



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

**President's Message** by Sam Sciacca

**Winter 2016-17**



As we move into the winter months, it would be logical to assume HLWA activity drops off with the declining activity on the lake. It would be logical, but it would be wrong. This time of year, the HLWA Board and volunteers remain very active on a number of things. It is this time of year we work with the Town to develop the proposed budget for herbicide treatment and water sampling/monitoring for the next fiscal year. Our Government and Legacy Committees continue to monitor Town activities and work with the Town on issues such as land acquisition, a new marine patrol boat and P&Z regulations. Our Membership Committee is busy working on plans for the Penguin Plunge (no winter dance this year, though), and we begin to think about the makeup of our Board for the coming year.

During the Bylaws revision of 2013, there was much discussion about term limits for Board members. The issue was very emotional, as term limits would eventually cost us the services of long-term contributors to the Board (many board members have served well over 10 years). On the other hand, it was recognized change on a board offers the opportunity to bring in new viewpoints and expand the participation in board activities to different circles of our membership. In the end, the Board decided to enact term limits to encourage a change in makeup and to bring new members into the governance structure of the HLWA. So now that the Board has created the environment to ensure new board membership, it is now up to the general membership to respond. Between now and the annual meeting in July, we will be looking for individuals who have an interest in serving on the Board of Directors. It doesn't take a special talent or skill set; all it takes is a genuine interest in the well-being of the Association and the lake. If you have an interest, please contact Rose Molinelli ([rpm2028@gmail.com](mailto:rpm2028@gmail.com)) or any Board member to express your interest.

One of the recurring themes of Board deliberation is the role HLWA should play in matters related to the residents of the lake and surrounding area, but not of direct impact to water quality and lake preservation. Over the course of the last season, we have heard from residents and members on a diverse range of issues including drone operation, noise ordinances, deed restrictions, road painting, speeding, littoral rights, seasonal lake drawdown, docking and mooring ordinances, state boat ramp operation and access, wake restriction ordinances, and marine patrol activity. Generally, the Board is reluctant to get involved in such matters, although we are also residents and property owners who wish an enjoyable and safe lake experience for all. The primary reason the Board does not become involved in such issues is they are not in our charter. Another reason is involvement in these areas can distract us from the issues that are of direct concern to water quality. Still another is some of these matters are between residents and members, and the HLWA Board feels the Association should not attempt to resolve issues which more properly should be resolved among neighbors or through the appropriate Town authority. The notable exception to this is the marine patrol issue. The original charter committee of the HLWA included a provision that calls for HLWA to assist the Town in the area of marine patrol. Towards that end, we are working with the Town and the Police Department to secure a much-needed replacement for the patrol boat. Expect to hear more about this in the coming months.

*(continued on next page)*

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### President's Message (cont.)

Finally, let's all hope for a snow-packed winter and very wet spring to replenish the water table in the state. Toward mid-October, before the drawdown, the lake was down 18 inches, and there was at least one known report of a residential well on lake vicinity property that ran dry. I have been reminded by longtime observers that the lake has never failed to fill up in the spring after drawdown. On the other hand, it was also observed the state has never experienced a drought of both magnitude and duration we have just experienced in the last six months, an observation supported by historical records of the Palmer Drought Indices for the last forty years (<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/temp-and-precip/drought/historical-palmers/psi/197610-201609>). Hopefully, Mother Nature will realize she's been a bit stingy with the water and move to rectify that in the next 4-5 months in time for the 2017 season.

### Supporting our Mission

The Highland Lake Watershed Association is fortunate to have many donors who help support our mission to preserve and protect Highland Lake and its watershed. If you are looking to honor an individual, group or even business, consider a donation to HLWA. A letter will be sent informing individuals of gifts made in their honor. This is a lovely way to acknowledge an important event or loss and support a special cause.

Please consider donations to HLWA for all occasions:

- \* In honor of a wedding
- \* In honor of a special life event or birthday
- \* In memory of a loved one
- \* In lieu of flowers
- \* In lieu of gifts
- \* Or just because . . .

### Attention Holiday Shoppers!!!

#### **HLWA Now Registered with AmazonSmile!!**

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support, and we would be truly appreciative if you choose HLWA!!! To shop at AmazonSmile, simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

Tens of millions of products on AmazonSmile are eligible for donations. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. Use your already existing account on Amazon.com for AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, wish list, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

#### **How Do I Select HLWA When Shopping on AmazonSmile?**

On your first visit to AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)), you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Select Highland Lake Watershed Association. They will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation.

We thank you in advance for choosing us!

### HLWA Thank You!

For the past several years, Larry Beck and Jan Gyurko have organized a swim/paddleboard event to raise money to benefit Highland Lake water quality. This year, their effort resulted in \$1,595 being contributed to HLWA to be for activities such as water sampling, studies and documentation of the progress HLWA is making on preserving the lake and educating the public on the need to support efforts to keep the lake a treasure for sporting and recreational activity for many years to come.

Please join the Board in thanking Larry and Jan for the energy and enthusiasm they exhibit in the name of Highland Lake, and we're sure they would welcome any interest you may have in participating in a future event. If you don't know Larry and Jan, please drop us a line and we will put you into contact with them.

### Lake Geography

The longest distance that can be traveled in a straight line on Highland Lake is 1.75 miles.

The shortest distance from Resha Beach to the south end of the lake is 2.65 miles.

The narrows between Second and Third Bays are 197 feet. This means it is not possible to travel through the narrows at speed without violating the state wake restrictions (no wake 100 feet from shore unless starting or dropping off a waterskier).

*Please note, we will not be hosting a winter dinner dance this year. To be involved in the planning of other social events, including the summer Evening on Highland Lake, please contact [bethpapermaster@gmail.com](mailto:bethpapermaster@gmail.com).*



## Water Data Collection Update

by Sam Sciacca

### Lake Hydrology

The cold weather of late fall and winter is a very dynamic and important time for Highland Lake. Through the summer and early fall, the lake develops a thermocline in which cold water remains at the bottom of the lake and warm water remains at the top. While we enjoy the warm top waters for recreational activity, a thermocline allows the bottom portion of the lake to become very depleted in dissolved oxygen as no mixing is taking place. Additionally, the warm top waters become too warm for some fish species and conducive to algae growth.

The first effect of colder weather is to cool the shallow areas. As early as mid October, trout return to the shallows and Sucker Brook Cove, able to feed on the small fish and crustaceans which are more plentiful there than in deep waters. As the top waters cool on the surface in the deeper parts of the lake, a kind of "elevator" system establishes where the chilled surface water sinks to the bottom, disrupting the thermocline and bringing much needed dissolved oxygen to the lower levels. Warmer water, which is less dense than colder water, is forced upward to the surface to be cooled, and the process continues in a lake phenomenon known as "turning over."

Eventually, the lake approaches a healthy, relatively uniform temperature of around 40 to 42 degrees. At this time, if we are having a cold-enough winter, the most physically dramatic event takes place, due to a somewhat magical property of water. Below 39 degrees, pure water actually becomes less dense than at warmer temperatures. So as the surface water temperatures drop below 39 degrees F, it stops sinking through the warmer water below it and remains on top in a sort of mini-reverse thermocline. The top surface water continues to chill in the cold air, and when the water reaches a temperature of approximately 32 degrees F (approximately because dissolved minerals in water affect the freezing point), we get ice over.

So as you stare out at the frozen expanse, longing for warm waters to swim and boat in, take comfort in knowing the winter time is vital to the quality and health of our lake.

### Vacation House Check Program

The Winchester Police Department is proud to offer a "House Check" program designed to provide our residents increased peace of mind while away from their homes during vacations, work-related travel, or for other reasons. There is no cost for this service.

Information submitted by the resident makes it possible for the police department to contact the resident, or their designated key holder, in the event a problem develops at their residence. The House Check Program provides an overall increase in police presence around your home as well as your neighborhood during your time away. This program is a public service to help safeguard citizens' properties and allow for a rapid response and owner notification in the event of a problem.

Please understand this program is no substitute for normal precautions a resident should take when away from home nor does it imply any guarantee or assurances as to the safety of your home. It is still recommended that when away from home you stop deliveries of the mail, paper or any other regularly scheduled deliveries and activate any alarm system you may have at your house.

When you are planning to be out of town or away from your home for a period of time, you can fill out the Residential Security Check Application Form and Information Guide, located in the main lobby of the Winchester Police Department, to request a vacation house check.

The police department will periodically check your house and have your contact information on file in case of an emergency. For security reasons, only hand-delivered requests with photo ID will be accepted at the Winchester Police Department.

Requesting a vacation house-check does not guarantee a burglary or other crime will not occur at your residence, and it is only intended to be a request for the Winchester Police Department to check your home periodically, based upon the availability of an officer. No vacation checks while the homeowner is gone from the home are guaranteed. No additional police response or protection is being guaranteed by requesting a vacation check, other than normal police services and protection which is provided to the general public. Consequently, it is recommended you make every effort to safeguard against losses including securing of high-value property, using proper locking devices, alarm systems, etc.

### Winsted Police Announce Medical Prescription Drop-Off Program

The Winchester Police Department, with the assistance of State Representative Jay Case and the Beacon Pharmacy, partnered to implement the Medical Prescription Drop-Off Program. The program is designed to reduce prescription drugs in homes that are either outdated or no longer needed.



Dispose of your medications in the secured boxes in the lobby of the police department and they will be safely and securely destroyed. "All pharmaceutical drugs that are being disposed must be in a sealed container such as the original bottle or a zip-lock bag. Liquid pharmaceuticals should remain in the original container. Personal information should be removed or blotted out with a permanent marker. Acceptable items include over-the-counter medications, prescription medications including those for pets, medication samples, lotions or ointments. Items not accepted: Open containers of liquid will not be accepted unless they are completely sealed. Syringes must not be placed into the drop box. Hazardous waste, thermometers and personal care products are also not accepted. For information, call the police department at 860-379-2721."

## Legacy Program: What Are Other CT Towns Doing about Open Space to Preserve Their Lakes?

by Dick Labich

It is important that Highland Lake residents and Winchester citizens are aware of the necessity to maintain the quality of the water of our lake by protecting the watershed.

One of the important ways to do so is through the Legacy program by which we obtain undeveloped land and preserve it as open space. Members of the HLWA understand preserving forestland around the lake limits the storm-water runoff and the resulting phosphorous that serves as a nutrient for the support of weed and algae growth. So do other Connecticut towns.

### Uncontrolled Development

The Town of Hebron, CT has a 184-acre lake, Amston Lake, which is located in the southeast portion of the town. The Hebron Planning and Zoning Commission recently authorized an engineering study for the preservation of the lake. The following is taken from their conclusions of the study.

*“These studies have established there is a direct relationship between uncontrolled development and environmental impact to the lake. Over time, principle contributors of phosphorous to the lake have been identified as soil erosion, atmospheric fallout and septic systems. Uncontrolled contributions in any of these categories can accelerate the premature aging of the lake. Maintaining the water quality of the lake and its attractive appearance, as well as keeping the lake in a condition that remains useable for recreation purposes and as a valuable wildlife habitat, is an important objective of this Plan.”*

### Lawns Versus Benefits of Natural Vegetation

The following is taken from Shelton, CT's Conservation Commission's issue on the Community Benefits of Natural Vegetation.

*“Not everyone realizes the benefits to the community that naturally vegetated areas provide, whether these areas are protected open space or private woodlots. Even small wooded borders between one-acre lots provide certain benefits to the community.*

*“Compared with lawns, natural areas:*

- *Cool air temperatures in the summer*
- *Dampen sound*
- *Provide a neighborhood buffer and increase privacy*
- *Reduce air pollutants such as ozone, which burn lung tissue*
- *Reduce storm water runoff and flood damage downstream*
- *Reduce water temperature downstream (needed for trout)*
- *Increase water levels downstream during drought*
- *Improve water quality downstream, fewer algae blooms*
- *Improve well water quality*
- *Raise groundwater levels*
- *Reduce usage of pesticides and fertilizer”*

Do your lawns look like a well-groomed golf course?

## Benefits to Our Aquifer and Wells

Many residents in Winchester, as well as lake residents, may not be aware a substantial number of homes in the watershed have septic systems and wells. The recent drought which has caused some dry wells or serious well water problems in the watershed is a reminder what Hebron and Shelton indicates as to the necessity of natural vegetation and open space.

### HLWA Legacy Program

You can help the HLWA preserve Highland Lake for future generations by joining the Legacy Program and making a contribution of open space land or by sending the HLWA a monetary donation.

The HLWA Board of Directors is very grateful to all the donors of land as well as those providing very generous monetary donations to support the program. These donors are aware of our goals for preservation of the lake but realistically realize the tax benefits that are available for these donations.

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. Before considering any donation to the Legacy Program, you should consult your tax accountant or financial adviser. If you have any questions, please call me at 860-738-0167.

## Freezin' For a Reason

Looking for something fun to do this winter? How about an ice-cold jump in the lake for a wonderful cause?

Penguin Plunge is the largest grassroots fundraiser to benefit Special Olympics Connecticut. Participants raise funds to run into the chilly waters of Connecticut. The Plunge at Highland Lake is Saturday, February 4. Your participation provides funding to support more than 13,000 athletes who participate in Special Olympics Connecticut's year-round training and competition in 27 sports.

Costumes are encouraged – awards are given for the best costumes! Many Penguins form teams to band together and share in this one-of-a-kind experience. To join in on the fun, Penguins need to raise a minimum of \$100. In addition to the awards for top fundraisers and best costumes, Penguins receive incentive prizes for their fundraising efforts.

To register for the Penguin Plunge on Highland Lake, visit [www.soct.org](http://www.soct.org).

In addition, HLWA is looking for volunteers to help serve refreshments to the plungers - please email [bethpapermaster@gmail.com](mailto:bethpapermaster@gmail.com) to volunteer.



# 2016 Highland Lake Relay

The "ItsAllAboutFun" Highland Lake Relay was held on September 10, 2016. It was an overcast morning, but it didn't rain all the time, and when it did, it was a light rain! The race included running, canoeing/kayaking, biking and swimming. Thirteen teams participated, there were many volunteers, and all showed a great amount of spirit and joy!



# 2016 Fall Cleanup

The HLWA fall cleanup was held on October 9, 2016. A great group participated. It was a gorgeous day and all enjoyed being outside doing this important task to help keep the lake clean. We all celebrated after at the home of Jackie Mulvey and Ray Juros, where we had a potluck lunch - so many great choices! Our next cleanup is in the spring, so join us then!



## Recipe Corner

by Marlene Rouleau

It's easy to make dessert taste like pumpkin spice cake and apple crisp baked together! I made it for guests and it was a hit. Hope you like it, and "Happy Holidays"!

### Pumpkin Apple Strudel Cake

#### To prepare the apples, combine

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 4 cups diced, peeled, cored Granny Smith apples, about four large
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

#### To prepare the cake

- 1 ½ cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup (one stick) unsalted butter cut into pieces, room temperature
- ½ tsp salt
- ¾ cup canned pumpkin
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 large eggs

Melt butter in large skillet with medium heat. Add apples. Sauté until apples begin to brown, about 5 minutes. Add sugar, cinnamon and sauté until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Cool.

#### To make the cake

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9-inch Springform pan.

Combine flour, brown sugar and salt in a large bowl. Beat with an electric mixer until it resembles coarse meal. Set aside ¾ cup of the mixture for topping.

Beat the pumpkin, sour cream, 2 tablespoons sugar, spice and baking soda into remaining flour mixture. Beat until smooth. Beat in eggs. Transfer batter to pan. Scatter apples evenly over the top and sprinkle reserved topping over apples. Bake until the topping is golden brown and tester inserted in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 10 minutes.

Cool in the pan on a rack for 20 minutes, then run a knife around the sides to loosen. Remove pan sides from the cake and transfer it to a platter. Let stand at room temperature and serve with ice cream.

## Herbicide Treatment

Although the Town awarded a contract in 2016 for herbicide treatment of milfoil, delays in obtaining a permit caused us to miss the period in which the effectiveness of application would warrant application. However, aided by Jay Case, our state representative, HLWA and the Town continued to work with the State and the contractor to obtain a multiyear permit for 2017, 2018 and 2019. With this out of the way, the intention is to apply herbicide in June of 2017 before the summer season is in full swing.

HLWA is acutely aware the application of herbicide is a cause of concern to some. However, the spread of milfoil is a greater concern, both to HLWA and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and has been targeted for invasive species control grants by CT DEEP. Left unchecked, milfoil could spread to the point that swimming, fishing and boating are adversely affected. The decaying weeds also use up vital dissolved oxygen and create other conditions which detract from the lake experience.

HLWA will continue to keep our membership apprised of developments in weed treatment, and we will work diligently with the Town toward the goal of safe, responsible and effective application of herbicides.

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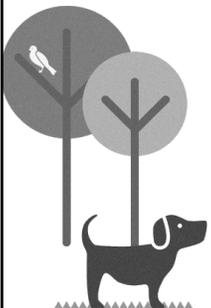


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# Holiday Sale on In-Stock Items at Patty's Shoppe!!!

Coffee cups and trivets with pictures of Highland Lake or Winchester.  
Cups are \$8 each (normally \$10) and trivets are \$12 each (normally \$15).



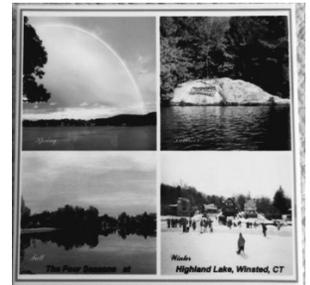
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