of Main Street project but so much fun.

### HLWA Board of Directors

Sally Carotenuti (Treasurer)	860.803.2344
Fran Delaney (Vice President)	860.379.7701
Ray Fugere	860.738.9781
Dick Labich (President)	860.738.0167
Pat Masucci	860.379.2303
Rosy Molinelli	860.379.5495
Jackie Mulvey (Secretary)	860.379.0268
Terry Platt	860.379.0017
Sam Sciacca	203.732.1716
Clare Stevens	860.379.1596
Carol Zacchio	860.379.3267

**So call me! I need you!** If you love your lake, give me a call.

*"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for*

*with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended." . . . . . Nelson Mandela*

## **Penguin Plunge**

*by Patty Masucci*

On February 8, 2014, 92 wonderful individuals jumped into the frigid waters of Highland Lake to raise money for a very special organization, the Special Olympics of Connecticut. Sharon Pelkey heads up the committee that runs the plunges throughout Connecticut and was in charge of the one held here at Highland Lake.

A total of \$45,000 was raised, \$32,000 of it by Matt Smith, who lives on Highland Lake, and his team of volunteers. He had 22 jumpers this year. Wow!! Kudos to Matt Smith!!

The HLWA helps with this event by serving all the food that is donated by different organizations. We had hot chocolate with marshmallows, hot dogs with ketchup, mustard and relish, and two soups, one donated by Marino's Restaurant in Torrington and one from Chili's restaurant in New Britain. A very big round of applause goes out to these organizations for helping.

A total of 14 volunteers from HLWA braved the cold weather to volunteer to serve this array of food. Many of them have already volunteered to help again next year. I am so lucky to have so many willing volunteers come to the aid of the HLWA in this endeavor. Yes, it doesn't benefit our organization at all, but it helps a very worthwhile cause and helps the people from our lake who wish to participate. And we are all about helping good causes and the residents of Highland Lake. Some of our lake jumpers were Matt Smith and his family, Denise Mancini and her sister, and Austin Lemis, an adopted grandson of Patty Masucci. Our Town Manager, Dale Martin, also participated. Kudos to you, Dale.



Thank you to all who helped and thank you to all who participated.

### **Donors as of 2/25/14**

Perga, Jennifer & Declement, Michael  
Mark Schrader (matched donation)

## Super Lakeside Tag Sale on Saturday, May 17

by Jean Labich

*Put away your shovels,  
Let the snowman melt,  
Climb up to the attic,  
Trudge down to the basement  
And out to the garage.*



**Free** all those treasures and **shine** the light on your antiques, for they belong at the **Best Lakeside Tag Sale EVER!** Once again, the HLWA is sponsoring its spectacular annual tag sale on Saturday, May 24, 2014, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at Resha Beach at Highland Lake. In case of a threat of rain, the tag sale will be held at the Recreation Department's green building at Rowley Park. Signs will be in place to direct you to the Recreation Department's building.

Donations of household items, linens, toys, books, small appliances, small furniture and sporting goods will be graciously appreciated. Please remember, **NO** clothing, electronics, luggage, or large furniture will be accepted.

### Drop-Off Schedule

Monday, May 12, to Friday, May 26, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Labichs - 418 East Wakefield Boulevard.

Volunteers will be needed during this week for sorting and pricing.

**Joy!! Joy!! Joy!!**

And, of course, the day of the tag sale we will need help for setup in the morning, cashiers, monitors and cleanup volunteers in the afternoon.

**Joy!! Joy!! Joy!!**

All proceeds will benefit the HLWA programs for the protection of the Highland Lake watershed.

Please call Jean Labich (860.738.0167) or Jackie Mulvey (860.379.0268) if you have any questions.

## Blue Circle Award

by Clare Stevens

One of the precursors to spring's arrival is our annual appeal for nominees to be recognized as having landscaped their lake property in an environmentally protective and enhancing manner. Several years ago, HLWA began presenting the Blue Circle Award to an HLWA member/family that demonstrates "best management practices" on their property. Likewise, the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has awarded HLWA the Green Circle Award for such projects as the biannual road cleanups on the entire perimeter of the lake.



I am always pleased to see so many of you who not only take pride in the appearance of your roadside and lakeside land but find creative ways to reduce erosion on the steep slopes of our glacially formed lake. Below are some of the ways you can enhance the beauty of your land and do your part in preserving the water quality of Highland Lake.

- Look at your land carefully and notice if there are areas where erosion is evident. Torrents of rain will carve out troughs, move soil and silt into the lake and add to the filling of the lakebed and general degradation of the water quality.
- Assess the slope of your land and think of ways to break the surface flow of water that erodes soil into the lake. Plateau the slope of your land with dividers such as rocks, pavers and railroad ties. Plants that develop extensive root systems, such as hostas, can border dividers and absorb surface runoff water.
- Since impervious surfaces prevent precipitation from being absorbed into the ground and enhance the likeliness of erosion, reducing the amount of surface area you cover with asphalt, cement, house and garage structures, etc., is very beneficial (smaller is better). Alternative materials include pavers, gravel, mulch and ground covers such as pachysandra and ivy. Use your imagination and create designs with interesting shapes, colors and levels.
- Divert water coming from roofs by channeling it into dry wells at the corners of your home/garage, catching it in rain barrels or using curtain drains. Check gutters and clean them out regularly so they'll work effectively.
- Eliminate the use of phosphate-containing fertilizers. Have your soil analyzed to determine the appropriate type and quantity of fertilizers you might apply to your yard or garden to support healthy plant life. Try composting to add natural, indigenous nutrients to your soil. Soil-testing kits are available for \$8.00 from Litchfield County Cooperative Extension Service at the Torrington Branch of UConn (860.626.6240).
- Reduce lawn size by creating "buffer gardens" near your waterfront. Plant ground covers, decorative grasses or low-growing shrubs; they will take up phosphorus before it enters the lake and be a last-stop measure to deter erosion.

I view the area of our yards facing the lake as a life preserver. It is the ring around the perimeter of the lake that is the final area with the opportunity of reducing the impact of erosion and curtailing the input of phosphorus, nitrogen and chemicals such as pesticides and power-washing ingredients. Thus, **if you notice a neighbor who is demonstrating good "stewardship" of our watershed, please take the time to let us know by emailing [hlwa@snet.net](mailto:hlwa@snet.net).**

Email us at [hlwa@snet.net](mailto:hlwa@snet.net)

Website: [www.hlwa.org](http://www.hlwa.org)

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## Our Beautiful Lake

*(This poem was supplied by Milly Hudak of the Winchester Historical Museum. The poet describes the beauty of our lake and at the same time decries the "Men, for the purpose of their business, take the precious waters with a ruthless hand, destroy thy beauty and deface the land!")*

No classical muse will condescend to sing,  
Nor Fire Promethean from the clouds to bring.  
A modern bard, untaught of Muse's lore,  
Must on his humble pinions try to soar,  
And catch poetic fancy as it flies --  
Or draw the poet's genius from the skies.  
Inspire, O heavenly Muse, the theme I take--  
To sing of Winsted and her mountain Lake.

Embowered in trees high reaching the skies,  
The verdant mountains round her borders rise,  
Save here and there, to variegate the scene,  
A lovely meadow on the banks is seen;  
Then rocks, precipitous and bold appear  
In forms majestic o'er the waters clear,  
Reflecting many a tint, or grateful shade  
Upon the bosom of the lake displayed;  
And sweetest flowers in wild profusion grow  
On lowly meadow and the mountain's brow;  
And laurels, rooted in the mountains, bloom,  
And modest violets 'neath the rocks find room;  
The stately trees a leafy umbrage spread,  
O'er lilies growing in their watery bed,  
And oft I ponder o'er the beauties here,  
Oh placid Lake, so deep, serene and clear.

Such, O Winsted, is this charming Lake.  
Would'st thou her beauty spoil, her waters take?  
Formed by the hand of Nature to adorn --  
By man of many beauties robbed and shorn,

And from the bosom of this lovely Lake  
Men, for the purpose of their business, take  
The precious waters with a ruthless hand--  
Destroy thy beauty and deface the land!  
Though for the mill thy waters freely flow --  
Shall we no mercy for thy beauty show,  
But draw unceasing till thy banks are bare,  
And make a wilderness -- this spot so fair?

Seek other streams, and let their courses take  
The waste of waters to this generous Lake --  
And so replenished, ever may be full --  
Bright, deep and clear, not shallow, low or dull.  
The neighboring streams in torrents idly flow,  
Why not conduct them 'long the mountain's brow,  
Supply perennial to thy bosom pour --  
Of waters rushing through a mountain gore?

If to avert the woodman's dire decree  
The poet cries, "Oh, woodman, spare that tree";  
Shall I not call the muses to defend  
What dangers o'er this lovely lake impend?  
Awake, O Winsted! raise thy might and power;  
Let rocks be cleft, and through the mountains pour  
Fresh streams of water, and new life supply,  
The Lake increase, adorn and beautify.

**Cecil B. Jenkins - Winsted, April 25, 1882**

*(Mr. Jenkins was the Secretary of the T. C. Richards Company which was located in the brick factory on Meadow Street located across the street from the Lambert-Kay building. T.C. Richards was a manufacturing company that made, among other items, automobile horns. The poem presents a paradox since the T.C. Richards Company depended on the lake water for power for their manufacturing operation, and Mr. Jenkins seems to bemoaning the fact the company was taking water from the lake. Mr. Jenkins was a native of Winsted and lived at 40 Hinsdale Avenue.)*



Volunteers at the Plunge: Jan Becker, Patty Masucci, Dick Labich, Jan Gyurko Jean Labich, Sally Carotenuti, Sam Sciacca and Sheila Borla.

## Recipe Corner

by Marlene Rouleau

This is a great recipe for a cold night's supper to chase away the "Winter Doldrums." The recipe was made by Gail O'Connor at a recent luncheon. Everyone loved the dish and asked to have it published in our next newsletter. Hope you all enjoy it.

### Egg Rolls

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 3 tablespoons vegetable oil   | 2 1/2 tablespoon fresh parsley         |
| 1 1/2 skinless boneless chicken breast halves   | 3/4 teaspoon ground cumin              |
| 3 tablespoons minced green onion  | 3/4 teaspoon chili powder              |
| 3 tablespoons red bell pepper   | 1/2 teaspoon salt                      |
| 1/2 cup frozen corn kernels   | 2 pinches cayenne pepper               |
| 1/3 cup black beans, rinsed and drained   | 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese    |
| 3 tablespoons frozen chopped spinach,<br>thawed and drained (optional)                                | 1 (14 ounce) package egg roll wrappers |
| 3 tablespoons diced jalapeno peppers<br>(use less and leave out the seeds if you don't like the heat) | 1 quart of vegetable oil for frying    |

1. Rub 1 1/2 tablespoons of vegetable oil over chicken breasts. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, cook chicken approximately 5 minutes per side, until meat is no longer pink and juices run clear. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Heat remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons of vegetable oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir in green onion and red pepper. Cook and stir 5 minutes, until tender.
3. Dice chicken and mix into the pan with onion and red pepper. Mix in corn, black beans, spinach, jalapeno peppers, parsley, cumin, chili powder, salt and cayenne pepper. Cook and stir 5 minutes, until well blended and tender. Remove from heat and stir in Monterey Jack cheese so that it melts.
4. Place 1/4 cup of filling in the center of each egg roll wrapper. Fold in the sides, and roll egg rolls; dampen the edges with a small amount of water to seal.
5. In a large heavy skillet, heat enough oil to cover egg rolls over medium-high heat. Working in batches, carefully place egg rolls in hot oil, and cook until golden brown. Remove to paper towels.

This makes 8 servings.

### Dipping Sauce

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 2 avocados, peeled and pitted                      | 1 1/4 jalapeno peppers, seeded and halved |
| 2 green tomatoes (use red if you can't find green) | 3 sprigs of fresh cilantro                |
| 3 fresh tomatillos, husks removed                  | 1 cup of sour cream                       |
| 2 cloves of garlic, peeled                         |   |

1. Place tomatoes, tomatillos, garlic, and jalapenos in a saucepan, and add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil, and cook for 15 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Remove from heat, drain, and allow to cool.
2. Place avocados, the cooked vegetables, sour cream, and cilantro in a blender or food processor, and blend until smooth.



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