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Bill Mann, Treasurer
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Laurie Gee
Steve Gratton
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2018 Spring Newsletter

Presidents' Message

Dear Members,

As another topsy-turvy Northeast Kingdom winter draws to a close, we are all hoping for less chaotic weather so we can spend more time with family and friends enjoying Echo Lake. Despite all of the weather-related obstacles, the ELPA board has been busy planning, organizing and securing funding for our programs and activities.

The long hours spent applying for appropriations and grants have resulted in securing financial support from the town of Charleston, as well as the state of Vermont, that helps fund our Access Greeter Program. It can't be stressed enough how important our paid and volunteer greeter program is to protecting Echo Lake from aquatic invasive species through education provided by our greeters. We have also been able to continue the outreach program educating Charleston elementary students about our lake's ecosystem and encouraging the students' appreciation of its importance.

For the last three years, another source of income for our association has been the Color Challenge. Extensive planning and coordination between ELPA, our members and community have made this event not only fun but also a great fundraiser. Please consider joining us on Sunday, July 1st for the fourth annual Color Challenge.

This year, we are hoping to have a Vermont Invasive Patroller (VIP) training on Echo Lake. We encourage you to participate in this valuable educational program. This training will help you identify native plant species in the lake, as well as help with early detection of aquatic invasive species. We will keep you posted when we have more information about the training.

As always, we are continually looking to expand ELPA membership. In addition, we invite your renters and summer guests to contribute to ELPA as "Friends of Echo Lake". Membership and donation forms can be found on our website: <http://www.echolakeassociation.net/membership/dues-donations/>

Thank you for your continued support

Patti Lennon, Co-President
Larry Martin, Co-President

Our Finances

Our association is in the best financial condition in our history. In 2017, we increased our finances by \$13,000. This is great news! However, we need to take some items into consideration on how we got here and what it means.

First, we had a very successful 3rd annual Color Challenge that netted us \$6,655, thanks to our sponsors and participants. We have been fortunate to have had great weather for our Color Challenge events. Hopefully, this will continue for the event on Sunday July 1st of this year.

Second, we received both installments of the Aquatic Nuisance Grant (ANG) we obtained for 2017. In years past, when we obtained the ANG, one payment was received in the year of the grant and the second installment was received the following fiscal year after filing the year-end report. Getting this second installment boosted our income by \$3,768 that we would have typically seen delayed until this year.

On another positive note, we saw an increase in membership: 11 families and 2 individuals, and an associated increase in dues of \$300. Donations also increased by \$460 thanks to the support of our members.

Due to the care taken by everyone who uses Echo Lake and the vigilance of our Access Monitors and Vermont Invasive Patrollers, the waters of Echo Lake remain free from invasive aquatic nuisance species, especially Eurasian Milfoil. Hopefully, we can keep the lake pristine. As other lake associations have experienced, this is an ever-increasing expense to manage. Efforts to control and procedures to eradicate milfoil are expensive with lake associations and towns spending tens of thousands of dollars per year. For example, Lake Dunmore in Leicester, Vermont spent \$259,000 in 2016 and \$177,992 in 2017 trying to control Eurasian Milfoil. As we realized that someday we would likely have to confront an invasion of an aquatic nuisance, at last year's annual meeting our members voted to establish a contingency fund. We initiated this fund with a deposit of \$15,000 and plan to augment the fund each year according to our donations, grants and fund raising.

We have had the good fortune of applying for and being awarded both an Aquatic Nuisance Grant of \$11,904 and a Watershed Grant of \$5,000 for 2018. These awards are based upon the paid and volunteer hours dedicated to the protection efforts we perform monitoring the fishing access, surveying the lakebed and monitoring the lake water quality. Our current financial status places us in an excellent position to continue the efforts to protect Echo Lake's waters and the land that surrounds it. The financial investments we are making will help to ensure our preparedness to preserve them. Everyone's support, financial and volunteer, is needed and appreciated.

2018 Grants and Appropriations

We are grateful that both of ELPA's grant proposals, submitted by Laurie Gee, were selected for funding this year. ELPA depends heavily on grant funding, as well as membership fees and donations to preserve the clean waters of Echo Lake. This year Vermont's Department of Environmental Conservation has awarded us an \$11,904 Aquatic Nuisance Grant to help keep our Access Greeter program strong, as we staff five 12-hour days per week with paid greeters and two 12-hour days with volunteers. We also received a \$5,000 Watershed Grant funded jointly by the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Watershed Grant is targeted to help fund both our expanding ecosystem education endeavors with Charleston Elementary School and our Access Greeter program.

In addition, the Town of Charleston has awarded us a \$1,000.00 appropriation.

Membership Report

Membership increased by 13 in 2017. We had 79 family memberships, up from 68, and 12 individuals an increase from 10. New members include: Brian and Susan Antonelli, Ben and Katy Barnum, Edmond and Kaye Bedard, Randy and Linda Bingham, James Brophy and Susan McKenna, Bonnie Hopkins, Ed Kraimer, Maya and Edward Manley, Bruce Reed, and Michael and Maureen Tessier.

The committee has created a Friends of Echo Lake Membership, and Christine Scott joined. If you plan on renting your camp this summer, we'd love to have the Friends form in your camp, so that visitors have the opportunity to join and support ELPA. Please let one of us know, and we will get you the form or visit the ELPA web site to find it.

The Membership Committee members are: Arvin Anderson, Ann Beams, Nancy Engels, Steve and Ann Gratton, Ann Hunsicker, Lori Kempton, Tracey Shadday, Jean Wilson, Tom Wagner

Lake Bed Survey

The volunteer crew of Lake Bed Surveyors is our second line of defense against invasive aquatic species. Our ELPA Greeter Program provides the first line, with boat and trailer inspections at the access near the outlet of Echo Lake. If any weeds are present on boats or trailers, inspectors remove them and educate boaters about the Vermont laws that protect our waters from accidental exposure to invasive plants and other organisms.

Lake Bed Surveyors inspect the lake bottom around the perimeter of Echo Lake to ensure that no invasives have escaped notice or been introduced accidentally. Inspections occur twice each summer, at the end of June when plant growth has fully taken off, and then again at summer's end in late August and early September. In the last year we had a dozen trained volunteers who inspected the entire perimeter of Echo Lake, no small feat! We look forward to their continued involvement in this important endeavor.

Greeters and Surveyors are currently all VIP (Vermont Invasive Patroller) trained by Vermont Natural Resources staff, but any layperson could also participate in the process of becoming familiar with native, non-invasive species and alert to any unfamiliar plant growth. All lakefront property owners are encouraged to monitor their shoreline and up to twenty feet of depth out, which is the expected limit for sunlight penetration needed for plant growth. In the event something suspicious is noted, a call to a VIP trained surveyor can confirm whether any threat is posed and follow up coordinated with the Agency of Natural Resources.

Thanks in no small part to the efforts of greeters and surveyors, Echo Lake continues to be free from invasive aquatic species which plague so many of Vermont's lakes and ponds, making boating and other recreational activities near impossible and detracting from the beauty and health of our ecosystems. ELPA is grateful for the interest and enthusiasm of its volunteer protectors and welcomes any and all to join us in this effort. Please contact Peggy Stevens, Volunteer Coordinator for the Echo Lake Lake Bed Survey at 723-5951 if you are interested in learning more. And stay tuned for notice of the next local VIP Training offered by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. These events are fun, interesting and informative - no science background required! You, too, can become a VIP!

Access Greeter Program

One of the ways that ELPA strives to maintain the superior water quality of our lake is to conduct inspections of boats entering and leaving. The list of potential invasive species grows every year. The State Department of Environmental Conservation is placing increased emphasis on the greeter program with increased funding and enforcement. State wide the program has seen an increase from 470 boats inspected in the initial year to 26,000 in 2016.

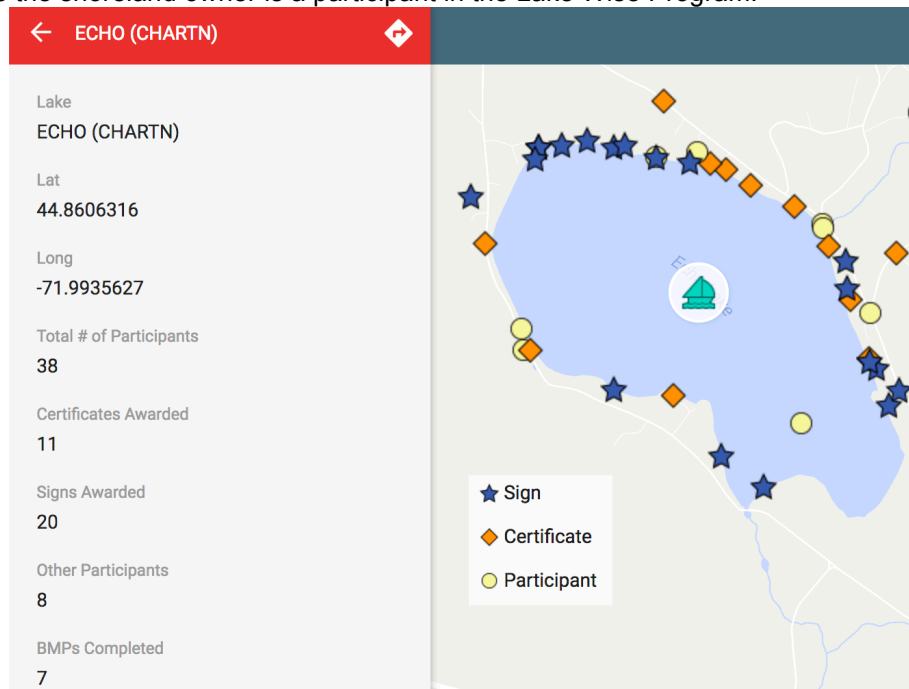
Up until now inspection has been voluntary. In 2018 inspection is mandatory for any staffed access area. Our access area is staffed seven days a week, twelve hours a day. Three paid staff members are there the five busiest days of the week; our volunteers cover the remaining two days. Our greeters limit their involvement at the area to boat inspections. Other violations, such as parking in the access area or use of the swimming area, are the concern of the state game wardens.

2018 Echo Lake Map

Laurie and Keith Gee are working on updating the ELPA map of Echo Lake property owners. It's been 10 years since the last map was created, so we are excited to be gathering information for the update. We intend to have the 2018 maps ready for sale at the annual meeting, if not before.

Get Lake Wise

Once again we are looking for residents who wish to participate in the state's Lake Wise program. We already have the distinction of having earned the state's first Gold Lake Wise award, and would like to continue expanding on this new normal culture of lakeshore landscaping that models lake friendly living, promotes excellent storm water runoff practices, and is proven to help protect the lake. This map shows all the shore land sites, including private, town, state or business owned property, where the shoreland owner is a participant in the Lake Wise Program.



There is no downside to participating. The Lake Wise Program offers technical assistance to shoreland property owners who want to learn more about making their property as lake friendly as possible. Take advantage of free consultation and technical assistance through the Lake Wise Program and have your shoreland property assessed for controlling runoff and preventing erosion.

The Lake Wise Program offers solutions - [Best Management Practices](#) - for managing shoreland property and making it lake-friendly for all.

- Lake Wise Evaluators have a background in natural resources management, including managing stormwater runoff and protecting wildlife habitat.
- All Evaluators use the same methods and impartiality for each assessment.
- Evaluators spend up to one and half hours assessing and providing technical advice on each property. Properties are evaluated according to the Lake Wise criteria for shore recreation area, driveway, and structure and septic. If all the appropriate shoreland Best Management Practices are in place, then the property earns the Lake Wise Award, otherwise, the Evaluator gives the landowner a copy of recommendations for how to



become Lake Wise certified in the future. Landowners have up to three years to make the improvements and to be assessed a second time for earning the Lake Wise Award.

An associated benefit is that by participating in the Lake Wise evaluations you are automatically qualified to apply for landowner services and programs offered by NorthWoods Stewardship Center.



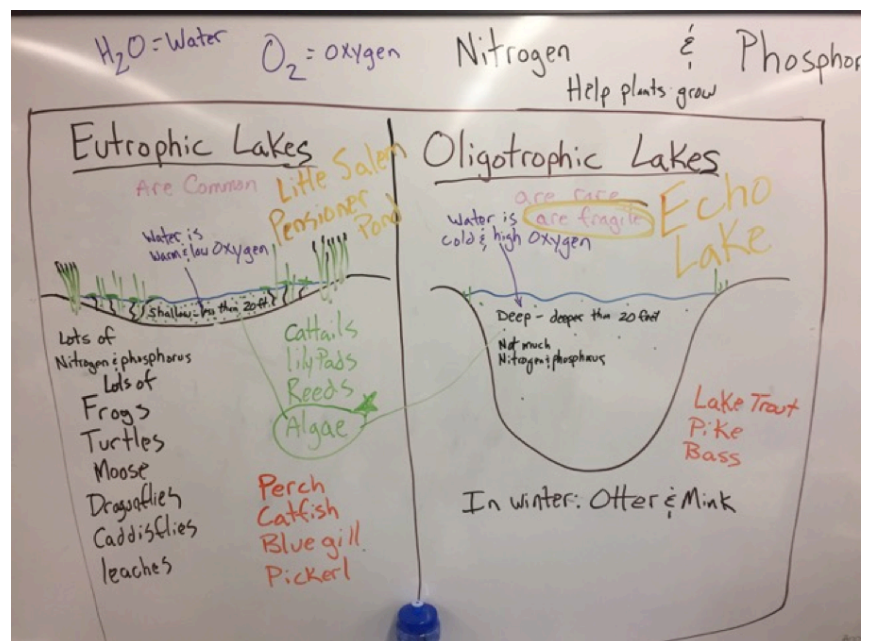
If you're interested, contact Susan Czerepak at susanczerepak@gmail.com or Tracey Shadday at traceyshadday@gmail.com. We'll arrange for Amy Picotte, Lakeshore Manager with the Watershed Management Division of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, to visit your sites.

Community Outreach

Third and fourth grade students from Charleston Elementary are taking a deep dive into the ecology of Echo Lake thanks to a grant from the Echo Lake Protective Association. Working with ecologists turned educators at Siskin Ecological Adventures/Coutts-Moriarty Camp, students learn about, explore and make real life connections with the Echo Lake Ecosystem.

During six 1-hour classroom visits at the school, students develop the scientific language and the knowledge necessary to instill a personal appreciation of both the ecological and economic importance of Echo Lake. Additionally, growing scientific literacy through exposure to college level "Nerd Words" -- such as "oligotrophic," "poikilothermic," "benthic macro invertebrate," "zone of hypoxia," and "biomagnification" helps foster an increased sense of academic self-confidence among students.

A chilly field trip to Echo Lake this winter found students stomping through three nor'easters worth of snow to the cedar-lined lakeshore of the Lydia Spitzer Demonstration Forest held by the Vermont Land Trust and managed by the NorthWoods Stewardship Center. Having already learned about the physics of ice formation and the ecology of winter lakes, students were eager to see how their predictions of Echo's ice thickness would hold up. After pausing to note some mink tracks darting along the snowy shore, students headed out onto the frozen lake and proceeded to auger through the ice. All were impressed, and most a bit shocked, to find they were standing on close to 42 inches of ice!



This type of hands-on investigation, coupled with science inspired art and presentations of learning instills a deeper understanding and lasting appreciation of the role Echo Lake plays in the larger Clyde River watershed and in the Charleston community.

Happenings – for learning, fun, and more

There are all kinds of happenings around the lake this summer. Join in, contribute, learn, and have fun.

Green Up Day 2018 - May 5th

Green Up Day is almost upon us! This year it will be held on Saturday, May 5th. Last year's Green Up Day was a great success. Our thanks to all who participated. It's great to have the lakeside looking so clean as we get into the season.

We can always use more volunteers. Please let Ann know if you can volunteer this year by emailing her at ahunsicker17@gmail.com.

Vermont Lake Seminar - June 1st

The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds (FOVLAP) and the Vermont Department of Environment Conservation is hosting an educational event to celebrate Vermont's lakes and to network with other lake lovers. The seminar will provide opportunities to learn about lake science, the health of Vermont's lakes, and how to form partnerships to leverage grant funding. The seminar will also include a showing of the video about Echo Lake receiving the state's first Gold Lake Award!

The all-day seminar will be held at the Vermont College of Fine Arts, 36 College St, Montpelier, VT; registration at the door. For more information, see <http://vermontlakes.org/about-us/lake-seminar/>

Yard Sale Day – June 23rd

“One man's trash is another man's treasure” — Saturday, June 23rd, has been designated Echo Lake Yard Sale Day. Some families on the west side of Echo Lake are planning to hold a yard sale. We all have stuff to unload. We'll donate a portion of our proceeds to the lake association. We hope you'll stop by, or, if you want to sell stuff from your yard too, then contact ann.beams@gmail.com, 723-5967, or jeanwilson55@mac.com, 673-9640, and we'll include you in further conversation, and adapt our advertising to include your location.

Hopefully, on 6/23 we will de-clutter, find treasures and bargains around the lake, and raise money for protecting our lake.

Echo Lake Color Challenge – July 1st

Think Pink...yellow, blue, orange and purple! Please join us for the fourth annual Echo Lake Color Challenge on Sunday, July 1st at 10:00 a.m. The event is open to people of all ages and all abilities. Walkers and runners travel a gentle, rolling 5K loop on West Echo Lake Road while being showered with colored powder at five color stations throughout the course. After the race enjoy post-race snacks and a chance to win fun raffle prizes.



We are keeping the registration fees the same as last year. You can save money by pre-registering. With each registration, we will provide sunglasses, a white t-shirt,

post-race snacks and a raffle ticket. You can pre-register online at Active.com or download our mail-in individual and team registration forms at the links on our website <http://www.echolakeassociation.net/activities/color-challenge-2/2018-color-challenge/>. Individual registration fee is \$15 per person; day of event registration is \$20. Or you can form a “team” of four friends, family, or neighbors. Team registration fee is \$50 per team of four people; day of event team registration is \$60.

See you at the 2018 Color Challenge!

Lake Shore Walk and Talk – July 19th

The VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation, VT Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Seymour Lake Association, Memphremagog Watershed Association and Echo Lake Protective Association have arranged a best forestry practices workshop about managing forestlands on lakeshores,

Don your walking shoes and come learn how native trees can brighten your shore, stabilize slopes, filter stormwater, and provide essential habitat for wildlife. This workshop will teach best forestry practices along the shore and upland in the watershed, including tree management under the new Shoreland Protection Act’s Vegetative Management Practices. Bring questions about tree care and join us outside, rain or shine, as we tour trees along the shore and upland.

Meet at the Morgan intersection of Route 111 and the Morgan-Charleston Road at 12:30 PM for Workshop from 1PM - 3PM. You can park in the lot beside Town Hall and across from the Church.

RSVP before Wed., July 11 to: Kendall Lambert, Administrative Director of MWA, klambert@mwavt.org or by phone at 802-487-0160.

Annual Picnic – August 11th

Our Annual Picnic, will be held on Saturday, August 11th on the Beam property at the west end of the lake. The Li'l Deb and Big Wind band will be back with us again this year, playing rock-a-billy, country, blues, and swing. Stay tuned for more information on time and so forth.

Get Involved

If you are not already a member, please consider becoming one. If you don’t want to be a member, consider being a “Friend” for a contribution of \$25. The 2018 dues and donations forms are available on our website at <http://www.echolakeassociation.net/membership/dues-donations/>.

If you are interested in becoming more involved or volunteering there are several options.

- Membership Committee – Tom Wagner – wagsvt@gmail.com
- Fund Raising – Patti Lennon – pattilennon@aol.com
- Lake Survey – Peggy Stevens – pegnericstevens@gmail.com
- Access Greeter – Terry O’Brien – obrien6417@yahoo.com
- Green-up Day – Ann Hunsicker – ahunsicker17@gmail.com

Important Dates

- May 5, 2018 – Green Up Day
- May 26, 2018 – Board Meeting
- July 1, 2018 – Color Challenge
- July 21, 2018 – Annual Meeting
- August 11, 2018 – Annual Picnic
- September 8, 2018 – Board Meeting

Vermont Conservation License Plates

A reminder that half of the proceeds derived from the sale of Vermont Conservation License Plates goes towards funding the Vermont Watershed Grant Program. If you are a Vermont resident, please consider purchasing a Vermont Conservation License Plate to support this program.



Please visit our website for more information - <http://www.echolakeassociation.net/>

ELPA

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