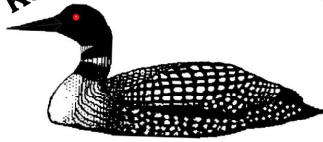


Keoka Lake Association



Waterford, Maine

Volume 7, No. 2

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**President's Message:**

Greetings.

I hope you had a good year on the lake. The water level was very low by August, driven by the low rainfall, and many of us noticed a great deal of algae growing. We investigated and found it to be just *metaphyton*, which grows when the water temperature is warm, and is not, in itself, an indicator of excessive nutrients. Nevertheless, we will continue to monitor the situation and have further observations about the 2015 water quality in the Spring 2016 newsletter.

Below is Part 1 of a two-part series on shoreland zoning and its implications for activities at your lakefront. Shoreland zoning is complicated and confusing - Just what is permissible? What is best for the lake? What needs to be done to stay in compliance with the law? The article below contains two anecdotes and sets up the review of new shoreline zoning 'regs' in the spring newsletter.

There is critical information in the following articles about things you can do to protect the lake, plus information about milfoil, boat inspections, plant patrol, and other issues important to the KLA family. As always, if you have any concerns about the lake, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Enjoy your winter! For the first time in a number of years, we will be lowering the level of the lake and setting the winter level low (24" below the spillway) in order to anticipate the spring snow melt and attempt to avoid the flooding (and consequent erosion issues) that occurred earlier this spring. Once the ice is out in April, we will return the lake to its target summer level.

Best regards,  
Charlie Tarbell

**OMG! What The Heck Are They Doing Over There?**

A major lake concern that impacts us all from time to time is the issue of shoreland clearing and alteration. The ultimate goal of the rules that govern shoreland clearing is to sustain a healthy lake. However, the shoreland zoning rules are complex and confusing, leading to some pending changes to these rules.

The Maine Legislature enacted a new model for shoreland zoning regulations in 2011 and 2013. These new rules are currently up for adoption by individual

towns. Waterford's Planning Board is reviewing these rules and considering adopting them, effective 2016. Adopting will require a vote at the Town Meeting next March. Among the changes proposed are rules that govern the permissible amounts of cutting at the shorefront. The details of these proposed changes are extensive. Assuming they are enacted, we will devote the spring issue to these new 'regs'.

What follows are two actual instances that occurred this summer that are illustrative of how shoreland rules are

misunderstood and how they can be misinterpreted/mis-communicated.

However, they are also examples of how everybody on the lake is “watching” what everybody else is doing at their lakefront.

Charlie Tarbell got a call one morning from a lakefront landowner. The caller wanted to report a new beach on the lake and he feared that the new beach’s property owner had brought in sand to create the new beach (a clear violation). He went on to say that several people on his side of the lake had noticed the new beach and that they were quite concerned that shoreland zoning regulations might have been violated in creating the new beach. He went on to apologize and say that he didn’t want to get a reputation as a tattletale, but then again, nobody knew what to do. So he decided to call Charlie,

After thanking the caller for his initiative, Charlie relayed that he, as KLA president, had no real enforcement authority. However, Charlie has a great relationship with the Waterford Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) who does have enforcement responsibility/ authority. Charlie indicated he would gather information and report this to him. The caller seemed relieved.

Over the course of the next week, Charlie spoke to the property owner and found that she had simply cleared a lot of accumulated debris (years of it, actually) off an existing beach, and that the low water level was exacerbating the visual effect. It did indeed appear to be a new beach. The property owner indicated that she had done no cutting or rock removal. And she had NOT brought in any additional sand. He also spoke to other concerned lake citizens, some of whom indicated that they remembered using the beach in question when they were younger. Fairly quickly, it was established that this was a bona fide existing beach that was simply cleared. Charlie then spoke to Bill Haynes, Waterford’s CEO and was informed that it is permissible to clear debris off an existing beach. While he was willing to investigate

further, based on Charlie’s evaluation, Bill did not consider the reported “violation” to be an actual violation

In the second instance, Charlie heard from a property owner that, as a precaution, she wanted to report some excessive cutting on her land as a result of a mis-communication. Her brother-in-law had asked if he could help trim the brush in front of their lakeside sitting area. She had responded to him that he could take the tops off the deciduous brush. She understood from her experience that it is permissible to trim brush back to three feet in height and assumed he knew this as well. In fact, he did not! Instead, the brother-in-law cut the 60 square foot area in question down to the ground, rendering it bare ground cover (duff). She was mortified that her family would be considered “criminals”.

While not permissible, and likely a violation, the news is not all bad. The cut area still included the root systems for the maples and blueberry bushes that had grown there and this brush will regenerate over the fall and next spring. There was no disturbance to the ground cover and no new runoff problem created from the cutting. In another 18 months, it will not be possible to tell that the “violation” occurred. Indeed, as Waterford’s CEO, Bill Haynes, did not feel that the action warranted any additional investigation, since 1) it was reported and since, 2) if left alone, the problem will take care of itself. It is a violation to remove brush that is less than 3 feet high. It is also critical to not disturb the duff.

These two “violation” anecdotes demonstrate how seriously some property owners take our collective responsibility to the lake. Lakefront property owners are generally very observant of changes to the lakefront and want to ensure that those changes do not impair the health of the lake. All are encouraged to report perceived violations. But more importantly, the reality is that shoreland zoning is

complicated and confusing. People modify their lakefront based upon their own goals and desires, sometimes without either considering the rules or the potential result of their actions on the lake, and sometimes in ignorance of their legal responsibility. It is incumbent upon landowners to comply with the law, but it is also within the mission of the Keoka Lake Association to do all we can to ensure that lakefront property owners understand the rules and are clear about how those rules are designed to help the health of the lake.

To that end, and assuming that Waterford does indeed adopt the proposed new shoreland zoning regulations at the Town Meeting in March, KLA will devote much of the Spring Newsletter to informing our membership about these changes and how they apply to your shorefront. Recognize, however, that the shoreland zoning 'regs' are complicated and confusing. As evidenced by the stories related above, the 'regs' are open to misinterpretation and misunderstanding, even by those who are highly motivated to help preserve the health of the lake. The bottom line is this: When in doubt about what to cut, contact the Waterford Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), Bill Haynes, at 207.743.1010. Bill is knowledgeable about shoreland rules and can help you stay in compliance with the laws when you cut trees and brush at the lakeside. He can also help you avoid an embarrassing investigation into your shoreline alterations that may get reported by an observant and concerned member of our lake community.

Remember, LakeSmart's motto: *Living lightly on the land for the sake of our lakes.*

#### **From the news:**

Colin Holme's *Mutiny Brook Times* comments:

Five things you can do to Protect the Lake:

1. Leave it to Nature – where possible, leave the existing rocks and vegetation along the shore where they'll protect

from erosion, soak up runoff and provide fish/wildlife habitat and privacy.

2. Maintain camp roads and driveways – 85% of all erosion and sedimentation problems within a watershed originate from camp roads and driveways, so install a waterbar or create a crown in the camp road's center and/or create a ditch that's stabilized with vegetation (or lined with rocks) with outlets to low, natural areas away from any water bodies or wetlands.
3. Control erosion during construction – install silt fences, mulch berms and/or hay bale barriers before work begins; minimize disturbed areas; maintain natural topography and vegetation; consider crushed stone infiltration beds along drip lines.
4. Pump out septic tanks – every 2-3 years for year-round residents and every 5-6 years for seasonal residents.
5. Watch out for invasive plants – primarily spread between lakes by boating activities. Inspecting your watercraft upon entering AND leaving a water body is critical. Remove plant fragments and dispose of them in trashcans.

#### **What's new from LEA?**

- *Lakes at a Tipping Point – Solving the Puzzle* - An article in the Summer 2015 edition of *LEA Lake News* (<http://mainelakes.org/?p=4516>) summarizes what Peter Lowell calls an 'uneasy feeling among Maine's lake communities as the evidence mounts that once pristine waters appear to be facing decline". Of particular interest to Keoka is the correlation between low O2 concentrations in bottom waters and the high phosphorus levels in the lake.
- Companion articles highlight efforts by LEA to gather data to better understand long-term effects of weather, lake temperatures and algae levels. For the second year, LEA has installed a fully-

automated monitoring buoy on Highland Lake in Bridgton while a Colby College professor is working to develop a website that not only displays current data from the buoy but also puts it in a format that is practical and easily understandable for all.

- Keoka Lake is one of 13 lakes that are currently participating in LEA's automated temperature monitoring program; specifically, that highly noticeable buoy off the west shore (near Kokosing) marked a string of sensors that allow for temperature readings of the lake over the spring, summer and fall to create a 'temperature profile' of the lake. Of particular interest in this temperature data is when the lake settles into distinct temperature differences (stratification). The length of time the lake is 'stratified' has important consequences for water quality and climate change.
- Maine Lake Science Center – The grand opening is scheduled for this fall, but a 'soft opening' occurred during the summer when various programs were sited at the new Center. With a 50-seat conference room, three researcher housing units, an education center, lab and offices, the Maine Lake Science Center is an essential component of LEA's quest for answers about impacts to Maine's lakes and will allow data-driven policy and legislative changes at the State and local levels.

### **What's up with Gloeo?**

Due to Keoka's elevated *Gleotrichia* readings in 2014, LEA scheduled the collection of four samples over about six weeks in late July and August when the populations tend to be highest. This additional collection activity is in part underwritten by the additional grant to LEA as voted at the 2015 Annual Meeting.

Results for 2015 are expected in late winter.

### **LakeSmart**

After 'formal' training (in the pouring rain), Peter Morse and Jim Flynn conducted three property inspections during the summer. Attempts to contact the additional 3-4 property owners who had signed up for an inspection this summer were unsuccessful. Inspections will resume next summer. Anyone interested in having a property evaluation to determine methods to have "rainwater become groundwater before it becomes run-off" can contact Peter Morse (207-583-4502).

### **Plant Patrol**

The volunteer Plant Patrollers found nothing suspicious this summer. There was a video made of a 'growth' that was ID'd by VLMP as a relative of a sponge. Its presence in shallow parts of the lake near intakes is likely due to the fact that the temperature in the lake reached 80° this summer.

### **CBI**

The hot and dry weather this summer resulted in 458 hours of Courtesy Boat Inspections, 202 inspections and 7 'catches' – all outbound. The catches were the *Keoka Curlyleaf Pondweed*, indigenous to Keoka but considered an invasive elsewhere. Once again, LEA administered the program for KLA and hired people for whom they have a profile, hence the greater number of inspection hours as the inspectors were able to cover shifts after the traditional mid-August departure date for college student CBIs.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bud Lazott Memorial Regatta**

Early August's fickle sailing weather resulted in a delayed start due to a thunderstorm over half of the lake followed closely by hail over the other half of the lake. Nonetheless, 8 Lasers and 2 Open

Class boats started at 3 pm as the wind promptly died down and remained at a bare minimum throughout the course. A veteran racer declared it the 'longest race ever!'"

Ted Chadbourne and Jennifer Freeman won the Open Class while Stu Nickerson placed first and Christian Struck was second in the Laser Class. Congratulations to all who participated and thanks to the Chadbourne family for the use of their beach.

### **Volunteering**

For over 43 years, KLA has been doing what it does with a committed group of volunteers. Volunteers serve on the Board of Trustees of KLA; they serve as plant inspectors that check a section of the lake on a regular basis to assess unusual flora or fauna activity; they monitor water quality; they maintain and set up/store the loon nest; they assist with merchandising and spreading the KLA word at Community Breakfasts, the Fourth of July parade & the Fall Foliage 5KRace; they serve as volunteer Courtesy Boat Inspectors and they serve as liaisons to the Town of Waterford, LEA and other state organizations through direct contact or through service as a committee or board member. KLA would not be what it is without those who volunteer. Would you like to join us?

KLA's Board of Trustees would like talk to anyone interested in lending a hand. Volunteering for KLA is a great way to get to know others who treasure Keoka Lake and, as more people volunteer, the work is shared and everyone gets to spend more time enjoying all Keoka and the area has to offer. Lend a hand! Check one of the boxes on the Fall Dues Form and you will be contacted! Our thanks to all who volunteer now and welcome to those who wish to join us!

### **Social Media**

Are you a 'tweet'-er? Do you use

Instagram? YouTube? Vine?. How about 'google'? (did you know it's now a legitimate word in Webster's dictionary!) Do you have a Facebook page? (now, that's something most folks have heard of!)

The world of social media is changing before our eyes but rest assured, Keoka Lake is taking it slowly. Yes, KLA has a website (<http://www.keokalake.org>) and KLA has a Facebook page. If you have a Facebook page too, you can 'Like' us on Facebook and any updates and/or posts to the KLA page will show up on your Newsfeed – It's as easy as that. Did you know that we can alert you to updates on our website by posting a notice on our Facebook page. And if you post pictures to Instagram, use #KLA or #keokalake so others who use Instagram can also see your pix. And while you're at it, check out the KLA website and upload your pictures through the link under the Gallery loon tab. That way - for those long winters not spent on the waters or shores of Keoka Lake, you can be 'in the know'!

### **KLA Merchandise**

In 2015, KLA continued to present articles for sale at the Wilkins House Community Breakfasts as well as at the Fourth of July Parade and the Fall Foliage 5K Weekend. Our organization regularly nets upwards of \$500 from these sales opportunities and we thank each of you who support KLA in this way.

### **Gift Memberships**

Many of the 'camps' that border Keoka Lake are multi-generational camps with long histories on the lake. Childhood friendships are renewed at Keoka when those who spent their summers in the '60's, '70's and '80's now return to Keoka with their families to share those same experiences. Family reunions are what it's all about!

But the work of KLA is supported largely through dues payments made by individuals, couples and nuclear families.

Please consider encouraging your children and grandchildren to take a direct interest in the lake by becoming independent members of KLA. To jumpstart the transition from one generation to another, consider giving a KLA GIFT MEMBERSHIP to children, grandchildren and/or nieces/nephews. On the enclosed Dues Notice, just fill out the form for your gift recipient, check the "Gift Membership" box and give us **your** name & address. KLA will do the rest and send you a **GIFT MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE** that you can gift-wrap and/or deliver as you wish. Want to give more than one Gift Membership? Just attach the information to your dues form and it will happen!

Passing the torch to the next generation ensures the continued enjoyment of the lake by all. A KLA Gift Membership is a gift that keeps on giving (and doesn't need batteries, doesn't take up space, doesn't need a charger or an electrical outlet and doesn't collect dust!). KLA Gift Memberships make great stocking stuffers or Hannukah gifts!

### **Fall Dues Notice**

The final page of this newsletter is the Fall Dues Notice. Our thanks to those listed who have paid their 2014 dues by October 9<sup>th</sup>. If you have not paid your 2015 dues, please note that you can pay both the 2015 and the 2016 dues with this notice (and save yourself a stamp!). Remember, each membership is eligible for one KLA floating keychain!

Please consider a gift in excess of the \$25 dues amount either as an unrestricted donation or directed to the Milfoil Reserve or Educational Initiative. KLA is a volunteer organization that relies on donations to continue its mission to maintain the health and safety of Keoka Lake, especially in the face of the threat of invasives, both flora and fauna, and naturally occurring and man-made environmental threats. KLA is also committed to protecting the waters of Keoka Lake for future generations by educating its membership about environmental threats, environmentally conscious and proactive best practices and safe boating practices to protect those who enjoy its waters.

*We wish each of you a Happy Holiday season and a very Happy New Year!*

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