

LAA NEWSLETTER

Lake Anasagunticook Association – Stewards of the Canton-Hartford Watershed

Upcoming Events

LAA Board Meeting
Dec 10th, 2023

LAA Board Meeting
Feb 4th, 2024

LAA Board Meeting
April 14th, 2024

LAA Board Meeting
June 9th, 2024

LAA Board Meeting
Aug 4nd, 2024

Lake Days
August 10, 2024

Annual Meeting August 11,
2023

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**2023-2024 LAA Board
Members**

Pres.: Mike McCluskey

Vice Pres.: Tim Bernard

Sec./Treas.: Diane Ray

Biff Atwater

Wesley Barry

Rob Bihlmeyer

Bill Gray

Carolyn Gray

Paula Marsters

Tom Ryan

Letter from the LAA President

The 2023 summer season on the lake has come to a close with the leaves changing color, lowered water levels and the first frost. In some ways, 2023 will be remembered as the summer of rain. As we look forward to a drier 2024, I wanted to take a few moments to reflect on 2023 and share with the membership some of the Lake Association’s priorities for the upcoming year.

At the Annual Meeting in August, the Membership confirmed a desire to continue the efforts to protect our watershed by applying for an additional grant. Despite many severe rain storms, water testing verified that the lake maintained previous water quality metrics- not every Maine lake fared so well. Though difficult to isolate cause and effect, I feel that our erosion mitigation efforts proved beneficial in limiting potential adverse impacts to the lake. Our ability to apply for a new grant has been verified and we will be working on the application over the winter and spring.

I am pleased to report that four new members were elected to the Board to represent the membership and contribute new perspectives as we move forward. A goal is to have representation from all types of people who use, and benefit from, the lake. Seasonal residents, year-round residents, members from both Canton and Hartford, young and old!

The Membership Committee successfully expanded membership numbers and increased engagement with members. If you are not already a member, I hope you will join the Association, not only to help fund many of the efforts underway but also to lend a voice and volunteer in support of our work to be good stewards of the lake.

.Moving forward, the Association will be embarking on a strategic plan to set the direction for the next five years. Stay-tuned for opportunities to participate in setting that direction.

Finally, I want to say THANK YOU to outgoing president, Tim Kirwan for his leadership before, during and after COVID. During his tenure, we completed a watershed survey, run-off mitigation efforts, increased membership and visibility in the community – Well done!

2020 – 2023 Watershed Mitigation Grant

Lake Anasagunticook Watershed Protection Project Wrap-up

From Jeff Stern – Consultant & Friend of LAA!

Tim asked me to review the status of the big erosion control grant. As you know, it went into “overtime” in 2023, since it was originally scheduled to be a 2-year grant, starting in January 2021. A third year was granted because the work at Pinewood Drive, which was originally scheduled to be done in 2022, got delayed. It was important to see it completed before the grant ended.

So now, I’m pleased to report that the work at Pinewood was completed last month (July) – special thanks to Tim Bernard for his efforts to see it through – and even more elated to have heard from various people that they haven’t seen any washing of road materials across Route 140 and into the lake since the work was completed. This was a common sight during and after storms. Pinewood was probably THE single biggest erosion problem in the entire watershed, so it’s good to see it taken care of.

I want to thank LAA for helping pull off this thing. These grants are not for the faint of heart – there are a lot of moving parts and they require a significant investment of time and money at the local level. LAA is the best partner I could have hoped for. To each and every one of you: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!!!

We achieved many noteworthy objectives for this grant. Probably the most important measure of success is the amount of Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS, aka: erosion) that we are keeping out of the lake annually. ***In the end, with the construction at 14 NPS sites, 43.7 tons/year of soil and sediment are being kept out of the lake.***

Again...this is every year. This grant met, or in some cases exceeded by a healthy margin, the goals of the work plan. Of particular note are the linear feet of shoreline buffer planted (50’ called for in the grant, but 117’ actually done), and technical assistance visits (15 called for in the grant, 16 actually done). Workshops were also an important part of grant activities, with the one on shoreland zoning/permitting being especially well-attended. This project generated a lot of articles in local newspapers, as well as posts on Oxford County Soil & Water Conservation District, Androscoggin River Watershed Council, and LAA websites.

I know LAA already is compiling a list of potential NPS projects for the next phase. I will be glad to provide assistance; I feel like I’ve gotten to know the watershed pretty well. My offer has an expiration date, though: I plan to retire by the end of the year...if not sooner. I’m not sure what this next chapter in my life will look like, or even where it will take place for that matter, but I’m looking forward to it.

The Lake Anasagunticook Project is a great way to wrap up a career. Your lake, and the beauty of the surrounding watershed, will always hold a special place in my heart. LAA is an amazing group of passionate and talented people. You are all heroes, in my mind. I am honored to have spent some time with you, and work together with you to help protect a very special and magical place.

Take care and keep up the good fight! Jeff



FROM YOUR NEW MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Thanks to the outgoing members of the Membership Committee: Liz Rothrock, Joanne Bartlett and Polly Bussiere. In '22-'23 the Committee made great strides in compiling a complete list of LAA members, creating a Welcome Bag for new residents, and organizing the raffle gifts described below.

Judy Hamilton is staying on the committee for another year to keep the membership database going and to train the rest of the committee in its value as a communication tool.

New to the membership team for 2023-2024 are Rob Bihlmeyer, LAA member for 24 years, who will be the committee's link with the Board of Directors; Heidi McCurdy, two-year member; and Mary Beth Vander Horn, who just moved to the lake this year.

The four of us are all from the Hartford side of the lake, and we encourage anyone from the Canton side to join our committee. The commitment is not huge - we are still working out how often to meet; we will limit meeting length to an hour; and we can set up meetings via Zoom. If interested please email anasagunticook@gmail.com.

As of this moment, the membership database indicates a total of 157 current members, and 29 of those were new to the LAA in 2023. Out of approximately 300 raffle tickets in the Membership Raffle drawing at the Annual Meeting in August, the following twelve tickets were drawn. Half of those winners were present at the meeting and got to choose their prize. The winners, in the order drawn were:

- Cyndi Phillips – a member for 12 years starting in 2011
- Kayla Israelson – a member for 5 years starting in 2015
- Donna Cloonan – a member for 24 years starting in 1999
- Jodi Hopping – a member for 3 years starting in 2020
- Hilda Schultz – a member for 23 years starting in 1988
- Biff Atwater – a member for 36 years starting in 1988
- Robert Phillips – a member for 12 years starting in 2011
- Diane Ray – a member for 21 years starting in 2003
- Cliff Damon – a member for 6 years starting in 2011
- Mary Atwater – a member for 36 years starting in 1988
- Kerry Huckins – a member for 19 years starting in 2004
- Tim Bernard – a member for 4 years starting in 2019



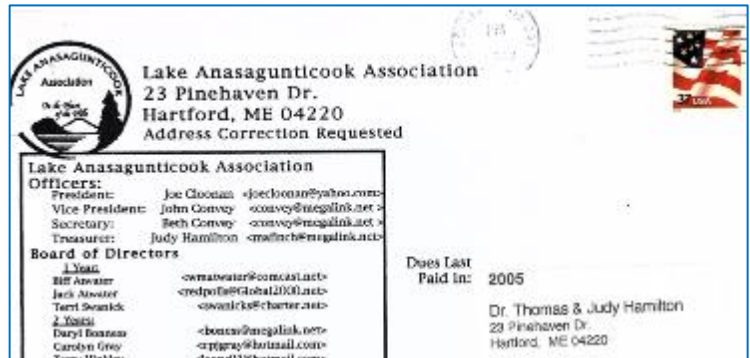
LAA Membership Committee:
Judy Hamilton, Rob Bihlmeyer, Heidi McCurdy,
Mary Beth Vander Horn (pictured L to R above)



Together, we can certainly make a difference!

Do You Remember This?

Years ago, when the CLA and LAA newsletters were mailed, the address labels indicated the last year your dues were paid. This helped members keep their membership current. Note the postage here compared to today 😊



LAA Newsletters are **emailed** at least twice a year now – snail-mailed upon request. Not only can we do our part to save trees but it also makes it possible to keep membership dues low. Remember: dues are paid for the calendar year. We are attempting to find a way to include the year you last paid dues when sending you emails. Look at your email for this newsletter. After your email address should be the “year your dues were last paid”. Apple and PC computers seem to handle this differently. On PC computers, you may need to hit “Reply” to have this show.

It’s not too late for 2023 dues nor too early to renew for 2024. Fill out the membership form in this newsletter and mail along with a check payable to “LAA” to LAA Membership, PO Box 411, Canton ME 04221

Need a Gift Idea? Think LAA Gear!!



We have the following gear for purchase! These items help promote the association AND make fun gifts for family and friends ❤️ Please reach out and we can deliver if not too far away!

Baseball Style Caps - \$15

Ceramic Coffee/Soup mugs - \$15

Hot/cold drink cups - \$15

LAA Tote Bags - \$5.00



dianeraypfi@gmail.com
717-314-7778 (mobile phone)



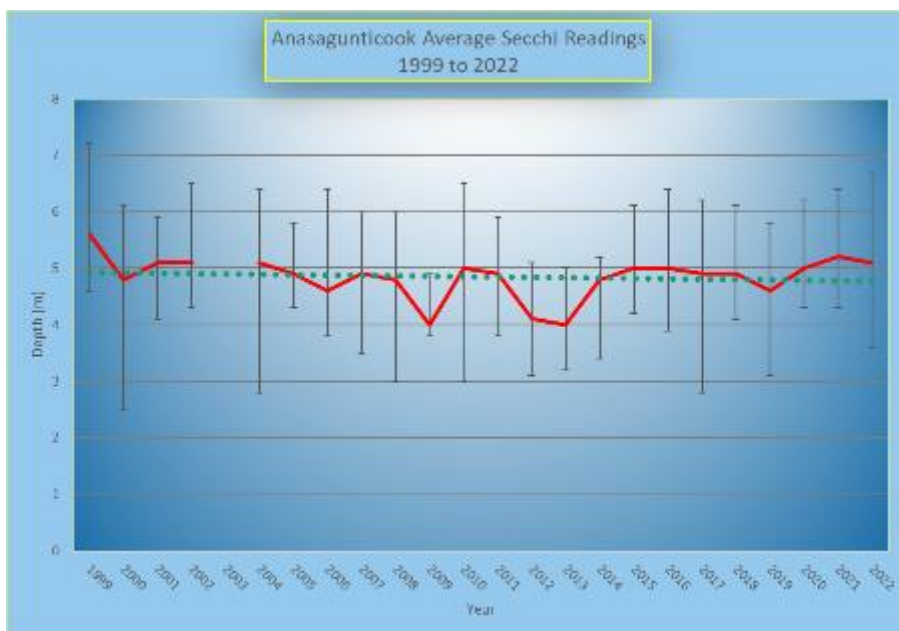
Maine Lakes partners with lake association volunteers, who visit with neighbors and friends to assess their lakeside properties, checking for erosion around structures, in the yard, and along the lake. Properties that protect the lake and meet LakeSmart standards earn the coveted LakeSmart Award, consisting of two distinctive signs that can be posted at the waterfront and driveway. The signs identify the homes of good stewards and show everyone what lake-friendly living looks like.

Property owners not yet meeting the LakeSmart standards receive recommendations for what they can do to reduce erosion and protect their lake. Whether it's installing a dripline trench around a structure, reducing lawn size and maintenance, adding more plants to a shoreline buffer, or covering bare areas of soil with erosion-control mulch, there is always something landowners can do to reduce their impact on the lakes.

LAA has always played a leadership role by having a significant portion of watershed properties checked for erosion. In the past year, we have been trained in the NEW Lake Smart software and digital submission process – and it is going well! Four properties were recently assessed and 7 more are in the queue!

If you would like to schedule a Lake Smart assessment – please reach Diane Ray at dianeraypfi@gmail.com or 717-314-7778

We Care about Water Quality....



Secchi, or clarity readings, are just one measure of water quality. As the lake ages, and warms, conditions increase for the formation of algae, among other things.

Dr. Tom Hamilton and Wes Barry track a number of quality measures every month and report to LAA and the State of Maine. See their full report on the LAA website.

THANK YOU TOM & WES!

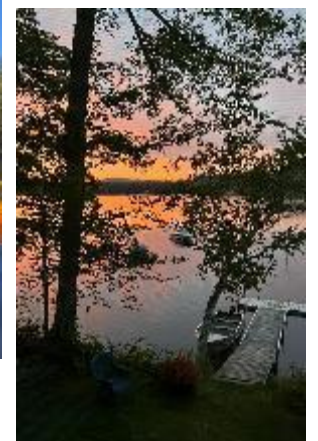
2022-2023 in Photos



In Remembrance

2021	2022	2023
John Corvey	Louise Campbell	Peg McGuskey
Carrall Howes	Roy Bousiere	Ron Pouliot
	Steve Wills*	Jack Rims
	Lisa Wills*	
	Sarah Moore*	

* Friends of the Lake



Planning for 2024 Invasives work

We have been gifted with very few/ no invasives in Lake Anasagunticook – *and we want to keep it that way!*

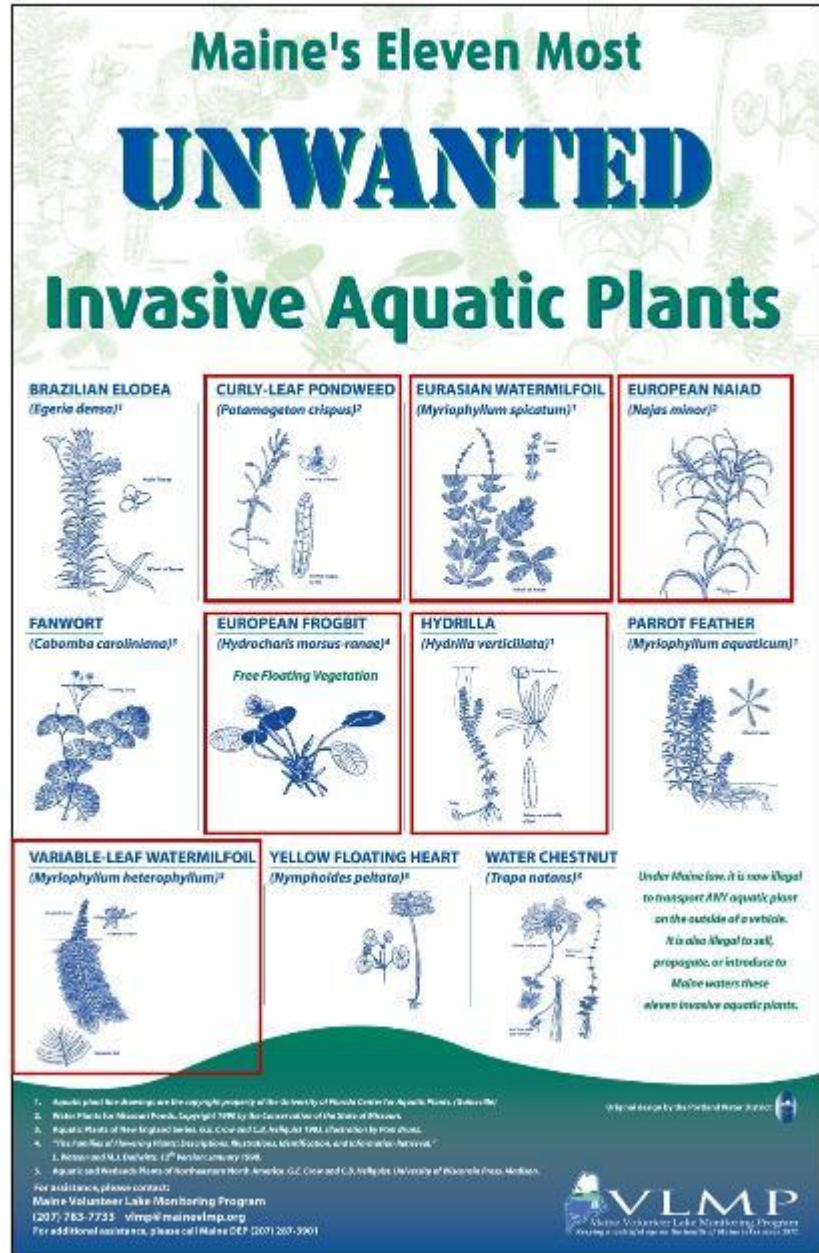
We have two key initiatives to kick off early next year but we can start thinking about them now:

1) Invasives Survey

This typically includes training, a one-day survey that covers the entire lake (lots of participation), with expert guidance, then ongoing monitoring & reporting on a regular basis. We carried this out some years ago but with new members could use a refresher and an updated, comprehensive survey.

2) Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI)

We have had sporadic volunteers in the past but really little activity during COVID – time to renew our efforts!



Resources:

<https://mainelakes.org/resources/visitors-guide-to-lakes/>

<https://mainelakes.org/boaters/>

<https://mainelakes.org/resources/clean-lake-check-up/>

<https://mainelakes.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2014-CBI-Handbook-web-quality.pdf>



Newsletters:

LAA Newsletters: Sign up by joining the association. Past issues posted on the LAA website.

Canton Updates: Sign up by sending your email address to info@cantonme.org OR text message the word CANTONEVENT to 22828 and follow the prompts.

Canton Crier: To receive this hardcopy newsletter, provide your mailing address to the Canton Town Office.

Hartford News: sign up by sending your address to: hartfdnews@megalink.net5

Webpages:

Lake Anasagunticook Association – www.lakeanasagunticook.org

Town of Canton – www.cantonme.com

Town of Hartford – <https://hartfordmaine.weebly.com>

Canton Historical Society – www.cantonmehistorical.com

Landscaping Resources:

Buffer Publication Resource List. This document lists publications available in Maine regarding lake buffers

Buffer Handbook. A Guide to Creating Vegetated Buffers for Lakefront Properties (1998).

Buffer Handbook Plant List. This 50-page publication contains a listing of and details about trees, shrubs, and groundcovers that could be used in planting or improving a buffer in Maine.

Gardening to Conserve Maine's Natural Landscape: Plants to Use and Plants to Avoid from University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

Invasive plants from the Maine Natural Areas Program.

Yardscaping. Yard care tips with a conservation focus.

LakeSmart Program, Maine Lakes. <https://www.lakes.me/lakesmart>

DEP Lakes Page. This webpage provides links to more information about lakes.

What is the LAA?

The Lake Anasagunticook Association (LAA) is a public, nonprofit organization that brings together people who care about Lake Anasagunticook—aka “Canton Lake.” The lake has a depth of 50 feet and occupies 600 acres in the towns of Canton and Hartford, Maine. It is used for recreational purposes, including boating, swimming, and fishing, and is a source of drinking water. The LAA is concerned with the preservation and protection of the lake as a natural resource and the surrounding watershed. Fundraisers and member donations are our primary sources of funding. The organization monitors water quality, pursues invasive plants and animals, communicates with citizens via public meetings, a newsletter; and annual Lake Days celebration.

Membership Mentions:

First, the membership form: It's not too late for 2023 dues nor too early to renew for 2024. Fill out the membership form in this newsletter and mail along with a check payable to "LAA" to LAA Membership, PO Box 411, Canton ME 04221.

Secondly, please tell us how important is it for you to have the last year your dues were paid attached to your mail in some way?

- Yes – it is very important to have this reminder attached to my email, it is convenient information
- No – it is not important to have this attached to my email as I keep track of this myself or can ask easily if needed

In the meantime, if you have questions about your current membership status just ask:

- Judy (Membership Committee member) 207-320-1113/ mafinch@megalink.net
- Diane Ray (Sec/Treas) [717-314-7778](tel:717-314-7778)/ dianeraypfi@gmail.com

LAA Membership Committee: Rob Bihlmeyer, Judy Hamilton, Heidi McCurdy, MaryBeth VanderHorn,

LAKE ANASAGUNTICOOK ASSOCIATION (LAA) MEMBERSHIP FORM

For annual membership, please complete this form and mail it, and a donation of at least \$15 per person, to:
LAA. PO BOX 411, Canton, ME 04221

Name _____ Mailing Address _____

Lake Address (If Different) _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone: _____

Dues \$ _____ For which year(s)? _____ Additional donation: \$ _____ Total Encl: \$ _____

Preferred method of personal contact (pls rank 1-4 with 1=most preferred) | stay informed about the LAA and its activities by (Check al that apply)

_____ E-mail
_____ USPS Mail
_____ Phone Calls
_____ Text

_____ Checking my email
_____ LAA Newsletter, Canton Crier, Hartford News, etc.
_____ Occasionally visiting www.LakeAnasagunticook.org.
_____ Joining *Friends of Lake Anasagunticook* Facebook group

If you are considering memorial gifts, please email Anasagunticook@gmail.com

Membership is open to anyone who has an interest in protecting the lake and supporting LAA projects.