

Winter greetings from the Blue Mountain Lake Association

(www.BlueMountainLakeAssociation.org)

Here's an early newsletter

⇒ to update you on some of the most pressing issues in our community.

⇒ to remind you that it's time to pay your BMLA membership dues.

Happy New Year from the Blue Mountain Lake Association!

It's the beginning of a new year and time for our annual Blue Mountain Lake Association membership drive. Last year we welcomed over 65 new members, almost 50% growth! To help us manage our larger membership as well as make the information more secure, we're switching to an online membership system hosted by ZippyReg. While payments by check are still welcome, joining or renewing online with a credit card payment is much appreciated.

When you connect to the BMLA page at ZippyReg for the first time you'll create an account with a password. Then you'll provide your primary mailing address, phone, and email, plus your Blue Mountain Lake location. You can add contact information for other family members as well, so they'll receive our emails. When you renew in subsequent years, you won't have to type your information again unless there are changes.

Membership in BMLA is still just \$25 for an individual, family or business. We encourage separate memberships for extended families.

There are lots of ways to join or renew using ZippyReg:

- Point your cell phone camera at this QR code and follow the prompts
- Go to www.zippyregclubhub.com/org/bmla
- Go to www.BlueMountainLakeAssociation.org and click on JOIN



To pay by check, make your check payable to "Blue Mountain Lake Association Inc," write your email on the memo line, and mail it to our treasurer at her winter address: Barbara Sullivan, 379 Hopkins Landing Dr., Essex, MD 21221

Donations are always appreciated as well. They can be added with your online membership payment or if you would like to avoid ZippyReg's service fee, we'll gladly accept donations by check.

Questions? Contact us at membership@bluemountainlakeassociation.org. Thank you for your support and your trust in BMLA to keep watch over the Eckford Chain and to advocate in the best interest of all who love our lakes.

**MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE NOW • THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
RENEW OR JOIN TODAY!**

A Fun (and Necessary) BMLA Team Effort

As part of a project to make the public bathroom at the Town Beach (the only year-round public facility for many miles in all directions) more pleasant, both stalls now have interior round-the-clock motion-sensor lights.

The job was a very cooperative effort—the **Fire District** agreed to supply the electricity; **the Adirondack Experience** donated the backhoe to dig a trench from the fire station; **Jonathan LaPrairie** operated the backhoe; **Ken Forsberg** did most of the wiring; **Bill LaPrairie of Indian Lake Parks and Recreation** provided key support; and **the Blue Mountain Lake Association** bought the lights and paid for professional installers and an inspector who completed the job. Yay, team!

Update on VLM Harvest

The Water Watch Committee of the Blue Mountain Lake Association had a busy summer and fall containing the spread of the Variable Leaf Milfoil that was discovered in the Utowana channel in 2020. We contracted Aqualogic Dive and Guide of Chestertown to survey and harvest. To date, we are confident that they have done an excellent job of staying on top of this challenge. Their efforts include on-going surveying, diving, and harvesting. This protocol will be repeated annually to contain the spread of VLM to other areas in the Eckford Chain.

VLM harvested and removed in 2020 and 2021

In September 2020, Aqualogic divers began their work and pulled 280 gallons of invasive VLM out of the channel at the end of Utowana Lake. After that initial haul, they harvested another 90 gallons from the channel in October 2020 and during the summer of 2021. After spotting VLM in isolated large and small beds elsewhere in Utowana, they harvested almost 100 gallons during August of 2021. Thus, almost 470 gallons of VLM have been removed to date.

We also hired Adirondack Research (AR), an experienced group that routinely surveys lakes for invasive species, to perform a two-day, two-boat survey of Blue Mountain Lake, Eagle Lake, and the channel to Utowana. They found no invasive species which was reassuring. In addition, we plan to continue to keep a close watch on these lakes with professional and volunteer surveyors.

The cost to BMLA has been \$18,250 for Aqualogic, which seems a lot, but compared to the millions of dollars the Saranac community has spent on the eradication of invasive aquatic plants over the past 15 years, this is tiny—and so worth it. Early action and constant vigilance are key, both of which we have achieved.

Outlook for 2022

Dominic Jude of Aqualogic believes that we are staying on top of containment. He estimates a cost of \$20,500 to continue surveying and harvesting in 2022. Surveying includes SCUBA, snorkeling, kayaking, and stand-up paddling. Additionally, the AR lake survey might come to \$5,000 a year. Surveys will be completed between this June and August as the weather permits. In addition, a community volunteer survey initiative is underway under the leadership of Jessy Noble Gray. Watch for updates on the community volunteer effort as we approach summer. ▲

Report on Salt Monitoring

BMLA's Water Watch Committee has supported AWI's (Adirondack Watershed Institute) program to measure nutrients and road salt in the five streams that feed BML, accounting for 58 percent of the total drainage into Blue. The six years of data was recently reviewed:

The nutrient flow into BML is rather low. The only stream with an increase over the expected baseline is Museum Brook, and that is within the permitted range.

Road salt is the most urgent issue for Blue Mountain Lake which is saltier than 86 percent of Adirondack lakes. Our monitoring reveals that between 200 and 500 tons of salt drains into Blue from the brooks, especially Museum, Potter and East Minnow. The concentrations in the brooks at times exceed NYS DEC and EPA guidelines for aquatic life.

BMLA/Water Watch is considering continued moni-

Blue Mountain Lake Association: What We Do

Community Engagement

BMLA improves communication and engagement in the community through a newsletter, an annual meeting, and social media presence. Topical meetings, on issues such as invasive species, are held as needed.

Philanthropy

BMLA supports local non-profit organizations. Recent beneficiaries include the Indian Lake Schools, Community Action (local food bank), the Adirondack Experience (museum), and the Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts. During the height of the pandemic, it made donations of \$21,210 to local causes.

It provides the portable toilet for the town playground and tennis courts in summer.

Beautification

BMLA's Beautification Committee maintains flower beds and container gardens around the hamlet. Periodic roadside clean-ups remove litter.

Highways

BMLA maintains contacts with the New York Department of Transportation and the Hamilton County and Town of Indian Lake highway departments to stay aware of highway projects and to provide community input.

Government Liaison

A BMLA representative attends monthly Indian Lake Town Board meetings as a non-voting observer, occasionally commenting on items of Blue Mountain Lake interest.

Water Quality

BMLA's Water Watch Committee sponsors an on-going professional study by the Adirondack Watershed Institute of lake tributaries, monitoring contamination by road salt and nutrients.

It participates in Protect the Adirondacks' Adirondack Lakes Assessment Program. Volunteers take samples from multiple points on the lake five times a season.

Invasive Species

BMLA hires professional divers both to inspect lake bottoms and to remove invasive aquatic species such as Variable Leaf Milfoil using state-of-the-art techniques. The work is done under permits from the New York Department of Conservation.

It makes donations to the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program to help suppress roadside invasive vegetation such as Japanese Knotweed.

BMLA volunteers survey the three lakes of the Eckford Chain (Blue, Eagle, and Utowana Lakes) for the presence of invasive aquatic plants using canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards.

Sporting Events

The association organizes two sporting events to benefit our project fund; a 5K road race/walk and a paddling and rowing race with three distances.

Lake Safety

BMLA buys and its volunteers place and maintain buoys in the lakes to identify dangerous rocks and to outline channels between the lakes.

Projects

Recent BMLA projects include adding motion-detector lighting to the town's toilet building at the beach, managing a grant to subsidize septic system cleaning and inspection, buying a sun shelter for the playground, installing a refurbished vintage telephone booth and bench across from the post office, and erecting the new beach pavilion. ▲

toring. AWI suggests we improve our monitors, enroll Minnow Pond in the Adirondack Lake Assessment program, and place another monitor higher in Museum Brook where the salt effect may be greater. Cost for these improvements may be significant (\$5,000/year).

Above all, we continue to push NYS DOT to consider road salt reduction strategies within the watershed. ▲