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President's Message by Sam Sciacca



(Second of four articles on HLWA issues)

In my term as President of HLWA, I have been often puzzled, sometimes frustrated, and on occasion troubled by HLWA's treatment of membership eligibility and the peculiarities which are written into our bylaws. I have heard a number of reasons as to how and why we have arrived at the position we currently hold, but I think future Directors will need to examine this further as the Association looks to increase membership and contributions.

The first peculiarity is our membership eligibility is not associated with an individual; it is associated with a property. Eligibility is restricted to duly recorded deed owners which are recognized in the Town office as holding property in the watershed. In any given year, there are always anomalies with this as, in some cases, properties are held by partnerships or relatives who do not reside at the property, raising the question of who is eligible to nominate the person who will actually serve as the voting member for that property.

This policy also seems to suggest only property owners in the watershed could have the best interests of the lake and the watershed at heart, and non-property owners lack some essential quality to serve as voting members concerned with the well-being of HLWA and Highland Lake. There is a provision in the bylaws for non-watershed property owners to become Associate Members, but these "members" cannot vote in HLWA matters or be a Director or Officer. In other words, the Associate Member is allowed to make a contribution to HLWA, but cannot participate in any official capacity.

Another peculiarity in the HLWA membership model is only a single person from any property can be the "Member." In my opinion, this has been a huge detriment, as it precludes HLWA from reaching out to multiple family members and generations associated with a single property. In fact, we have had cases where more than one person associated with a property wanted to be actively involved, but our rules preclude this.

So why does any of this actually matter?

There are two very important reasons.

1. At a time when HLWA's membership has remained geographically bounded and is "graying," any restrictions to membership eligibility which makes it more difficult to bring in new and younger members should be reconsidered.
2. HLWA and our mission are not well served by retaining a restrictive membership policy which could support the appearance (and accusations) of elitism and privilege.

On the second point, I observe that in the 10-plus years I have been associated with the HLWA, I have never seen a more dedicated and selfless group of individuals who care not only for the lake and water quality but also for the Town of Winchester and its

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President’s Message (cont.)

taxpayers, who ultimately bear the bulk of the financial burden of maintaining the lake as a resource. Many HLWA members have served and continue to serve on various Town commissions and committees which have little to do with the lake but have everything to do with ensuring the Town is successful in its policies and services to all of its residents in areas such as economic development, education, public works, civil service, downtown revitalization, and emergency response.

Fortunately, the solution to this issue, in my opinion, is relatively simple and painless: make membership an individual process open to anyone who has an interest in protecting and preserving the watershed. If there is speculation over potential problems which might be created by such an approach, we can look to the examples of other organizations such as Bantam Lake Protective Association, Lake Waramaug Association, Winchester Land Trust, Weantinogue Land Trust, or a myriad of other organizations similar to HLWA which welcome any individual to donate and participate in open land preservation, water quality stewardship and watershed management.

In the end, HLWA’s interest and involvement in preservation of the watershed should reach far beyond the 600+ properties that are technically in the watershed, and anything in HLWA bylaws which might contribute an impression to the contrary should be reexamined.

Legacy Program

by Dick Labich

First Annual Open Space Symposium

The Open Space Symposium held on Saturday, October 21, at Northwestern Connecticut Community College Founders Hall Auditorium was sponsored by the HLWA and the NCCC Biology/ Environmental Science Department’s Professor Tara Jo Holmberg. The Symposium updated the attendees on the current status of open space programs, locally and in New England.

The keynote speaker was William G. Labich, a Senior Conservationist at the Highsted Foundation, which is dedicated to advancing the conservation of wildlands and woodland through collaboration with regional conservation partners. Mr. Labich coordinates more than 40 regional conservation partnerships and working groups to help local communities advance the pace and practice of large landscape conservation in New England and eastern New York.

After Mr. Labich’s presentation, a panel of local land trust representatives and Professor Holmberg discussed local open space activities currently under way. Professor Holmberg also presented economic reasons for the development and participation in open space activities. Following are the land trust representatives who were on the panel.

- Winchester Land Trust – Jen Perga
- Colebrook Land Conservancy - Linda Raciborski
- Norfolk Land Trust – Shelley Harms
- Barkhamsted Land Trust – Lisa Candels
- Hartland Land Trust – Mark Ziarnik
- New Hartford Land Trust – Martha Steenburgh

Each one of the representatives provided an update of their activities in preserving open space, and their description of the total open space acreage they have in their open space programs was very impressive. The symposium also allowed those in the audience who were not directly involved in land trusts to learn why open space is important for our communities.

In the discussion following the meeting, the consensus was this symposium was a worthwhile endeavor and we should begin planning for a second symposium in the fall of 2018.

This event was one of the endeavors the HLWA Legacy Program has undertaken to publicize and promote the need for open space. One of the important tasks the HLWA has is to ensure the maintenance of the quality of the water of Highland Lake as well as to protect the Highland Lake watershed through the Legacy program by which we obtain undeveloped land in the watershed and preserve it as open space. We accomplish this by accepting donations of land and by receiving donations which cover the legal fees, surveying and insurance costs.

We are continuing to receive donations of property as well as monetary contributions. On November 9, 2017, we closed on a donation of two lots on Mountain Road, across the road from Taylor Brook State Park, totaling a half an acre.

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.

The Legacy Committee would also like to invite anyone who is interested in preserving the lake, through the preservation of open space, to join the Legacy Committee. Everyone is welcome and will soon realize the value of what the open space will mean to the future of Highland Lake and to future generations. Just give me a call if you would like to join the committee or if you have any questions.

Property Owner's Manual

Do you know whom to call if your pump grinder has an alarm? Do you understand the effects of winter ice and safe practices during ice-over? Could you recognize potentially toxic blue-green algae? Do you know the relationship of lake quality and lawn products? If you are like many new residents, you might not know these and many other facts which are important to the responsible ownership of property around the lake. HLWA will be undertaking the creation of a Property Owner's Manual to serve as a resource for old and new residents alike. If you have an interest in contributing to this effort (writing, researching, editing, etc.) please email president@hlwa.org.

Water Data Collection Update

The following is reprinted by permission from the Summer/Fall 2017 CFL News. See the full newsletter and view their website at: CTLakes.org. Submitted by Jan Gyurko.

Buffer Zones: Maximizing the Potential of Your Lakefront Property

by Luke J. Gervase

A buffer zone is an area of shoreline with planted grasses, shrubs, or trees that serves to separate the lake water from a lakefront property. This area is also known as the riparian zone. While at first thought these zones might seem like an obstruction to your view, they provide many valuable services.

Riparian zone

The riparian zone of a lake is the interface between land and water and is where a buffer zone would be installed. Based on your property, a perfect buffer zone would extend as far as possible from the water's edge toward your building, but ideally would be about 30 feet in length from the shoreline to your building to maximize function.

The riparian zone serves two major functions WHEN vegetation is present. These functions are the reduction of surface water runoff, which carries nutrients and pollutants, and the protection of banks from erosion. A vegetated riparian zone acts to serve as a buffer towards the runoff water from big rain events or snowmelt, and to reduce the amount of nutrients and pollutants that would otherwise make it into the lake water. Once these compounds make it into the lake, a number of things can happen including water becoming more turbid, increased potential for nuisance plant and algae growth, and increased sediment loads.

A vegetated buffer zone along a shoreline will also help prevent erosion by holding sediment in place and protecting the shoreline from wind and wave action. When shoreline banks are eroded, more sediment is added into the water, which can increase turbidity as well as create environmental conditions that allow certain nuisance plants to thrive.

Additional benefits of buffer zones

The plants of a buffer zone have the ability to consume some nutrients already in the lake, which is dependent on the plant species present. Certain species are more efficient at up-taking nutrients, like phosphorus and nitrogen, due to their root structure and other characteristics. In addition, the trees, shrubs, and grasses commonly found in buffer zones can attract a wide range of wildlife that can be pleasant to observe.

Growing your own buffer zone

It is critical that when you construct a buffer zone you only plant species of vegetation that are native to your

region. When designing a buffer zone it is important to realize the importance of having trees, shrubs, and grasses and not just one of these three types of plants. Trees have the ability to take up the most nutrients while also attracting a high amount of birds. Unmown grasses (not your typical lawn!) have the greatest ability to slow down the speed of surface runoff. Once the water settles in the grass, the grass can then use the runoff water and all of the nutrients the water carried to grow. Shrubs also have the ability to reduce the impacts of surface runoff, but similar to trees, they are great at stabilizing the shoreline. Where wind and waves are an issue, trees and shrubs might be the most suitable plants as they help stabilize the topsoil along a shoreline. Where runoff water high in nutrients and pollutants is an issue, a mix of grasses and shrubs is the most suitable approach. Additionally, it is important to remember that the simplest way to grow your own buffer strip is to stop mowing your lawn! By letting part of your yard grow naturally, you permit native species to colonize the area and reduce the cost of a buffer strip project. Multiple studies have shown that buffer strips have substantial positive impacts on waterbodies, and although they may seem insignificant, they can really make a difference on the state of your lake. Buffer zones maximize your lakefront property in a relatively cheap and easy manner, while benefitting overall lake water quality.

The Pond and Lake Connection
pondconnection8@gmail.com (203) 885-0184

Figure I: A schematic showing an ideal riparian and lake habitat

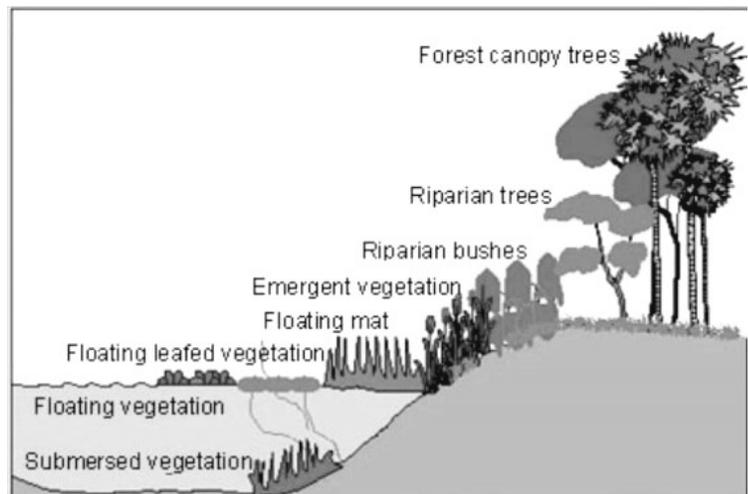


Figure II: Image illustrating a buffer zone before and after shrubs were added.



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 . . .

To make a donation, please mail a check, payable to HLWA, to:

HLWA
P.O. Box 1022
Winsted, CT 06098

Road Deicing Around the Lake

This time of year always raises a concern over product being applied to roads around the lake to improve winter traction. The Department of Public Works provided the following information on deicing.

The product the Town uses is called "Clearlane Enhanced Deicer." The benefit this material has over traditional rock salt is improved performance, which results in 30% less chlorides (salt) needing to be applied. The material has a green color and is wet when applied, which results in greater adherence to the road surface (less bounce).

The Public Works Department also mixes sand in with the deicing product when icing conditions require it, particularly in hilly areas of the Town. However, recognizing the detrimental impact sand has in catch basins and runoff into the lake, the DPW's policy is to avoid mixing sand for treatment on lake roads except in the most extreme of conditions.



Highland Lake's Contribution to Winchester's Soldier's Monument

by Dick Labich

Winchester's Soldier's Monument is a significant historical symbol of the Winchester and Winsted community's respect and homage for their men who served in the Civil War. The suggestion for the monument first came from the local Winsted unit of the Grand Army of the Republic, Palmer Post, No. 33 in 1870. There was "much bickering" among different sections of the town over its eventual location, and, according to the Frank H. DeMars Winsted History, a local newspaper editor provided a facetious suggestion a monument be placed upon a two-yoke ox cart, which was then to be hauled up and down Main Street in order to satisfy the conflicting opinions of its final location.



Then in 1877, after years of discussion and little action, money was raised for the proposed cost of \$7,500, which turned out to be about half of the final cost of the monument. The three-story, granite medieval tower is a wonderful artistic triumph resulting from the combined creativity of two Connecticut designers, Robert W. Hill of Waterbury, the architect, and George F. Bissell, formerly of Waterbury, the sculptor. The monument was dedicated on September 11, 1890 at an elaborate ceremony.

The masonry contractor was Stone and Wooster and the stone supplier was Stephen Hurd, a local resident who owned many acres and a large farm on Sucker Brook Road. He lived there most of his life, and, although there is no apparent documentation confirming the exact location of his quarry, we do know he had a "quarry nearby Highland Lake near Cold Spring." It is assumed it may have been near the site of the dam.

The granite from the quarry was an uncommon color, "pinkish cast when viewed close up" but to appear "greenish gray from a distance" (*Hartford Courant*, September 12, 1890). Perhaps we might find this pinkish tinted granite in that area today.

Attention Holiday Shoppers!!!



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We thank you in advance for choosing us!

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, March 3, 2018.

Your participation provides funding to support more than 13,000 athletes who participate in Special Olympics Connecticut's programs, including 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.

In addition, HLWA is looking for volunteers to help serve refreshments to the plungers - please email bethpapermaster@gmail.com to volunteer.

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 keyholder, 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 when away from home that 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 are 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.



Fall Lake Cleanup

October was off to a great start with the HLWA Fall Cleanup. A group of lake residents and two school groups, one from The Gilbert School and one from The Forman School, walked the perimeter of the lake, picking up trash along the way. It was a gorgeous day, and all enjoyed being outside doing this important task to help keep the lake area clean. Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers and to Rose and Steve Molinelli for hosting a lovely potluck lunch. Our next cleanup is in the spring, so please join us then!

Top - students from Gilbert School; middle left - students from Forman School; middle right - Jan Gyurko; bottom - gathering at the cleanup luncheon.



Meet the Board

Have you ever wondered what the HLWA Board of Directors does? Have you wondered about the nature of issues that come before the Board, or what a Board meeting is like? Have you ever thought you might be interested in serving on the Board but were unsure what was expected of Directors?

In January, we will be holding a "Meet the Board" social event to provide answers these questions. The event will give you a

chance to meet Board members, discuss your concerns and ideas, and provide some insight on the time and efforts Directors provide in service to the Board.

So if you ever had a thought about possibly serving on the Board or just want to meet Board members and discuss the issues that are important to you, please make a note to stop by. The details on where and when this is happening will be announced. Check our Facebook page and website!



- Raspberry Red Apple
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- Ginger Pear
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- Red Raspberry
- Golden Raspberry
- Peach
- Mulberry

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- Spiced Blackberry
- Plum
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- Pumpkin

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Recipe Corner

by Marlene Rouleau

With the biggest entertaining season coming, I have a simple and delicious cookie recipe.

White Chocolate Cranberry Shortbread

Ingredients

- 4 sticks softened butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 1 ½ cups raisins



Directions

Soften butter. Add the sugar alternating with the flour, 1 cup at a time. Mix in chips and raisins.

Drop rounded teaspoons on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees, 8 to 10 minutes, till golden on top.



HLWA Board of Directors

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Ray Fugere	860.738.9781
Jan Gyurko	860.877.1499
Gene Janczak	860.496.7876
Dick Labich	860.738.0167
Rosy Molinelli	860.379.5495
Beth Papermaster (Vice President)	860.238.7695
Jill Ricci (Treasurer)	860.324.7631
Sam Sciacca (President)	203.464.5703
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HIGHLAND LAKE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, INC. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

P.O. Box 1022, Winsted, CT 06098

Property owners in the Highland Lake watershed are eligible for voting membership. Others who wish to support the mission of the Association are eligible to join as Associate Members. Membership dues are \$50.00 per year (**July 1-June 30.**) Dues and donations paid to HLWA qualify for IRS consideration as a contribution to a charitable organization and may be tax deductible.

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Dues for fiscal year 7/1/17 to 6/30/18 \$ _____; additional donation \$ _____ *Please make check payable to HLWA*

Volunteer opportunities:

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<input type="checkbox"/> Town Meeting Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Activity Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Cleanup Campaigns
<input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming New Owners	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing/Fundraising
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(Form also available on website www.hlwa.org)



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