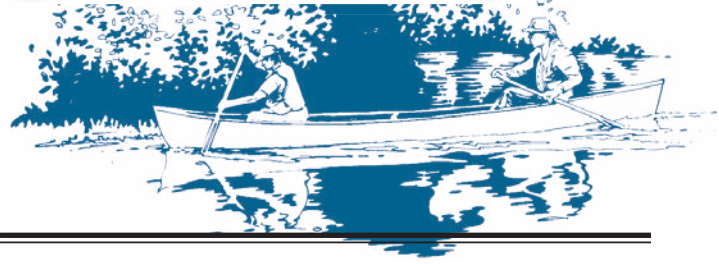




# REFLECTIONS

The Newsletter for the Pleasant Lake Protective Association

Vol. 55, Issue 1, June 2024



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Welcome back Pleasant Lake! I hope this letter finds you well and filled with anticipation for the joys of another beautiful summer on Pleasant Lake. As I am writing this letter the snow is flying for what appears to be the largest snowfall of the season. But you never know what mother nature can have in store for you. This winter I am told, for the December to February period, New Hampshire was 9 degrees warmer than the 100 year average!

It is my pleasure to share some updates and reflections with you. First and foremost, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering commitment to the preservation and stewardship of our lake. Your dedication to our cause is the heartbeat of our association, and together, we continue to make a positive impact on our community and environment.

In the spirit of progress, I am thrilled to update our recent initiatives to enhance water quality monitoring efforts around the lake. Through a collaborative partnership with Colby-Sawyer College and their Environment Sciences Department, headed up by Professor Nick Baer and Associate Professor Dave Luntz, we have been testing water samples from throughout the watershed of Pleasant Lake to establish a benchmark from which we can start to develop innovative strategies to safeguard the health of our lake. I want to particularly thank Board

members Craig Williamson, Doug Bent, Carter Roberts and John Wilson for spearheading this important study. More on this important study can be found inside the newsletter.

Our boat launch monitoring program, headed up by Doug and Charlene Baxter is our primary defense against invasive species. This past year we inspected 1993 boats. We receive a grant from the town each year which helps offset about half of our cost. The rest is funded by your PLPA dues. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

We are always looking for volunteers to help with our various efforts and committees around the lake. If you are looking to engage please reach out to any board member. Currently we are seeking out people who can help in the following areas: weed watch patrol, water sampling and Membership and Communications.

Each year I need to thank Jen Esten and Jonathan Waage for their great work on the e-newsletter, "The Nature of Pleasant Lake." I am looking forward to their beautiful photos this coming year.

Our annual display of July Fireworks will be on July 6th. The Ring of Fire will begin at 9pm. There will be an opportunity to purchase modern LED "Power Flares" at the annual meeting. Please be on the lookout for more information.



Fred Pierce, President

Our annual meeting will take place on July 6th at 9am in the Slope 'n Shore clubhouse. Donuts and coffee will be served at 8:30.

Later that afternoon, at 2pm we will hold our boat parade. We will start at Slope 'n Shore and travel clockwise. This year's theme is Olde London. Our Grand Marshals will be Peter and Kathy Bianchi.

Lastly, I am finishing up my two years as president of PLPA. I want to especially thank Doug Baxter (VP), Sue Andrews (Secretary) and Peter Winship (Treasurer) for their guidance and wisdom. Their commitment to the stewardship of Pleasant Lake is considerable. I encourage others who live in the Pleasant Lake watershed to consider giving of their time. We need everyone's support to keep this gem we call Pleasant Lake.

Have a great summer!  
Fred Pierce  
President

# The Ring of Fire

Pleasant Lake's Tradition of Flares around the Lake  
**Saturday, July 6, 9-9:30 pm**

The PLPA is once again planning the "Ring of Fire" which traditionally precedes the fireworks display. This year the PLPA is strongly encouraging the use of LED Flares. These are easy to find on Amazon.

## THE LAKE HOST PROGRAM

During the 2023 season (Memorial Day – Labor Day) our Lake Hosts inspected a total of 1993 watercraft entering and/or exiting Pleasant Lake at the Elkins boat ramp. This number was down from 2022's 2563 inspections, due primarily to the rainy summer weather we experienced. Significantly, no invasives were found during these boat inspections!

We would like to pay a special tribute to our long-time Lake Host Don Sheffield, who served as a dedicated Pleasant Lake Lake Host for eight years. Don and his wife Chris have relocated to Massachusetts and they will both be sorely missed.

For the 2024 season we have three of our 2023 Lake Hosts returning: Jane Slayton, Rachel Rodrick and Lindsay Brook. We have filled Don's position by bringing onboard Molly Ellison, a senior at Kearsarge High School who will be attending William & Mary University in the fall. Molly comes to us with previous experience, having been a Lake Host last summer on Messer Pond, and she will be a great addition to our existing team.

Thank you to all PLPA members for your continued support of this essential program. And thank you to the Town of New London and the New Hampshire Lakes Association for their continued financial support.

Doug & Charlene Baxter  
Lake Host Coordinators

## LIFE JACKETS REQUIRED FOR STAND UP PADDLE BOARDS (SUP)

Stand up paddle boards are considered boats by the United States Coast Guard and the State of New Hampshire. Accordingly, all persons using a stand up paddle board are required to carry a wearable life jacket onboard while paddling.

The Marine Patrol also reminds boaters/paddlers that anyone **12 years of age and under MUST be wearing their life jacket at all times** while aboard any type of boat, including stand up paddle boards.

## 2023 - 2024 PLPA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

### OFFICERS

President: Fred Pierce  
603-526-6594

Vice President: Doug Baxter  
603-738-4737

Secretary: Sue Andrews  
603-731-9808

Treasurer: Peter Winship  
603-848-6700

### BOARD

Doug Bent 603-748-3164

Storm Connors 603-459-4201

Jen Esten (cell) 781-726-2697

Jamie Hess (cell) 802-291-3939

Marilyn Kidder 603-491-7459

Will Kidder 603-526-4531

Judy Oates 603-526-2173

Carter Roberts 603-526-2160

John Ryan 603-526-4813

Tom Stark 603-526-6741

Craig Williamson 610-442-9322

John Wilson 603-526-4069

Oge Young  
603-724-8683

www.plpa.net • email: plpa@plpa.net

Message and 'Like' us on our  
~~Facebook page: Pleasant Lake~~  
Protective Association

*The PLPA was incorporated in 1969, by a group of far-sighted New London residents who valued the wonderful natural resource we have in Pleasant Lake and wanted to provide for its long-term protection.*

Newsletter photos by  
Jennifer Esten and Jonathan Waage  
Graphic design, printing,  
and distribution by

Echo Communications, Inc.

# Understanding the Importance of Stream Inputs

Although Pleasant Lake has some of the best water quality of any lake in the state, blooms of harmful algae (cyanobacteria) have been identified for the first time in the past two years. It is important that our community remain vigilant about preventing inputs of nutrients that stimulate algae growth into our beautiful lake. Harmful algae can carry neurotoxins (brain toxins) and hepatotoxins (liver toxins) that can threaten the health of humans and their pets if they are exposed to this water.

The water quality in our lake is a direct function of what we all do in the surrounding watershed. Human activity in the watershed - such as the application of fertilizers to lawns and gardens, and faulty septic systems - can bring in nutrients such as phosphorus that cause harmful algal blooms. Periodic inspection and pumping of septic systems and reducing or eliminating lawn and garden fertilizers are essential to maintain the high water quality that we enjoy in our lake.

We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated residents who monitor water quality in our lake. This sampling has been focused on water quality in the lake itself, but it provides little or no information about nutrients or other materials that enter the lake through the stream tributaries.

We are also very fortunate that starting in September, 2023 ten Colby-Sawyer Environmental Science and Studies students have been working with faculty members Nick Baer and David Lutz and the PLPA on a comprehensive analysis of the nutrients and other materials entering Pleasant Lake through the tributary streams. While in-lake samples provide important information on the extant conditions of a lake, tributary monitoring provides a better understanding of the origins of nutrient inputs that can trigger harmful algal blooms.

Starting last autumn, through the cold, icy winter and into the spring, students collected 750 water samples on 22 separate days from over 50 tributaries (**Figure 1**). Analyses included measurements of several variables including chloride and total phosphorus loading.

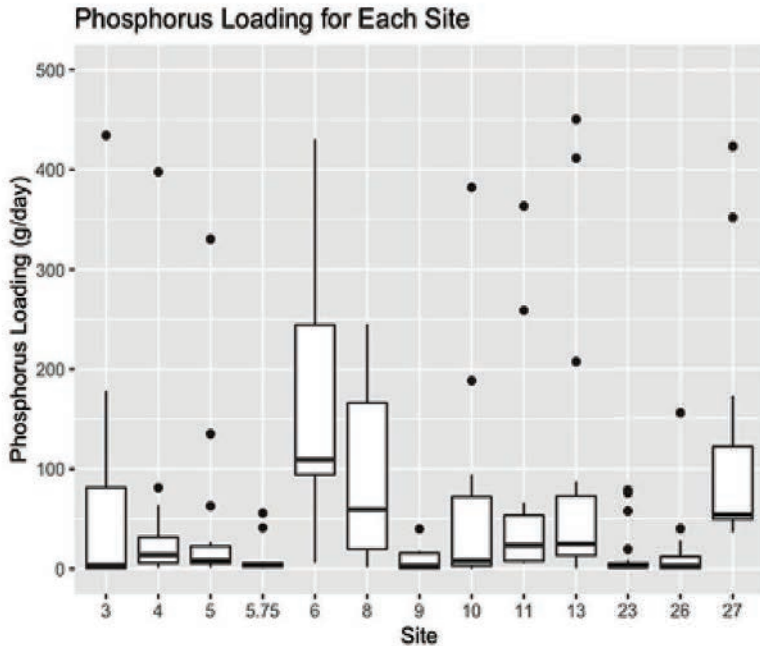
The results of this study showed that tributaries with the greatest water volume contribution to the Lake were Great Brook (site 6, 58%), Little Brook (site 8, 10%), Red Brook (site 13, 7%), and the Fire Pond (site 27, 7%). The main sources of TP nutrients to the lake were Great Brook (6), Little Brook (8), and the Fire Pond (27) located across the street from Elkins Beach. (**Figure 2**).

These three inlets are areas to monitor for future harmful algal (cyanobacteria) blooms. Streams with periodically elevated TP concentrations were from the Fire Pond located across from Elkins Beach, an inlet from the skating pond near the Slope and Shore community, the stream leading into the Lake coming from Spring Ledge's Strawberry Field, and from areas with more development, a higher percentage of impervious surfaces, and major road intersections.

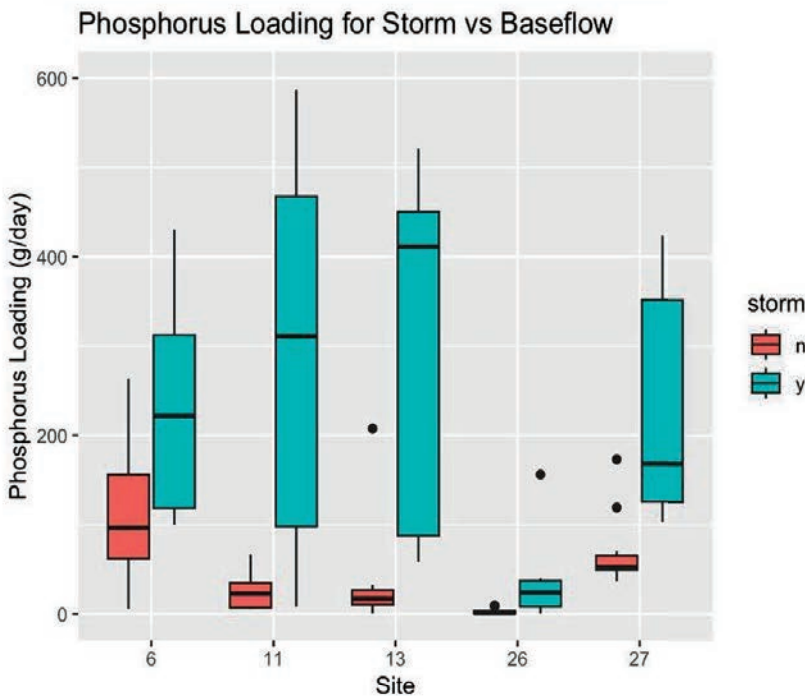
Students collected water samples before and after rainstorm events twelve times and found that TP loading was significantly higher during storm events **Figure 3**. As climate change is predicted to increase the frequency and intensity of storm events in our region, it will be important to monitor inlets to see if the elevated levels of sediments, nutrients, and organic matter generated by storms



**Figure 1.** project sampling sites were numbered counterclockwise around the lake and totaled over fifty different inlets into the Lake.



**Figure 2.** Tributaries varied significantly in terms of phosphorus loading. Great Brook, Little Brook, and the Fire Pond were the dominant sources of phosphorus to the Lake.



**Figure 3.** Phosphorus loading during normal conditions (red) and storm/melt conditions (blue) for five major tributaries including Little Brook (6), White Brook (11), Red Brook (13), and the Fire Pond (27). Note the significantly greater loading during storm and snow melt events.

as well as warmer temperatures result in conditions that favor harmful algal blooms.

Nationwide increases in road salt application have led to concern about the effects of chloride on water quality, which include increases in harmful algal blooms and decreases in beneficial algae-eating zooplankton (microscopic crustaceans that also serve as food for fish). Data indicate that there have been strong increases in chloride in Pleasant Lake, from about 4 milligrams per liter in the 1970s to over 8 milligrams per liter in the 2020s. The students found that chloride loading varied across tributaries. Red Brook and the sampling location adjacent to the corner of Bunker Road and Elkins were the largest contributors of chloride to the lake. Chloride concentrations and loading were both directly and significantly related to total salt application within each tributary's watershed. With these results, the Pleasant Lake community can quickly identify locations of concern and initiate conversations related to rules regarding road salt application in the watershed.

### *Looking Ahead and What You Can Do to Help Protect Our Lake*

With the generous support of the Pleasant Lake Protective Association, several members of the Colby-Sawyer team will be continuing sampling efforts throughout this summer from May until August to fill in the periods of the year not covered in the class study. This complete annual snapshot of tributary conditions will serve as the foundation for potential watershed management plans and initiatives to help protect Pleasant Lake's water quality.

If you live within the Pleasant Lake watershed, have your septic system pumped and inspected on a regular basis, and reduce or avoid the use of lawn and garden fertilizers. The Colby-Sawyer study did not include runoff from lawns and gardens near the lake, which are a potentially important source of nutrients favoring conditions that can lead to harmful algal blooms.

# PLEASANT LAKE WATER QUALITY REPORT

Pleasant Lake water quality continues to be in excellent condition. This is due in large part to the depth and volume of water in our lake. The large volume helps to absorb and disperse the nutrients brought in by the tributaries feeding the lake.

However, we must remain aware and vigilant of the nutrient load entering the lake (especially phosphate). In 2023, the lake experienced a brief algae bloom of cyanobacterium. These blooms usually occur when there is a surge in rainwater containing nutrients (algae food!) and/or warm water temperatures. We are fortunate that the bloom quickly dissipated and did not result in any beach closures or illness (either human or pet).

The lake does an incredible job of keeping itself healthy, but it still needs our help. The Lake Hosts help keep out undesirable/invasive organisms and the Weed Watchers look for any invasive/non-indigenous plants that might have snuck in. If you are located in the watershed, please eliminate pesticide/herbicide usage and keep fertilizer use to a minimum or less. Lastly, maintain your septic system. Failing systems can be a large source of unwanted nutrients as well as a health hazard.



If you all recall, in the Summer of 2023 Mother Nature bestowed upon us an abundance of rain. This not only caused the lake level to rapidly rise, but we also saw the turbidity increase as evidenced by decreased Secchi disk readings. The water also appeared to take on a brownish tint most likely caused by the tannins in the runoff. Tannins commonly leach out of dead leaves.

The initial report by the Colby-Sawyer College students studying nutrient levels and sources in the multiple tributaries was quite interesting and we are looking forward to the final report's findings and recommendations.

All in all, our lake is healthy and we are fortunate to live on and around such a gem.

Many thanks to our team of samplers; Peter Winship, Oge Young, John and Deborah Wilson, who venture out once a month to take readings and samples for analysis.

Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas Bent

## LOST AND FOUND

If you lost something from your beach or waterfront, or if something unexpected comes ashore, please email [will@plpa.net](mailto:will@plpa.net) or send a message to the PLPA Facebook page, and we will try to help!

## PLEASANT LAKE ICE-OUT DATES

	2013 APRIL 17	
	2014 APRIL 22	
	2015 APRIL 21	
	2016 MARCH 1	
	2017 APRIL 16	
	2018 APRIL 27	
	2019 APRIL 20	
	2020 APRIL 2	
	2021 APRIL 5	
	2022 APRIL 6	
	2023 APRIL 12	
	2024 MARCH 21	

# 2023 Pleasant Lake Loon Recap: O



Our Loons returned for their 17<sup>th</sup> year of nesting on Pleasant Lake. They were blessed with a calm season with no drama from interloping competitors!

The first egg was laid on May 18<sup>th</sup> and the second on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Paisley hatched on June 13<sup>th</sup>. Sadly, the second chick hatched on June 16<sup>th</sup> but came into the world with an infection of its yolk sack called Omphalitis. It died soon after hatching.

Although we would all love to have two healthy Loon chicks, a single offspring is less stressful for the parents and for the surviving chick.



Plentiful rain last summer reduced the amount of boat traffic which also helps the Loons. Paisley grew up well fed and with no competition, turning into a gorgeous healthy juvenile.



Birds grow so fast!  
This is Paisley at just 23 days old



# Our Fabulous Loons Continue to Amaze

Photos and text by Jen Esten and Jon Waage



On July 27<sup>th</sup> Paisley was fitted with bands by the team of biologists from the Loon Preservation Committee. If we are lucky, in a few years we may hear about our Pleasant Lake Loon being sighted on a nearby lake.

Paisley's new bands



Paisley at 8 weeks old

## *Of our past banded loons:*

Both chicks from 2010 have been located, one on Grafton Pond, Grafton, and one on Millen Pond in Washington, both breeding. Popeye, on Grafton Pond, has seen 10 of his chicks survive to fledge.

2016 – One chick was banded and was found breeding in 2023 on Pool Pond in Rindge, NH.

It's very gratifying to know that at least three of our Pleasant Lake chicks are healthy and breeding in New Hampshire!



Paisley in September at 14 weeks old

# SAFE BOATING AND FISHING RULES

We appreciate everyone's help in respecting our neighbors and our lake.

We hope you enjoy your day boating here on Pleasant Lake!

For your safety and enjoyment as well as that of others, please follow these important boating and fishing rules:

## NO WAKE ZONES

When you are within **150 feet** of any **shore, other boats, skiers, swimmers, floats, or marked swimming areas**, State law mandates that you must slow down to **NO WAKE** speed. **NO WAKE** means **no faster than 6 mph. 150 feet = the length of two ski ropes.**

## TOWING SKIERS

- All skiers **must** wear life jackets.
- A maximum of two people may be towed at any time.
- An observer, 13 years or older is required.
- No skiing is allowed before sunrise and after sunset.
- Keep your boat and skier 150 feet or more away from EVERYTHING; the shore, the island, other boats, skiers, swimmers, floats, and marked swimming areas.
- Do not drop a skier within 150 feet of the shore.

## ON-BOARD SAFETY

- It is illegal and dangerous to sit on the edge of the cockpit, bow or transom.
- There must be at least one appropriately-sized life jacket for every person onboard. This includes paddle boarders and kayaks. **By law**, children 12 or under must wear a life jacket at all times. On a power boat, it is recommended that you always attach a lanyard to the ignition kill switch.

## BOATING CERTIFICATION

New Hampshire law requires that all persons who operate a powerboat with a **motor greater than 25 horsepower must have a New Hampshire Safe Boater Education Certificate** and that **certificate must be carried on board**. Out-of-state boaters must have completed a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) approved course and carry that certificate on board. Call 1-888-254-2125 or go to [www.boat-ed.com/nh/](http://www.boat-ed.com/nh/) for more information.

## WILDLIFE, LOONS

Pleasant Lake is home to many water birds, including nesting loons. The loon is a protected species and harassment is a **punishable offense**. Loon chicks are very small and cannot dive or fly to escape an oncoming

boat, kayak or canoe. Please keep well away from all water birds, especially loons and their chicks.

## FISHING

- Children under the age of 16 may fish without a license.
- The use of lead sinkers and jigs is strictly prohibited. Ingestion will kill a loon!
- Only smelt can be used as live bait in Pleasant Lake.
- Be sure to follow all the Fishing Rules published in the New Hampshire Freshwater Fishing Digest.

Copies of **A Boater's Guide to NH Boating Law** and **The New Hampshire Freshwater Fishing Digest** are available at Rocky's Ace Hardware in New London.

## THE "150 FEET LAW" New Hampshire Law 270-D: 2 Section VI

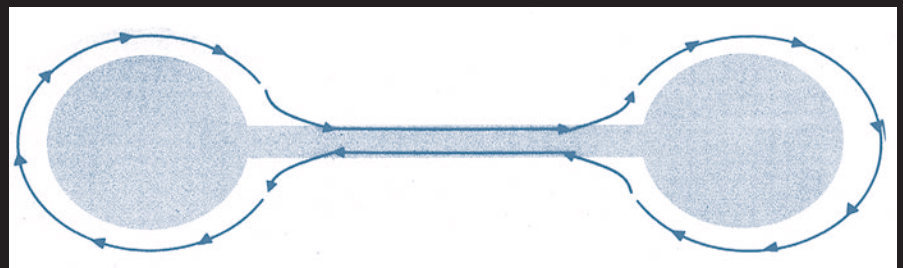
### SPEED

All vessels shall maintain headway speed (only 6 mph and No Wake) when within 150 feet (the length of two ski ropes) from: the shore, the island, other boats, docks, rafts, swimmers, permitted swimming areas.

### BEST PRACTICE

#### TOWING

Ski down the middle of the lake and Use "Best Practice" Towing: Long, straight runs, with barbell turns help keep the wake moving away from the skier.



### IF YOU SEE A VIOLATION, PLEASE REPORT IT!

- Obtain the bow number of the boat.
- Call Marine Patrol at 293-2037. They appreciate our help!



# THE PLEASANT LAKE BOAT PARADE 2023



*2023 Theme: LOONey Tunes*



SATURDAY JULY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2024 AT 2 PM

*2024 Theme:*

**OLDE LONDON**

Parade marshals will be Peter and Kathy Bianchi

1:30 pm Gathering of the Boats off Slope 'n Shore

Direction of travel will be clockwise

2 pm Parade

The horn will sound and we will follow The Tortoise

# FISH LEAD FREE!

Effective June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, the sale and freshwater use of lead fishing sinkers and lead jigs weighing one ounce or less is banned in New Hampshire. Senate Bill 89 was originally signed by Governor Hassan in 2013, but there was a three year phase-in period to allow retailers and anglers to switch to non-lead tackle. Please visit [www.loon.org](http://www.loon.org), the website of The Loon Preservation Committee, to learn more about the Fish Lead Free program.



## Fishing guidelines from The Loon Preservation Committee:

Reel in your line when loons are around and avoid casting in the direction of loons. Loons are visual predators, and if they see your lure/tackle moving through the water, they may strike at it, break your line, and become tangled. If your line gets snagged on a tree, log, rock, shoreline, or something else, please take the time to recover it completely, or to the fullest extent of your ability.

Many birds perish from unrecovered fishing tackle.



This Loon was entangled on another lake in NH.

Photo by Bill Beattie

**If you see a Loon in distress or find an injured or orphaned bird or animal, call Jen Esten 781-726-2697, Jon Waage 508-463-5906 or John Wilson 526-4069**

**Or message us on the Pleasant Lake Protective Association facebook page**

# LPC'S LEAD TACKLE BUYBACK

The Loon Preservation Committee is continuing the lead buy back program. Anglers can exchange one ounce or more of banned\* lead fishing tackle for a \$10 merchandise voucher redeemable at participating tackle shops.

\*Banned lead tackle means a lead fishing sinker or jig (weighted hook) that weighs one ounce or less, regardless of whether it is painted, coated, covered by some other substance or by attached skirts. The sale and freshwater use of the aforementioned tackle is banned by New Hampshire Law. See NH RSA 339:77 and NH RSA 211:13-b.

View Offer Terms at <https://loonsafe.org/lead-tackle-buyback-terms/>.

## LOCAL PARTICIPATING RETAILERS

Rocky's Ace Hardware  
257 Newport Rd.  
New London, NH 03257  
(603) 526-2800

The Tackle Shack  
894 Route 103  
Newbury, NH 03255  
(603)763-5508



# PLEASE JOIN THE PLEASANT LAKE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*Next year's annual newsletter will feature a page to recognize our generous donors. If you wish your donation to remain anonymous, please check here*

Town, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000+ Pleasant Lake Benefactor

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500+ Pleasant Lake Patron

\_\_\_\_\_ \$240+ Pleasant Lake Steward

\_\_\_\_\_ \$120+ Pleasant Lake Protector

\_\_\_\_\_ \$80+ Pleasant Lake Supporter

\_\_\_\_\_ \$40+ PLPA Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

I would like to learn more about becoming a volunteer

MAIL BY JULY 1, TO:

PLEASANT LAKE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 1584, NEW LONDON, NH 03257

***Many thanks!!***

*Note: Contributions to the PLPA are fully tax-deductable. PLPA is a 501(c)(3) Non-profit organization.*



**THE**



**WEED WATCHERS**

## Thank You Wakeboarders

Pleasant Lake's Weed Watchers found no invasive weeds or animals in last summer's three monthly investigations. The lake is very fortunate to have escaped any infestations.

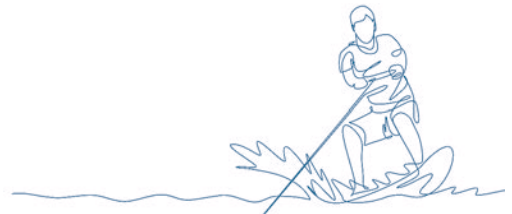
Our loyal force of Doug Baxter, Lynn Annicharico, Matt White, Jeff Hollinger, Doug Bent, John and Debbie Wilson, George Jamieson, Bruce Herring, Sally Winship, Judy Oates, Tom Stark, Bruce and John Williamson, Oge Young, Lisa and Jamie Hess, Bob Kirchberger and Dee and Storm Connors continue to man their posts year after year.

Every other June, we have a Wine and Weeds get together. First we have a refresher course on invasive weeds and animals with Amy Smagula of the State Department of Environmental Services followed by some fine wines and super hors d'oeuvres. This event will take place on June 4. We are desperately looking for new young talented weed watchers. Attending the refresher this year would be a great way to start.

Our wakeboating community worked hard last summer to minimize the damage to the lake that stems from their very large wakes. By staying to the middle of the lake, the severe shore erosion that can occur from the heavy wave action is lessened.

It is important that all speed boats be aware of other boats, kayakers, swimmers and paddleboarders. There should be room enough for all of us on the lake!

Keep in mind that local boating laws and navigation rules still apply. Follow them and everyone will enjoy their time on the water we share.



PLEASANT LAKE  
PROTECTIVE  
ASSOCIATION, INC.  
P.O. Box 1584  
NEW LONDON, NH 03257

PRESERVE AND PROTECT  
PLEASANT LAKE

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## CELEBRATE PLEASANT LAKE THIS SUMMER!

### Saturday, July 6

8:30 am Coffee, Juice, Pastries  
*Slope 'n Shore annex*

9 am PLPA Annual Meeting  
*Slope 'n Shore annex*

1:30 pm Gathering of the Boats  
*Off Slope 'n Shore beach*

2 pm Boat Parade  
Theme: *Olde London*  
The Parade will go clockwise this year.

9 pm Cannon Fired! Light the Flares!

9:30 pm Fireworks!!  
Followed by the Illumination of the Colors and Taps



Pleasant Lake had an extended visit from a bird rarely seen on inland lakes. A Black-legged kittiwake made quite a stir in the New England birding world.

It spent a lot of time on the biggest rock off of the public beach area in Elkins, drawing bird watchers from far and wide.