

Highland Lake News



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

Winter

2015-16

President's Message by Sam Sciacca



Changes

As I write this article (in mid-October), I am reminded this is the time of year when changes are very evident. The trees are at the height of color, the evenings are cool, and the lake has been transformed from the bustle of summer recreation to a quiet, reflective scene with an occasional fisherman or pleasure craft cruising slowly along.

There have also been some changes of note for the HLWA family. For the first time in many, many years, Clare Stevens is not our chair of Water Quality. Clare established the position and has served in this role since the incorporation of HLWA in 1994. Over the years, she has amassed a tremendous amount of data and established the techniques and procedures we use to monitor conditions of the lake. She has also taken the time to train the next team of volunteers to perform the data collection that is essential both to the Town and State in determining the best course of treatment and management required for the preservation of the quality of the lake experience.

Clare's hiatus from the committee chair will provide her time to attend to some personal matters, but her continued presence as a Board member will ensure her knowledge and guidance remain a valuable asset to our cause. Rose Molinelli, who has worked extensively with Clare and led many of the water data collection efforts for the past two years, will be stepping into the role, and we thank her for taking on this responsibility.

Another change that has occurred is Beth Papermaster has agreed to serve as Vice President of the Board. Beth is one of the newer faces on the Board, although she has been involved with a number of our membership events in the past. With Beth stepping up to this position, our leadership team is strengthened and my job becomes easier knowing that in the event I am unavailable, Beth is there to pick up the slack.

The other change of note is one I wish I did not have to report. Dale Martin, Winchester's Town Manager, has announced his resignation. Dale has been a friend to Highland Lake and the HLWA during his entire tenure, and both Dick Labich (my predecessor) and I have relied heavily on Dale for guidance and support in dealing with Town matters. Hopefully, the Board of Selectmen will be successful in finding a replacement for Dale who will continue the cooperative partnership between the Association and the Town. And to our friend Dale Martin, we wish him only the best in his new endeavor.

Finally, we would like to mention a sad change to the HLWA family. Bob Moore, a longtime lake/community resident, businessman, and HLWA member, has passed away. Bob was a perennial supporter of HLWA efforts, always ready to help out when asked. Many of you will also remember Bob as a personal friend as well. It is always difficult to hear an HLWA family member has made the transition to another phase of this journey we call life. Farewell, Bob . . . see you at another lake in another time and place.

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Legacy Program

by Dick Labich

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

The most important tasks the HLWA has are to assure the maintenance of the quality of the water in Highland Lake and to protect the Highland Lake watershed. One way to accomplish the latter is 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.

The Legacy program has been successful despite the recent economic environment. We have deeds from 33 donors for properties around the lake totaling nearly 5 acres. In partnership with the Winchester Land Trust, we have preserved another 13 acres. We are also in the closing process with three donors for a total of 10 properties. These donors are aware of our goals for preservation of the lake but realistically they realize the tax benefits that are available for these donations. They also understand open space is necessary to reduce the pollutants that would otherwise enter the lake.

In addition, we have received generous donations of money for the Legacy program. 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 me at 860-738-0167.

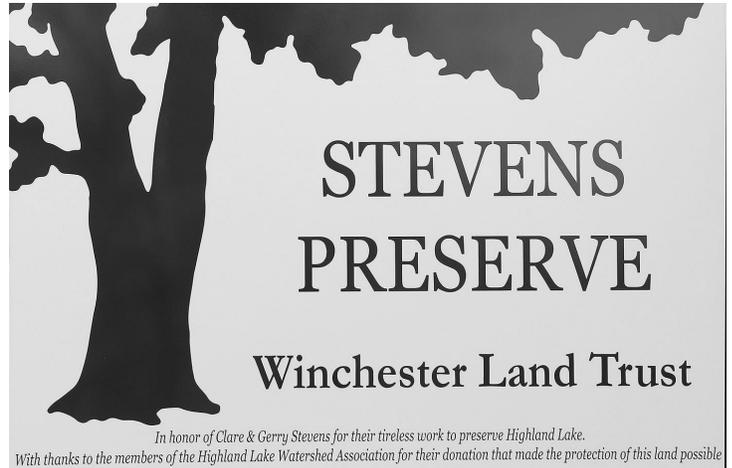
The Legacy committee would also like to invite anyone who is interested in preserving the lake through the preservation for open space to join the committee. Everyone is welcome and will realize the value of what the open space will mean to the future of Highland Lake and to future generations. Just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

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Carol Zacchio (Secretary)	860.379.3267

Stevens Preserve

by Jen Perga



The Winchester Land Trust (WLT) would like to thank members of HLWA once again for their generous support of the Stevens Preserve property. Not only did HLWA members vote unanimously (July 2014) to donate \$25,000 toward the \$50,000 purchase price, but HLWA has now purchased the beautiful sign for the preserve.

Stevens Preserve is named in honor of Clare Stevens and her late husband, Gerry. Clare and Gerry have worked tirelessly to protect Highland Lake. Clare has served for many years on the HLWA board, including terms as president. Clare and Gerry implemented the water testing program, participated in cleanups, and educated those around them by example – using natural weedkillers, forgoing a lawn, and planting native shrubs.

The WLT board looks forward to next year when the new sign for the Preserve will be dedicated in the spring of 2016. We will also open a small loop trail on the five acres of preserved land. The loop trail will enable walkers to experience the best parts of this property: a pristine stream that runs into Highland Lake, impressive boulders, and a high plateau with winter views of the lake. Dead trees provide valuable woodpecker habitats and the ledges shelter animals. Dick and Jean Labich's son, Bill, came across a hibernating bear under a rock ledge near this property! Not only does forested land provide a habitat, but it preserves our lake as well.

Protected forested land absorbs precipitation and prevents runoff (which would carry sand, salt, pesticides, and fertilizers) to the lake. WLT and HLWA have worked together to preserve almost 20 acres in the Highland Lake Watershed. We look forward to our continued collaboration and seeing all of you in the spring of 2016.

Email us at hlwa@snet.net

Website: www.hlwa.org

Visit our *Facebook* page and "Like" us!

Water Data Collection Update

by Rosy Molinelli, Water Quality/Environmental Committee Chairperson

*"Alone we can do so little,
Together we can do so much."
Helen Keller*

A Day to Remember!

On the brisk early morning of Sunday, October 11, five members of the HLWA set out to complete the final water testing conducted by its member teams for the 2015 year. (The November and April samples are collected by Dr. George Knoecklein.) On this particular morning, the HLWA team included: Ray Juros and Dr. Wayne Warren, who were working together to collect the water samples at various depths in each bay of the lake; Rosy Molinelli and Jackie Mulvey, who were recording data on water clarity, temperature, conductivity and phosphate levels also at various depths; and Steve Molinelli, who was serving as boat captain, driving us to the particular sites in each bay where the testing consistently takes place.

At approximately 9:30 a.m., we set forth from Unity Cove in third bay, heading north toward first bay at 9:30 a.m. The weather was perfect. The temperature was cool with a brisk hint of fall, the sun was shining brightly, and there were just a few lone clouds lending contrast to the beautiful blue sky. At this point in time, the water was calm and peaceful with very little wind as Captain Steve was leisurely approaching our first reference site on first bay. We were enjoying the ride, the fresh air and the vibrant fall colors as we reached our desired stop and lowered our anchor. For a few moments in time, we just sat together and mused in realization of how blessed we are to reside on such a beautiful and precious lake in our Town of Winchester and how important it is for all who wish to enjoy our bounty to do our part to keep it healthy and pristine.

Together, we engaged in collecting our samples and recording our data. We concluded our work at first bay, and our captain proceeded to raise the anchor and traverse toward second bay. The wind was beginning to pick up slightly, but we concluded our second round of collecting and recording in record time. As we were crossing the narrows into third bay, we slowed down in accordance with regulations and were admiring the brilliant foliage which was heralding the vibrancy of the fall scenery on Highland Lake. Our captain then proceeded to drive us toward our final location in third bay. Just as we passed our starting point at Unity Cove, an unexpected strong gust of wind took us by surprise. Seconds later, there was a cry from Ray Juros that our water samples had been blown overboard. Needless to say, we were panic stricken, yet we adroitly sprang into action.

Captain Steve immediately shut off the motor, and we all bent over the sides of the boat attempting to locate the carton where our samples were being held. In less than a very long minute it was located, but it was quickly filling with water. (Thank goodness, our bottles were tightly sealed, so our water samples were not compromised.) Then it was frantic teamwork. Steve turned the boat in the direction of our samples; Ray located an oar and passed it to Wayne; Wayne was swiftly moving to the side door of the pontoon as I cleared the area of our measuring devices.

Jackie and Ray began relaying directions to Steve while I stayed alongside Wayne to ensure he didn't fall overboard. Minutes seemed like hours, and after a half dozen attempts, we successfully saved the water samples and completed our work on third bay.

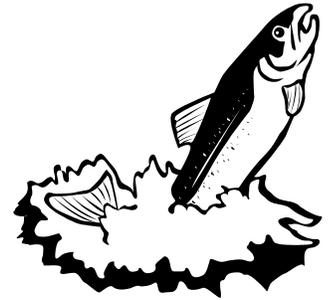
We were congratulating Steve for his driving ability and Wayne for his unwavering and brave action when we realized the water which had now filled the carton had damaged the notations on the water sample bottles. It took all of us together to examine the notations and rewrite them clearly so they could be forwarded to Dr. George Knoecklein at Aquatic Research. When our work was completed, we relaxed and proudly enjoyed the feeling of camaraderie and success while knowing full well that precautions to safeguard our water samples would be a priority for the future.

Highland Lake Nature

by Mary Barbro

Highland Lake's Jumping Fish

If it were not for the amazing display of airborne acrobatics of late, fish would certainly not have been on my radar. Shortly after the lake was stocked on October 22 with primarily brown trout (but also large- and small-mouth bass), we began seeing the wonderful jumping displays. Almost a week later, there were two days in a row during our 2½-mile walk during which you just kept moving your head constantly to watch the high jumps happening every few feet. On those days, the weather was a little warmer and a little steamy across the top of the water. We weren't sure if the new smaller fish were intimidated by the large fish already inhabiting the lake, if they had an itch, or if the particular weather and insects around were the reason for the extreme amount of jumping, but it was sure fun to watch.



So we needed a little information about these fish.

Here are some tidbits I came across from multiple sources. Trout seem to have been the stars of the jumping show, so I am focusing on them. Trout are closely related to salmon/char and are classified as an oily fish. They are considered an important food source for humans, birds of prey, bears and other animals. Trout themselves can feed on other fish, mayflies, dragonflies and any number of other flies. Lake trout can actually live decades, prefer cool water, and can have very different colors and patterns in different environments. They are able to camouflage themselves by having darker or lighter colors and varying patterns, depending on their habitat.

While the jumping abilities of trout are amazing, their senses are even more surprising. The sensory input received by trout is estimated to be 500 to 800 times more than what a human receives. Their brain is devoted to bodily functions and sensory input. They do not have a cerebrum and yet learn quickly from experience (the cerebrum being the center for thought and reasoning in humans). Their eyes are sensitive to bright light and can see about 20 feet, but it is their sensory information that allows them to perceive food from a distance. They have keen senses of taste and smell but also hearing. Their greatest sense

is what scientists are calling "distant touch sense" by which they can feel/sense an object entering the water from long distances. Echolocation in trout is still being studied.

And, yes, they are known for their jumping ability, jumping up to three times their length. Those warm misty mornings were probably concealing some bugs we didn't see, but trout's ability to see color keenly and closely were giving it something to jump about.

While trout are Connecticut's most sought after game fish, I saw an article about fishermen being cited after an illegal taking of undersized bass in Milford. A few months back, I had seen an article about the DEEP training dogs to sniff out illegal fish catches. While looking up fish facts for this article, I saw another report where two men from Bridgeport were cited for violations after a fishing trip in Milford. When they were questioned, the men said they had not caught anything, but the dog sniffed out the hidden fish and exposed two undersized striped bass. Dogs from CT Labrador Rescue are used, and I have heard about beagles being used for this as well. Apparently fish-and-game canines have been used throughout the country to combat illegal fishing, hunting and trapping. You may see them here, so be sure you know your facts and pick up your fishing rules and regulations pamphlet at Town Hall or at the DEEP website.

Our wonderful jumping displays are coming to an end with the weather changing. We may have to wait until close to fish restocking again in April/May and the opening of fishing season the second Saturday in April to see such a show again.

Snuggle in fishes and friends until the warm weather graces us again.

Membership Services Report

by *Patty Masucci*

September found us assisting the Winsted Recreation Department with the "ItsAllAboutFun" Relay Race. Nine teams did all they could to entertain people who came out to watch this relay race. The energy and hype of running, kayaking, biking and swimming made the air surrounding Resha Beach come alive with fun and enthusiasm. This race was the creation of Jack Rouleau. He came up with the name and concept several years ago when we first talked of combining our efforts with those of Winsted's Recreation Director to bring a fun-filled event to the lake area.

We keep every portion of the event surrounding Resha Beach. Although our numbers were down this year, our enthusiasm was not deterred in the least. Throughout the day we kept hearing words of encouragement and offers to help with the relay for next year. Medals were awarded and all present felt a sense of accomplishment. A lunch was enjoyed at the home of the Rouleaus.

October found Membership Services walking the perimeter of the lake collecting any items of trash discarded by passersby. 34 volunteered to help with this project. And for a few days, the lake road was clean and almost shining.

After leaving all of our trashbags in a designated area for pickup by the Winsted Public Works Department, we all met at the home of John and Sarah Munley for a delightful potluck luncheon.

While we have no plans to do any Christmas caroling this year, we are very busy planning a New Year's Dinner/Dance. We have booked the Crystal Peak Event Center for Saturday, January 2. The theme has been decided as "Putting on the Glitz." As always, we are looking for people who would be willing to bring this event to fruition. We are in need of decorators and people to pick up raffle prizes. We have booked a room at Crystal Peak, so now we just have to get out there and sell our tickets. A prize will be awarded to the person with the most glitz worn in the best, most tasteful way. So come dressed to kill!! And bring your cameras!!



Relay team consisting of Heather Jones Grustas, Coleman Grustas, Steven Ivain and Jennifer Jones Persechino



The contestants getting ready for the running portion of the relay.

Why Did Winsted, with a Population of 6,700 People, Need (or Could Possibly Use) Five Railroad Stations?

by Dick Labich

This is another piece of Winsted history passed on to me by Milly Hudak, Director of the Winchester Historical Museum. I am very grateful for Milly's contribution of some interesting tales of the past of Winsted and Highland Lake.

This story was taken from an article in the April 1978 issue of the NMRA (National Model Railroad Association). Space limitations prevent me from repeating the entire story, so I will try to summarize it. The article was written by Robert B. Adams and bore the following headline:

Connecticut Concocts a Conglomeration

Railroading came to Winsted back in 1849 when the Naugatuck Railroad was extended up the valley of the Naugatuck River to Torrington and was extended over the watershed divide to the Still River valley and its juncture with the Mad River. The entire line was opened for traffic on September 24 of that year, and a small station was erected to serve the northern terminus (**Station #1**).

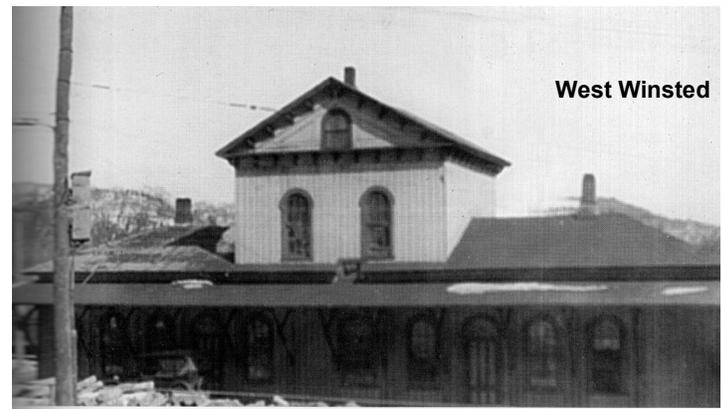
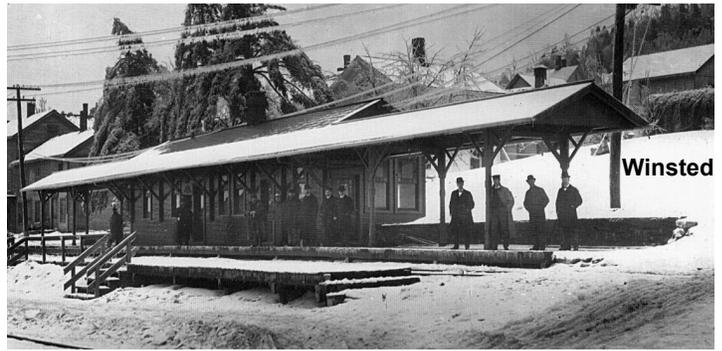
For 22 years the Naugatuck Railroad reigned supreme, funneling its traffic in a north-south direction. Then in 1871, a new east-west Connecticut Western Railroad appeared on the scene, being opened on December 21 between its termini at Hartford on the east and Millerton, New York, on the west. Strapped for cash due to the road's heavy construction expenses, the Connecticut Western gladly made arrangements with the Naugatuck Railroad for the use of its station and facilities at a cost of \$1,000 annually. The instructions to train men stipulated the Naugatuck Railroad Agent would have priority at the station and would "direct as to use of tracks and grounds."

Six months later, in June 1872, Winsted received its second station (**Station #2**) when local citizens donated some land and money for the new station which was erected on Lake Street, three quarters of a mile west of the Naugatuck station, and was given the name West Winsted. Connecticut Western passenger trains then made two stops in Winsted, continuing to use the Naugatuck Winsted station nearer the center of town, as well as stopping at its own new West Winsted station.

Harmony between the two railroads continued to exist for the next eight years, but suddenly in 1880 an explosive situation arose. The Connecticut Western began to have financial troubles and wanted to rid itself of the expensive use of the Naugatuck station and facilities. However, the station occupied all the available land along the bank of the Mad River on the north side of its tracks. To solve the problem, the Connecticut Western built its own Winsted station, which was later called East Winsted and colloquially called the Sand Bank station (**Station #3**).

Winsted now had three stations - the Naugatuck Railroad's depot and two stations of the Connecticut Western at East Winsted and West Winsted.

The Connecticut Western now discontinued its use of the Naugatuck station at Winsted and ceased to stop there, stopping



only at its own East Winsted and West Winsted stations. But this immediately created a problem. Patrons of one road wishing to transfer to trains of the other road were faced with the problem of how to get themselves and their baggage over the 1,800 feet which separated the two Winsted stations. Trains of each railroad ran right past the other's stations, and passengers had to fend for themselves.

Action was forthcoming immediately in the form of a petition to the state. Railroad Commissioners (*in their wisdom*) ordered that the Connecticut Western should deliver passengers and their baggage to the opposite side of the tracks to the Naugatuck station and vice versa. As a result, the Naugatuck Railroad was obliged to make two stops in Winsted, 1,800 feet apart, and the Connecticut Western was obliged to make three stops before leaving town.

To confound the issue further, the town filed a petition with the Railroad Commission to force Connecticut Western to reestablish its use of the Naugatuck station. The case finally went to the Superior Court, which ordered the Connecticut Western to stop its trains on its own road nearest the said Winsted station and accommodate the passengers, sell tickets and handle baggage.

In compliance with the order, the Connecticut Western placed a boxcar body for a station of sorts at that location (**Station #4**). The Town of Winsted now had four stations to serve its modest population.

Amazingly, for 16 years this preposterous situation prevailed. Kids and many a childish adult learned they could ride, free of charge, from one end of town to the other and took advantage of the opportunity. In 1897, the Winsted selectmen gave permission to the railroad to take five feet of land from the south side of Depot Street, and a creditable little station was erected to replace the boxcar body station, which had become an eyesore.

Around June 15, 1908, the Torrington Street station (**Station #5**) came into being as a convenience for trolley commuters from the Torrington area wishing to go easterly toward Hartford. No longer were they obliged to take the trolley all the way into Winsted.

Over the years, many changes took place in the ownership and management of the railroads involved. The Naugatuck station and the East Winsted station were razed sometime after 1908. Between 1916 and 1920, the West Winsted Station was abandoned, and it was demolished in 1929. Passenger service on the old Connecticut Western line by the Central New England & Western Railroad ceased in 1927. Service via the Naugatuck railroad came to an end in December 1958. Freight service dwindled to insignificance, and in April 1963 the last train trundled slowly out of town. The historic old Naugatuck station at Bridge Street was the last landmark to disappear, finally falling to the wrecker's ball in 1966.

If anyone has a suggestion for an article about the history of the lake or of Winchester, please let Terry Platt or myself know, and we will try to research it for upcoming issues.

Highland Lake Supporter Exposed

by *Patty Masucci*

Well, The weather was iffy,
Not sure what it would do.
Will we have a downpour?

Or will it clear and let the sunshine through?

This was the forecast for October 3 and 4. The Fall Festival on Main Street was cancelled, and we were encouraging volunteers to go out whenever it was not raining in order to successfully clean up around the perimeter of the lake.

Then out on the west side of the lake walked a powerhouse of a woman filled with determination to have a clean lake roadside. Jan Gyrko was on the job at her post filling garbage bags with the litter one family left behind along the roadway and into the wooded areas. Jan, along with Lynn Brandolini, volunteer to clean the dirtiest and darkest of all areas around Highland Lake. It was terribly obvious someone used this



section of the roadway as their personal garbage dump. We stopped to help Jan at this time. Tupperware, coffee pot parts and other household items were found, along with garbage and other throw-away goods and items.

While doing her work and walking along, Jan was approached and asked what she was doing. She explained to him about the HLWA and told of our effort to clean up around the lake we love twice a year. Jan is a "nature" person and always promoting her love of the lake where she grew up with her mother, Betty Formaggioni, on East Wakefield Boulevard. Well, this person who stopped to talk to Jan gave her a donation for the HLWA for keeping his fishing area clean. Jan has such a positive effect on people. She exudes an enthusiasm for life at Highland Lake.

You have probably seen Jan out in the middle of third bay paddleboarding with her trusty dog, Bella. Jan joins Larry Beck each year on his swim of the length of Highland Lake (which is about three miles long) to raise money to use for water quality here at Highland Lake. Jan is large in spirit and perkiness, exuding pep, agility and an inspiration to all who pick up garbage bags to walk alongside her.

So on the road or on the water, stop to talk to Jan Gyurko. Tell her you appreciate the efforts she brings forth on behalf of Highland Lake. And many thanks to all those who helped with the cleanup operation!

Charity Swim/Paddleboard Event

Raises \$2,745

For the past couple of years, some of our more energetic members have conducted a charity swim of the lake and paddleboard event to raise awareness of the importance of water quality. This year, Larry Beck and Jan Gyurko participated, raising awareness and \$2,745 for HLWA Water Quality programs. If you run into either of these two people, please be sure to thank them for the time and effort they expended to preserve the water quality of Highland Lake. And a special thanks from the HLWA goes out to all those members and friends who supported Jan and Larry with pledges and encouragement. Things like this demonstrate the caliber of individuals that make up the HLWA.



Linda Groppo cleaning up on East Wakefield.

*“Water never forgets.
Anyone with a boat named after them will live forever.
How about that?”*

— Ann Gibbs



Embellished rock formation on East Wakefield

Recipe Corner

by Marlene Rouleau

Here is a recipe for Danish Apple Pie with Caramel Topping - Terry Platt discovered the recipe when reading the book "The Apple Orchard" by Susan Wiggs. It turned out to be a hit at her book club, and they all enjoyed the book as well!

Danish Apple Pie

Before they taste this, people wonder at the lack of spices. If lovely fresh apples are used, the spices won't be missed.

- 1 egg
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- dash of salt
- 2 cups diced apples, peeled and sautéed in 1 tablespoon butter until soft
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

Beat the egg, gradually adding the sugar and vanilla. Then add flour, baking powder and salt to create a smooth batter. Fold in sautéed apples and nuts, then pour into a buttered and floured 8-inch square glass pan. Bake for about 30 minutes at 350 degrees F. Cut into squares and serve with caramel topping, ice cream or both.

Caramel Apple Topping

This is one of the simplest and most delicious ways to prepare fresh apples. Keep a jar on hand to serve over cake, ice cream, pound cake or yogurt, with your morning granola or straight out of the jar with a spoon at two in the morning, when you find yourself alone and hungry.

- 4 sliced apples; no need to peel
- 4 tablespoons butter (no substitute)
- a pinch of nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup cream or buttermilk

Melt the butter in a heavy pan. Add the sugar and swirl until melted. Add the spices and apples and sauté until the apples are tender. Add the walnuts and stir.

Turn off the heat, and slowly stir in the cream. Serve immediately over ice cream or cake, and keep the leftovers in a jar in the fridge.



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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 an Associate Member. 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.

Primary Residence

Name: _____

Street: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Email: _____

Lake Residence

Do you want the summer newsletter mailed to your lake address? Yes ___ No ___

Lake Street: _____

Winsted, CT 06098

Phone: () _____

Dues for fiscal year 7/1/15 to 6/30/16 \$ _____; additional donation \$ _____ *Please make check payable to HLWA*

Volunteer opportunities:

<input type="checkbox"/> HLWA Board of Directors	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Data Collection
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> Website Maintenance/Video Show	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance

(Form also available on website www.hlwa.org)



HLWA
P.O. Box 1022
Winsted, CT 06098

Address Service Requested

Prst Std
U.S. Postage Paid
Winsted, CT
Permit No. 11



An Elegant Affair

Donation - \$50 per person

R.S.V.P by December 15

Call Pat Masucci at 860.379.2303 for
tickets and info

Putting on the Glitz Dinner/Dance

*Crystal Peak
164 Torrington Road
Winsted, CT 06098*

January 2, 2016