



President's Column

By Dave Mankus

We are in the depths of winter with the lake having been frozen now for more than a month. Most camps are closed until spring. Out on the ice a few fishermen experience a strange lonely stillness. It's hard to describe the feeling out on the ice but it's more like being on a smooth solid desert. No waves. The spooky part is when you think about the fact that you are standing on a few inches of ice and under that there are dozens of feet of cold water.

We have many reports in this newsletter. We ran a deficit of almost three thousand dollars this year. There is no single cause, except our desire to do as much as possible for the lake while asking for as little as possible from our members. One way we could reduce expenses would be to transmit our newsletters by email to those members who would prefer that while printing and mailing to those who would not. We would like to hear from you, do you have suggestions? What is important to you?

Looking forward we have many opportunities to experience the lake in a better way next year. The lake does so much for our enjoyment, how do we pay it forward? You could feel you have helped improve the lake we love by paddling your kayak and looking for invasive weeds you have been trained to spot. Or helping with the water quality testing. Or contributing your talents to the Association by being a Director and helping with the meetings. Or adding a little extra money to your membership or Invasive Species Defense Fund contribution. Or by encouraging a neighbor who hasn't yet joined GELIA to do so. Or by examining your camp and property for ways that storm water runoff can be slowed and infiltrated in order to reduce pollution. Or helping check boats at the ramp for invasive weeds. Any of these things will make you feel better for having invested in the quality of the lake. I guarantee it!

Lake Hosts Guard Against Invasive Species

By Caitlyn McKay

Since the lake is frozen over and covered with icehouses, milfoil might be the last thing on our minds, but it is important to stay active! Even though the lake might be free of milfoil for now, it is crucial that we continue to learn about invasive species and promote advocacy programs. With the support of multiple groups, especially GELIA, the Lake Host Program has been able to do just that. Last year alone the Lake Host Program had one official "save" and approximately 2,500 inspections.

Before moving onto this upcoming summer, as the Lake Host Captain, I would once again like to thank all of the employees from last summer for helping to protect the lake. Looking forward, I would like to let everyone know that we are always looking for Lake Hosts and volunteers to cover the boat launch from Memorial Day to Labor Day. I am always excited to meet more people who are as dedicated to protecting the lake as I am. If anyone is interested, please contact me through email by the end of March (Caitlyn.McKay@hotmail.com). Once again, I would like to thank the residents and GELIA for the support since the program is the first line of defense for keeping our lake clean.

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Mission

To preserve, enhance and protect
the advantages of Great East
Lake and its environs.

AWWA Can Help You Keep Great East Clean

By Sam Wilson, AWWA Program Manager

Soil erosion is the number one source of pollution to lakes in New Hampshire and Maine. As storm water washes across the landscape it picks up sediment and dumps it into the lake. Sticking to the sediments are particles of phosphorus, a naturally occurring element that is essential to plant growth. When a lake gets too much phosphorus there will be excess algae growth and cyanobacteria blooms which can be toxic to animals, including us, and can be quite an eyesore for property owners and lake visitors alike.

Luckily, there are a number of ways to combat erosion, all with very little cost to homeowners. Simple erosion control practices (known in the AWWA world as Best Management Practices or BMPs) can fix a property's erosion issues while increasing the aesthetics, and value, of a property.

BMP's can be as simple as a few blueberry bushes or as complicated as a 40-foot set of infiltration steps. They can be as plain as a rubber razor or fire hose diverter, which will move water off a driveway, or a rain garden filled with beautiful and rugged native plants to infiltrate and soak up runoff. Most properties use a variety of BMP's to combat storm water runoff and erosion, and the truth is, there are dozens of ways of dealing with runoff at every site. It all comes down to what you, as a lakefront homeowner, want to do.

AWWA and its Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) can help homeowners on Great East Lake. If you think you have an erosion issue, or would just like a site evaluation, call Sam at (603) 473-2500 or email at swilson@awwatersheds.org to get personalized advice and a design to fix your erosion issues at no charge. You may even want to become a YCC Project Host and have the YCC install your BMP's for you at no charge; you buy the materials, and we do all the work! If you want to see our work, you can take a look at our YCC Site Map at AWWA's website, www.awwatersheds.org; it has pictures of every site the YCC has worked on since 2006. Or you can take a trip down to Langley Shores Rd where the AWWA YCC fixed erosion problems at six sites last year. I look forward to hearing from you this spring.

Here's Your Chance to Get Involved!

The Great East Lake Improvement Association's Board of Directors is continually looking for new talent as we build the board and replace directors whose terms have expired. The board meets a mere three times each year plus the Annual Meeting and yet works on behalf of the whole membership to preserve water quality, prevent invasive species, protect the loons and other wildlife, promote safe boating and interface with the local and state governments. It's important work and we need more good people!

Do you know someone who you feel would be a good candidate? Is it time you got involved yourself? While nothing beyond your time and an abiding love of the lake is required, we are especially interested in people with the following skills:

Marketing	Information Technology	Social Media
Fundraising	Town Connections	Environmental Issues

If you know of someone who might be a good candidate, please let us know. If you send us a brief email or give us a call, we will be in touch for more information.

Ron McKay

Ron.mckay@comcast.net

603-772-1967

Walter Neff

wsneff@comcast.net

603-926-7278

Calendars- We have 2014 calendars for sale, beautiful photos of the lake and some helpful information. \$17.50 including shipping

"GELIAwear": What Would You Like?

One of the "must-do's" at the Annual Meeting in July is to check out the merchandise that we call "GELIAwear", or items bearing the GELIA logo or the name "Great East Lake". Your board is trying to determine which items to order for next year's meeting (and potentially for sale all year long on the web.) To take a very short (3 question) survey on what kinds of items YOU might want, please go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5H99x3w>

We appreciate your help!

Monarch Butterflies Need Milkweed

By Dave Mankus

When sitting by the lake in October a Monarch butterfly flew by from the east to west. A few minutes later another passed the same way. This is the fall migration and these Monarchs are on their way to a few acres on a mountain in Mexico for the winter. A couple of years ago I made a video of a dozen on a flowering shrub in our garden. We had planted more of these shrubs which supply needed nectar. However, last fall I didn't see one butterfly stopping to drink.

It seems the use of genetically modified crops and the widespread use of Roundup and other weed control products have eliminated much of the milkweed in southern and northern states east of the Rockies. Unfortunately, milkweed is the only food that Monarch larvae can eat prior to their metamorphosis into butterflies. The overwintered adults must move north at a specific time and arrive at their summer habitat as far away as Canada to lay eggs on milkweed. Three generations will hatch, mature, and lay eggs that summer while the fourth generation will fly south to the same few acres in Mexico having never been there before.

For years, the farmers in Mexico have been encouraged to get into tourism instead of cutting down the trees where the Monarchs overwinter and efforts there have been quite successful. How ironic it is that now the "villains" are we in the United States who have a low tolerance for weeds and would rather have pristine developments than undisturbed lands.

During the last two years the weather has been also been unusual causing the Monarchs to be off schedule or lost on their migration. The combined result of habitat change and weather irregularities has caused a **70% reduction** in the number of overwintering Monarchs in Mexico. As with so many things, we tend to take nature for granted until something bad happens. I am really missing my migrating friends and hope to see more next season. In the meantime, let's all grow some milkweed!

GELIA's Annual Contributions for 2013

\$2000 to Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance (AWWA)
\$500 to Moose Mountain Regional Greenways
\$500 to Three Rivers Land Trust
\$425 to Wakefield Conservation Committee's Camp Kids program
\$400 to Acton Ambulance Association
\$400 to Wakefield Ambulance Association
\$300 to Maine Congress of Lakes Association (COLA)
\$300 to NH Lakes Association (NH Lakes)
\$250 to Maine Audubon Society
\$250 to NH Audubon Society
\$250 to Loon Preservation Society
\$250 to Maine Lakes Monitoring
\$100 to Acton Library
\$100 to Gaffney Library (Sanbornville)
\$100 to Wakefield Parks and Recreation Department

Water

By Dave Mankus

Sometime before high school a science teacher taught us about the water cycle: how puddles evaporate, become invisible in the air only to become clouds and fall back to earth as rain. All of us around the Great East realize the importance of water to our lake. Without replenishment, the lake would lose the fresh clear quality that we all cherish. The evaporation part of the cycle purifies the water leaving behind all impurities; in fact most of our rain and snow comes from the Gulf of Maine or the Gulf of Mexico.

When a rain drop strikes the ground it may land on the property you enjoy near the lake. What happens next determines whether this raindrop will enter the lake quietly filtered through clean sand and enhance the clarity or rush quickly downhill carrying mud, silt, phosphorous or other contaminants. If this drop lands on a road or driveway it may carry the fine powder from sand ground under tires and its attached phosphorous to the lake. Falling on mulch, pebble walkways, or diverted to French drains and rain gardens, it will infiltrate and works its way slowly underground to the lake. Undisturbed forest duff (leaves, needles and other organic material) is the natural filter for rainwater. If a rain drop lands on a lawn which has been fertilized, it will dissolve the nitrates and phosphorous and carry them underground and eventually to the lake. A good lawn by the lake should look poor to lousy, fading to moss and finally duff or natural vegetation and brush near the bank.

A raindrop may find its way to your well and then to your faucet. The soaps, detergents, and other substances which you use will pass through your wastewater system and flow with groundwater to the lake. If it leaks into your basement a sump pump could carry it with leaked oil from your heating oil tank to the lake.

We should think about our property and how small changes could improve the quality of the water passing through it to the lake. We all should know how small amounts of phosphorous could support an algae bloom in the lake making the water green or possibly toxic.

Attention Weed Watchers

By Deb Parkin

It's hard to believe it will ever be warm enough to walk outside without a coat on, let alone enjoy a swim or go boating on the lake, but I've been assured we are getting closer to warm weather. To get you thinking about summer again, I wanted to give you some advance notice of an invasive aquatic plant workshop that will take place on June 14. Linda Schier from AWWA has taken the lead in putting this workshop together and plans to hold it in Acton. If any of you have attended one of these before, you probably remember that the workshops teach you how to identify some of the invasive plants that can be found in the Maine/NH area using slides, printed material and hands on identification of live plants. The people who run these workshops know alot about aquatic plants and can probably answer questions about other things that you see in and around the lake. If anyone is interested, look in the Great East Lake newsletter for more information. I can also forward your information to Linda if you'd prefer to hear from her directly.

In addition, GELIA would like to provide a set of Aquatic Species ID Cards to everyone who is currently on the list of interested weed watchers. These cards are waterproof and cover some of the more common invasive and non-invasive plants you might encounter. Some of you already have these cards, but if you don't and would like a set, let me know. I can drop them off at your camp, once the weather gets warmer, or I can mail them, whichever is easier. Drop me an email and let me know how to get you these ID cards.

Finances Narrative

B/(W) Indicates Better or Worse

Income

- Membership dues are up relative to last year. Thank you for your increased support.
- The Invasive Species Defense Fund contributions are on par with last year.
- Grant income for the lake host program is from the Towns of Acton and Wakefield and Maine LEA. A grant from NH Lakes does not show specifically this report as it is treated as an offset to the lake host expense through NH Lakes.
- Merchandise Sales were off 30%.

Expense

- Merchandise expenses were up. The major components were calendar expense and restocking our supply of charts.
- Contributions were down. 2012 contributions were higher than normal due to that year's \$2000 contribution to Langley Shores.
- Lake host program expenses were up as we expanded the hours of coverage.
- Water quality testing was up (double the amount for years prior to 2012). The lack of spending in 2012 for this important area was unusual.

Prepared by Charles Crespi, Treasurer. Comments or questions are welcomed. Detailed financial statements are available upon request to treasurer@greateastlake.org.

Treasurer's Report 2013

2013 Cash Activity

Cash on Hand 1-1-13		\$ 60,852
	Cash In	\$ 45,889
	<u>Cash Out</u>	<u>\$ 48,741</u>
Cash on Hand YTD		\$ 58,000

Income	2013	2012	B/(W)
Dues - Membership	\$ 26,640	\$ 25,885	\$ 755
Dues - Invasive Species Fund	\$ 3,650	\$ 3,670	\$ (20)
Grant Income	\$ 11,988	\$ 12,591	\$ (603)
Merchandise Sales	\$ 2,553	\$ 3,650	\$ (1,097)
Interest Income	\$ 158	\$ 244	\$ (86)
<u>Other</u>	<u>\$ 900</u>	<u>\$ 1,180</u>	<u>\$ (280)</u>
Total Increases	\$ 45,889	\$ 47,220	\$ (1,331)

Expense	2013	2012	B/(W)
Annual Meeting	\$ 1,332	\$ 1,708	\$ 376
Merchandise Expense	\$ 2,930	\$ 1,087	\$ (1,843)
Contributions	\$ 6,125	\$ 7,600	\$ 1,475
Lake Host Program	\$ 29,726	\$ 28,963	\$ (763)
Legal and Professional Fees	\$ 700	\$ 1,374	\$ 674
Newsletter and Mailing	\$ 3,147	\$ 2,890	\$ (257)
Water Quality Testing	\$ 1,600	\$ -	\$ (1,600)
<u>Other</u>	<u>\$ 3,181</u>	<u>\$ 2,547</u>	<u>\$ (634)</u>
Total Decreases	\$ 48,741	\$ 46,169	\$ (2,572)

Increase in Net Assets	\$ (2,852)	\$ 1,051	\$ (3,903)
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March is Membership Month!

Be on the lookout for your membership renewal letter to arrive sometime during the month of March. As always, we urge you to mail your membership form and dues at your earliest convenience.

~~~~~ Many thanks ~~~~~

Pat Theisen, Membership Coordinator

**Thank you, Members!**

The Great East Lake Improvement Association gratefully acknowledges your membership support and donations to the Invasive Species Defense Fund. We greatly appreciate the involvement of 422 members this year.

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### ***Save the Date to Save Your Lake!***

On Saturday, June 14th join with experts from both the Maine Volunteer Lakes Monitoring Program and the NH Department of Environmental Services to learn about how you can help prevent an invasive aquatic plant infestation in your lake. This workshop, held in Acton, ME will give you an overview of invasive species issues in Maine and NH, teach you the tricks of identification fundamentals, let you play with live invasive and native aquatic plants and give you the tools to conduct a screening survey. All workshop participants will receive an Invasive Plant Patroller's Handbook, Maine's Field Guide to Invasive Aquatic Plants, and the NHDES Weed Watcher kit.

This free workshop is being coordinated by the Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance in partnership with the York County Invasive Aquatic Species Project and multiple lake associations. To register or for more information contact AWWA at [603] 473-2500 or [info@AWwatersheds.org](mailto:info@AWwatersheds.org). For more info about the Great East Lake Invasive Aquatic Plant efforts contact Deb Parkin at (603)431-2272 or Deborahp4@comcast.net. Further details will be announced as the date nears.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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**NEWICHAWANNOCK NEWS**

