

# Keoka Lake Association



Waterford, Maine

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Spring, 2017

## President's Message:

I've been involved with the KLA Board for over 20 years. During that time, it has been my privilege to be involved with many programs, the goal of which has been to protect and improve the quality of Keoka Lake. We've been successful in mitigating the milfoil risk and I've witnessed steady improvement in water quality metrics. Indeed, according to ratings by Lakes Environmental Association (LEA), Keoka improved from a HIGH concern lake in 1985, to a MODERATE concern lake in 2015. That improvement reflected and validated the efforts of many people over many years to primarily reduce sources of phosphorus-laden storm water runoff into the lake.

However, over the last three years we have seen troubling signs in certain water quality statistics. While the "big three", clarity, phosphorus, and chlorophyll levels were all lower in 2016 (consistent with the drought, deep-water oxygen and deep-water phosphorus were very high). We've also seen spikes in the cyanobacteria algae, *Gloeotricia*, in 2014 and 2016. *Gleo* thrives on phosphorus and is considered a "canary in the coal mine" when it comes to water quality issues. As a result, in late 2016, LEA raised Keoka's level of concern to MODERATE/HIGH.

In 2017, KLA is responding with a 4-pronged strategy aimed at further reducing runoff. We are focused on 1) expanding the LakeSmart program on individual parcels, 2) extending the LakeSmart runoff review concept to some of the larger properties around the lake, 3) continuing to address the municipal hot spot areas (in tandem with the Town as we have for the last 2 years), and 4) conducting a river and stream review to ensure that tributaries are open and not overtopping their banks.

**We need your help!** 1) Please review your own properties with a critical eye, especially during a hard rainstorm. 2) Increase your vigilance about water running directly into the lake over your property. 3) Take actions to avert any erosion or other sources of runoff you notice. 4) Talk up the LakeSmart program with your neighbors - Ask them to apply. and 5) Let us know if you are aware of river or stream blockages.

We are all in this together. The water quality of Keoka Lake impacts every one of us. Let's all "up our game" and address this re-emerging concern aggressively.

Thanks, and see you out on the lake -

Charlie Tarbell

Please note: The annual Meeting of the Keoka Lake Association (KLA) is Saturday, July 8, 2017 at the Wilkins House. Coffee, donuts and socializing at 8:30 a.m.; the meeting begins at 9:00 a.m.

## ICE OUT!

If you thought spring was a long time coming, there are facts to back that up! It was only a couple of years ago that it was the end of March that the ice finally disappeared from Stone's Cove. This year, the ice hung around

in front of Keoka Beach Campground until the official Ice Out date of April 27. Thanks to Joan Fillebrown for continuing the Fillebrown tradition of keeping records for all these years. Question for the old timers – do you know where the 'written record' used to be kept??

## **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Maine Milfoil Summit**

Charlie represented KLA at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Milfoil Summit in Lewiston on March 3, 2017. The keynote speaker was from the Lake Champlain and Lake George areas of NY and dubbed these two large bodies of water a “cocktail of invasive species.” She spoke passionately about the extensive efforts underway to prevent the spread of these species. Among the hopeful things that she said were that, through research conducted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, visual inspections of watercraft (Courtesy Boat Inspections-CBI’s) have been proven to be 88% effective in identifying and stopping the transfer of aquatic plants.

Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) speakers indicated that the state is approaching the 1,000,000th cumulative inspection conducted at boat launches in Maine since 2000. Furthermore, to date, over 4000 invasive plant inspectors have been trained to conduct these CBI’s. Roberta Hill (Maine VLMP) spoke about invasive plant issues, underscoring a best practices model which features prevention, early detection, and aggressive management. She described prevention as the least expensive option and described invasives management as an “ever-after cost”.

These summits continue to shine a sobering light on the issues we face around invasives and provide motivation to us at KLA to keep working to address the threat with prevention and education. Charlie came away from the Milfoil Summit thinking that KLA is employing the best-practices model and has mitigated the milfoil risk as best as is practical for a lake our size. But no one can back off the vigilance!

## **Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI)–Year 16**

At the 2017 annual Waterford Town Meeting, the proposal to support the Courtesy Boat Inspections with a grant of \$3,400 was again approved. KLA also applied to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and was awarded a \$1,400 grant.

Combined with funds from KLA, these two grants will cover approximately 500 hours of paid CBIs at the Town Boat Launch. KLA is grateful to both organizations for their ongoing support to help keep Keoka free of milfoil/invasives – the Prevention part.

LEA will once again handle the hiring, scheduling and payroll for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday coverage on Keoka Lake. At times when there is no paid CBI at the Town Boat Launch, boaters are encouraged to inspect their boats before and after enjoying Keoka Lake. With an 88% effective rate at stopping invasives, every time a CBI is done or every boater who self-inspects a boat before launching or after pulling the boat out of the water, the chance of transferring invasive flora from lake to lake is decreased. Even the ‘Keoka Pondweed’, while not classified as an invasive species, needs to stay in Keoka Lake where it was found!!

Volunteer CBIs are always welcome to help cover hours not on the paid CBI schedules. If you are interested in being trained, please let a KLA board member know.

## **Plant Patrols**

Plant patrollers are the Early Detection part of the fight against a milfoil infestation in Keoka Lake. Arne Klepinger has organized a group of volunteers who inspect the flora and fauna in front of a defined piece of shoreline (usually in front of their individual properties). He is looking for some help!

If you enjoy being in or on the water and are willing, you could become a volunteer plant patroller. Responsibilities are to become aware of the flora/fauna in the water in your designated patrol area. If, when you are enjoying the lake, you happen to see something that doesn’t ‘look right’, you would have the tools to identify flora/fauna that is invasive and a team to call for confirmation.

The ideal ‘patrol area’ would be about 200’-500’ of lakefront. Currently, some patrollers are covering multiple sections and there are some longer sections that need to be broken up. Please contact Arnie or Tom Stockwell or Charlie if you’d like to lend a hand.

For the deeper sections, the LEA scuba patrol will be scheduled for sometime this summer.

### **LEA is monitoring....**

The 2016 Water Quality report is now available. Keoka Lake saw a second high *Gloeo* reading in 2016 that has bumped Keoka Lake's concern level to the Moderate-High category. Once again this summer, LEA will be supporting KLA by analyzing concentrations of *Gloeo*, doing continuous temperature monitoring and continuing the baseline monitoring of all algae species. With membership approval at the Annual Meeting, the *Gloeo* and algae baseline monitoring will be done monthly between June and September.

The temperature sensors are at varying depths and are attached to the buoy that is out from Kokosing. We ask that everyone respect the buoy and give it a wide berth – in other words.... Leave it alone!!

### **Water Quality.....**

The areas of concern for Keoka Lake are three-fold: low oxygenation, very high deepwater phosphorus and a second high *Gloeo* reading (2016 and 2014). The *Gloeo* reading was within range for 2015, but that was also a year of heat and extreme dryness, so LEA will be evaluating if the higher readings are a trend for Keoka.

Members of the KLA Board of Trustees plan to walk all the feeder streams this summer to determine if any of the streams are over-reaching their banks in times of heavy rain and/or if there has been any rerouting of streams that might contribute to the higher deep-water phosphorus levels in the lake. All property owners are asked to be on the lookout for any evidence of either situation, especially during/immediately after a heavy rain or thunderstorm. KLA appreciates your help.

### **LakeSmart**

Since 2011, KLA has sponsored LakeSmart – a program whereby property owners can have reviews done of their

lakefront property with an eye to helping keep Keoka Lake's water quality at its highest possible level. Common concerns are for run-off whereby phosphorus might be getting into the lake or where the shoreline is being eroded. As part of the review, mitigation measures may be suggested. The review is voluntary and designed to be educational – there are NO downsides to the program! If the property tallies sufficient 'points', a LakeSmart award is presented.

To date, over 25 properties have been inspected and 19 LakeSmart Awards have been granted. If you are interested in having your property 'LakeSmart inspected', please sign up at the Annual Meeting on July 8<sup>th</sup> or call Jim Flynn (813.416.3009) or Charlie Tarbell (207.671.6962). Please leave a VM with a number that you will answer.

### **The Dam**

So far, 2017 has been a wet and cold year. Because of the ice not going out until late in April, the 15 feet of snow that fell on Waterford during the winter and all the rainstorms (some with 2+ inches of rain per storm), the lake has been running very high. Shoreline erosion was less of a problem this winter due to the lake level being lowered last fall. In late May, the dam was opened up to control the high lake level and the significant run-off from the feeder streams. Al Struck and Charlie Tarbell continue to closely monitor the lake level and the dam settings.

### **Do you paddle board??**

The Maine Lakes Open Paddle Battle 2017 is Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup> at Tarry-A-While Resort on Highland Lake. There will be 2K and 5K courses for men and women (age 15 and up), three different age classes, two board length classes. Advanced registration is required (<http://www.mainelakes.org/event/2017-paddlebattle/>). The Paddle Battle is a fundraiser for LEA. Additionally, if you raise \$100 for LEA, 'one whole minute' will be deducted from your time! Support LEA by competing – or joining those who are cheering them on!

## **Water Safety**

The navigational buoys are in place marking the boat launch near the Town Beach – but a word of caution to those using the boat launch. The combination of the winter ice and lack of ongoing maintenance by the town has not been kind to the access – be careful!

## **The Warden Service IS watching.....**

As a reminder to all, 2017 Boat Registrations now include the Milfoil Sticker and can be purchased at Town Hall during business hours. The Warden Service ranger, whose jurisdiction includes Keoka, lives in Albany and frequents our town boat launch. He's been observed on Keoka at least once a year.

## **Loon Update**

The loons are back.... The nesting platform is in place in slightly deeper water.... And as of the latest report, there are two eggs in the nest! Stay tuned for birth announcement(s) in early July!! And if you are out on the lake in a boat, kayak, paddleboard or jetski – PLEASE STAY AWAY FROM THE NESTING PLATFORM!

## **Education Initiative and Outreach**

After a successful program last summer at the Eaton/Stockwell beach, KLA will again sponsor a Keoka to Sebago Watershed sand sculpture program, this year at Keoka Beach Campground in August. Stay tuned to the website, flyers around town and the KLA Facebook page for more details. If you would like to volunteer to help with the event, please contact either Ginger Eaton or Tom Hammett.

## **Fundraising**

The merchandise sales table will be moving around a little bit this summer. Watch for Joanne Eaton to be setting up the table in the parking lot (then moving to the the parade route) for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and inside the Wilkins House for the remaining Community Breakfasts (July 19, August 2 and August 16). She will also be on the common for the Fall Foliage 5k race on Columbus Day weekend.

Come check out the new merchandise for 2017!

## **Raffle**

Current plans are to have date-specific raffles at each event – but - Stay tuned for details on a bigger raffle!

## **KLA is EVERYWHERE**

Do you 'Like' us? Have you 'Googled' us? Did you know you could 'upload' to us? KLA's website is: <http://www.keokalake.org> - check it out! Our web-master, Joe Abbiati, is always updating and improving the look and content of the website. A new feature in the Gallery section allows anyone to upload pictures for the website. Check it out! And please share some of your pictures of Keoka and the surrounding area.

And for those who use Facebook – 'Like us' at Keoka Lake Association and stay up-to-date on news from Waterford! Check it out!

Going forward, KLA will be utilizing the Internet and social media to disseminate information, important announcements and invitations – Check 'us' out!

## **Membership**

2017 dues are now due! A Dues Notice is included with this newsletter. Consider making an additional donation to the Milfoil Reserve Fund or the Educational Initiatives. With graduations upon us, a gift membership to KLA is always a welcome thought – see the Dues Form for instructions!

## **KLA - Being Environmentally 'Correct'**

Going forward, we will be looking to deliver newsletters via email as the US Postal Service seems to be increasing costs for slower service. Please note your email address on your dues form so we can keep you informed in a timely manner. Get the KLA news faster – and save a tree (or two)!!

## **INCLUDED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER:**

- Plant Patrollers map
- 2017 Dues Form

## **Dates to Remember**

- July 1 Maine Lakes Open Paddle Battle 2017, Tarry-A-While Resort on Highland Lake (advanced registration required)
- July 4 Wilkins House Community Breakfast  
Waterford 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade
- July 8 KLA Annual Meeting – Wilkins Community House  
Coffee, donuts & socializing @ 8:30 a.m.; Meeting starts @ 9:00
- July 19 Wilkins House Community Breakfast
- July 29 4<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bud Lazott Memorial Regatta – registration @1; race @2  
(Raindate: July 30<sup>th</sup>)
- August 2 Wilkins House Community Breakfast
- August 16 Wilkins House Community Breakfast
- October 6 Fall KLA Board Meeting
- October 8 Fall Foliage 5K/Festival – and Raffle Drawing



2016 Keoka loon baby - Photo by Bill Colbath

### **KLA Board of Trustees**

Charlie Tarbell, President

Joanne Eaton, Vice President

Dave Abbiati, Secretary

Chip Mason, Treasurer

Ginger Eaton  
Tom Hammett  
Dan Johnson

David Johnson  
Jo Lynne Johnson  
Arne Klepinger

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Keoka Lake Association: <http://www.keokalake.org>