



A Little Spot of Heaven

# The Laurel Lake Ledger

## Laurel Lake Association

### 34th Annual Newsletter Spring 2021

## TOWNSEND CAMP HISTORY ON LAUREL LAKE

The Townsend presence on Laurel Lake goes back over 100 years. My grandparents, Inez and Guy Townsend, purchased our small lot on East Lake Road in three parcels. The first and larger of the three parcels was purchased in 1913 from Ira Prouty. The other two smaller parcels were purchased in 1922 and 1930, both from Josie and Louis Webb.

I am told that my grandfather built the cabin in the top picture around 1918, but I have not been able to document that date. Sometime between 1922 and the early 1930's Guy added the boathouse. He passed away in 1935. In the 1940's my parents, James and Doris, enclosed the open porch and made some other modifications as visible in the second picture (below). Notice the pine in front has grown quite a bit.



Original Townsend camp

The camp stayed pretty much the same until 2006. At that point both my parents had passed away and, due both to the age of the structure and the fact the original layout was not totally conducive for our family, my wife Paula and I decided to raze the original camp and rebuild on the same footprint as regulations required, as shown in the picture on the next page. The boathouse remained as originally built but was just re-sided to match the new camp.



For a number of years from the late 1940's and early 1950's my grandmother rented the camp for the month of July to help pay for the taxes. From the late 1940's my grandmother, my parents and I spent summers at the lake for the time the camp was not rented. My Dad commuted to Winchendon daily for his job at the Alaska Freezer Company/White Mountain Freezer Company. After my Dad retired, my parents changed their residence to New Hampshire and lived at the camp from May to October.

I have a sign over my desk that reads "The Lake Is Calling and I Must Go". I have always enjoyed Laurel Lake having spent some of every summer there for the last 75 years. My first visit to the lake was when I was six months old. Both my Dad and I have been involved

with the Laurel Lake Association at different times and in different capacities over the years having served on the Board and committees.



Current Townsend Camp

Five generations of the Townsend family have spent time at the lake: grandparents (Inez and Guy), parents (James and Doris), Paula and myself, our two daughters and their husband's (Julie/Matthew and Jill/Patrick) and their combined five sons (Joshua, Ben, Caleb, Colin and Peter). We know more generations will continue to enjoy spending time at the lake.

The lake area has certainly changed over the years regarding number and types of camps/year-round homes, road traffic, boat traffic, water quality, etc., but Laurel Lake is still "A Little Spot of Heaven".

Submitted by Bill Townsend

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

My Second "Message from the President" arrives with a more positive outlook on the summer season for the Laurel Lake Association. Although our first board meeting of the year will be online via Zoom I am optimistic I will get to associate with everyone by the end of the summer. The board will discuss the lake association activities at the Spring Board meeting, so be sure and stay tuned on the website and Facebook for updates. I want to thank Chip and Nan Yensan for updating the website, and donating the first two years of hosting. In addition, Chip has volunteered to take over the Lake Host Program and already has the ball rolling.

My goals last year were first to get the Lake Host Program back on track, and second to get a team to help plan and operate the Canoe Race when Charley Brackett retires. These two activities require time and effort to execute, and if we all pitch in we can spread the load and keep a flow of people who know the process for the future. With Chip stepping up to handle the Lake Host, that leaves the canoe race still open. Following the board's decision whether to go forward with the race this year I will be looking to recruit some folks for the tasks.

Although social distancing kept us apart and cancelled our social programs last summer, the work of the members and volunteers to monitor the lake remained unhampered. Many thanks to the Aquatic Invasive Species team and Water Quality team for their continued work despite the adversity. In addition, thanks to those who stepped up and filled in for team members who couldn't make it to the Lake.

We arrived home on March 30<sup>th</sup> this year to find ice out had officially taken place on the 28<sup>th</sup>. We did find Mud Season was in full swing, and the black flies had not yet appeared so we will be able to enjoy the full season.

My continued thanks to all who make the Laurel Lake Association a success.

**Tom White, President**



## 2021 SUMMER EVENTS—LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION

**Notice:** Due to the COVID-19 virus, all events are subject to cancellation. The Spring Board of Directors meeting (June 5th) will be held via video conference and the Spring Pot Luck Supper is cancelled. The Board will evaluate whether an event can be held based upon state and local guidelines. To check on the status of an event, please go to our web site: [LaurelLakeAssn.com](http://LaurelLakeAssn.com) or on Facebook.

### JUNE

5th –9:00 AM Board of Directors Meeting via Zoom.

### JULY

4th—**9:00 PM** Celebrate the Fourth of July with the traditional lighting of flares around Laurel Lake. Flares are available for purchase at Bottoms Up (Rt. 12) & Pottery Works (Rt. 119).

10th - 10:30 AM - The **Annual meeting** will be held at White's Field, Laurel Lake Campground, Keene Ave. Our featured speaker is Association member Pat Deyo, an avid fisherman, who will speak about the good biodiversity of the lake. Association business will also be addressed with a picnic lunch following the meeting. Bring a chair (none provided). Note: in case of terrible weather, the meeting will be moved to the restored train depot building in Fitzwilliam Depot, next to the fire station.

10th- 5:00-7:00 PM Concert on the lake at Sunrise Rock (west side of lake). Boat on over for some great music.

31st - 11:00 AM - The **30th** Annual Canoe/Kayak Race. Registration starts at 9:30 AM.

Kids race at 11:05 a.m., 1.5 mile Jr/Sr at 11:00, 6 3/4 miler at 12:20, 2 1/4 mile at 12:30 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER

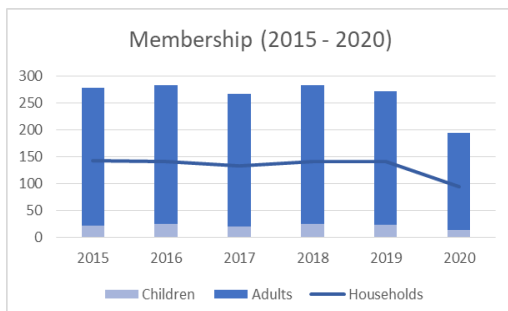
4th - 10:00 AM - The **33nd** Dresser-Friedman Regatta. Rain date is September 5 at 10:00 a.m..

11th - 9:00 AM - The Board of Directors will meet at Camp Fleur de Lis.

11th - 5:00 PM - The Laurel Lake Association Pot Luck **Supper** will be held at Camp Fleur de Lis to celebrate the finale of the 2021 Summer season. Bring a brunch dish to share. Coffee, plates & silverware will be provided.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of April 23, 2021, we have 194 members (13 children, 181 adults) in 94 households. Membership generally hovers around 276 total members (22 children, 254 adults) in 140 households.



Ordinarily, the Laurel Lake Ledger is provided to those that are current with dues, however, this year the ledger is being sent to any households that were paid for 2019 or 2020. We hope that all will consider renewing for 2021. Also, please encourage others that have not joined in the past to consider becoming a part of the Laurel Lake Association. Information about the association and membership can be found at <https://www.laurellakeassn.com>. Thank you for your support! — **Bill Chase**



## COVID SUMMER 2020



Laurel Lake thoroughly lived up to its reputation as “A Little Spot Of Heaven” in the Covid Summer of 2020 for those whose circumstances allowed them to visit. While it seemed that the nasty influence of the virus was all-encompassing, one area of life it COULDN’T meddle with was good, old Mother Nature!

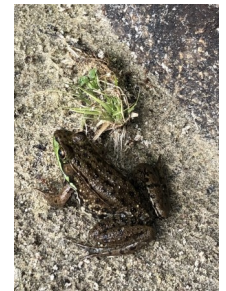
The setting of the Lake was still pristine. It boasted clear, cooling waters, forested shorelines, beautiful blooms of laurel decorating its edges in June, and Mt. Monadnock overlooking it all “like a kindly grandfather”, as a lake-loving middle schooler once observed. The fish were biting and blue herons cruising. One to four loons visited daily, looking for lunch, remarkably unperturbed by humans boating nearby. Deer loped through woods and feasted on residents’ hostas as always.



The lower-than-normal lake level exposed some sandy mini-beaches in places, which in turn seemed to provide a playground for tiny toads and baby snapping turtles, to the delight of their discoverers. The August and September sunshine warmed the rocks and downed trees in the water and provided sunbathing spots for many sleepy turtles and a few lazy snakes.



Blueberry bushes thrived along the lake edges, inviting birds and humans to sample their bounty. When autumn began to descend, foliage became breathtakingly beautiful. The lake was ringed with vibrant reds and oranges and yellow with pine greens and oak browns mixed in.



Human activity, so restricted in most of the outside world, became possible at “The Lake”. Since people could feel safer in fresh air, out of doors conversations or safe dining in small groups could happen. Families could visit, though always mindful of Covid protocols and safe distancing. As one seven year old exclaimed to her favorite older cousin, “I learned Covid doesn’t travel in water, so that means we can dive underwater and high five and HUG!” And they did...that once taken-for-granted greeting on land, now assuming a new preciousness.



Swimming, sunbathing, shooting the breeze with each other as they socially distanced on docks, kayaking, paddle boarding, solo sailing, fishing, floating on blow up rafts, were among the simple pleasures lake folk could enjoy. The internet provided connections to jobs or coursework for those who had to continue daily routines. The loyal weed watchers were able to file their reports. A safe plan was instituted to gather water samples to provide that valuable data to the NH DES.

The Association cancelled the usual community summer events. Everyone missed those. Still, individuals bought fireworks and the Fourth of July display, reflecting in the lake, was quite a spectacle! Someone erected an American flag on Sunken Island which it adorned most of the summer, lending a patriotic presence in the year all of us had to pull together while being apart. The Town of Fitzwilliam itself had to forgo the much-loved Concerts on the Common so many lake folk enjoy. The Inn and Library were closed.







Still the Common became abuzz in late summer when the Town Hall clock tower and spire which had been dismantled in fall 2019 for restoration in a Vermont workshop, was delivered on flatbed trucks in pieces. During the days it was stored on the ground, people were invited to write messages or their names for posterity on the boards inside the tower. Over just a couple of days, the structure was dramatically reconstructed with the aid of cranes and talented workmen. An engineering marvel to behold!



To be totally honest, there were a few sadnesses. Due to the mandated shutdowns, the Girls' Camp was shuttered. No happy squeals of delight were heard at that end of the lake. The Town Beach was closed as well, taking away a refreshment for Fitzwilliam residents on hot summer days. The Swim Club was silent. For reasons of health, or travel restrictions, confinement in congregate residential settings, and other Covid- related reasons, some summer lake friends were unable to come to Laurel Lake in 2020. Some properties appeared abandoned, their usual fingers of docks stored on the land, awaiting another healthier and "normal" year. How good it will feel in the summer of 2021 to begin the return to some semblance of normalcy and greet old lake acquaintances again,

For those fortunate beings who were able to spend some time "on the Lake" in the Covid summer of 2020, though, life passed a little more enjoyably than it might have otherwise. Folks were reminded that in our too-often hectic world, a simple life with only those closest to us around, entertained mostly by Mother Nature herself, can be ever so satisfying, and even rejuvenating. A true blessing.

Submitted by Phyllis Lurvey



All photos on pages 4 & 5 courtesy of Phyllis Lurvey, except completed town hall photo from Kathy Olson.





## IN MEMORIAM

**Betty Bartlett**, 91, of Keene, NH and formerly Satellite Beach, FL passed away in July 2020. Betty and her late husband Raymond “Sunny” had summer homes in the White’s Grove area for a number of years. Betty was a real estate investor who bought, renovated, sold & rented a number of properties in New Hampshire and Florida. She also worked in the banking and bookkeeping office of Fort Pierce, FL Jai Alai for 20 years. She leaves behind her son Daniel and his wife and other extended family.

**Gail Johnson** of Sturbridge, MA passed away unexpectedly in October, 2020 at the age of 72. Gail was born and raised in Central Massachusetts and had a long career as a Triage Nurse in women’s health clinics. She and her husband Bruce spent decades at their summer place near Sandy Beach, either on the beach or all day on Bruce’s boat on the lake. In addition to Bruce, Gail leaves behind her children Amy-Margaret Castellano and Adam Johnson and their spouses and four beloved grandchildren. She also leaves behind her sisters Elizabeth Sullivan & Laurie Mullett and other extended family.

## LAUREL LAKE LOGO PRODUCTS & ONLINE STORE

As we move forward into a new normal in regards to COVID (especially for the short term) this also affects how products are made, ordered, and delivered. When it comes to Laurel Lake Logo Products we have all the bases covered for you. There is a supply of pre-printed shirts, sweatshirts, hats, mugs and much more and these will be available for sale at the annual meeting July 10, at the canoe/kayak race on July 31, or by appointment.

In addition to the limited supply of pre-printed items, we have pivoted to an online store through a local screen printing and design shop located on Winchester St. in Keene NH. The company is Bulldog (a quick internet search for them and you will find the amazing things they are doing to help Cheshire County Communities). Their website is <https://bulldog-design.com/>. Along with their website there is also a special online store setup specifically for the Laurel Lake Association so you can purchase Laurel Lake Logo Products. The web address for the online store is <https://laurellake.itemorder.com/> (as of your reading the store is open for business and you can see many items that can be purchased). How this works is the store will be open until July 5<sup>th</sup>; at that time Bulldog will close the store and put into production all the orders that were made through July 5<sup>th</sup> with the products being available 2-3 weeks after the online store is closed (just before the canoe/kayak race). In addition to normal Laurel Lake Logo Products there will also be 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary canoe/kayak shirts. There are many ways to pick-up your gear and they include curbside, shipping to you (extra charges may apply). I will also be willing to pick up for anyone and we could do curbside pick-up at my camp at 14 South Pond Rd. (off of White’s Grove Rd. on the east side of the lake). Anyone that needs assistance ordering please contact Bulldog at 603-352-7217. If there are product selections not currently offered please share those thoughts with me and I will see what I can coordinate with Bulldog.

The online ordering was very successful last year with two separate online store offerings throughout the year (one in the spring/summer and one in the fall just in time for the holidays) which we will also offer in 2021 (dates to be communicated later in 2021).

**Joe Pelkey**

[Jpelk20@yahoo.com](mailto:Jpelk20@yahoo.com)

603-762-2247





## THE BLUE MARBLE TRADITION

Several years ago NH Lakes created a wonderful tradition of handing out blue marbles at their Lake Congress to symbolize the importance of water and caring for the planet. Member Lucy Pierannunzi attended the Congress with her grandparents Jeannette & Greg Gardner and started our tradition, at the annual meeting, of passing the marble along to someone who cares about our lake. Lucy passed it to Barbara Green, Barbara passed it to Perry Nadeau and Perry to me in 2019. At our virtual annual meeting in 2020 I passed the marble to Ken DeBlieu who has been doing aquatic invasive species surveying for the Association for several years and is a long time summer lake resident and protector. Because of Covid-19 the marble never physically made it to Ken's hands. I will get the marble to Ken in 2021 and think he should keep it until 2022 but leave it to him to decide what he wants to do at our annual meeting which hopefully will be live and in person. There are many worthy recipients out there and this is a lovely tradition to keep going.

**Kathy Olson**



## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020 LAKE TESTING RESULTS

- The NHDES Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP) was modified for the summer of 2020 due to the pandemic. Laboratory staff had to be reduced, and sampling was limited to alternate months. As a result, we only sampled two times instead of three: in mid-June and mid-August. The results from those tests have provided evidence to support our theory that stormwater runoff in recent years has been the cause of the significant decline of water clarity.
- The full 2020 VLAP Laurel Lake Report is included on the next two pages in this Ledger and is also posted on the Laurel Lake Association website.
- Note that the "slightly bad pH" highlighted in red indicates improving (increasing) pH, and recovery of the lake from acid precipitation in the past.
- The average chlorophyll-a level (algal growth) decreased sharply from the 2019 level. Historical trend analysis indicates significantly improving chlorophyll-a since monitoring began.
- Statistical analysis of transparency measurements with the Secchi-disc from 1989 through 2019 had been showing a significant trend of decreasing water clarity. The 2020 results showed a significant increase in clarity compared to the three prior years.
- Actions Recommended by VLAP:** Drought conditions (in 2020) and the lack of stormwater runoff and flushing of wetland systems rich in dissolved organic matter led to decreased nutrient (phosphorus) levels, algal growth, color, and turbidity which resulted in increased (improved) water clarity (transparency). This highlights the importance of managing stormwater runoff within the watershed. Consider development of a watershed management plan to identify and quantify pollutant loads and make recommendations on management activities to reduce pollutant loading to the lake.
- The sampling team in 2020 was required to observe Covid-19 protocol. Thank you to Gail Connelly, Daniel, Rachel, and Kerry Shrives.*

**Barbara Green, Chair, Water Testing Committee**



## Volunteer Lake Assessment Program Individual Lake Reports LAUREL LAKE, FITZ WILLIAM, NH

### MORPHOMETRIC DATA

Watershed Area (Ac.):	768	Max. Depth (m):	13.4	Flushing Rate (yr <sup>-1</sup> ):	0.4	Year	Trophic class	KNOWN EXOTIC SPECIES
Surface Area (Ac.):	155	Mean Depth (m):	6.1	P Retention Coef:	0.78	1992	MESOTROPHIC	
Shore Length (m):	3,500	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> ):	3,826,000	Elevation (ft):	1099	2006	OLIGOTROPHIC	

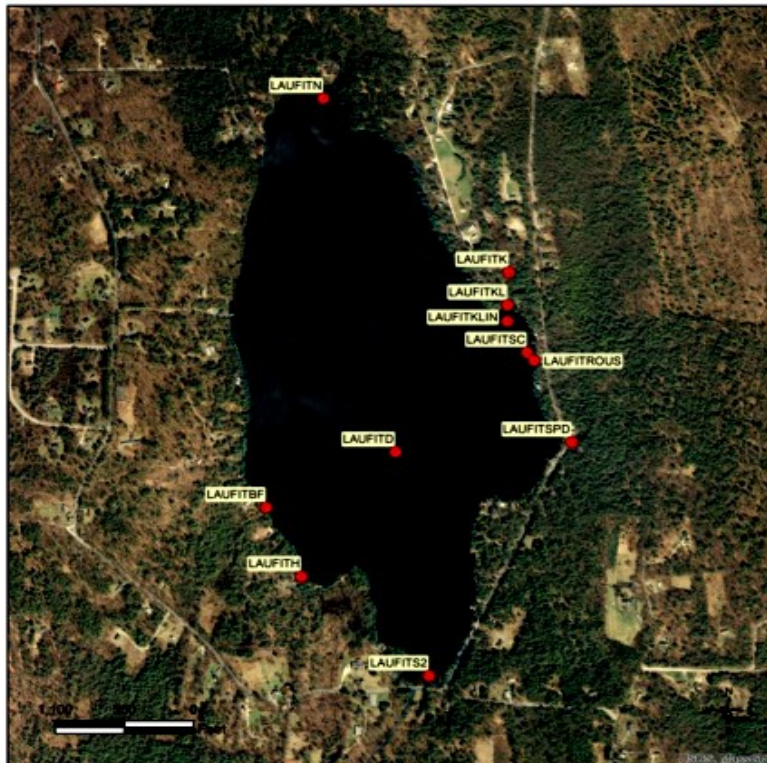
The Waterbody Report Card tables are generated from the DRAFT 2018 305(b) report on the status of N.H. waters, and are based on data collected from 2008-2017. Detailed waterbody assessment and report card information can be found at [www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/swqa/index.htm](http://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/swqa/index.htm)

Designated Use	Parameter	Category	Comments
Aquatic Life	Phosphorus (Total)	Good	Sampling data is better than the water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter.
	pH	Slightly Bad	Data periodically exceed water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter by a small margin.
	Oxygen, Dissolved	Encouraging	Limited data for this parameter predicts water quality standards or thresholds are being met; however more data are necessary to fully assess the parameter.
	Dissolved oxygen saturation	Encouraging	Limited data for this parameter predicts water quality standards or thresholds are being met; however more data are necessary to fully assess the parameter.
	Chlorophyll-a	Good	Sampling data is better than the water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter.
Primary Contact Recreation	Escherichia coli	Very Good	All sampling data meet water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter.
	Chlorophyll-a	Very Good	All sampling data meet water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter.

### BEACH PRIMARY CONTACT ASSESSMENT STATUS

LAUREL LAKE - TOWN BEACH	Escherichia coli	Good	Sampling data commonly meet water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter.
LAUREL LAKE - CAMP FLEUR DE LIS BEACH	Escherichia coli	Very Good	All sampling data meet water quality standards or thresholds for this parameter.

### VLAP SAMPLE SITE MAP



### LAUREL LAKE FITZ WILLIAM

#### VOLUNTEER LAKE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

STATIONID	STATION NAME
LAUFITH	HODGKINS
LAUFITD	DEEP SPOT
LAUFITN	NORTH BEACH
LAUFITS2	SOUTH BEACH
LAUFITSC	SWIM CLUB
LAUFITSPD	SPAULDING
LAUFITK	KEENE AVE TRIB
LAUFITKL	KEENE AVE TRIB AT LAKE
LAUFITBF	BUTLER FEY TRIB
LAUFITKLN	KEENE AVE TRIB IN LAKE
LAUFITROUS	ROUSSEAU

Editor's Note: Several of the above locations have not been tested for a number of years.

Source: The data layers are derived from NHDES data and are under constant revision. NHDES is not responsible for the use or interpretation of this information. Not intended for legal use. NHDES Watershed Management Bureau Date: 2/17/2021







## VOLUNTEER LAKE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM INDIVIDUAL LAKE REPORTS

### LAUREL LAKE, FITZWILLIAM

### 2020 DATA SUMMARY

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:** Great job sampling in 2020! Drought conditions and the lack of stormwater runoff and flushing of wetland systems rich in dissolved organic matter led to decreased nutrient (phosphorus) levels, algal growth, color, and turbidity which resulted in increased (improved) water clarity (transparency). This highlights the importance of managing stormwater runoff within the watershed. Consider development of a watershed management plan to identify and quantify pollutant loads and make recommendations on management activities to reduce pollutant loading to the lake. For more information contact the NHDES Watershed Assistance Section at [katherine.zink@des.nh.gov](mailto:katherine.zink@des.nh.gov). The improving pH levels are a positive sign and indicate recovery of the lake from historical impacts of acid precipitation. For more information read NHDES' "Acid Rain Status and Trends Report" found on the website. Keep up the great work!

#### OBSERVATIONS (Refer to Table 1 and Historical Deep Spot Data Graphics)

- CHLOROPHYLL-A:** Chlorophyll level was within a low range in June and remained stable in August. Average chlorophyll level decreased sharply from 2019 and was less than the state median and the threshold for oligotrophic lakes. Historical trend analysis indicates significantly decreasing (improving) chlorophyll levels since monitoring began.
- CONDUCTIVITY/CHLORIDE:** Epilimnetic (upper water layer), Metalimnetic (middle water layer) and Hypolimnetic (lower water layer) conductivity levels were within a low range and approximately equal to the state median. Epilimnetic chloride level was also low and slightly greater than the state median, yet much less than the state chronic chloride standard. Historical trend analysis indicates stable epilimnetic conductivity levels since monitoring began.
- COLOR:** Apparent color measured in the epilimnion indicates the water was lightly tea colored, or light brown in June and then became clear with little to no tea coloring present in August.
- TOTAL PHOSPHORUS:** Epilimnetic and Metalimnetic phosphorus levels were within a low range in June and remained stable in August. Average epilimnetic phosphorus level decreased from 2019 and was less than the state median and the threshold for oligotrophic lakes. Historical trend analysis indicates relatively stable epilimnetic phosphorus levels since monitoring began. Hypolimnetic phosphorus level was moderate in June and slightly elevated in August.
- TRANSPARENCY:** Transparency measured without the viewscope (NVS) was high (good) in June and remained stable in August. Average NVS transparency increased (improved) from 2019 and was higher (better) than the state median. Historical trend analysis indicates significantly decreasing (worsening) transparency since monitoring began. Viewscope transparency (VS) was higher (better) than NVS transparency and likely a better measure of actual conditions.
- TURBIDITY:** Epilimnetic, Metalimnetic and Hypolimnetic turbidity levels fluctuated within a low range. Average epilimnetic turbidity level was the lowest measured since monitoring began, and Metalimnetic and Hypolimnetic turbidity levels were the lowest measured since 2001 and 2002.
- pH:** Epilimnetic pH level was within the desirable range 6.5-8.0 units and historical trend analysis indicates significantly increasing (improving) epilimnetic pH levels since monitoring began. Metalimnetic pH level was approximately equal to the low end of the desirable range. Hypolimnetic pH level was slightly acidic and potentially critical to aquatic life.

Station Name	Table 1. 2020 Average Water Quality Data for LAUREL LAKE - FITZWILLIAM								
	Alk. mg/l	Chlor-a ug/l	Chloride mg/l	Color pcu	Cond. us/cm	Total P ug/l	Trans. m	Turb. ntu	pH
							NVS VS		
Epilimnion	4.2	1.86	10	20	43.3	5	6.25 6.99	0.19	6.96
Metalimnion					42.2	7		0.36	6.46
Hypolimnion					44.2	17		0.92	5.78

**NH Median Values:** Median values for specific parameters generated from historic lake monitoring data.

**Alkalinity:** 4.5 mg/L

**Chlorophyll-a:** 4.39 ug/L

**Conductivity:** 42.3 uS/cm

**Chloride:** 5 mg/L

**Total Phosphorus:** 11 ug/L

**Transparency:** 3.3 m

**pH:** 6.6

**NH Water Quality Standards:** Numeric criteria for specific parameters. Results exceeding criteria are considered a water quality violation.

**Chloride:** > 230 mg/L (chronic)

**E. coli:** > 88 cts/100 mL – public beach

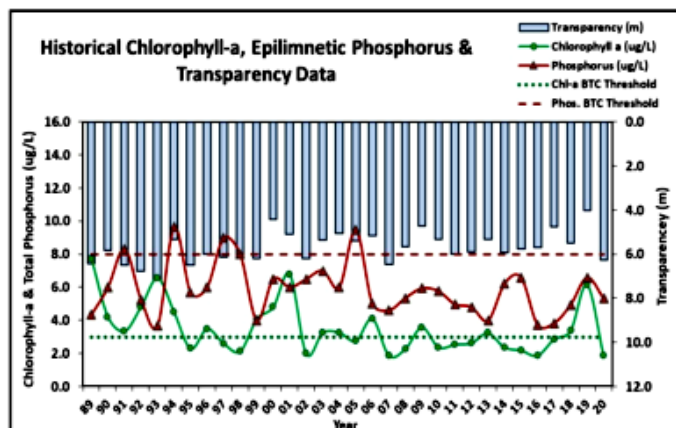
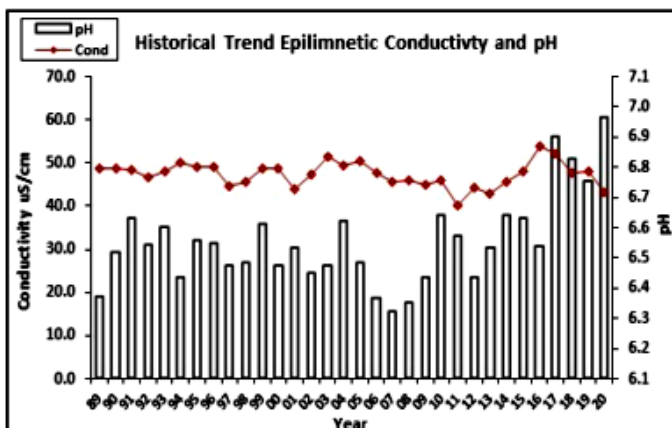
**E. coli:** > 406 cts/100 mL – surface waters

**Turbidity:** > 10 NTU above natural level

**pH:** between 6.5-8.0 (unless naturally occurring)

#### HISTORICAL WATER QUALITY TREND ANALYSIS

Parameter	Trend	Explanation	Parameter	Trend	Explanation
Conductivity	Stable	Trend not significant; data show low variability.	Chlorophyll-a	Improving	Data significantly decreasing.
pH (epilimnion)	Improving	Data significantly increasing.	Transparency	Worsening	Data significantly decreasing.
			Phosphorus (epilimnion)	Stable	Trend not significant; data moderately variable.



## OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES - LAKE HOST PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

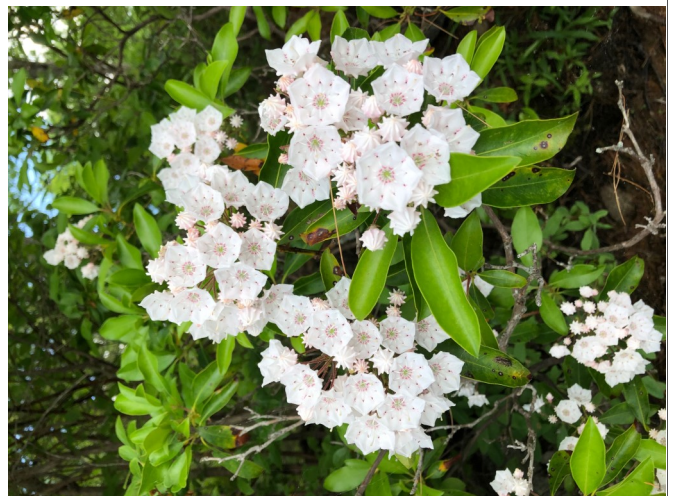
We are very fortunate to have kept aquatic invasive species (AIS) like variable milfoil from Laurel Lake thanks to Lake Association volunteer programs designed to prevent their introduction and spread. The Lake Host Program - a courtesy boat inspection program administered by NH LAKES in cooperation with the Laurel Lake Association - is one such program. By promoting New Hampshire's "clean, drain, dry" prevention method, Lake Hosts can stop invasives at our lake's front door.

Regrettably, milfoil exists in multiple ponds and lakes around our region. Since the NH Lake Host program began in 2002, Lake Hosts have conducted 1.2 million courtesy boat inspections and removed 1,635 suspicious specimens from boats being launched into NH waterbodies. In 2020, Lake Hosts at 94 ramps throughout the state made 120 such AIS "saves".

**The success of the Lake Host Program at Laurel Lake depends on volunteers!** Lake Host Volunteers are not enforcers of local or state ordinances, rules, or laws. Rather, these volunteers are asked to conduct four simple tasks at the boat ramp: 1) greet all arriving boats and visitors to Laurel Lake; 2) increase awareness of New Hampshire's "clean, drain, and dry" prevention program; 3) conduct boat and trailer inspections with boaters' permission and help boaters remove potentially invasive plants and animals that are trying to hitchhike a ride into our lake; and 4) collect boater survey data.

Please consider volunteering for one or more weekly Lake Host courtesy inspection slots (2-3 hrs. ea.) this summer. In addition to our sincere gratitude, Lake Host Volunteers will receive NH Lake Host branded t-shirts. Interested volunteers for the 2021 Lake Host program should contact Chip Yensan at [chipyensan@gmail.com](mailto:chipyensan@gmail.com) for more information.

**Submitted by Chip Yensan, Lake Host Coordinator**



Photos courtesy of Phyllis Lurvey





## STORMWATER RUNOFF & SOAKING UP THE RAIN

Maintaining the water quality of Laurel Lake is the primary goal of the Association. Control of stormwater runoff is a huge factor in doing that. Tom O'Brien, President of NH Lakes, noted in their Summer 2019 newsletter that previous major sources of water pollution were due to poorly treated wastewater, from uncontrolled sewerage & poorly maintained septic systems. Due to improved controls and more awareness, that pollution source is much improved. Today, stormwater runoff contributes to 90% of the water quality problems in New Hampshire. This is excess water runoff that the natural area can't manage and the pollutants that the excess water may carry into a waterbody. Managing that runoff needs to be a major effort for us all.

Both NH Lakes (of which the Association is a member) and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services have programs to help homeowners and communities manage stormwater runoff. Both of these programs are free (FREE) and lots of guidance is easily available online. NH Lakes launched a LakeSmart program in 2019 to educate homeowners on lake friendly practices. A 30 minute online assessment of your property can be done and you can request a free evaluation of your property by a trained evaluator who will make recommendations on improvements. Their website also has an extensive collection of resource guides on various topics such as native plants, lawn care, managing leaves, designing and managing driveways to reduce runoff. Go to [www.NHLakes.org](http://www.NHLakes.org) and click on Our Programs and select LakeSmart. [A tidbit from the NH Lakes newsletter also had a recommendation of the use of Blueberry sod (*Vaccinium* or lowbush Blueberry) as a ground cover or erosion control near the water. Functional and edible!]

NH DES has established a program called Soak Up The Rain ([www.SoakNH.org](http://www.SoakNH.org)) which also provides personalized property assessments and an extensive online Guide which details sources of runoff pollution and provides detailed guidance on many different methods of controlling runoff, such as vegetated buffers, rain barrels, dry wells, rain gardens, infiltration trenches and steps, etc. Several lake residents had property assessments done in 2019. Not all homeowners took action due to Covid-19 restrictions and a drought year in 2020. However, Spicer Point residents Pat Spicer and Gail Connelly had their property evaluated and their success story is below. If you've taken mitigating steps to control stormwater runoff at your property, please let me know and I'll report on other successes in future Ledgers.

**Kathy Olson**



We have always been conscious of rain water running off of our property during heavy downpours but more so since the annual lake association meeting two years ago featuring the "Soak up the Rain" program. One of the most egregious areas of run-off was our beach and boat ramp area. Many a summer, we could be seen shoveling sand from the lake back onto the beach as each heavy rain storm washed a good portion of sand into the lake. Replenishing sand on beaches is regulated so we did our best at recovery.



After researching more about run-off prevention on the NH Lakes and DES websites, we built a retaining wall two to three feet high surrounding the beach area with 6x6 timbers to eliminate the sharp ground slope towards the lake. On one side of the retaining wall we added 2 to 3-inch stone to the slope and on the other side, we added permeable steps to help slow any escaping run off. We also planted a sunken rain garden just prior to the wall to catch and absorb as much water as possible.

When the folks from Soak up the Rain came to visit our property that summer, they provided positive feedback on our new beach structure as well as some other very useful recommendations that we hope to take advantage of as well.

**Submitted by Gail Connelly**

Lily showing off Pat & Gail's retaining wall project. Photo courtesy of Pat Spicer.



## 2020 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES SURVEY REPORT

The AIS committee, or Aquatic Invasive Species Committee, formerly known as the Weed Watch Committee, experienced an unusual summer in 2020. Like most of the country, lockdowns prevented many folks from returning to their homes on the lake and inviting guests to visit for weekends. It also prevented some of our volunteers from completing all three of their evaluations of portions of the lake. Our volunteers did their best to take on extra responsibilities, and we were able to complete a good assessment of the aquatic life on Laurel Lake.

We are pleased that no new invasive species were discovered. However, the initiative to remove yellow iris from the lake's banks had to be postponed until 2021. Trends that we have seen in the past continued during the summer months. From June through early August large groups of pipewort, floating heart, and lobelia dominated the shores. By midsummer, a wider range of vegetation emerged: pickerel weed, white water lilies, watershield, bur-reed and wild celery are but a few of these harmless and often helpful varieties of vegetation. We also began to see more forms of algae, such as the harmless gelatinous green algae. Some years, if the conditions are "right," we may discover more unusual blooms, such as the "cotton candy" algae that we experienced a few years ago. In mid to late August floating heart seems to flatten out and disappear, as does pipewort. Lonely grey stalks of lobelia flank the shores as they also retreat to their deaths. The most unusual of our aquatic organisms, however, became more visible at this time. Bryozoans will have grown into colonies that command our attention because of their weirdness. They are benign, microscopic, aquatic invertebrates that live in colonies and cluster onto docks, submerged tree limbs and branches. They are a food source for fish, insects and snails, and help clean our lake by feeding on its microorganisms.

Our committee is comprised of volunteers who dedicate a few hours in June, July and August to paddle around a specified section of the lake to record and identify the aquatic species that live there. They are trained to differentiate which species are invasive and which are not. They note the amount of growth they observe in vegetation, and indicate any changes or unusual findings. Each of the ten sections is evaluated by a pair of volunteers. When something questionable comes into view, I may examine it. If I or one of my colleagues are unsure of what it is, we will photograph it and send the photo off to Amy Smagula, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Exotic Species Program Coordinator.

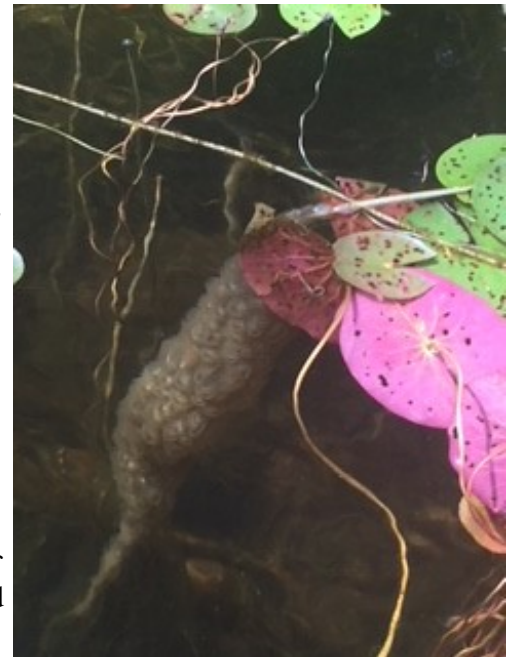
Serving on the AIS Committee are our wonderful volunteers: Bill Townsend, Charley Brackett, Roberta Nadeau, Tricia LeClaire, Phyllis Lurvey, Barbara Dumont, Lucy Pierannunzi, Ken DeBlieu, Gail Connelly, Pat Spicer, Ned Greeley, Bobby Williams, Cat Lathrop Strahan, and Nancy Fey-Yensan. Without their help we could not maintain our monitoring of the lake.

If you think that you would like to learn more about volunteering as a member of the AIS committee, please do not hesitate to let me know.

***Submitted by:***

***Beth Samuels, Chair of the AIS Committee***

[evsamuels1@yahoo.com](mailto:evsamuels1@yahoo.com) (843-838-8338 winter) (603-585-9467 summer)



Bryozoan under Floating Hearts. Photo courtesy of Trish LeClaire.





## TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer's Overview: There were very few expenses last year due to the cancellation of all traditional lake summer events. Although our membership income was down against last year, our minimal expenses coupled with our merchandise sales and investment returns resulted in a year over year financial net gain of \$2,361.

Of note: every four years the Laurel Lake Association must renew our non-profit status with the state of New Hampshire. This was completed in December of 2020 and updated to represent the most current Laurel Lake Association officers.

**Beginning Balance: \$34,465.94** (as of last Treasurer's Report on 5/02/20)

### 2020 Income (Deposits):

Description	Amount
Merchandise Sales	\$837.05
Membership	\$2105.00
Donations	\$445.00
	<b>Total Income: \$3387.05</b>

### 2020 Expenses (Checks Written):

Expense Description	Amount
Organization Dues	\$400.00
Water Testing	\$120.00
Ledger Printing	\$695.93
Postal Fees	\$56.00
Non-Profit Certification	\$32.00
	<b>Total Expenses: \$1303.93</b>

Income (Deposits) less Expenses (Checks written) = **Net increase of \$2083.12**

Savings and Checking Account Balances (People's Bank) as of April 24, 2021

- \* Checking Account: \$7520.12
- \* Savings account balance: \$504.32
- \* Total of checking and savings: **\$8024.44**

Certificate of Deposit (Service Credit Union) as of April 24, 2021

- \* Total account balance: **\$13,755.37**

Savings Balance (Live Oak Bank) as of April 24, 2021

- \* Total account balance: **\$15,047.65**

**Total Association Assets as of April 17, 2021: \$36,827.46**

- \* Net change of +\$2,361.52 since 5/20/20 Treasurer's Report

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Mike King**

**2020 - 2021 OFFICERS**

Tom White - President	Kathy Olson - Vice President
Liz Young - Secretary	Mike King - Treasurer
Beth Samuels - Secretary	Perry Nadeau - Past President

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Barbara Green	2021	Jack Dumont	2022
Bill Townsend	2021	Joe Pelkey	2022
Patrick McNamara	2021	Terry Silverman	2022
Bill Samuels	2021	Charley Brackett	2023
Ned Greeley	2021	Bill Chase	2023
Gail Connelly	2022	Jeff Prunier	2023

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

Kathy Olson	Editor Laurel Lake Ledger
Barbara Green	Water Testing Committee
Beth Samuels	Aquatic Invasive Species Survey Committee
Barbara Dumont	Nominating Committee
Jack & Barbara Dumont	Annual Meeting/Family Picnic
Charley Brackett	Canoe/Kayak Race
Bruce Hill	Commodore Dresser-Friedman Regatta
Joe Pelkey	LLA Logo Products - T & Sweatshirts & Hats
Bill Chase	Membership
Chip Yensan	Lake Host Program
Terry Silverman	4th of July Celebration Flares
John Fitzwilliam	Swim Club Representative
Perry Nadeau	Concert on the Lake

**Visit our Web Site at: [www.LaurelLakeAssn.com](http://www.LaurelLakeAssn.com)**  
**AND NOW ON FACEBOOK - SEARCH FOR LAUREL LAKE ASSOCIATION**





## LOON NEWS



Laurel Lake Loon, photo courtesy of Phyllis Lurvey.

Our wonderful loons continued to grace our lake with their presence in 2020; I've been told up to 4 were seen at any one time. These symbols of idyllic lake life continue to entrance us and we need to do what we can to help them thrive. The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) in Moultonborough, NH conducts a volunteer loon census every year. As reported on their website: "In 2020, 501 observers covered 118 of New Hampshire's lakes during the annual loon census, just under one third of the lakes that LPC surveys and monitors annually. A few loons were still on nests during the census on July 18—definitely a bit on the late side, but not out of question. A total of 481 adult loons were tallied, 4 immature loons (1-2 years old) and 83 loon chicks." Two of those loons counted were on Laurel Lake thanks to two volunteer census takers! The annual census is the 3rd Saturday in July—July 17, 2021, from 8:00-9:00 a.m. I encourage you to participate in this survey so that our visiting loons can be counted. Steve and I did the survey several times and tried to coordinate with others around the lake so that all sections (north & south ends, the big cove by WestWinds, pictured at left) could be seen at the same time.

In addition to the annual census, the Loon Preservation Committee ([www.loon.org](http://www.loon.org)) assigns field biologists to the different regions of New Hampshire. They make several visits to all the lakes and ponds in the region to continually survey for the loon population, particularly looking for nesting loons. We are covered by the Monadnock region biologist who will reach out to you if you have contributed loon sighting information & done the census in the past. If you would like to help the Committee with their data collection there are a number of field volunteer opportunities which you can find on their web site. This includes keeping observation logs, communications with the field biologist (email to [Monadnock@loon.org](mailto:Monadnock@loon.org)) and other activities to help protect the loons.

I just had a delightful conversation with John Cooley, the Head Biologist with the Committee, who updated me on their observations of the Laurel Lake loon population. There have not been any signs of loons nesting on Laurel Lake and it is not an optimum locale for nesting but appears to be a good feeding location. This would be borne out by the continued observations of multiple loons on the lake over the years. Lucky us! John noted that a loon nest had been spotted several years ago at Sportsman Pond in a marshy cove area and it is likely that the loons vary their feeding between Sportsman and Laurel Lake. (A bit further away loons have nested at Grassy Pond off of Rte. 119 in Rindge.) As the loon population grows it is possible that a mature pair of loons may attempt nesting on Laurel Lake, especially as the nesting is done before lots of lake activity starts up in the summer. So, keep your eyes out, especially on the rock bound southern end of the lake.

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If you do any fishing, this is a good opportunity to remind you that ingested lead fishing tackle is the leading cause of death of loons. Lead sinkers & jigs weighing less than one ounce have been banned in New Hampshire since 2016 but continue to be used and found in the bodies of dead loons. Improvements are being seen: 7 adult loons were identified as dying from lead objects in 2019 and 4 in 2020 but zero would be a better number. Loons can live a long time—LPC is seeing loons that were banded 20 to 30 years ago—but are slow to reproduce so the loss of a loon to a preventable cause is disheartening. LPC's lead free tackle program has it's own website: [loonsafe.org](http://loonsafe.org) where you can find local and online stores for buying lead free tackle.

For more information, videos and photos of our most favorite lake visitors, go to [Loon.org](http://Loon.org). I also recommend membership in LPC and/or donations to them for their great work and visiting their new facility or taking a Squam Lake loon tour thru the Natural Science Center.

**Kathy Olson**



Above photo courtesy of Loon Preservation Committee website

## SWEET & SOUR: FIREWORKS ON THE LAKE



Many of us enjoy the sights and sounds of fireworks, especially on the Fourth of July. The visual displays can be extraordinary, generating lots of ‘oohs’ and ‘aahs’. However, many of the fireworks are mostly or all noise, such as the unseen but horribly loud M-80 type of firecracker, which frighten and annoy people and animals. Our Covid year of 2020 caused a major use of fireworks everywhere for months, not just around July 4. This seems to have abated in 2021 and many of us hope the quiet continues. The Association Board, NH Lakes and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services all have mixed feelings about fireworks because of the potential for pollution of lake water and noise pollution.

Regarding noise pollution, we ask that people show consideration for their lake neighbors in shooting off fireworks, limiting the hours and

days of using them. We all expect them around the Fourth but don’t need to be hearing them night after night for weeks.

In terms of water pollution, below are excerpts from a NH DES Environmental Fact Sheet (WD-BB-60, 2019) re: fireworks and NH’s waterbodies:

“Fireworks are comprised of a long list of chemicals used to create colors, noise and propulsion into the sky. Often these displays occur near or over water to enhance their viewing pleasure. Once launched, the chemicals can potentially be deposited directly into a waterbody or washed in from the shore after a rainstorm. In addition, the debris left behind after fireworks explosions can be coated with these same harmful chemicals....

“Heavy metals such as copper and other elements are used in fireworks to create many of the colors we observe. These chemicals, in concentrations above certain levels called water quality standards, can be harmful to humans and aquatic life. Another chemical compound, perchlorate ( $\text{ClO}_4^-$ ), is used to assist in the skyward propulsion of fireworks. At this time, perchlorate is an unregulated compound in New Hampshire but studies have raised concerns regarding its ability to disrupt the body’s synthesis of thyroid hormones. Fish development can also be affected by high concentrations of perchlorate. Massachusetts has set a standard for perchlorate concentration in drinking water of two  $\mu\text{g/L}$ . Fireworks can also contain nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen compounds) that contribute to algal and plant growth in lakes....

**“Recommended Best Management Practices:** In order to reduce the potential for surface water contamination because of fireworks displays there are several reasonable options:

1. Be respectful of your neighbors and consider the timing and frequency fireworks displays.
2. Become knowledgeable of surrounding drinking water supplies and avoid using land near those supplies as launch areas.
3. Devise a plan that minimizes potential runoff from launch areas, especially if fireworks are launched from bare soil or sand.
4. Launch fireworks at a steep angle that promotes maximum height allowing the complete ignition and combustion. Fireworks launched at a low trajectory may result in premature submersion in the water and incomplete burning of potentially hazardous compounds.
5. Rake the launch area and clean up all debris immediately following a fireworks display. Retrieve any visible non-combusted materials from the water.
6. Collect and dispose of all “duds” in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.

“Finally, it should be noted that fireworks are likely a very small source of nutrients and metals compared to stormwater runoff from roads, sidewalks, and lawns. New Hampshire’s lakes have clearly documented pollution problems from lawn fertilizers, road runoff, leaking septic systems, and even pet waste. The most effective way to protect your favorite lake is to allow for a buffer of natural vegetation next to the lake, eliminate fertilizers and pesticides from lawn maintenance, clean-up after pets, and maintain your septic system on a regular basis.”

**Kathy Olson**

Photos courtesy of Phyllis Lurvey







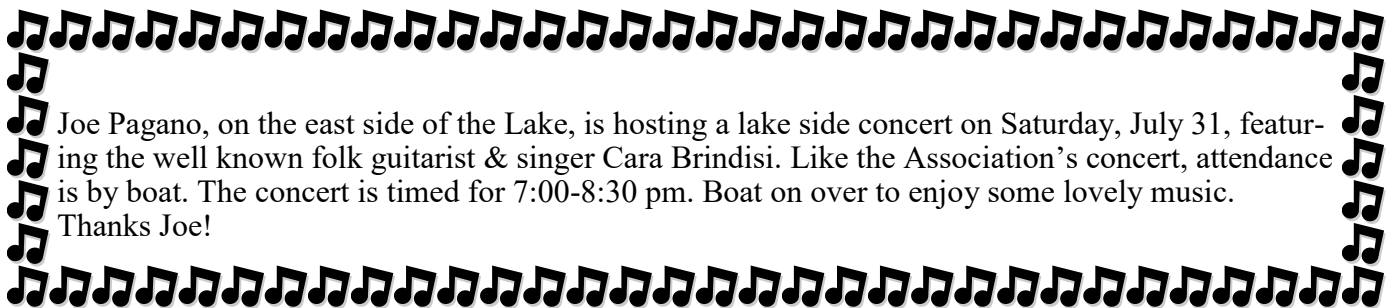
## THE 2020 COVID CUP REGATTA



Since the Dresser Friedman Regatta was cancelled this year, an unofficial race took place September 5 to keep everyone in good form. Tom White, Matt Poulin, Jeffrey Punier and his daughter Rebecca, and Patrick McNamara participated with Unofficial commodore Bruce Hill starting the race. Tom White crossed the start finish line first but fell to last place by the first mark. Jeffrey, Patrick, and Matt rounded and started the downwind leg. Patrick tipped over and Tom caught a good gust and rounded the third mark ahead of the pack. Unfortunately, about 100 yards from the start/finish line, the wind quit, leaving Tom stranded while Patrick, after quickly up-righting his boat, passed for the win. Tom came in second, Jeffrey and Rebecca third and Matt fourth. All the boats were in a tight pack for one of the closest finishes ever.

Commodore Bruce gave Patrick an Unofficial winner tee shirt.

Submitted by Tom White



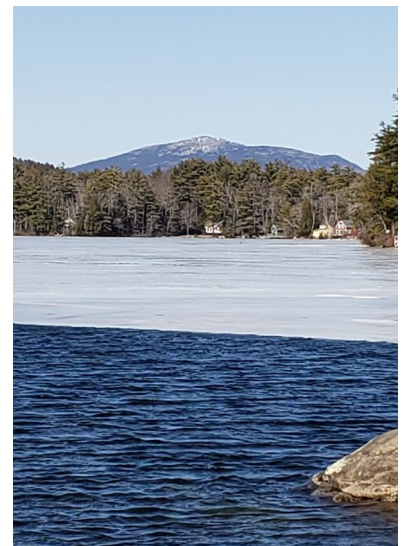
Joe Pagano, on the east side of the Lake, is hosting a lake side concert on Saturday, July 31, featuring the well known folk guitarist & singer Cara Brindisi. Like the Association's concert, attendance is by boat. The concert is timed for 7:00-8:30 pm. Boat on over to enjoy some lovely music.

Thanks Joe!

River Otters on the Lake ice, courtesy of Pat Spicer



Lake 9 days before ice out. Photo from Kathy Olson



### Elliot Institute Concerts on the Fitzwilliam Common Summer 2021

**July 15<sup>th</sup>:** “The Green Sisters”: Four multi-instrumentalist singers who perform folk, country, blue-grass and Irish music.

**July 22<sup>nd</sup>:** “The Mark’s Brothers”: A five piece danceable, rock-n-roll jam band.

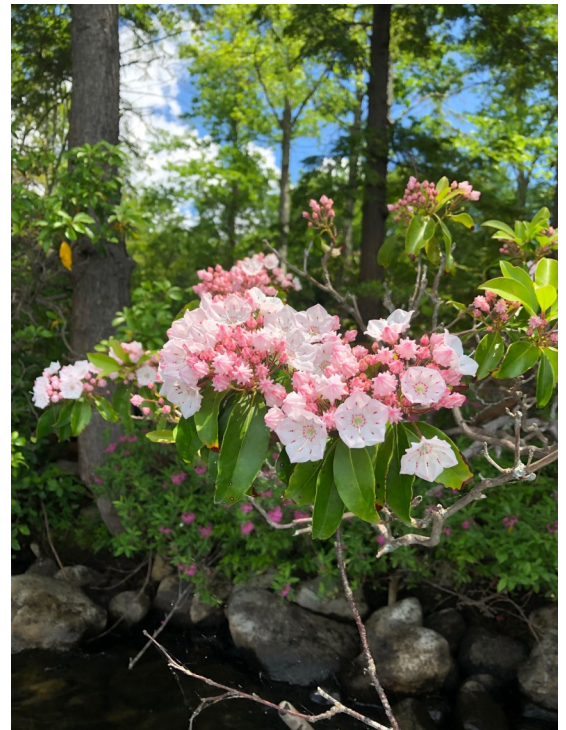
**July 29<sup>th</sup>:** “Walt Sayre Orchestra”: A six piece band performing a variety of ballads, jazz and show tunes.

**Aug 5<sup>th</sup>:** “Banish Misfortune”: A six-piece traditional Irish music band...full of energy and nostalgia!

**Aug 12<sup>th</sup>:** Library Program cosponsored by Friends of the Library and the Elliot Institute—TBD.

**Aug 20<sup>th</sup>:** “Tom Foolery Band”: A 7 piece band playing rock, big band and jazz music — a Cheshire County favorite.

All performances will be from 7:00-8:30 pm on the Common. Bring a chair or a blanket. In case of inclement weather, the venue will be upstairs in the Town Hall or at the Emerson School. (Please check the SIGNBOARDS).



Photos above courtesy of Phyllis Lurvey, photo to left from Kathy Olson





# 2021 Laurel Lake Association Membership Form

**Membership Dues:** \$10.00 for Adult Memberships and \$5.00 for children under 18

**Laurel Lake Ledger:** Each Household of paid-up members will receive a copy of the Laurel Lake Ledger via US Mail Delivery or E-mail (please select delivery method below)

## Members

Last Name	First Name	Membership Type		Amount
		(Adult or Child under 18)		A/\$10.00, C/\$5.00
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Child	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Child	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Child	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Child	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Child	_____

If you wish, you may also include an additional donation to help support the Association      Donation Amount \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

## Permanent Address

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Summer Address

☐ same as above

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Ledger Delivery Preference (select how you would like to receive your Laurel Lake Ledger)

☐ I would like to receive an electronic copy of the Ledger via e-mail at the e-mail address below

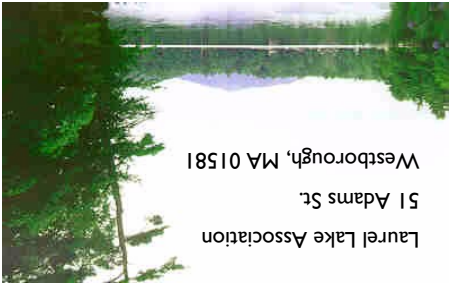
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to receive the Ledger via US Mail delivery

\*Please make checks payable to **Laurel Lake Association**

\*All applications and checks should be mailed to: Bill Chase  
Laurel Lake Association  
51 Adams Street  
Westborough, MA 01581

**Thank you for your contribution !**



Laurel Lake Association  
51 Adams St.  
Westborough, MA 01581