



From the Highland Lake Watershed Association - A Nonprofit Organization Dedicated to the Preservation and Protection of Highland Lake and Its Watershed

Fall/Winter

2020

President's Message *by Beth Papermaster*

We are fortunate for having access to Highland Lake which has made living through the pandemic more bearable. I've heard so many stories from people who have owned homes on the lake for years who said they finally had time to truly enjoy and fall in love with Highland Lake. As evidenced by the increase in lake activity, many of us took advantage of the dry, hot summer days to be out on or in the water. The pandemic led to innovative ways to gather on the water with several lakefront concerts enjoyed by hundreds of people. And it was possible to see people out on their decks, working away on a laptop, phone in hand, enjoying a beautiful view - much nicer than from an office! My hope is this renewed appreciation for the lake will lead to even greater involvement and stronger stewardship by all of us.



Some updates and in appreciation – thank you!

- * HLWA conducted our first online survey, and we are thrilled with the 50% response rate. We are taking time to evaluate the information, and our next newsletter will focus on the survey. Thank you to all who took the time to participate.
- * Weeds. Weeds. Weeds. Yes, we heard from many of you that the lake has more weeds than usual. This summer we had perfect weed growing conditions - warm, dry and good water clarity.

There are more than 25 varieties of native plants in Highland Lake. The herbicide treatment applied in the lake is to treat invasive weeds only. When Northeast Aquatic Resources (NEAR) conducted the late spring weed survey, they only discovered a very small patch of invasive weeds. The patch was too small to warrant herbicide treatment. Instead, professional divers were brought in to hand-harvest and remove the invasive weeds. By the time the divers were able to work on our lake, the invasive weeds had spread beyond the initial small patch. At the end of the summer, NEAR conducted the posttreatment survey, and invasive weeds were found in several locations. It is possible the deep drawdown will expose the weed root systems to freezing temperatures (if we do not get snow to insulate them) and could kill off many of the weeds. If not, it is likely an herbicide treatment will be necessary in summer 2021. (See page 11 for more on the day of weed pulling.)

- * Thank you to the volunteers who helped with water data collection during these challenging times. Usually, a group of four to five volunteers goes out once a month, May through October, to collect water samples. Due to safety concerns, these efforts were initially suspended, and HLWA hired NEAR to conduct the testing for May and June. In July, our volunteers decided to divide the duties and have two different teams on a boat, each from the same household, to conduct the testing and sampling. We are grateful to Carol Zacchio, Lynn Carter and Jay Champagne, Jill and Mark Ricci, and Stuart Yaffee for making this possible.

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Check out our new advertisers on pages 15 and 19 and all our other wonderful advertisers!

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President's Message (cont.)

In September I reported NEAR identified the "white specks" floating in the lake as a pop-up bloom of cyanobacteria. These "cyano-bits" were colonies of cyanobacteria where something went wrong with their biochemistry, causing them to float to the surface. This unexplained event occurred in lakes all over the area this summer. The "cyano-bits" eventually disappeared but not until they caused us some concern. This experience reminds us of the fragility of the lake and the importance of our vigilant stewardship. Remember, if you see something unusual in the water, please notify HLWA (hlwa@hlwa.org) and send photos, if possible. Working together, we can protect Highland Lake.

- * For the membership year 2020, we had 255 members, which included 18 new members! This is near our 2018 record high of 259. Thank you to all of you for showing your support for Highland Lake by joining HLWA.
- * Please consider making an end-of-year charitable donation to HLWA. Donors of \$100 or more will be listed in the next issue of Highland Lake News. Checks, payable to HLWA, can be sent to HLWA, PO Box 1022, Winsted, CT 06098 or Venmo [@highlandlakewatershedassociation](https://www.venmo.com/highlandlakewatershedassociation). Thank you!

As we begin to hunker down for winter, let's hope the lake freezes solidly enough for all of us to enjoy the great outdoors on a frozen Highland Lake. Stay safe!



Town Manager Bob Geiger Will Be Missed

by Jim Welton

As I sat down with Bob Geiger for the last time, I felt sad - sad for the town, sad for the EDC of which I'm a member, and sad for the lake community. While I'm happy for Bob's retirement (his third time),

Bob's energy, devotion to the town, leadership and vision will be sorely missed. He's stepping down at the end of the year to pursue his many hobbies, which include travel and ballroom dancing.

When Bob came here five years ago with a background in turnaround management of distressed companies, he faced significant challenges in Winsted. He was able to turn around Winsted by focusing on the people and issues in the town and those in Town Hall. He really worked hard on developing the people and the departments in town and worked closely with the Board of Selectmen and Mayor Candy Perez. Some of the things he was focused on were working on economic development, removing blight, improving the schools and its ratings, and improving Winsted's overall image.

He also notes how important Highland Lake is to the town, including recreation, the scenic beauty, and the home valuation. He said it is crucial to continue to focus on water quality and "edge-of-lake development." He feels Highland Lake is highly developed and it is crucial to enforce regulations and ordinances fairly and with consistency.

One of the challenges that affect water quality is the upkeep and maintenance of numerous storm drains that feed the lake. Of note, the town recently purchased a brand-new vacuum truck for \$300,000 that will begin to service the drains in coming weeks.

Looking forward, he feels increased lake resident involvement is key and noted HLWA's high level of participation in many lake issues. Another wish is the town should control and own all State-owned land around the lake, including the boat launch. He feels the town has a better feel for, and more vested interest in, the land and might be able to manage the lake and its watershed better. There are many viewpoints on these issues, but it certainly gives us something to think about.

If you see Bob by the side of the road picking up some trash or grabbing a cup of coffee or a beer at a local establishment, you might consider taking a moment to say hello and thanking him. I know I will.

Electric Car Charging Station

The Town of Winsted has had an electric car charging station installed in the parking lot of the former Bank of America building on Center Street. The charging station services vehicles with 220 volts. There are two charging units on one post. If one person is charging they get the full capacity of the charging. If a second person charges their car, the charging capacity is split between the two charging units.

At this time there is no charge for using the station. So spread the word!

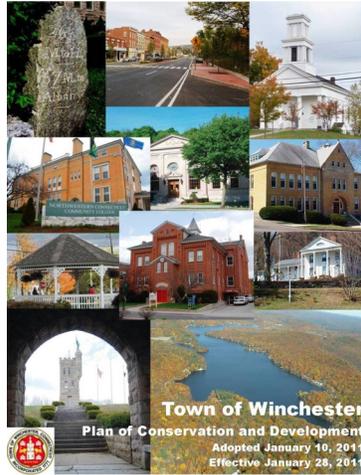


Water Quality/ Environmental Update

by Clare Stevens

Highland Lake's Role in the Town of Winchester's Plan of Conservation and Development

For many Highland Lake residents, Labor Day marks the end of the summer recreational activities such as swimming, water skiing, tubing, fishing and paddle boarding. Our post-Labor Day thoughts turn toward broader issues such as COVID-19 and its related impacts of testing, treatment, preventive measures and job/income security. Meanwhile, there is a little-known town committee researching, discussing and updating the **Town of**



Winchester Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

As stated in the 2011 State DEEP-approved plan, it is "a tool for guiding the future of a community." It is an "advisory document" that helps guide conservation and development in the community and influences current land use regulations. It also "demonstrates Winchester's commitment to achieving Connecticut's objectives for land use planning such as Smart Growth that provides for reuse of existing, obsolete or underemployed assets, limiting sprawl, infrastructure limits and maximizing environmental and quality of life contributions of nondeveloped lands."

What part does Highland Lake play?

Highland Lake is an "open space" and is seen as a significant water resource for Winchester. It is the largest lake in Winchester (approximately 444 acres) and the third largest natural lake in Connecticut. Highland Lake is a natural glacial waterbody; its deepest area is 62 feet on the west side of second bay. Its water level was raised in the 1800s through the construction of a dam to increase hydraulic flow for the generation of power for several factories along the overflow stream descending to the Mad River downtown. Highland Lake has a watershed that covers approximately 4,512 acres that are primarily forestland. Furthermore, Highland Lake provides beautiful views over the water's surface and leads one's eyes to the wooded ridgelines. Several conservation organizations have classified it as a "Critical Treasure" and it's Winchester's best known natural feature.

Thus, Highland Lake makes a significant contribution to the town's overall open space. Other open spaces that enrich Winsted's rural environment are Taylor Brook State Park, Platt Hill State Park, Paugnut State Forest, Winchester Lake, Crystal Lake, Rugg Brook Reservoir, the Still River and the Mad River. They are all uninhabited by people and buildings and are considered open space. Furthermore, Highland Lake contributes to Winchester's overall water resources that provide the water needed to support a prospering community; it is important for the health, safety and community infrastructure. Think of the many ways you use water;

we drink it, bathe in it, put out fires with it and recreate in it, to name a few. Further, water contributes to a physical environment that supports a large and diverse range of wildlife from waterfowl and birds such as eagles and osprey to animals such as deer and bears who need it to survive. Water resources have long contributed to Winchester's economy as used by the factories to generate power in the industrial age, by farmers in agrarian times, for river transportation before highways existed and for recreation and sporting activities today. Water resources, as open space, are fragile and vital to a thriving community. Thus, Winchester's Plan of Conservation and Development places water as one of the top priorities for protection and diligent stewardship.

Winchester's Conservation Commission monitors all activities that impact the entire environment in our town. It recommends and advocates for the adoption of watershed zoning that will increase the distance of property from a waterbody that can be built on, increase the minimum lot size and create more restrictive limits on impervious surfaces such as roofs and asphalt driveways. The 2010 POCD recommends enhanced limits on clear-cutting trees within the boundaries of our watersheds and development of educational programs for the public on such matters as the proper type and use of fertilizers and pesticides; the Plan provides alternatives to their damaging use. The Highland Lake Watershed Association (HLWA) is represented by several of its members.

The State of Connecticut has set a statutory goal of protecting 21% of the land area in Connecticut as open space for "public recreation and natural resource conservation and preservation." By 2023 the target is that 10% of open space land be acquired and held by the State and 11% be acquired and held by the State's other partners. In Winchester, the State owns approximately 7% of the land, the Winchester Land Trust (WLT) owns about 9.5% and the HLWA's Legacy Program has acquired many parcels on our watershed. The HLWA partnered with the CT DEEP to preserve nine acres of property on the west side of the lake extending from the shoreline to the ridgeline and named "Long Pond Ridge." Also, HLWA partnered with the Winchester Land Trust to buy five acres of forestland on the non-lake side of East Wakefield Boulevard in third bay and named it the "Stevens Preserve" in recognition of the many environmental contributions of Gerry and Clare Stevens.

The HLWA asks you to do your part by being an effective steward of your personal watershed property. Please acknowledge your impact on the water quality and beauty of Highland Lake as well as the many other contributions to the character of Winchester. We ask you to help the Town of Winchester fulfill the goals established in its new 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development. Look for it on the Town's website:

www.townofwinchester.org and click on the link to the Planning and Zoning Commission.



A single star in the universe combines with countless others to create the Milky Way.

Likewise, the positive stewardship of your property combines with other lake neighbors' to preserve Highland Lake's naturally beautiful scenery and maintain its water quality and recreational use for future generations.

Piracy on the High(land) Seas

by Jeff Smith



On a Sunday afternoon in late June, I decided to take my boat out for a quick spin around the lake. When I got on the boat, I noticed some muddy birdlike tracks on my seat cushions. I made a mental note to clean them up when I got back.

As I pulled away from my dock, a movement in the passenger seat caught my eye. I glanced over and saw what looked like a rat emerge from an opening in the side of the boat's interior wall. However, this "rat" gradually expanded as it pushed itself out of the wall, and I realized it was a large raccoon. And it looked rather annoyed. It glared at me, and I'm not ashamed to say it was a bit intimidating. My immediate concern was it might attack, and even if it wasn't rabid, its claws and teeth would have been capable of inflicting some nasty wounds. For a brief moment I thought in the event of an attack, I might want to abandon ship, so I cut the engines. Fortunately, after about a minute of our staring at each other, the raccoon hopped down from the seat and scampered into the bow of the boat. I closed the door that divided the bow from the rest of the boat, relieved that at least no physical confrontation was going to occur. The raccoon then climbed up on the gunwale of the bow and kept shifting its gaze from me to the water. I began shouting at it to encourage it to jump overboard, and, shockingly, it did just that, executing a nice headfirst plunge into the lake. It began swimming toward shore, at this point about 50 yards away.



I started the engines and decided to resume my ride. However, after about two minutes, another raccoon, somewhat smaller than the first, emerged from the same opening. This one had a decidedly different demeanor, with a very forlorn expression on its face. It immediately laid down on the passenger seat. But while it looked less aggressive, it was no more welcome than its companion. I reached into the ski locker and pulled out a long plastic swim noodle, both as a way to defend myself, if necessary,



and potentially useful to shepherd the intruder up to the bow. I began prodding the raccoon, but it seemed determined not to move and wedged itself between the seat cushions. But after a minute of being jabbed with the noodle, it finally climbed down and went to the bow. I closed the door again, and it

just sat on the floor, looking back at me with a very sad face. I kept poking it with the noodle until it finally climbed up on the bow seat. But again, it just wedged itself between the seat cushions. Finally, after another minute of being prodded and yelled at, it too climbed up on the gunwale. But unlike its predecessor, it decided to make a run back in my direction. Just as it tried to climb up the windshield, I managed to poke



it with the noodle so it tumbled overboard, and it immediately began swimming toward shore as well.

I decided to cut my cruise short and returned to my lift in order to inspect the entire boat to make sure there were no more uninvited guests. That was just as unnerving, as I had to climb into some tight places where it would have been difficult to retreat quickly if I encountered more company – an image of the movie Christmas Vacation with the squirrel leaping out of the Christmas tree came to mind. But, fortunately, no more pests were discovered.

Lessons? In hindsight, the tracks that had appeared to be bird tracks should have been a clue I might have visitors. I now make a point of looking for such signs before taking my boat out. When I cleaned the mess, I found some leftover crackers one of my sons and his friends had left on the boat the day before, which likely attracted the animals in the first place. Everyone has been reminded to be more vigilant about removing any food items when they get off the boat. Finally, I concluded, to board the boat, the raccoons must have climbed from my dock onto my boatlift wheel and from there onto the boat, and I also discovered raccoons are excellent swimmers, so no one should be complacent about their boat being safe from having an uninvited guest.

Spotlight on Volunteers

by Jill Ricci

Jay Champagne and Lynn Carter

The financial contributions and donations our members contribute are most certainly valuable and appreciated, but we'd like to give special recognition to those who go above and beyond to volunteer their time and effort toward our common goal of maintaining and improving the quality of our beloved lake.



Jay and Lynn have been living on Highland Lake for 17 years in second bay, but their families have been coming to the lake for decades. Jay and Lynn are kind and generous folks who wanted to do more and actually contacted the mayor to inquire how they could best help. They were directed to HLWA, where they graciously volunteered their time. They now do our water testing each month! They take their pontoon boat to three different preset established GPS positions and, using a special device, they measure the water temperature and oxygen saturation at standard depths. The information is then collected, recorded and sent to the Northeast Aquatic Research Lab for analysis to research trends. This important work helps us to monitor our lake and, together with the professionals, to advise on what needs to be done for our lake for optimal health.

We cannot do all the work that is necessary to protect our lake alone; thus, our volunteers are invaluable! A big shout-out to Lynn and Jay for all they do. And when you see Lynn and Jay around the lake, please give them a big *Thank You!*

Appreciating Summer of 2020 on Highland Lake

by Jeanne Marchand

In addition to all the cancellations, fear, and anxiety, there was something good that happened this summer. COVID-19 was like hitting the reset button for me.

The summer of 2020 on Highland Lake was my all-time favorite. This was the first year I didn't commute to Hartford, and I worked from home every day. My schedule had been extremely hectic as I used to leave the house at 5:20 a.m. and not come home until after 6:00 p.m., exhausted. My days were always rushed, trying to get to meetings, exercise classes, and then rushing to get out of Hartford to beat the traffic to come home. Evening commutes were the worst - gridlock on Route 44, and there was always that one person who wanted to drive five miles below the speed limit. It was so stressful and frustrating.

When the State of Connecticut shut down due to COVID-19, I began working from home five days a week. Then, something happened to me. There was a gradual transition where staying home forced me to slow down, hit the reset button and take the time to appreciate all the little things around me I never noticed and used to take for granted.

I love the mornings on Highland Lake. Running or walking around the lake gave me the opportunity to see the same familiar faces each morning. This is especially true when you set out at the same time. There may not have been long conversations, but there was enough time for a "good morning" and/or "have a great day." There was such an influx of new families coming to the lake who changed their vacation homes to their permanent residences. It was pretty nice to see so many friendly faces. One of my favorite lawn signs I saw this summer was "Be Kind." It seemed to be the theme on the lake.



I appreciated the most beautiful flowers and gardens on Highland Lake. With so many people staying home this summer, there was an endless sea of colorful blooming. This year was my first attempt to battle weeds, and even plant my own gardens and watch them grow! I guess having the time to water them made all the difference!

Getting to know my neighbors! You don't realize how important neighbors are to you until there is a hurricane, you look outside, and your neighbor is almost parasailing as his carport set sail due to the wind! My heart was pounding in my ears with panic as the trees started to snap and everyone was outside helping! The hurricane was crazy with so many trees down and power outages! I have never seen such long lines of cars getting water at the spring. People patiently waited their turn and new conversations began. Neighbors started to check on each other, making sure everyone was safe. One of my favorite memories this summer was when "the boys from Illinois" utility trucks drove down the Boulevard, and all I could hear was people cheering and whistling and yelling thank you to them for restoring our electricity. Best parade **ever!**

Concerts on the lake! There were some amazing people on Highland Lake who provided free concerts for everyone this summer! It was like going to the drive-in on boats! I counted 31 boats at the first concert. The warm summer nights were so perfect for their performances. It was one of the most enchanting nights with boats lit up, people cheering, singing and "carefully" dancing. So many people thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The lake was so spectacular!



Sunrises are different every day. One morning I went for a run and got about a half mile in when I saw an orange glow on the house in front of me. I turned and stopped dead in my tracks. I couldn't believe the sunrise that morning. The orange glow was like hot lava flowing across the water toward us. Then the morning water skier came by and skied right into the color, leaving ripples of orange. This was one of the most beautiful sunrises I've ever seen. After I started running again, I turned back for one more glance. Just as quickly as it appeared, the orange glow was gone. It's amazing how quickly this happens.



Sunsets on Highland Lake are magical. This is the first summer I sat outside in the evenings and watched the sunset almost every night. The pink skies were so therapeutic to me, and the moon seemed brighter this year than I've ever seen it. Just like the morning "walkers/runners," we started to see the same people walk/run and ride their bikes each night.

There are birds I've never seen before on the lake - ospreys, blue herons, cormorants and the most majestic eagles that fly over and hunt for fish. I was sitting outside one afternoon and couldn't believe how the eagle swooped down and grabbed a fish with its claws.

I'm sad summer is over, but I am excited to see what beauty fall and winter have in store for us here on Highland Lake. Now that I have hit my reset button on life, I can appreciate all the beauty the next two seasons will bring.

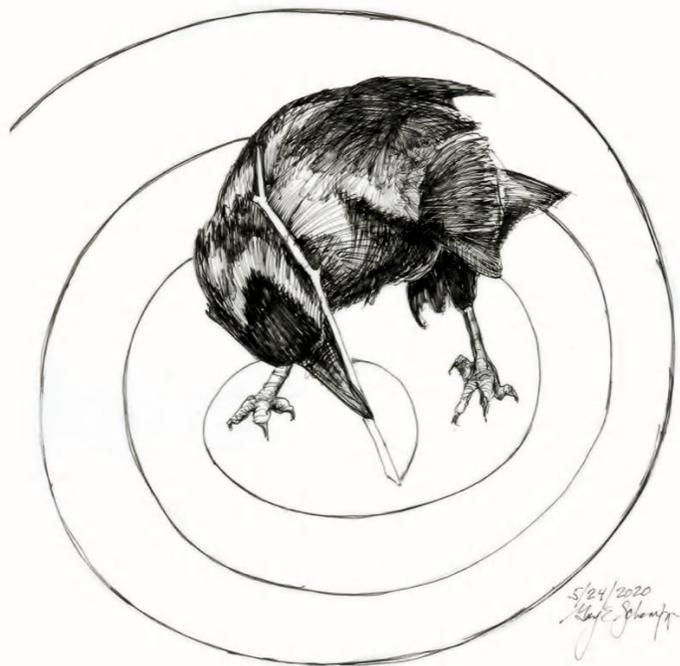
The Spring of 2020 and Crows

by Gay E. Schempp

About a year ago, a murder of crows took up residence in our birch grove. I placed broken jewelry and bits of shiny stuff I found on an old tree stump there to entice them to stay - there were too many bears around for feeding them. Soon, they let me walk or sit among them to observe, sketch or photograph their quirky postures. They stayed for several months, and I gathered wonderful images of these intelligent birds to use as visual resources for my paintings before they left. I have a studio at Whiting Mills and painted these wonderful creatures in encaustic (pigmented beeswax) to create a large body of work depicting stories I saw played out between them in that grove. Then the pandemic hit.

Because of the coronavirus quarantine in early spring, I basically pivoted from my 900-square-foot studio, equipped with all kinds of media, tools, torches, visual resources, easels, etc., to my small kitchen table. Galleries closed, my classes and workshops were cancelled, and I was exiled from my creative space. To anchor my days and to express what I was experiencing and observing, I began daily drawings. I used pen and ink on a small pad - well, many small pads. I wanted to inject some humor into the terror we were facing. Since I had previously been working with the subject of crows, I used a crow persona to convey experiences I had during that day. Basically, I was entertaining myself, or getting cathartic relief, with no real plan for these multiplying images. Some examples are a crow observing our elbow-bump "hug," or a crow perched on a grocery cart following the arrows on the floor, or sewing a mask. After four months, I had around seventy images documenting that time. More important, that practice gave me purpose and relief in an otherwise rudderless spring. And I've recently compiled and published them into a book (see *Gay's ad for her book on page 19 - Editor*).

The story I am telling here is my rediscovery of the lifeline our innate creativity, whatever form that takes, offers us. We are not in normal times. The daily news, COVID-19, the economic shift, and state protocols have unbalanced our previous lives and added undeniable anxiety for many of us. Having a regular practice of some pleasurable activity such as gardening, new learning of some kind, cooking, making music, crafts, or taking up the arts can create an oasis in the middle of this siege of crises. I believe there is something inexhaustible in terms of what we are capable of or what is possible, as opposed to what it is society wants to measure or sell. In our society, creativity, like so much else, has become compartmentalized, assigned to specialists, and ripped out of everyday life. The creative impulse is in our DNA. Everyone has access to it. Give yourself the gift of transforming ordinary stuff into a new creation, something transcendent over the mere raw materials. Creativity is not just a matter of manufacturing a product to be admired or sold. Rather, it is to explore the act of creation as a way to awaken to our own voices, surprise ourselves, connect with the beauty and mystery of our own lives, and give us some respite from these worrisome times.



My Shrinking World

Our Advertisers

by Stuart Yaffee

In this last issue of 2020, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all who advertise in the Highland Lake News. Without them this publication would not exist, especially in these difficult times. I would like to welcome all this year's first-time advertisers:

- ◆ William Fontaine - Fontaine Mechanical Plumbing, Heating & Cooling
- ◆ Jeff Lippincott - Lippincott Van Lines
- ◆ Mike Mastrianni - Mastrianni & Seguljic, LLC
- ◆ Maria Miele - MGM Originals Fine Art Studio
- ◆ Gay Schempp - Schempp Studio

We as a community want to support and recommend all our advertisers for either their services or their products.

We are always looking for new advertisers. The newsletter is a good way to help build your business and support HLWA. If you are interested in advertising or want more information, contact me at stuartyaffee@comcast.net or at 860.916.1830.

THANK YOU

Forever Young

by Brigitte Rouleau

The Adventures of Jack and Marlene Rouleau

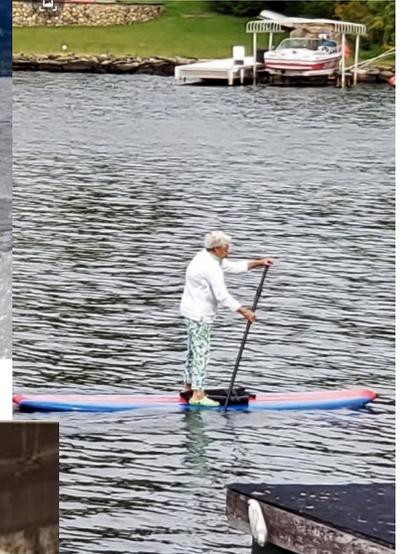
Those of you who know Scott and me know our philosophy is "Have fun, grow young." No two people live by that motto more than Scott's parents, Jack and Marlene Rouleau. They met as teenagers one summer many moons ago at Highland Lake. Marlene was a competitive swimmer with the YMCA swim team, and Jack was an avid water skier. They met through mutual friends and a shared love of the lake and all things fun.

After high school, Jack headed to Florida for vacation and ended up water skiing for a living. He taught skiing seven days a week, ending each day with a ski show. He left Florida to join the Air Force Reserves, eventually returning to Connecticut. Jack and Marlene married in 1960. Yup, you did the math right – they're about to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in November!

Jack and Marlene raised a beautiful family, all of whom have a shared love of the water and Highland Lake. Through the years, Jack and Marlene were very active in the Laurel Water Ski Club and participated in many ski shows. Jack was one of the "foundation" members of many a pyramid, while Marlene effortlessly graced upper levels of the pyramids. Besides these daring pursuits, she loved and excelled at trick and slalom skiing.

Fast forward to 2020, with five kids, 12 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. They may not be doing pyramids anymore, but they still love the water. Jack, or "Papa Jack" as he's affectionately called by many a neighborhood child, was seen water skiing this summer. And Marlene can never get enough time on a paddleboard. Her love for life is endless - and contagious!

Though our philosophy of "Have fun, grow young" suits them, I think "Forever Young" is much more fitting! Scott and I can't wait to see what adventures they have next summer.



69 Times

Aljean Owens loves to waterski.

She and her husband Rusty have lived on and enjoyed the lake for 13 years.

This year she turned 69, so to celebrate, she decided to have a goal to ski 69 times!

She achieved that goal in the beginning of September and, after feeling good about accomplishing it, went on to ski six more times!



The Deadliners

by Mark Mandell

The sound around Highland Lake on some recent weekend nights was hard to miss - some Rolling Stones, some Grateful Dead, some old blues and a bunch of Phish.

The band behind the sound is The Deadliners, a four-piece local group that includes lake resident Mark Mandell. The Deadliners played on the porch of his house on Friday, July 31, and Saturday, August 15, to dozens of boats each night - along with a number of socially distancing guests on shore, in boats and hundreds of people via livestream on Facebook.

The Deadliners have been together since late 2017, and like many local bands, their formation was a bit of an accident. Mandell and bassist Matt Grosk of New Hartford were playing at the time with a group that had had a gig scheduled at the Crown & Hammer in Collinsville in January 2018. But two of their other members had conflicts, so Mandell and Grosk were in a spot. They didn't want to cancel the gig.

Grosk had played previously with guitarist Stephen Busemeyer (who answers to "Bus," obviously) and percussionist Steve Ringuette ("Ringo," also obviously), both of whom live in New Hartford and were playing together in a band of their own. But Grosk knew he could reach out - the music scene is small and friendly enough in the area that players routinely sit in with other acts.

Bus and Ringo were free on the night of the Collinsville gig and agreed to play, even though they and the two of us had never played together as a single unit before - and the show was less than two months away. It would be a challenge for four family guys with regular jobs to carve out the time they needed to put on a proper show (and to feel okay asking to be paid for it).

So one cold Tuesday night in late November 2017, Mandell, Bus and Grosk met at a bar in West Hartford Center to talk it out. Was it even possible?

In the course of an hour, they came up with a list of 30 songs everyone in the band already knew and had performed live. That was enough for a show. A big problem solved.



But what about a band name?

They kicked around a few, based loosely on the kind of improvisational rock they all liked. And then, someone came out with "The Deadliners."

It fit. The "dead" references the Grateful Dead, a favorite of every member of the band, and

the "deadline" was a nod to the six weeks or so they had to practice and gel before stepping on a stage.

A few days later, the band got together for the first time in Bus' family-room-turned-studio, and the fit was immediate. Musically, they were a solid match for each other, with each player bringing a strength of his own. Most songs came together in one take.

And oddly for a group of musicians, they got along as human beings. Everyone left their egos at the door. It was all about making good music.

The gig at the Crown & Hammer was a hit. The band will remember a few flubbed notes and questionable song choices that are common at debuts, but the place was packed, and there was only one question at the end of the night: "How soon can we get another gig?"

Since then, The Deadliners have played regularly in bars and backyards across the area, but they haven't had a proper bar gig since January 25 at The Old Well in Simsbury - a night the band members agree was one of their best shows ever. Fortunately, it was recorded, and the first set is available on their website, www.thedeadliners.com.

The Deadliners hope to return to Highland Lake next year, and they will be available for bookings in backyards and any socially distanced situation then!

Band Bios:

Mark Mandell runs a data analytics and marketing company in Newington. He has an enviable collection of guitars and amplifiers but prefers to play a Fender Stratocaster through a classic Fender amplifier. He shares vocal duties with Bus and handles the PA system, band bookings and the band's website. Mark is a font of musical ideas and tasteful guitar. He lives with his wife and kids in West Hartford.

Stephen "Bus" Busemeyer has been a writer and editor at The Hartford Courant for more than 20 years. He also teaches at Wesleyan University. Like Mandell, Bus is an accumulator of guitars and gear, but he has fallen hard lately for a Paul Reed Smith guitar and has scaled down his two-amplifier Fender/Marshall rig to a simple Boss Katana amp, much to the band's delight. He handles the band's Facebook page, manages livestreams and engineers recordings. He lives in New Hartford

with his wife Martha - who is a percussionist and plays regularly with The Deadliners - and his two teenage children.

Matt Grosk delivers. He is the most accomplished and experienced musician of the band, has a great ear for arrangements and is the definition of reliable. Grosk played with the former local band Flipper Dave, which toured widely and played to much larger audiences than The Deadliners have ever known. He is also the band's go-to when they need an unvarnished opinion. When he's not playing his home-built bass, he delivers mail for the U.S. Postal Service, and nothing in this world makes more sense than that. He lives in New Hartford, literally a stone's throw from Ringo, with his wife and two children.

Steve "Ringo" Ringuette worked as an accountant at Otis Elevator for many years until he took a position as a financial executive with Butler Equipment, a West Hartford-based power equipment retailer. Like Grosk, Ringo played with Flipper Dave, and he's been with many other local bands, including Casino Ghost Town and The Age of Treason with Bus, carefully packing up his gorgeous DW drum kit for every show. Ringo drives The Deadliners' improvisational spirit, taking songs from mood to mood with a subtle shift of accent or an unexpected, explosive turn. He lives in New Hartford with his wife and two children.

New Fire Chief Lagassie Sworn In

by Shaw Israel Izikson - September 16, 2020



Photo by Winsted Mayor Candy Perez

WINSTED — New Winsted Fire Department Chief Jamie Lagassie was sworn in at a ceremony at East End Park on Wednesday, Sept. 16.

The ceremony included members of the fire department, former Chief David Sartirana, and Police Chief William Fitzgerald.

Lagassie was previously the captain of Squad Five and worked as the department's daytime firefighter.

He is the first full-time fire chief in the department's history.

He was appointed by the Board of Selectmen on Sept. 8 after a two-year search for a full-time fire chief.

Since the town's fire department was founded in 1862 all fire chiefs have worked on a volunteer basis.

However, in recent years the town has given a small stipend to the department's chief.

According to the department's website, so far this year the department has responded to 277 fires.

For more information about the Winsted Fire Department, including information about volunteering, go to their website at <http://winstedfire.org>.

Taken from *The Winsted Phoenix* at winstedphoenix.org

Free Fitness Classes on Zoom!

This might be of interest to those of us who are staying at home more. The Winsted Senior Center is holding fitness classes on Zoom! You would need to be a current member of the center, which costs \$6.

Chair Yoga classes are held at 9:00 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Tai Chi classes are held at 10:15 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays as well.



For more information, you can contact Jennifer Kelley at 860.379.4252 or jkelly@townofwinchester.org.

And check out the Winsted Senior Center Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/wsc.page>.

Recipe Corner

by Terry Platt

I had some leftover Coca-Cola I thought I should use up, and since we don't drink it, I started looking on the internet for ideas. This is what I came up with! (It smelled like bacon when it was cooking! I don't know why - it didn't taste like bacon!)

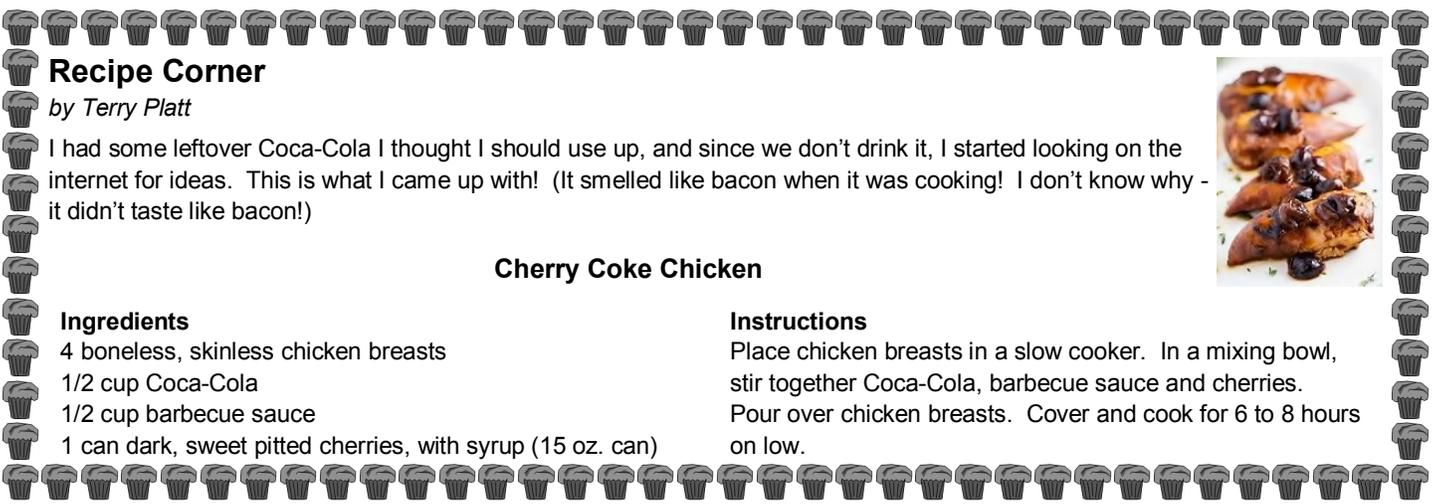
Cherry Coke Chicken

Ingredients

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1/2 cup Coca-Cola
- 1/2 cup barbecue sauce
- 1 can dark, sweet pitted cherries, with syrup (15 oz. can)

Instructions

- Place chicken breasts in a slow cooker. In a mixing bowl, stir together Coca-Cola, barbecue sauce and cherries.
- Pour over chicken breasts. Cover and cook for 6 to 8 hours on low.



2020 HLWA Boat Parade!



On July 11, the HLWA boat parade got under way at 7:30 p.m. A smaller number of boats participated, but the number of people (and pets) on shore was tremendous!

A canoe joined in and kept up to the motorboats rather well! In other places you could see references to our current way of living during the pandemic. And one family presented a Star Wars theme!

Dealing with the Weeds

Employees from New England Aquatic Services spent two days hand-harvesting invasive weeds. Divers hand-pulled weeds and fed them into a suction tube. New England Aquatic Services does work for towns and individuals all over New England.



Freezin' for a Reason

by David Sartirana

Once again, the Northwest YMCA is holding its annual "Freezin' for a Reason" fundraiser in the East End Park. It will be held on Friday, December 11, at 6:00 p.m. Members of the YMCA administration, other members of the community and I will spend the evening raising funds while bringing awareness to the persistent issue of homeless families and individuals in our communities. Funds raised will benefit the Winsted Y Homeless Shelter and are used for operating the shelter and enhancing the experience for its clients. The goal is to raise \$15,000.

I have been involved with this effort since its inception. Then Branch Director Jason Cohen, the Y's Housing manager Bruce Mochan, and Town Manager Dale Martin approached me and asked if I would be involved. It was hard to say no. From their idea the event turned into "Freezin' for a Reason," and the following year other civic groups and individuals joined in.

The reason for my involvement from the very beginning is every day I work in my business as a realtor to help people achieve the "American Dream" of finding and realizing home ownership. It's a great feeling to see the smile on their faces when they get the keys and their new life begins. Most of us don't realize how many people among us don't have the luxury of calling somewhere "home." This year, since the pandemic hit, my wife and I have hosted a food pantry outside our office. Although not everyone who takes advantage of the good will the pantry offers are homeless, many are, and it has given me renewed energy to raise further awareness. I am hoping this year more people will get involved and we can exceed the goal.

To participate or make a contribution, please contact Will Donahue at 860.489.3133, extension 122.



Remembering the Flood of 1955

by Shaw Israel Izikson - August 19, 2020



*The Aftereffects of the Flood of 1955 on Main Street.
Photo courtesy of The Winchester Historical Society.*

August 19 was the 65th anniversary of the Flood of 1955. The Winsted Phoenix is republishing an article from last year that covered a lecture on the Flood by Winchester Historical Society President Milly Hudak.

COLEBROOK and WINSTED — As part of their ongoing lecture series about area history, the Colebrook Historical Society presented the program “The Flood of ‘55: Before and After” at the Historical Society featuring Winchester Historical Society President Milly Hudak.

Colebrook Historical Society President Gerry Kassel said it is important to remember what happened both to the town and the state.

“So many lives were changed and devastated, not just in Winsted, but all over Connecticut,” Kassel said in an interview before the presentation. “Winsted has come a long way, but it was never the same after the flood. It’s important to understand how people’s lives had all changed due to an event no one had control over. It’s the same with a hurricane or due to a fire.”

While Kassel said that Colebrook was not impacted due to The Flood of 1955 because the town is elevated and away from flowing water, the flood still hurt residents of the town and surrounding areas.

Winsted was and still is a hub where people go and shop,” Kassel said. “Whether it is Norfolk, Winsted, or New Hartford, we are all in the same area and we are all connected.”

“Winsted was the hardest hit town in the state during the Flood of ‘55,” Hudak said in an interview before the event. “No one should ever forget the flood. Seven people died and 400 were left homeless. Over a thousand people had to find new homes.”

During the program, Hudak showed “The Cornelio Legacy.”

The film was made by Carmen Cornelio who owned an Oldsmobile car dealership in Winsted.

Back in 1948, Cornelio filmed people, store owners, and businesses in Winsted because he was about to visit his family in Italy.

“He wanted to make a film to show his family what Winsted was like,” Hudak said.

Cornelio’s film was a time capsule of what Winsted looked like before the flood and showed a very busy town filled with people, businesses and industry.

“Before the flood hit, there were 21 grocery stores on Main Street, 12 clothing stores, 11 taverns, 10 package stores, seven barbershops and three motels,” Hudak said. “After the flood 170 of the 200 stores in Winsted were all lost. Ninety percent of the city’s industry was lost.”

Hudak concluded her presentation by saying that the aftereffects of the Flood of 1955 are still being felt today.

“Some people say that the flood was the best thing that ever happened to Winsted, but I never look at it that way,” Hudak said. “It was a tragedy. We lost so much after the flood. So many people moved out of Winsted and the factories are all long gone. Not that the shut down of the factories wouldn’t have happened anyway. After World War 2 we had two woolen factories that employed over 2,000 people. But both nylon and dacron fabrics came out after the war. People were not looking for wool anymore. All of the appliance factories we had never got into making microwaves. The Gilbert Clock factory never made digital readout clocks. A demise was going to happen, but we don’t ever want to see another flood ever again. But you never know, especially with all the global warming and environmental problems you are seeing now.”

Taken from The Winsted Phoenix at winstedphoenix.org

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To contact HLWA please email us
at hlwa@hlwa.org.

2020 HLWA Fall Cleanup!

Though it was a little dark, it was still favorable weather for our day of cleaning up the roadside and lake. This wasn't organized like our past cleanups, but it was basically a help-out-if-you-can type of thing!

Many thanks to all who helped make Highland Lake a cleaner place!



Holiday Shopping

Custom HLWA Items - email president@hlwa.org if interested.



Bamboo cutting board/serving tray, 8" x 12". It has a metal handle and the HLWA logo engraved in the lower corner - \$25 each



Bottle opener, 2" x 7". It has the lake outline on one side and the HLWA logo on the opposite side. Cedar (reddish color) and walnut (brown color) wood - \$25 each



Plaques, 9" x 19" - \$150 each. Both plaques have a dark stain finish. One version is solid stained and one has the lake stained in blue.

AmazonSmile

Don't forget, when shopping for your holiday gifts, you can support the HLWA by going to smile.amazon.com. When you select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases, select Highland Lake Watershed Association. They will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. Thank you!

Purchase your HLWA swag at Lands' End online at:

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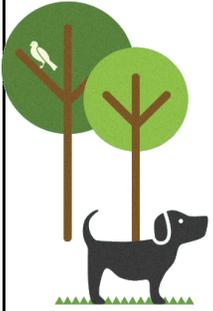


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Quarantine 2020
Through a Crow's Eye



Gay Schempp

This book is a visual documentary of our shared experiences this Spring through early Summer. It is available through my website www.gayschemppencaustic.com.

Small group [3 people] and private art classes in painting, drawing or encaustic wax painting are available in my Whiting Mills studio here in Winsted. Please contact me at gayschempp@gmail.com for info on classes or studio visits. Gay Schempp, Studio 414, Whiting Mills.



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HLWA Donation

Members of the HLWA Board of Directors personally delivered a \$250 check to Winsted's Open Door Soup Kitchen. A generous donation by one of our members made this gift possible. The Open Door's mission is "to provide a healthy meal to any individual who, for whatever reason, is unable to provide a proper meal for himself/herself without regard to ability to pay, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, disability or sexual orientation."

Since July, the Open Door has been providing lunches to go to residents in need from Monday to Friday.