



PO Box 245
Blue Mountain Lake, NY 12812

Winter 2024 News & Membership Appeal

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Blue Mountain Lake Association Membership Renew or Join Today!

by Sarah Lewin

More members than ever equals a stronger community than ever! Thanks to your involvement our hamlet has helped neighbors in times of trouble, been a welcoming community to new homeowners and businesses, cared for our beautiful lake, and celebrated with one another through events and gatherings year-round. These efforts are on-going, and we are excited to keep you in the mix as a Blue Mountain Lake Association Member!

Please renew today and encourage any Blue relatives or neighbors you have to do the same. Thank you and here is to a GREAT 2024!

Scan the QR code to go straight to the member login page:



Why Everyone Should Renew Online

*If you typically write a check,
please consider our online option.*

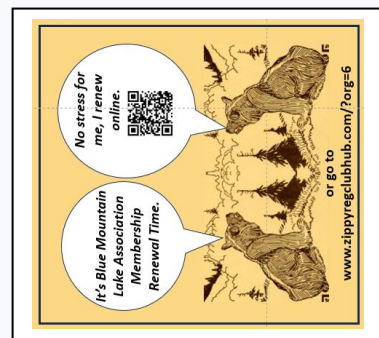
Here is why:

- Receive an immediate email acknowledgement.
- Allocate your optional donations to the general or water quality funds according to your wishes.
- Eliminate the threat of check-washing (see NY Times 12/6/23 *We Can't Stop Writing Paper Checks. Thieves Love That*)
- **It is so much easier for us.**

And a bonus: when logged-in to our membership system you have access to our password-protected member directory with phone numbers, emails, and mailing addresses of current members.

Cannot Remember Your Username or Password?

All you need is your email address.



To begin, go to the member login page either by pointing your phone's camera at the QR code or go to

www.zippyregclubhub.com/?org=6

When the Login Help window opens, enter your email address and follow the prompts. (For illustrated step-by-step directions, click **Password Reset Instructions** in the Login Help window)

If You Still Need Help

A membership volunteer will set your password for you. It is not as secure as setting the password yourself but if you are willing and it means you can renew online, we are for it. Email us: **Membership @BlueMountainLakeAssociation.org**

If You Prefer to Write a Check

Please mail \$25 membership checks, made out to "Blue Mountain Lake Association" to:
Diane Selin - BMLA Treasurer
PO Box 61
Round Lake, NY 12251

If adding a donation, please indicate if it is for the General or Water Fund.

Water Watch Update

by Michele Curry

We are excited to announce that 2023 saw yet another incremental reduction in Variable Leaf Milfoil being harvested from Utowana Lake. Even so, our continued vigilance is required to stop this aggressive aquatic invasive species from spreading further into the Eckford Chain.

We are also happy to share that a full survey of Blue Mountain Lake and Eagle Lake confirmed that both water bodies remain free of aquatic invasive plants. So, thanks to everyone for cleaning their boats, equipment, and gear before entering our waters - our efforts are clearly making a difference!

Friendly reminder: If you're ice fishing this winter, please make sure your baitfish are certified disease free. Never dump unused baitfish or water into the lake as undesirable aquatic invasive species (including the microscopic spiny water flea) might be mixed in and contaminate our waters.



A Fire Department Request *Aim Your Bubbler In*

by Bob Curry

Last winter the fire department rescued an ice angler who fell through ice weakened by a mis-directed deicer (a.k.a. a bubbler or ice-eater). It was aimed out into the lake rather than toward shore and undermined the ice for a long distance. The subject was in the water half an hour and nearly died.

According to the manufacturer's instructions a properly installed deicer directs warmer water from deeper out toward the dock or boathouse. The purpose is not to agitate the surface but to bring up warmer water. The arc of open water should not extend far into the lake or beyond your own shoreline. Timers and thermostats can match the amount of time the deicer is running to the conditions.

Whether it is you or your caretaker who manages your deicer, please be sure you are not endangering others this winter.

SUN Fund Update

by Nancy Forhan

Following the July flood, the Adirondack Foundation activated the SUN (Special and Urgent Needs) Fund and solicited donations for the Central Adirondack Communities that were most affected.

Thanks to your generosity, \$106,000 was collected specifically for Blue Mountain Lake and was distributed to individuals and businesses who had applied for financial assistance with property damage and lost business. The volunteer fire and ambulance department also received a grant.



More Dam Projects

by Andy Coney

My father called us "sidewalk supervisors," those who love to watch construction. With last summer's Lake Durant turtle trench complete, the next unusual and visible project unfolding for our enjoyment will be rebuilding the Lake Adirondack dam.

Dangerous dams have been in the news lately and we are reassured that two critical local dams are being addressed, Indian Lake and Lake Adirondack.

While the Indian Lake dam work will occur out of the public eye, sidewalk supervisors can watch the Adirondack Lake dam refurbishment in plain sight.

Adirondack Lake lies just southeast of downtown Indian Lake on route 28. The road dips to pass beside the dam, revealing an ominous-looking leaking spillway.

While the spillway's leaks are concerning, engineers report the real problem is beneath the earth embankment and the solution will be to inject stabilizing materials from above.

Work should start in April and finish by September 2025.



NY Safe Boater Certificates

Soon Required for All

It has been sneaking up slowly but now is the time to act. At the BMLA's 2023 annual meeting we were reminded that New York State requires all motorboat operators to complete a boating safety course and carry a certificate. Boaters born on or after January 1, 1978 must have certificates in 2024. For all others, the deadline is January 1, 2025.

If you have a safety boating certificate from another state or a NY certificate you earned in the past, those are fine. New York residents with a certificate can add an anchor symbol to their auto driver licenses and do not need to carry a separate card.

Contrary to widespread belief, law enforcement does occasionally patrol Blue Mountain Lake. Recently a 90-miler volunteer in a safety boat was ticketed for an expired registration by an officer assisting the race. Rangers, while not necessarily checking boats, are frequently on the lakes for routine patrol, rescues, and campsite maintenance.

The 8-hour safe boating course is offered across the state in-person and online. The Hamilton County Sheriff's office organizes classes several times a summer in locations around the county. At press time the schedule had not been set. While the classroom course requires a day-long commitment, the online version can be paused and restarted as convenient. Some thirty-five vendors offer the online course and members who have tried them report success.

Let us all put this requirement behind us. And chances are you will learn something new.



State Approves BMLA's Navigation Buoys

Since the days of steamboat travel, buoys have been placed in our lakes to mark hazards and the 1933 state survey map shows some of those locations. Over time the responsibility for marking rocks has shifted; from guides to steamship company employees, to hotel and boat rental operators, and now to volunteers organized by the Blue Mountain Lake Association.

This past summer the BMLA was pleased to learn our navigation buoy permit application was approved by New York State, the first ever for a lake association. The BMLA's new five-year permit grants the buoys official status under Section 33 of NY Navigation Law, however with that comes an obligation to maintain them.



Blue Mountain Lake's navigation aids follow the "red right returning from sea" standard. Blue Mountain Lake flows west through Eagle and Utowana toward Raquette Lake and eventually to the North Atlantic. So, returning to Blue through the channel, red buoys mark the right side and green the left. Leaving Blue toward Eagle Lake, it is the opposite.

White buoys in mid-lake identify dangerous rocks and shoals. Our white spar buoys stay in place year-round while in the summer, volunteers add large white "Danger Rocks" buoys, one for each significant rock or cluster.

A Family Daycare Tradition

by Cathleen Collins

Grandma Evelyn provided daycare — but really so much more — for many of us and many of our children. In October, Evelyn Thompson's daughter-in-law Kim, and her daughter Ashlyn Pine opened Blue Mountain's Little Explorers licensed daycare in Kim and Greg's home in Blue. They currently care for eight children, from

infants to age 12, serving the Blue Mountain, Indian Lake, and Long Lake communities.

Little Explorers has capacity for a few more toddlers and is renovating their basement space to accommodate those active bodies and all the toys.

2024 Race Dates

Blue Mountain Lake's marquee sporting events return in 2024.

July 21- *BluMouLA-BuFuRa*, the prettiest darn race in America, for canoes, kayaks, guideboats, and paddleboards, with 1.5-, 7-, and 14-mile courses. www.BMLbuoyrace.com
August 11- The *Blue Mountain Sizzler* will melt your socks, a 5K run and walk around Blue's "Big Triangle" plus a quarter mile kids' race. www.BlueMtSizzler.com

Who Was Henry Eckford? and why was the Eckford Chain named for him?

by Andy Coney

The Eckford Chain (Blue Mountain Lake, Eagle Lake, and Lake Utowana) was named in 1834 by Ebenezer Emmons, New York State Geologist, for Henry Eckford, a prominent ship builder and New York politician. It was a time when Adirondack features were named for politicians, historians, and businesspeople, such as Mount Marcy, Street Mountain, and Tupper Lake. But why did Emmons choose to honor seemingly obscure Henry Eckford who had died two years earlier?



Courtesy- US Navy Naval History and Heritage Command

Henry Eckford, after a youth as a carpenter in Scottish shipyards, emigrated as a sixteen-year-old in 1791

to apprentice with his uncle, a shipbuilder on the lower Saint Lawrence River, where he proved to be adept at both construction and design. In 1796, having completed his apprenticeship, he moved to New York City where his reputation grew for building fast and seaworthy ships. In 1803 he became a US citizen and travelled in 1806 to Oswego, NY to build a naval gunship to serve on Lake Ontario, the new nation's northwestern frontier.

Returning to New York City, Eckford continued his shipbuilding enterprises and began a long relationship with John Jacob Astor, producing ships for Astor's fur trading business. He also built coastal patrol boats for the US Navy.

In 1812, at the start of the war with Britain, Eckford was asked to return to Lake Ontario and create a fleet at Sackets Harbor, barely a wilderness clearing. In a short time, the Sackets Harbor shipyard was producing naval vessels at a furious pace and by the war's end employed eight hundred shipwrights. That Lake Ontario fleet, and another on Lake Erie where Eckford was also instrumental, was essential to discouraging a British invasion from the north and a chief reason the United States was able to prevail in the war.

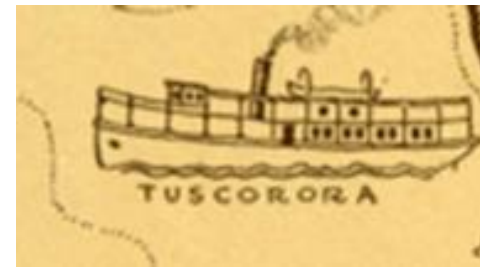
Eckford had built the navy's ships on credit and went bankrupt when only partially paid after a series of bills in Congress to restore his finances did not pass.

After the war, Eckford continued in shipbuilding and became a player in New York's Tammany Hall, then the political machine of the city. When Tammany came into disgrace, his reputation fell with it which further discouraged attempts in Congress to reimburse him for his losses building the Lake Ontario fleet.

In 1831, to help restore his finances, Henry Eckford agreed to help the Ottoman Empire rebuild its navy. He travelled to Constantinople where he died suddenly in January 1832, possibly of cholera.

Henry Eckford was an immigrant who made good and whose shipbuilding and

organizing skills helped his adopted country survive the War of 1812. That Blue Mountain Lake, Eagle Lake, and Lake Utowana are still known today as the Eckford Chain is an honor to both him and our beloved lakes.



Preserving the Tuscarora

A group of Adirondack residents and boat experts is outlining a future for the 123-year-old steamboat.

by Elizabeth Folwell

In 1900 William West Durant—known for great camps and grand schemes—commissioned A. C. Brown, of Staten Island, to build a coal-fired passenger steamboat on the shore of Blue Mountain Lake. Beginning that June, the Tuscarora traveled from Marion River Carry through Utowana, Eagle and Blue Mountain Lakes, delivering visitors to Gilded Age hotels and lakefront estates.

For nearly three decades it operated much like the other excursion boats on the Fulton Chain, the Saranacs and across the Adirondacks.



With passengers filling both decks, the Tuscarora steams into the channel between Blue Mountain and Eagle Lakes on a summer day. Courtesy the Adirondack Experience.

When better roads were available, those vessels—their useful lives over—were deliberately burned or scuttled. The Tuscarora escaped that fate and took on a new life in 1934, when it became the Graham family's camp, with bedrooms, a lounge, a kitchen, and bathrooms. As cozy as the cottage was, to all appearances it retained the essence of the Tuscarora.

This 75-foot-long double-decker steamer is a rare relic of the heydays of Adirondack tourism and a glimpse of how a summer family repurposed a unique structure. Tuscarora is an important part of the history of Blue Mountain Lake, bridging the Victorian era and modern times. Tuscarora owners Donna Gingell and Peter Halsch plus a committee of boat experts and historic preservation advocates have been discussing just what the future may hold for the boat. It is on shore in a quiet cove, not accessible for viewing. There is much work needed to document and stabilize the watercraft and develop interpretation that will bring this unique story to life. Plans are to move the boat to a site where visitors can see the restored steamer and learn about its key role in Adirondack transportation long before motor vehicles.

The first step in the next chapter for the Tuscarora was made possible by a grant from the Connecticut-based 1772 Foundation that will facilitate creation of a feasibility study and high-tech documentation of the structure. This historic preservation grant is administered by Adirondack Architectural Heritage, Keeseville, NY, an organization that sees the value of saving this unique artifact as part of its overall mission recognizing the importance of the region's built environment.

In early November, a team from Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), which is a program of the National Park Service based in Washington, D.C., used large-format photos and laser plotting to make images that show the Tuscarora from all directions. The HAER documents will provide digital measured drawings of the vessel, which will be enormously important for the preservation project

and engineering studies to enable moving the vessel to a new location.

This winter, the task is to determine how best to relocate the Tuscarora. Cranes and trucks, like a house mover would use over land, may be unfeasible due to the location; building a cradle to support the hull as it is hauled over the lake is an option to explore.

There are grant opportunities to facilitate this work, though matching funds are required for federal and state proposals.

As plans emerge the Friends of the Tuscarora intend to offer progress updates via social media, press releases and other venues. Funding for the Tuscarora is currently managed by Adirondack Architectural Heritage, which can accept tax-deductible donations on behalf of the project. Becoming an independent non-profit organization is a goal of the Tuscarora group in 2024.

Blue Mountain Lake Association

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Cathleen Collins - Interim Co-President
Nancy Forhan - Interim Co-President
Andy Coney - Vice President
Diane Selin - Treasurer
Sherry Nemmers - Secretary

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Pat Benton - Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts
Ralph Coon - Highways
Bob Curry - Fire/Ambulance
Sarah Lewin - Membership
Michele Curry - Water Watch
David Kahn - Adirondack Experience
Mea Kaemmerlen - Newsletter

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Mary Lynne Heldmann
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