



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE LAKES ASSOCIATION

Raft-a-Palooza: Kayaking for a Cause



Volume XXIV, No. 3, Fall, 2014

*Story and photos by Alicia Carlson, Forest Stewardship Program
Outreach Assistant for UNH Cooperative Extension*

I was somewhere I wouldn't normally be on a Sunday morning in August—sitting in a canoe on Weirs Beach at the edge of Lake Winnepesaukee. I was surrounded by nearly 400 kayaks and canoes, all colors of the rainbow. Somebody in the distance was counting down ... “10, 9, 8 ...” the crowd began to buzz ... “7, 6, 5, 4 ...” get ready ... “3, 2, 1 ...” and we're off!

It was a boating frenzy at *LakeFest 2014: Raft-a-Palooza*, as people pushed and paddled their way into Lake Winnepesaukee, collectively trying to break two Guinness World Records. The first—the largest simultaneous launch of canoes and kayaks in 15 seconds or less—was (unofficially) successful. We had 396 lined up for the simultaneous launch, which bested the 308 launching boats that set the current record last year in Tasmania. We were off the mark for the second—an attempt for the largest raft of canoes and kayaks. We needed a whopping 1,700 more boats for that record; the record of 2,099 boats in a raft is held by Sutton's Bay, Michigan.

After the boats joined together in a floating raft of canoes and kayaks, we all headed back to shore to enjoy the festival portion of the day. As my husband loaded the boat on our car, I took my post under an educational tent to help kids answer the question



Canoes and kayaks lined the shore at Weirs Beach, anxiously awaiting the signal to launch at LakeFest 2014: Raft-a-Palooza (8/3/2014).

“How does water move around?”. The Watershed Warriors tent featured seven stations on topics including how lakes form, food webs, erosion and runoff, watershed pollution and invasive species. Each child that participated took a pledge to help protect water and lakes and received a Watershed Warrior patch.

This was a fun event, but there was a greater purpose: The New Hampshire Lakes Association (NH LAKES) organized *LakeFest 2014: Raft-a-Palooza* with the goal of raising awareness about aquatic invasive species and getting boaters in the habit to “Clean, Drain and Dry” their boats before launching into a lake, pond or river. Aquatic invasive species, like variable milfoil and zebra mussels, crowd out native plants and animals, reduce property values, and foul up boating and swimming areas.

But NH LAKES didn't do this alone. They had 75 volunteers helping with all aspects, from helping people

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LAKESIDE

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From the President...



As I write this piece it is a week into September. The day was hot and the evening is cool—the harbinger of cooler days to come. We had some hot and humid days in late August and early September but, by the time you read this fall issue of *Lakeside*, the foliage may have peaked and leaves begun to fall. Autumn is a time when nature transitions before our eyes, as the air and earth and water cool, and many things in the natural world begin to slow down. But, the ice has not yet come and we should still have some fair weather days. I do hope that you are getting outside and enjoying the outdoors and our lakes and ponds and rivers during this season of transition. It is a fine season to enjoy the outdoors.

NH LAKES also transitions during the fall, moving from an outdoor education mode—from programs like Lake Host and our signature educational event, LakeFest—into a season of intense advocacy in the public policy arena. In these pages, you will read about *LakeFest 2014: Raft-a-Palooza*, but, with that event well

behind us, we are now focused on the legislative process as it affects our lakes. While elections and the elected get sorted out by the voters, NH LAKES is working on its policy agenda and planning its advocacy strategy for the upcoming legislative session. As part of that process, we are polling you—our members—through an online survey, which we hope you will complete. Please go to our website to do so.

Also in transition is our Member Services Program. We have added Board and staff members to our team that are experienced in this area and we have upgraded the tools that we use to better serve you. We want to help your association be the most effective stewardship organization it can be so please call upon us; we are here to help.

Lastly, and very special for me, is a brief story in *Lakeside* about the beginnings of a New Hampshire lake about 75 years ago and a little bit of New Hampshire history, told to us by a dear friend. I am slowly, but almost daily, learning what makes New Hampshire special. With all the natural beauty that this state possesses, New Hampshire's greatest asset is its people—people who care deeply, who commit, who persevere, and who sometimes tell their story. And what wonderful people and stories they are.

Sincerely,

Tom O'Brien
NH LAKES President

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Our partner in lake protection helping us reach new audiences in new ways.

Advocacy Program Update

By Tom O'Brien, NH LAKES President & Policy Advocate

Good News! House Bill 292 was signed into law by the Governor this summer! Increasing the cost of registering a boat in New Hampshire by \$2.00, this new law will add approximately \$200,000 each year to state grant funds to control aquatic invasive species (AIS). This is an important step towards increasing the capacity of local organizations to manage AIS infestations in their lakes and rivers. NH LAKES campaigned for the passage of this bill and we thank our advocacy volunteers who urged their representatives to support the bill and who testified at hearings in support of the bill.

I spent a great deal of time this past summer, and will spend even more time this autumn, talking with our members and partners about lake and natural resource advocacy issues in New Hampshire. Following is a brief update about some of the work the NH LAKES Advocacy Program has been involved in during the past few months and will be working on in the coming months.

State Agency Program Rules: The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) recently held several public meetings on proposed revisions to Wetlands, Shoreland Protection, and Clean Lakes program rules. NH LAKES provided comments on the revisions and made recommendations for improvements to those rules. In addition, several

of our Board members and staff serve on a variety of public policy committees or boards, through which we provide this kind of input on a year-round basis.

State Agency Budgets: Coming up on our advocacy radar is the New Hampshire fall elections and the subsequent 2015 legislative session. It is important to note that this is a 'budget year' for state agencies. Budgets for the state fiscal years 2016 - 2017 biennium were developed and submitted during 2014 by agency department heads at the request of the Governor.

These budgets will be scrutinized by lawmakers and many stakeholders and will likely be revised numerous times before going before the full legislature for approval. The final budget for the 2016 - 2017 biennium will be signed into law by the Governor by June 30, 2015. NH LAKES works closely with the natural resource agencies—NH Fish & Game and NH DES, in particular—and the NH Marine Patrol, to advocate for agency funding that supports important lake and other water resource programs. These agencies have lost staff over the last couple of budget cycles and where these losses have impacted lake-oriented programs, it is in our interest to see that these programs are maintained or restored.

NH LAKES' 2014 – 2015 Advocacy Survey: High on our list of advocacy priorities is our goal to prevent the further

spread of AIS—particularly invasive critters like Asian clams, zebra mussels, and the spiny water flea. We are considering what additional statutory or policy 'tools' may be needed to help contain AIS infestations, if and when they occur. The control (i.e. management) of AIS in New Hampshire's lakes and beyond has proven to be very expensive and difficult, with eradication so far being elusive if not unattainable. Some states have added the ability to 'quarantine' waters where AIS infestations are found. Are there new tools that should be added to the AIS management toolbox in New Hampshire? AIS management is just one of several issues included in our annual advocacy survey. By November 1, and sooner if possible, please let us know what legislative issues are most important to you by completing the 'NH LAKES 2014 – 2015 Advocacy Survey' posted at www.nhlakes.org. We will use the results of this survey to formulate our legislative and public policy strategy for the coming year.

We want to hear from you! In addition to participating in our annual advocacy survey, please let us know at any time that which is important to you and to your favorite lake. I can be reached at tobrien@nhlakes.org and 603.226.0299.

In Memoriam

On September 1, 2014, **Bruce Anderson** and **David (Dave) Ingalls**, both of Kingston, New Hampshire, were killed in a plane crash. Bruce and Dave were members of the Kingston Lake Association and were actively involved in the NH LAKES Lake Host Program and will be greatly missed.

unload their boats to conducting courtesy boat inspections, from giving us instructions before the launch to parking cars. There were several non-profit organizations available at informational booths, an arts market, and other vendors. It was truly a community-run event.

This article was originally published by The Stewardship Network: New England. For information about nature-based events, workshops, and volunteer opportunities—including those focused on invasive plants—visit newengland.stewardshipnetwork.org.

Note: As of the layout of this newsletter, NH LAKES was waiting to hear from Guinness if the simultaneous launch of 396 canoes and kayaks had been verified as an official new Guinness World Record.



Canoes and kayaks gather together in a floating raft at LakeFest 2014: Raft-a-Palooza (8/3/2014).



One youngster ponders the food web in the Watershed Warriors tent at LakeFest 2014: Raft-a-Palooza (8/3/2014).

Membership Matters

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Help Us Watch Over Your Lake Year Round

As we near the end of 2014, we ask you to consider what condition the lakes in New Hampshire might be like today—and in the future—without the work of the New Hampshire Lakes Association (NH LAKES). Since 1992, NH LAKES has been the only nonprofit organization working to protect *all* of New Hampshire's 1,000 lakes, including your lake. We have done this through education and advocacy and with the support of our members and partners. Our staff and Board of Directors understand that your lake is important to you and believe, as we know you do, that future generations should have the opportunity to enjoy clean, safe lakes.

As a lake steward, you can help ensure that NH LAKES will continue to watch over all our lakes—including your lake—by making a financial contribution to our Annual Fund.

There are a number of easy ways you can make a contribution:

- Use the remittance envelope included with this issue of *Lakeside*.
- Go to our website (www.nhlakes.org) and select the 'Donate' button to make an online contribution using a credit card. New this year: You can split your annual donation into twelve monthly automatic electronic payments.
- Make a gift of appreciated stock. Find out how on our website (www.nhlakes.org) under the 'Support Us' tab.
- Donate your old boat—or any type of vehicle located anywhere in the country—to us. Most vehicles can be picked up within one to three days. Find out more at our website (www.nhlakes.org) under the 'Support Us' tab.

Please help us to continue this important work year round by giving as generously as you can to the NH LAKES 2014 Annual Fund.



NH LAKES thanks all sponsors, volunteers, and attendees for helping make LakeFest 2014 a success!

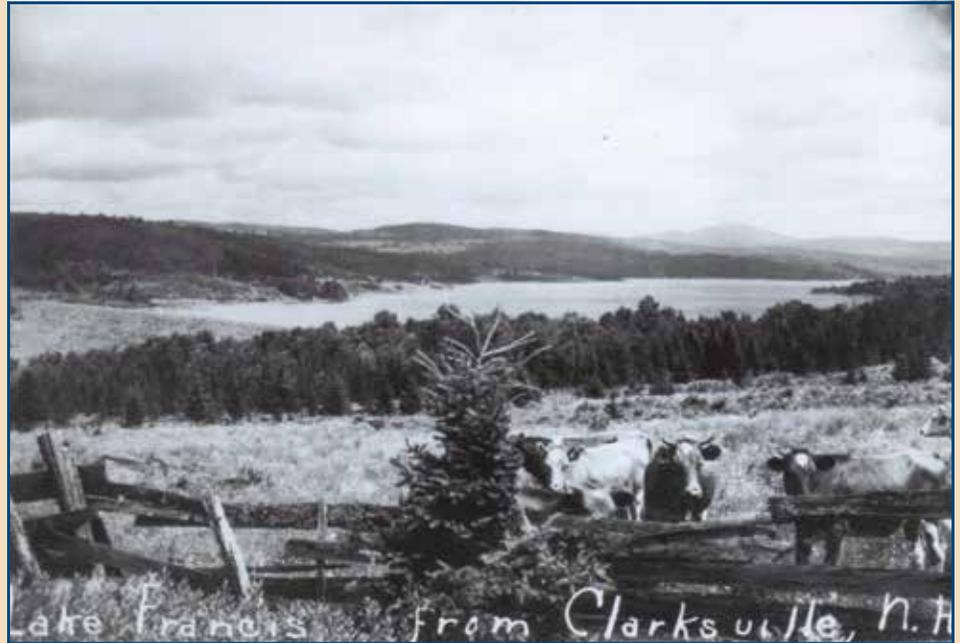
Lake Francis Back in the Day...

by Tom O'Brien, NH LAKES President

This is a story of the end of an era and beginning of a new one, with three young boys going through a life and death experience in the midst of it all. It ended well, due to the heroics of one of the boys, a little older and stronger than the rest.

It happened one hot August day back in 1941. Bugs Bunny has just made his debut, Captain America was soon to follow, and Joe DiMaggio was well into his 56-game hitting streak. At least that's what we hope was on the minds of the three lads, as opposed to world politics and the historic and horrific events of that year that led to the United States entering WW II. It was, to say the least, a tumultuous year.

Charles Robert Johnson (Bobbie to his family), 14 years old and, by all accounts, strong and quite capable, was playing below the newly constructed Murphy Dam (behind which was the just-filled Lake Francis) with his two young cousins, John (age 6) and Frederick (age 4). The boys were visiting their relatives in New



Hampshire's North Country—Pittsburg to be precise—and the newly-filled 2,000-acre Lake Francis was no doubt a great attraction to them. The lake was brand-new in fact; it was a 1940 flood control project which covered the Johnson family's (former) farmland.

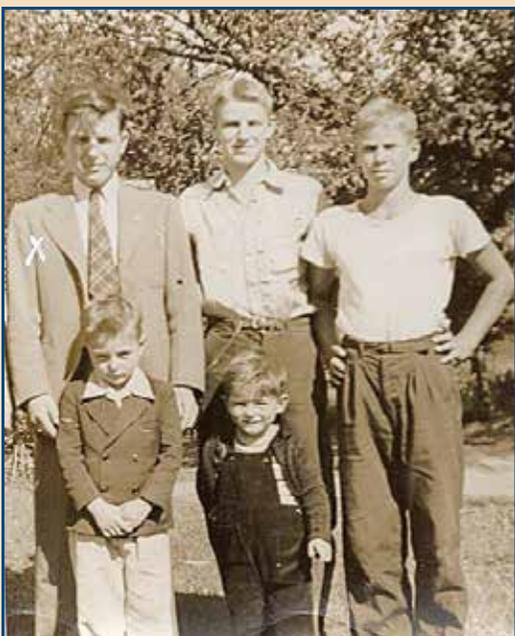
Bobbie had come all the way from Colorado along with his brother Billy and mom, Ruth Johnson. Their younger cousins, John and Frederick, had come up from Hooksett, New Hampshire; all of them to visit their grandfather on his remaining farm. Bobbie, John, and Frederick went down to play near the water and what happened next was the stuff of which legends are born and ultimately policy got made.

In the words of the Colebrook Sentinel on August 28, 1941: The boys "...were fishing off the rocks when they got caught in the swirling flood, that came upon them so suddenly, and they were swept off their

feet. John managed to crawl ashore and Frederick was carried over the falls below. Bobbie, being an expert swimmer and a boy scout, never thinking of his own danger, plunged into the angry waters and rescued little Frederick just in time."

The boys had been caught in the release of water from Lake Francis through the Murphy Dam, constructed for flood control below the four Connecticut Lakes. Those four upper lakes were dammed to provide hydroelectric power, which they still do today. The Colebrook Sentinel reporter goes on to comment that perhaps a warning signal could be installed that would, in the future, warn people downstream prior to a release of water. The power company did so soon thereafter.

So, Bobbie saved his cousin Frederick from certain death and got his picture in the paper. And the company that owned the hydroelectric facility installed a warning system for water releases that continues to be in use today.



Back (left to right): Link, Billy, and Bobbie Johnson.
Front (left to right): John and Frederick Berry.

Lake Francis, continued on page 7

But that's not the end of the story. In 1990, these heroic events were brought to the attention of New Hampshire Governor Judd Gregg, by Polly Johnson. Polly (99 years old this year and a resident of Concord, NH) remembered those events most vividly. She was there as a young woman back in 1941—the boys' aunt—and much later thought to mention this incident to Governor Gregg. Polly and her husband Harlan were deeply immersed and active in New Hampshire history, politics, and civic life throughout their lives (the description of which would fill a book) and Polly thought that this story of her nephew Bobbie's heroics as a young lad was worthy of recognition. Indeed it was.

On May 24, 1990, Governor Judd Gregg publicly recognized Robert's boyhood heroism on that near-fateful day below Lake Francis in 1941 (out of which came important public policy and greater attention to public safety). Bobbie Johnson was not just strong and able, he was humble as well. In his thank you letter to Governor Gregg, he simply wrote that he "didn't know enough to be scared until it was all over." Charles Robert (Bobbie) Johnson passed away on May 16, 2013.

Polly Johnson relayed this story to me this past summer, along with tidbits of many others about New Hampshire civic and political life, and it was, of course, the lake story that caught my attention.

Writer's Note: I sincerely thank Polly Johnson for sharing with me and our NH LAKES community her family's lake story, along with the articles, letters and commendation associated with the event. Perhaps one of our other Lakeside readers has an equally compelling story to tell. If so, please send it our way.

And the 2014 John F. Morten Award for Exemplary Lakes Stewardship goes to...

Marge and Dave Thorpe from Lake Wicwas in Meredith!

The "Morten Award" (as it is affectionately known) is New Hampshire Lakes Association's highest award for lake stewardship. Established in 2002, the award was created in recognition of the late John F. Morten (1914-1989) and his lifelong work to protect New Hampshire's lakes and ponds. Mr. Morten was one the visionaries behind the formation of our statewide association—New Hampshire Lakes Association (NH LAKES). Each year NH LAKES chooses from the many volunteer lake stewards that are nominated for this award—all of whom do incredibly important work and are all deserving of accolades in their own right.

Marge and Dave Thorpe stood out among the nominees this year for having dedicated themselves to the preservation of Lake Wicwas in multiple capacities and through numerous ways over many years. Individually and as a couple, they have been involved with the Lake Wicwas Association, the Town of Meredith, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the Loon Preservation Committee, and NH LAKES. In addition, Marge and Dave have been full-spectrum lake stewards, involved in water quality monitoring, education programs, dam maintenance projects, loon protection efforts, and aquatic invasive species prevention activities. They have been exemplary lake stewards in virtually every capacity that we can think of and have been doing so consistently since 1984.

NH LAKES President, Tom O'Brien had the pleasure of presenting the Thorpes with the Morten Award at the Lake Wicwas Association annual meeting in Meredith Center on August 2. Following the Morten Award presentation, State Senator Jeanie Forrester presented the couple with a letter of commendation from the New Hampshire Senate.

Congratulations, Marge and Dave!

Nominations for the John F. Morten Award are accepted year round.

To learn more, visit www.nhlakes.org/morten-award.



Marge and Dave Thorpe (center and right, respectively) were awarded the 2014 Morten Award by NH LAKES President Tom O'Brien (left) on August 2.

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Member Services News!

Introducing Erin Graichen, Member Services Assistant

Printed on stock that is 30% recycled fiber with chlorine-free pulp, using timber from managed forests.

Member Services News! Introducing Erin Graichen, Member Services Assistant

There's a new face at NH LAKES: Erin bravely joined our staff this summer—just before LakeFest! Erin comes to us from the New England Aquarium in Boston where she worked for eight years in the education department. As the Education Program Assistant, she coordinated education programs, supported education and stewardship initiatives, assisted with youth intern programs, and enjoyed teaching others about the ocean. Erin is a graduate of the Florida Institute of Technology and she brings many years of database management and administrative experience as well as a passion for the conservation of oceans and lakes. Her excitement for all things water-related stems from visiting both Salisbury Beach and Newfound Lake for family vacations each year. Erin enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter, playing cards, swimming, having impromptu conservation conversations, organizing things, whale watching, and paddling! Feel free to introduce yourself to Erin the next time you call or stop by the office.



NH LAKES welcomes new Member Services Assistant Erin Graichen!