

# Highland Lake News

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

**Summer** **2014**

## President's Message *by Dick Labich*



With some mixed emotions, I have decided this will be my final President's Message article for *Highland Lake News* as I have informed the Board of Directors I will be stepping down as President of the HLWA effective at the July Board of Directors Meeting. I plan to stay on the Board, but it is clearly time for new leadership and perhaps new directions and energy for the organization. I was elected President in July of 2006 and enjoyed every minute of these past eight years.

**Save the Dates!**

- July 12, 9 a.m. - Annual Meeting at St. Joseph Franciscan Center
- July 12, 8 p.m. - Boat Parade at Holland Beach
- August 23, 5:30 p.m. - Evening on Highland Lake

I was truly fortunate to have the support of an amazing and devoted Board of Directors as well as their friendship and guidance during my tenure. I am especially grateful for the support of past Presidents Clare Stevens and Fran Delaney who have tried, but were not always successful, to keep me from making any serious blunders. The Board has some new members who have added a great deal to the organization, and I can assure you the HLWA will be in capable hands in the future.

Now back to business with some breaking news. The longtime readers of the newsletter may recall our early reports in 2004/2005 of a developer, Mr. Anthony Silano, who had purchased property on the east side of the lake and was proposing to develop an eighteen-hole golf course and an adult housing community to be called Highland Ridge/St. Anne's Golf Course. The original plans called for 630 housing units (later reduced to 456 age-restricted housing units) for this development. A second development was eventually added to the area to abut Highland Ridge and was to be called Winchester Estates and called for 123 age-restricted and 177 unrestricted housing units. The total acreage for the two developments consisted of 664 acres. We continued to report the progress of this development in subsequent issues of the newsletter.

The companies Mr. Silano represented experienced financial difficulties, and in 2010/2011 entered foreclosure proceedings. The courts eventually awarded the entire 664 acres to one of the debtors, the Tissa Funding Corporation of Brooklyn, New York, who is the present owner. The property is now in the hands of a Waterbury realtor who is actively soliciting potential buyers, and the 664-acre property has been listed on the commercial market.

The HLWA Board of Directors has the same concerns now that we had for the many years Mr. Silano was appearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC), namely, how will any development on this acreage affect the environmental condition of Highland Lake? Members of the HLWA board spent many late nights at Town Hall over the years to assure whatever changes were going to be made on the site were done correctly and would not be a detriment to the lake. Members of these land commissions worked many hours to assure the environmental integrity of the developer's plans. Sue Peacock, then chairman of the IWWC, was especially passionate in assuring the developer adhered to the regulations to protect the lake and worked very diligently on the developer's applications.

*(continued on next page)*

<b>What's Inside</b>		<i>Attention – Deep Drawdown Year</i>
<i>Highland Lake Nature</i> .....	2	<i>Water Level Will Start to Drop October 1</i> .....
<i>Sailboat Races</i> .....	2	<i>Legacy Program</i> .....
<i>Water Quality Update</i> .....	3	<i>Boating Rules and Regulations</i> .....
<i>Membership Services</i> .....	4	<i>Progress of Highland Lake Signage</i> .....
<i>It's Blue Circle Award Time Again!</i> .....	4	<i>Save a Life, It May Be Your Own</i> .....
<i>The History of the Development of Highland Lake - Part One</i> ..	5	<i>A Special for the Annual Meeting</i> .....
<i>Margaritaville Dinner/Dance - HLWA Style</i> .....	6	<i>Bunga—Ode</i> .....
<i>Spring Cleanup</i> .....	8	<i>2014 Lakeside Tag Sale</i> .....
<i>Boat Parade</i> .....	9	<i>Recipe Corner</i> .....

### President's Message (cont.)

It is a simple fact the lake is aging, and environmentally sensitive and even minor changes in the runoff streams from this property in the watershed can impact the lake and quickly cause irrevocable damage. We may be facing round two.

On other subjects, please try to attend the upcoming events on the HLWA calendar. The **Annual Meeting** will take place on Saturday, July 12, followed by the **Boat Parade** that evening (see page 9 for more information.)

And let's not forget the party of the year, the **Evening on Highland Lake** food and wine tasting extravaganza and art show on Saturday, August 23.

I would like to thank all the volunteers who came out for the semiannual lake cleanup on Sunday, April 20. It was a great showing and, as usual, a large amount of trash from around the lake was accumulated.

Kudos also to the more than twenty volunteers who helped with the 6th Annual Lakeside Tagsale held at Resha Beach on Saturday, May 17. Once again we dodged the ominous weather forecasts and were able to raise money for the HLWA's environmental projects.

In closing, let me thank all the members of the HLWA who have been so generous and supportive of the activities of the board as well as to me personally. Your support for these many years has allowed us to commit to the purpose of the HLWA, as written in our articles of incorporation, **"to encourage the restoration and conservation of the natural resources of the Highland Lake Watershed; and to protect and conserve fish and wildlife, forest and other plant life, water sources and soils; to promote the understanding among citizens of the Watershed of the need of such conservation."**

## Highland Lake Nature

by Mary Barbro

The burst of renewed activity around the lake with the arrival of warm weather is both welcome and exhilarating, with so much to do and see right now. In addition to enjoying the colorful sights of Baltimore orioles and hummingbirds, all of our lakes water birds seem plentiful as I walk in the mornings. We also love seeing the eagles dive for fish on those early walks.

Common mergansers and a ruby-throated loon were seen on third bay. Some of the bear sightings include a large one with multiple ear tags who likes to break into garbage sheds. He seems to be quite active right now. There was a rare opportunity of seeing four



baby foxes. There are several sightings of a large, fluffy red fox especially on the East Wakefield side. This may be the one being blamed for the disappearing cats. A reminder may be in order here, though. Remember, skunks,

woodchucks, raccoons and foxes are high on the list of carriers for rabies.

That brings me to coyotes, which are not high on the list of carriers for rabies. It is actually very rare and believed to only affect about 3% of the population on average. I heard this and a lot of other information when I attended a wonderful talk about coyotes at the Beardsley and Memorial Library in conjunction with the Winchester Land Trust.

It was mentioned that people tend to think coyotes are bigger than they really are and that might just be human nature that wild things we are leery we see as much larger than they truly are. A female can be 30 to 35 lbs., and a male around 37 lbs. A wolf has a thicker, heavier build. Slender long legs, thin body, erect ears,

bottlebrush tail held low and walking in a straight line are good identifiers of the coyote.

Another event I was pleased to attend was opening day of fishing season on Highland Lake. I had no idea how much fun it was. Again, on our early morning walk, we ran into all the excited residents and visitors there for the opening. There were people from Torrington, West Hartford, Winsted, and I'm sure many other areas. In talking to them as we walked along, we learned many of them had been doing this here for generations and were now sharing the experience with other family members. There were also the partiers and boats and people settled in on every rock and crevice, hoping they had found the best spot or reclaiming a best spot from days gone by. Some were there for the fish, some for the fun, many for both, but there truly was a buzz of excitement and great camaraderie.

The 2014 Connecticut Anglers Guide can be picked up at Town Hall, so you can find out anything you want to know about fishing - a great, informative magazine. You might decide to take up a new hobby.

I don't care to do the fishing myself but had a great time walking by and being in the middle of people having so much fun. I think I'll schedule a walk again next year on the third Saturday of April for opening day of fishing.

## Sailboat Races?

by Sam Sciacca

Years ago (I am told), third bay was home to the colorful sight of sailboats racing every Sunday morning. Why they stopped is not clear, and to start them again could require a number of things such as permits, insurance, and coordination with other watercraft traffic. But the first step in the process would be to determine if there was sufficient interest to warrant looking into the other details. If you would like to join an online discussion to determine the level of interest that might exist, please send an email to that effect. My address is [sam@scsglobalsolutions.com](mailto:sam@scsglobalsolutions.com). Once I start receiving responses, I will start a thread for everyone to weigh in and we'll discuss how to round the first mark.

## Water Quality Update

by Clare Stevens, Water Quality/Environmental Committee Chairperson

### The Effects of Winter Drawdowns on Lake Ecosystems

The Town of Winchester's Highland Lake Water Level Policy schedules all winter drawdowns for five years at a time. This fall is the scheduled time for lowering the water level up to 8 feet; that is the maximum depth we have the ability to draw by opening the gate at the spillway. Certainly, the amount of precipitation we have after the start date of October 1 will impact the actual amount of water that can be drawn.

#### Benefits of Winter Drawdowns

Highland Lake is somewhat unique in that the road along the north shoreline has two spillways for flood control purposes. Drawing the lake level down at least 3 feet every year keeps the water from washing onto the road, creating ice and making winter travel hazardous. Winter drawdowns also reduce the threat of ice damage to waterfront retaining wall and dock piers. The lower lake level provides some space for the winter precipitation to accumulate once the lake is totally iced over. Sometimes shoreline aquatic plants, both native and invasive, are killed. Thus, winter drawdowns are an inexpensive lake management method. Since the State of Connecticut has property rights on Highland Lake, the Town must apply for a Department of Energy and Environmental Protection permit to conduct all winter drawdowns and comply with its policy.

#### Possible Negative Impacts

Winter drawdowns are a double-edged sword since there are potential, even probable, detriments. Here are the most important dangers:

1. **Water Quality** - The HLWA Water Quality Committee and Dr. George Knoecklein (limnologist) monitor factors that are most important in maintaining good water quality, i.e., phosphorous, nitrogen, oxygen, temperature, clarity and pH. During a drawdown, particularly a deep drawdown, the aquatic plants within 3-6 feet of the shoreline are exposed to the cold and are totally or partially killed. They proceed to decompose, releasing the phosphorous and other nutrients they contain to the lake water. Also, the biomass of their foliage gets washed into the water and results in additional "sludge" that fills the lakebed. The added nutrients can result in the growth of algae that can be aesthetically unpleasant and/or toxic and odorous.

Decomposition of plant life also consumes oxygen. Therefore, the oxygen content of the lake water is somewhat depleted and can trigger the release of phosphorous in the lakebed. Increased amounts of phosphorous fuel plant and algae growth, thus setting up a detrimental cycle.

2. **Lake Sediment** - During winter drawdowns, many acres of Highland Lake's shoreline sediment are exposed to wind, air, precipitation, wave action and ice scour. The sediment becomes dry, compact and altered chemically. While the lake water is receding, fine particles of sediment are moved to deeper areas or blown away. This leaves larger material behind and negatively impacts the fish habitats, insects and

even plant life. During deep winter drawdowns, we have seen large quantities of fine silt in Sucker Brook Cove, blown from the exposed, dry surface and deposited on lake owners' property and elsewhere in the lake.

3. **Aquatic Plants** - While deep winter drawdowns may partially control shoreline aquatic plants by freezing them, we have found the plants are now growing in deeper water that can't be reached with our drawdowns. Thus, we have turned to applying a herbicide on the invasive plants for more effective control. Also, some beneficial native species can be killed, which shifts the type of vegetation in the lake. Perhaps you have noticed changes in the type of plant life near your waterfront. Sometimes when one species dies off, it provides an ideal environment for another species, particularly an invasive, to take over.
4. **Food Chain** - We have heard of the concept of the big fish eating the little fish. Winter drawdowns expose many slow-moving organisms such as snails, insects and crayfish and leave them stranded to be consumed by birds or other wildlife. Some are able to relocate as the water recedes but are exposed to conditions they aren't adapted to. An important food source for many fish is crayfish. They may attempt to burrow in the silt near the shoreline and perish as the lakebed freezes. In turn, the loss of a food source at the lower end of the food chain makes an impact on higher level organisms. For example the fish, whose primary food source is crayfish, may starve and result in less food for water fowl such as ospreys and eagles.
5. **Fishery** - When the lake level is lowered even 3 feet, there is a population of small fish that lives in the beds of aquatic plants; they may become trapped or stranded and perish. Other small fish may swim into deeper water but, with the lack of vegetative protection, are subject to predation by larger fish, fish-eating mammals or birds. Again, the balance of nature is altered with mixed results.

In the spring, refill of the lake to "full pond" depends on snow melt and precipitation. If the winter/spring precipitation is lower than normal and the lake does not resume spillway level, juvenile fish production may be hindered due to the lack of appropriate spawning sites.

6. **Mud Islands** - Deep winter drawdowns expose several of Highland Lake's shallow coves to the possibility of having lakebed stumps, debris and sediment freeze into a large block. If there is heavy spring rain as the ice is melting, the water can get under the massive mud island and raise it to the surface much like an ice cube floating in a glass of water. The frozen mass is subject to wind and can be blown into the shoreline where it melts and deposits the stumps, rocks and sediment. Several years ago, Resha Beach and the properties on the southern side of the cove were littered with the dangerous debris. The beach had to be closed until the debris was removed and property owners were faced with their own shoreline cleanup. In an effort to avoid this situation this fall, the deep drawdown will start two weeks earlier than in the past (October 1) and will end on December 15. The intent is to allow the coves to refill somewhat before the severe freezing

takes place. Hopefully this will prevent another dangerous and unsightly mud island from forming.

### Drawdown Management Recommendation

In 2008, HLWA's limnologist consultant Dr. George Knoecklein did a comprehensive study of Highland Lake in relation to our history of winter drawdowns. He analyzed water quality data that was recorded as long ago as 1938 up through the current information. Dr. Knoecklein also calculated factors such as the acreage of exposed lakebed, gallons of lake water released and refill capability in relation to multiyear precipitation data.

His overall lake management recommendation was to do fewer deep winter drawdowns. He found that many of the negative effects described above applied to Highland Lake and enhanced the decline in water quality and health of the ecosystem. The Water Level Committee has heeded his advice in proposing and advocating that deep winter drawdowns be done no more than every five years. We are fortunate to have their commitment to pursue objective data and volunteer their time and talents in working to preserve Highland Lake.

### Membership Services

by *Patty Masucci*

Each year I put out a plea for new members to get involved in the HLWA organization, not just as a member but as an active member. Now more than ever we need you with your talents to step up to the plate and help keep this lake as pristine and beautiful as you found it when you decided to move here.

There are numerous ways that you may help!! Every spring and fall we hold a cleanup campaign. About 25 people get together and walk around a designated assigned area and place all trash and debris into garbage bags that are left in an area where the town agrees to pick it up and take it to the dump. We go into the wooded areas about 10 feet to reach articles that have been thrown from passing cars and trucks. We need to find a way to get through to passers-by that littering is illegal and to please not do it here at Highland Lake. We all need to get consciences ourselves that tell us to inform our friends and visitors we care about our lake and to please help us keep it so beautiful by picking up after themselves. This will have already happened by the time you read this newsletter as it was scheduled for April 27.

The annual meeting set for July 12, 2014 is important for all residents to attend and tell us what you are looking for here at Highland Lake. Are you only here in the summer or are you here year round? If I had more help, we could plan an activity each month. We could do a skating party or a class on history of the Highland Lake. What is your pleasure? There are many knowledgeable residents here at Highland Lake. There is a swim group that meets from June till September swimming three times a week as weather permits and a few of the really good swimmers have started to have a swim-the-lake day to raise money for water quality.

Other activities to keep a look out for are: food and wine tasting in August, annual meeting and boat parade in July, ItsAllAboutFun relay race in September. If there is there an activity you would like to see happen at our lake, please speak out and call Patty Masucci at 860.379.2303.

## It's Blue Circle Award Time Again!

by *Clare Stevens*

Several years ago, the HLWA began a tradition of recognizing property owners who demonstrate lake water quality and watershed protection by the methods used to landscape and maintain their property. Blue Circle Awards will be presented at the HLWA annual meeting the second Saturday of July. Please help us to spotlight and publicize the efforts of one or more of our environmentally friendly neighbors. Some examples of lake stewardship practices are:

1. landscapes property with trees, shrubs and plants that will prevent erosion and be aesthetically appropriate for the natural lake environment;
2. uses landscaping techniques such as terracing, lakeside buffer gardens and rain gardens to prevent erosion and manage storm water;
3. removes only diseased or dead trees and replaces those where feasible;
4. maintains property by using a minimal amount of phosphate fertilizer and pesticides; seeks alternative methods to provide needed nutrients for vegetation, natural methods of weed control and pest control;
5. sends soil samples to UConn Agricultural Extension Service for analysis; uses that information to determine appropriate types and amount of fertilizer or other nutrients needed for healthy grass, plants, shrubs and trees (if needed at all);
6. reduces or eliminates the amount of lawn by using ground cover and shrubs which are less fertilizer/pesticide dependent and have greater capacity to control erosion; adds native vegetation which is less pesticide dependent;
7. chooses a minimal amount of impervious surfaces, i.e., uses gravel, flat stones or pavers for driveways and walkways instead of cement or asphalt;
8. selects effective drainage techniques to accommodate severe storm events (may include dry wells, curtain drains, gutters, or rock barriers to break the force of flowing water); keeps gutters and storm drains clean and free of debris;
9. prevents lake shoreline erosion by providing an effective retaining wall or other natural shoreline protection;
10. obeys State of Connecticut Boating Regulations which require water vessels to travel 100 feet from shore or a dock when moving more than 6 mph (personal watercraft are required to be 200 feet from shore or dock); this prevents shoreline erosion as well as safety for swimmers;
11. does not feed/entice waterfowl since their waste is detrimental to lake water quality; removes pet waste from landscape;
12. minimizes use of soaps and chemicals for car, house siding and boat cleaning to prevent them from leaching into the lake or aquifer;



- 13. removes sand and debris from storm drains adjacent to their property to increase their effectiveness in keeping lake water clean;
- 14. prevents oil/gas spills from cars, boats or mechanical equipment;
- 15. recycles vegetation through composting; disposes unwanted vegetation a safe distance from the lake or takes it to a landfill;
- 16. observes all land use on the watershed and is proactive in its preservation and protection; and/or
- 17. volunteers to serve on Town boards, commissions and committees pertaining to watershed protection (Board of Selectmen, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Conservation Commission, Water Level Committee, Dock and Mooring Committee, etc.).
- 18. Everyone who lives in the Highland Lake watershed is eligible to nominate a person whom you believe to be worthy, or apply yourself for the Blue Circle Award. (HLWA Board of Directors members are not eligible.)

**Nomination/Application for HLWA Blue Circle Award**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a brief description of the actions you or your nominee take that demonstrate your stewardship of Highland Lake. Refer to examples above or others you may think of.

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If you have any pictures that show the stewardship activities, they would be very helpful. Please include them with this application.  
**The application deadline is July 1.**

Please email your application to [hlwa@snet.net](mailto:hlwa@snet.net) or mail to Highland Lake Watershed Association, P.O. Box 1022, Winsted, CT 06098.

**The History of the Development of Highland Lake - Part Two**

*This is the second 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 relates the presence of the first boats on the lake and the completion of the boulevard.*

The first attempt to run a pleasure boat on the lake was made by Mr. Harlow Spenser, a veteran balloonist. His boat, the "Lady of the Lake," made round trips on Thursdays and Saturdays for 25 cents but was sold and removed in 1862.

A little propeller (*driven*) boat called "Aetna" with a seating capacity of fifteen was brought here from New Britain in 1876 and, under the supervision of Captain J.H.O. Batchelder, did passenger service on the lake that summer but was evidently not sufficiently patronized as it was sold to Springfield parties the next spring.

In 1881 the Howe Brothers had a passenger boat on the lake known as the "Iron Clad," and on at least one occasion, the Union Cornet Band gave a concert from this boat. The propeller was worked by hand power through a curious device, and, unlike the various other passenger boats, this one continued in use for more than fifteen years.

The next steamer to appear on the lake was the "Tunxis," which made trips to Cold Spring in second bay in 1881. An amusing story is told regarding this boat. A stranger appeared at the lake one day, took a ride on the steamer, and appeared greatly pleased with it. After some discussion as to the price, he bought the boat on the written guarantee the money would be refunded if after running it one day the purchaser was not satisfied. The day was fine and the business was rushing all day long but after the last trip the new owner declared himself dissatisfied and demanded his money back. Although rather mystified, the original owner kept his word and bought back his boat, the stranger leaving quit hastily before the proprietor realized how he had been cleverly done out of the proceeds of a busy day's business.

On July 24, 1884, Mr. Harvey Wakefield, a retired farmer from Colebrook living at 163 Main Street, died leaving quite a sizeable estate. Mr. Henry Gay, who had been Mr. Wakefield's financial adviser and knew he had put off making his will, although he had discussed the matter with Mr. Gay several times. Upon hearing of his serious illness, Mr. Gay went to see Mr. Wakefield and induced him to complete the document. By the terms of this will, after gifts of \$1,000 each to various churches, the Borough of Winsted and the First District School, together with a few smaller bequests, the balance of his property was given to the Town of Winchester.

At the town meeting in October of that year, it was voted by a majority of five to one to use this money in the building of a lakeside drive to be known as the Wakefield Boulevard. Among those who opposed this proposition wishing to apply the money toward the reduction of the Town's indebtedness (*things haven't changed in all these years*), were such influential citizens as B.B. Rockwell, Wm. L. Gilbert, S.B. Horne and Wm. C. Phelps.

Mr. Wakefield, who was a widower at the time of his death, had a housekeeper by the name of Mrs. Brazee who was reported to have been greatly disappointed in the way he left his money. She immediately put in a claim for \$4,000 for services. The administrators asked the court to appoint commissioners to judge all claims; Mr. Brazee was awarded \$3.50 and Mrs. Brazee \$321. Four days after the rendering of this decision Mrs. Brazee was found dead in her room having committed suicide by cutting her throat with a razor.

By the fourth of July 1886, the Boulevard had been completed on the west side of the lake as far as Cold Spring in Second Bay. A few weeks later, rights of way had been secured as far as Sucker Brook, and blasting was begun through the ledges between Cold Springs and Second Narrows. It was reported the receipts from the Wakefield legacy had totaled \$11,855.25, of which \$9,600 remained after paying for the first section of the drive.

Real estate operations began to take place along the shores of the lake. Wm. L. Camp secured a tract of land in third bay from Fittus Stack and offered building lots for sale. He was the first to erect a cottage on the Boulevard and take his family there for a vacation.

Work of blasting through the ledge on the west shore by second bay was delayed by the necessity of hauling the dynamite by teams from Worcester, Mass. While in charge of this work, Mr. Charles Carey was so severely injured by the premature explosion of a stick of dynamite, which he was holding in his hand, that he died soon after being removed from the home of his sister Mrs. Verschoyle. On the completion of the second section of the drive, extending the road to Sucker Brook, a bronze tablet was placed on the face of the ledge in second bay bearing the following inscription.

*"A tribute of remembrance to Harvey Wakefield, a citizen of Winchester, in grateful recognition of his bequest to the Town, which has enabled it to provide for public use of this Lakeside Drive."*

*This tablet can still be seen in second bay and is adjacent to the bronze tablet erected on August 13, 2009 by the HLWA in recognition of the preservation of the last open space land on the lake, a project which took six years from the time of preliminary discussions to the erection of the tablet.*

*"It reads: Purchased by donations to the Highland Lake Watershed Association and through the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program, this 7.9 acre parcel was deeded to the Winchester Land Trust on June 13, 2007."*

*(The fall newsletter will contain another article on the history of the development of Highland Lake and will describe the continuing work on Wakefield Boulevard as well as the many political battles on changing the name of the lake.)*

## Margaritaville Dinner/Dance - HLWA Style

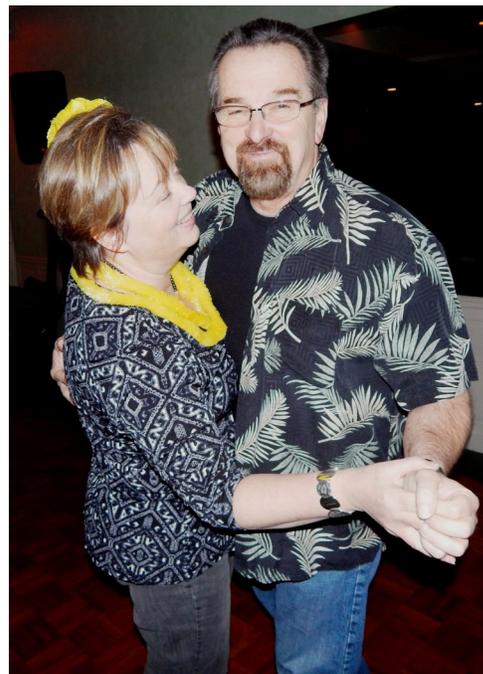
by Patty Masucci

On March 1, 2014, about 60 people attended the dinner/dance held at Crystal Peak. We know numbers do not really matter, but because our numbers were down for this event, the HLWA did not make any money on this dinner/dance. That is why we say this event is not a money maker!! If by chance we happen to come out a little ahead of the game - wonderful!! But we run this event so the winter residents here at Highland Lake can come and see their friends and have a delightful meal and a lot of fun. So next year, please try to plan to attend this event and join everyone in the lake festivities. Janet Closson planned and created all the decorations for the event! Kudos to Janet - every time she is in charge of an event, she attends to every single little detail. She planned a limbo dance, and many people were on their feet remembering when this was a common recreational event in the good old days!! Two prizes were awarded to the last two people still doing the limbo at the completion, and they were Rhonda Marchand and Sandy Macinaus.

A silent auction and raffle were held with items donated by our downtown merchants. Give our **merchants a thank you** next time you stop in their store. And remember to shop here in Winsted and give support to all those merchants who support us here at Highland Lake.

John and Jennifer Roller, who own Crystal Peak, planned a very nice Jimmy Buffet-style meal and a wide array of desserts that said Margaritaville with each bite. All in all, any event that has smiles upon smiles on everyone's faces is truly a success. So a **big** thank you to all who helped with every aspect of this event. Those include Janet Closson, Sandy Macinaus, Jean Labich, Mary Barbro, Terry Platt, Annmarie Janczak and Patty and Donald Masucci.





## Spring Cleanup

by Marcia Winn

It sounded too easy to not do. HLWA was looking for volunteers for their annual Spring Cleanup Day. I volunteered Kevin and me and gave the warning I was totally a fair weather friend and would **not** participate if Mother Nature did not cooperate. Well not only was Mother Nature basically on our side, but Mr. Bear made a surprise visit in our front yard as we started out. Now what could top that!

Kevin and I were well armed with work gloves, bags, and Pat's warning to not go too far into the woods. We knew we would find garbage to pick up but what we actually found in our two hours was much more than that.

We picked up dozens of glass bottles in all different beautiful colors - reds, blues, greens, clear, and browns. We picked up soda cans, beers cans, water bottles and lots of papers. At least two entire garbage bags had been torn apart and strewn all over - perhaps from Mr. Bear???? A muffler, several pieces of metal, some chicken wire fencing, three balls - tennis, golf and softball. A plastic ring pop, an empty bubble bottle, an empty rusty paint can (yes, we both have current tetanus shots!), and lots of

styrofoam and plastic cups. Fast food wrappers, cups, and containers were plentiful. And my favorite item - some dominoes with their white pips still shiny.

But the nature part of our walk is what I will remember. We noticed squirrels racing around. We found primrose plants fully budded and almost ready to open hidden deep under some brush - making us wonder how the sun was able to get to them at all. I learned to clear the leaves from the catch basins so the water will flow - reminding me of Winnie the Pooh's game of Phoosticks. We watched a very tall tree being taken down by a professional company and marveled at how easy they made it look and how it was done so eloquently. We saw a tree with several very large holes - evidence of some wonderful meals had by woodpeckers. We enjoyed the company of each other and the quietness of Highland Lake on a spring Sunday morning.

And now when we take our usual walks around the lake, we will most likely remember to bring a plastic bag with us to pick up whatever garbage we do find. As we learned, if lots of people each pick up the garbage they see, the lake will be a much prettier place for us all!!



From left: Sam Sciacca at Longpond Ridge, Kevin and Marcia Winn, and Susan Hoffnagle and Mark Michelson. Below is the entire crew at the luncheon.



## Boat Parade

by *Patty Masucci*

The HLWA annual boat parade will again take place the same day as the HLWA's annual meeting - July 12. Please attend the meeting and then go home, decorate your boat and enter the yearly boat parade contest. The categories that will be judged this year are as follows: Most Original; Most Patriotic; Most Comical; Judge's Choice Award; and the Group with the Most Energy. Now **pay close attention** as we are offering a Land Lubber's Lavish Lore Award - so tell your story on land or on water and receive this award!!! Now get creative - put on your thinking caps and come up with some wonderful, fun decorated boats and property. Be the first to think up your theme and Win, Win, Win!!

If we have more than 35 entrants, more prizes will be awarded. If you are a first-time entrée, let us know and I will have a special first-time entree prize for you!! Let's get the **spirit** moving across the waters of Highland Lake!! Get creative and win!!

## Attention – Deep Drawdown Year Water Level Will Start to Drop October 1

by *Shirley Allshouse, Chairman, Water Level Committee*

For those of you who may want to do waterfront maintenance projects this year, 2014 is the year for our deeper drawdown in the fall.

Here is what will happen:

The gate will open October 1 (a month earlier than usual), and the water will be allowed to go down as much as it can, but not beyond 8 feet. This whole period, of course, depends upon Mother Nature. It might go down the entire 8 feet or we might have lots of rain which could prevent it from reaching that 8-foot mark. Regardless of whether or not it gets to the 8 feet down, the gate will definitely be closed on December 15 (also a month earlier than usual). It is hoped the earlier close of the gate will allow the coves to have enough water by the time there is a sustained hard freeze in order to prevent destructive bogs from forming.

This means you need to be aware of possibly taking your boats out earlier than usual. You will need to make your contractor aware of this window of opportunity and to emphasize 8 feet down is a maximum but the level to which the lake will actually go down is an unknown. The schedule explained above will be strictly kept and there are no exceptions. There is a permit issued by the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission for the drawdown.

The Water Level Committee is a five-member committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen and has been in existence for 16 years. We are charged with establishing a proposed long-term (five-year) water level policy for Highland Lake, which is submitted to the Board of Selectmen for acceptance. If accepted, then the town applies to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission for a permit to proceed with the policy and the Winchester Public Works Department carries out the policy by controlling the gate.

2015-16 and 2016-17 will be 3-foot drawdowns. This current policy runs through 2016-2017, at which time the Committee will review and analyze all of its additional data from the previous five years and establish a policy going forward for another five years.

The Committee has amassed a lot of data and experience over all of these years. It also consults with a limnologist (Dr. George Knoecklein) to analyze the information and discuss best practices for lake health. We are very much aware of the fact the policy does not please everyone. However, it is a 445-acre body of water that cannot and must not be manipulated by request for individual convenience. The Committee takes everything into consideration when it adopts a policy, including weed growth and migration, weed kill, risk of property damage from ice, the desire to have exposure to do waterfront maintenance, the safety and preservation of the town beach, the formation of dangerous and destructive floating bogs, the littoral right of waterfront residents to have year-round access to the water (whether frozen or not), rate of fill, and other issues.

Please help with this notification by passing the information along.

## Legacy Program

by *Dick Labich*

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

In the fall issue of the 2009 edition of the newsletter, the Board of Directors announced the beginning of an HLWA open space initiative aptly called the Legacy Program, as it represents an important feature of the HLWA mission to preserve the Highland Lake Watershed for future generations. The Legacy open space program will help to ensure the environmental protection of Highland Lake for many years to come.

Later that year, in 2009, we announced we had accepted donations of three properties on the east side of the lake. Since then we have closed more than 30 properties around the lake and are in the process of closing six more. The assessed value of these properties we hold deeds to is nearly \$200,000.

These donors are aware of our goals for preservation of the lake but realistically realize the tax benefits that are available for these donations. They also realize open space is necessary to reduce the contaminants that would otherwise enter the lake.

As Jen Perga reported in the last issue of the newsletter, the HLWA and Winchester Land Trust (WLT) are working together on projects to assure as much open space as possible is preserved in the watershed.

In addition, in the past we have received generous donations of money for the Legacy program. It should be noted anyone considering a donation to the Legacy program should make out a check payable to the "HLWA Legacy Program" and send it to P.O. Box 1022, Winsted, CT 06098. Before considering any donation to the Legacy Program, you should consult your tax accountant or financial adviser. If you have any questions, please call Mike Peacock at 860-738-1941 or me at 860-738-0167.

## Boating Rules and Regulations

by Dick Labich

It is quite possible new Highland Lake residents or visitors to the lake from other states may not be aware of some of the many rules and regulations governing boating on Highland Lake or on water bodies elsewhere in the state. I will try to outline some of the more important regulations, but for a complete listing of all those that apply please look in the 2014 Connecticut Boater's Guide published by the Connecticut State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. These guides are available in the Town Clerk's office in Town Hall.

### Certification

Connecticut residents who have registered their boats in Connecticut must have a Safe Boating Certificate (SBC) or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO) to legally operate any boat with a motor or a sailboat 19 1/2 feet in length or longer.

Any person operating a personal watercraft must possess either a CPWO issued by Connecticut or a state recognized by Connecticut.

You must have either an SBC or CPWO on board at all times while operating your boat.

### Registration

Boats must be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the registration card issued by the DMV must be available on the boat. In addition, the validation decals issued by the DMV must be displayed on the side of the boat.

Documented boats numbered by other states which are moored, docked or operated more than 60 days in Connecticut must obtain a validation decal. In addition, the owner of the boat must acquire a boating certificate to operate the boat in Connecticut water bodies.

### Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

There must be a wearable lifejacket on board for each person aboard each boat. Each lifejacket must be readily accessible and must fit the intended wearer. Any child under 13 must wear the lifejacket at all times while the boat is underway.

Any person operating a PWC must wear a lifejacket. Any person being pulled behind a boat (such as towing or skiing) must also wear a lifejacket.

### Additional Safety Equipment

Sound Producing Devices – Whistle (Horn): There must be some means of making an efficient sound signal.

### Boating Regulations

Exceeding noise levels is a serious problem. The state reports Marine Police will be targeting areas to check for compliance. Exceeding noise levels will result in a fine of \$220. Failing to submit to an on-site noise level test will result in a fine of \$435. Subsequent failures to submit will result in a fine of \$535.

Water-skiing is forbidden between 1/2 hour after sunset until sunrise or when visibility is restricted to less than 100 yards.

Towing of a person or persons on an inner tube without handholds is prohibited.

No person shall operate a motorboat, excluding a personal water craft, at a speed in excess of Slow-No Wake (less than 6 miles per hour) within 100 feet of shore, or a dock, pier, float or anchored or moored vessel, unless taking off or landing a water skier.

No person shall operate a personal water craft at a speed in excess of Slow-No Wake (less than 6 miles per hour) within 200 feet of shore, or a dock, pier, float or anchored or moored vessel, unless taking off or landing a water-skier.

### Specific Local Regulations for Highland Lake

Regulations: 6 mph limit from 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise, and 6 mph limit from 5:00 p.m. Sunday to 1/2 hour before sunrise on Monday (Sunday before Memorial Day to Sunday preceding Labor Day.) 45 mph limit on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Boats greater than 22 feet in length and pontoon boats greater than 30 feet in length are prohibited. No staging or personal watercraft, motorboat or water-skiing activities from town-owned beaches or park. Overnight mooring is prohibited.

## Progress of the Highland Lake Signage

by Raymond Juros

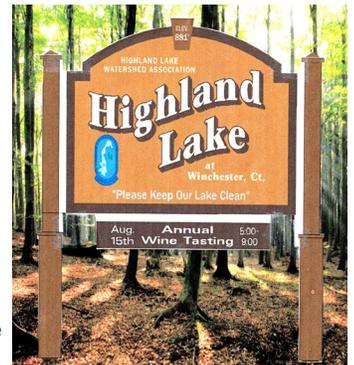
The fund raising is slow and we have only about 30% (\$5,000) of the needed \$15,000. We mailed a Fund Raising Appeal in May to the watershed membership inviting them to participate in this appeal so that we may start construction and hopefully install the signs this spring.

Getting permission from the State of Connecticut to put up a sign near Taylor Brook Park has been very difficult to obtain so far. However, we are still talking with our state legislatures, and we are still considering permission from private land owners in that location.

To recap, our fund raising goal is still \$15,000. This last (2nd) appeal raised only about \$2,000. Our next and third appeal will be to local businesses and should hit the mail in a week. Your twenty and fifty dollar bills are still needed! We started to construct the signs last week and are planning the "sign raising" installation the week before Memorial Day.

Raising the funds for the lake signage has been as difficult as getting Mother Nature to send some warm sunshine these **latest wet spring days!!!**

However, we are hopefully looking forward to sunny days and showers of money in the mail. **You** are encouraged to send your tax-free donations to Highland Lake Watershed Association, a nonprofit organization, at PO Box 1022, Winsted, Conn 06098. Please "note" your donation as specific for "Lake Signage"!!!!!!



## Save a Life, It May Be Your Own!

by Dick Labich

The HLWA has been furnishing reflective, home address signs and horizontal dock signs since 2005 and during that time have delivered 223 signs to residents in and out of the Highland Lake watershed. During this time we have reminded residents of the fact that emergencies can happen and every second counts if it means a delay of the emergency medical technicians, police or fire personnel. If they cannot find you in time because they have to guess what house you are calling from or what driveway leads to your home, it could mean the difference between life and death. This is especially true at night in our rural setting. This is why you need a reflective sign that illuminates at night from the headlights of first responders. As we reported in our Fall 2013 *Highland Lake News*, Jim Hutchison of the Winsted Area Ambulance Association stated, "**You can die without one.**"

The Winchester Board of Selectmen passed an ordinance requiring a home address sign on your dock. Dock and Mooring Ordinance (Sec. 162) requires "Reflectors shall be affixed to the ends of a dock." In addition: "The street number of the property (in numbers at least 3 inches high) shall be affixed to the end of a dock so as to be visible from the watercourse."

Now is the time to order your signs if you haven't yet done so.

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 \_\_\_\_\_

### A Special for the Annual Meeting!!

Patty's Shoppe is taking orders for ceramic mugs and tiles (trivets), among other things.

Mugs with four lake pictures - \$10.00 each a set of four for \$30.00

Trivets any design - \$15.00 each or a set of four for \$45.00

A set of four coasters for \$25.00

Ornaments - \$10.00 each a set of four for \$30.00

All clothing in stock will be 20 percent off. Spend \$100.00 and receive a free pennant!!

### Sign Donations as of 4/28/14

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Elizabeth Fitzgerald  
Thomas Sodloski  
Betty Formaggioni  
Thomas Flaherty  
Robert and Maureen Ney  
Gerald and Concetta Skutt  
Beverly Paganelli  
Sue Doyle  
David Guillet  
Carol and Tony Zacchio  
Christopher Warren and Linette Branham  
Thomas and Ann Ferretti  
Tracy and Robert Bates, Jr.  
Mary Fazzino  
Wayne Hoffman  
Edward and Matthew Smith  
Jeanne and Thomas Hinman  
John and Margaret Boglarski  
Peter and Linda Halstead  
Eddice Jesse  
Mark and Jill Ricci  
Gaye Schempp  
Arline Fazzino  
Richard and Carmel Nardella  
Robert and Kathleen Brackett  
Heather and Edward Dzielak  
Evan and Donna McDermott  
Neal Keating  
Dawn Vanyo  
Jack Hillman, Sr.  
Kalyn and Peter Flockhart  
Robert and Marie Lauzon

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

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

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## Bunga---Ode

There's a jingle in the jungle,

'Neath the juniper and pine,  
They are mangling the tangle  
Of the underbrush and vine,  
And my blood is all a-tingle  
At the sound of blow on blow  
As I count each single shingle  
On my bosky bungalowow.

There's a jingle in the jungle,  
I am counting every nail,  
And my mind is bungaloded,  
Bungaloping down the trail;  
And I dream of every jingle  
Angle at my ease,  
Naught to set my nerves a-jingle,  
I may bungle all I please.

For I oft get bungalonley  
In the mingled human drove,  
And I long for bungalofing  
In some bungalotus grove,  
In a cooling bung' location  
Where no troubling trails intrude,  
'Neath some bungalowy roof tree  
In the east bungalongitude.

Oh, I think with bungalothing  
Of the strangling social swim,  
Where they wrangle after bangles  
Or for some newfangled whim;  
And I know by bungalogic  
That is all my bungalowow  
That a little bungalotion  
Mendith every mortal moan!

Oh, a man that's bungaloning  
For the dingle and the loam  
Is a very bungalobster  
If he dangles on at home.  
Catch the bungalocomotive;  
If you cannot pay the fee,  
Why, a bungalooan'll do it -  
You can borrow it from me!

*Written by Burgess Johnson probably in 1911.*

This poem above was in a collection of Highland Lake memorabilia I purchased about 10 years ago. This poem was in a renters' book that belonged to Weowna Lodge Bungalow.

The book starts in 1911 and goes yearly till 1933. The cottage was rented for \$20 per week or \$200 for a summer season of 10 weeks. But loving poetry myself, I found the poem to be unique and endearing and written by a very talented person. I'm hoping you also enjoyed reading this poem. The book is written entirely in cursive handwriting, which I understand the school system wants to curtail for the reason it is not necessary anymore. How sad that perhaps young children will not be able to read the words written so long ago.

*Submitted by Patty Masucci*



# 2014 Lakeside Tag Sale

by Jean Labich

We did it again!

We brought out the sun.

We brought out the crowds.

We brought honor to the waters of Highland Lake.

And over and above the warm and fuzzy feeling we all get when we work together, we brought home about \$2,000 for the HLWA. Congratulations to each and every one of us!



*Clockwise from above, a young customer displaying her purchase; Annmarie Janczak with the seasonal items; Mary Barbro, Sheila Borla, and Sarah Munley; Patty Massuci selling HLWA items.*



## Recipe Corner

by Marlene Rouleau

Here are a couple of great recipes from dishes brought to the spring cleanup. The fruit salad is from Marcia Winn and the Bourbon Meatballs are from Carol Zacchio.

### Molded Cranberry Fruit Salad

#### Ingredients

- 2 8-ounce cans crushed pineapple, drained, reserving juice
- 1 cup cranberry juice cocktail (or any mixed red juice flavor)
- 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 3-ounce packages raspberry (or any red) flavored gelatin (I always use sugar free)
- 2 14-ounce cans whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1 cup chopped apple or celery (if desired)

#### Directions

Combine reserved pineapple juice, cranberry juice cocktail and lemon juice in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add gelatin, stirring until it is completely dissolved. Break up cranberry sauce with a fork. Stir into gelatin mixture.

Refrigerate until mixture begins to set. Stir in pineapple and celery. Pour into an 8-cup mold. The only mold I've ever used is the Tupperware one below. I have one of these in both my homes and swear by it. Chill until firm. Makes 16 servings.

### Bourbon Meatballs

- 1 bag Swedish frozen meatballs
  - 1/3 cup bourbon - Old Granddad
  - 1/2 cup ketchup
  - 1/2 cup brown sugar
- Heat 3 sauce ingredients. Pour over frozen meatballs.

Heat in crockpot 3+ hours. Stir occasionally.

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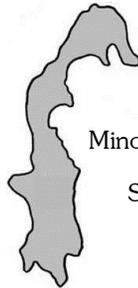


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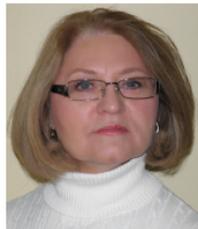
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