



Newsletter

November 2021

President's Message

by Rhonda Shippee

I am humbled and honored to have assumed the role of SLA President at the July annual meeting. If you don't know me, I have been on the SLA Board of Directors since 2016 and have been an SLA member since my family first built our "camp" on the lake in 1999. I look forward as President to work with the dedicated officers, directors and countless volunteers who keep our lake clean and free of aquatic invasives and to keep our members informed. I love Seymour Lake for its beauty, wildlife, and clean water, but especially for the people I have met in this welcoming lake community. The final installment of "Relentless Generosity" and "Community Helpers" in this newsletter are just two examples of how special the people of Seymour Lake and Morgan are.

Thankfully, this summer we were able to again gather in person for our annual meeting and summer social. If you have not participated in these SLA activities, I encourage you to put them on your calendar next summer.

The unapproved minutes of the annual meeting have been posted on the SLA website, www.seymourlake.org. The issue of potential reclassification of Seymour Lake as an A(1) water was introduced to members at that meeting. Further information is presented in this newsletter as well as on the website. This is an important issue for SLA and the Town of Morgan in the coming year. I encourage all to read the materials presented and share your thoughts on the issue with Peggy Barter, Chair of the recently formed A (1) Investigation Committee.

With important issues such as A(1)

classification on the horizon, member communication is critical. Increasingly, we will utilize the website as a means of disseminating important and interesting information to you. Much effort has been made updating and improving the website. Please check it out, and if you're on Facebook you can also follow SLA there at www.facebook.com/seymourlakeassociation/

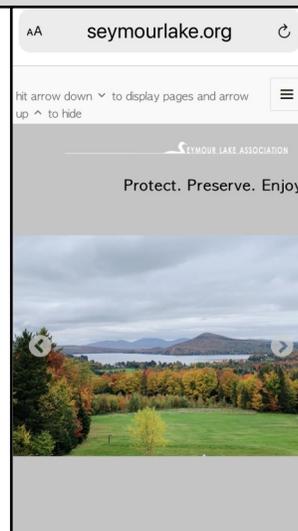
In addition to the A(1) issue, our Water Quality committee was busy this summer completing Lake Wise evaluations, and we gained 5 new Lake Wise properties! Nearly all the 15 owners who participated either received the award or committed to making improvements which will be assisted by Northwood Stewardship Center. Thank you Water Quality Committee and property owners. Every improvement helps

New Online Committee Appointed

by Chuck Nichols

With the goal of ensuring that SLA remains a vibrant and relevant association for its members, SLA President Rhonda Shippee recently appointed the new Online Committee. This Committee's initial projects have included considerable updating of the SLA website (www.seymourlake.org), and use of Facebook (search for Seymour Lake Association) also to disseminate information important to Morgan and lake residents. Committee

members are Candy Moot (Chair), Karen Abada, Erik Lessing, Rhonda Shippee, Wendy Franklin, Andy Barter, and Chuck Nichols. The Online Committee expects to use monthly email blasts to "drive" SLA members to the website, so if you're an SLA member and haven't been getting emails from us, check your "junk" email file or read the article in this newsletter by Chuck Nichols on page 5. □



keep our water pristine.

In closing, I would like to thank Chuck Nichols, for his hard work and dedication to SLA and Seymour Lake over the past seven years and for the guidance he has given me over the past two years as Vice-President. Thankfully, he will continue as one of our dedicated volunteers, updating the lake map, measuring the lake level, and maintaining the website! □



This Newsletter is a semiannual publication of the Seymour Lake Association, a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of Seymour Lake and the surrounding locality for the benefit of lake users, property owners, and residents of Morgan, Vermont.



Seymour Lake Association

P.O. Box 36

Morgan, Vermont 05853

Website: www.seymourlake.org

Officers

President	Rhonda Shippee	President@SeymourLake.org
Vice President	Bonnie McWain	
Treasurer	Jean McKenny	Treasurer@SeymourLake.org
Secretary	Linda Buzzell	

Directors (Term Ends)

Sean Selby	'22	Tim Buzzell	'23	Bruce Barter	'24
Erik Lessing	'22	Tom Adams	'23	Charles Woods	'24
Frank Antonelli	'22	Bill Bilowus	'23	Bruce Remick	'24

Committee Members

- Activities.....Frank Antonelli
- AuditVacancy
- Boating.....Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain
- Dam/Lake Level.....Tim Buzzell, Ron Kolar, Chuck Nichols, Erik Lessing, Candy Moot
- FishingCharles "Woody" Woods, Bill Bilowus, Ron Frascaio, Matt Shippee
- LoonsCharles "Woody" Woods, Denis Fortin, Nancy Bowen, Eli Antonova
- MapsChuck Nichols
- MembershipTom Adams, Bruce Barter, Tim Buzzell, Gerry Cahill, Erik Lessing, Ann Torpey, Chris Blais, Bonnie McWain, Brenda Wierschke
- MilfoilRhonda Shippee, Beth Torpey, David Wieselmann
- NewsletterErik Lessing, Bruce Barter, Candy Moot
- NominatingTim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain, Sean Selby
- Water Quality.....Peggy Barter, Tom Emery, Bill Kilpatrick, Dan Barry, Gerry Cahill, Kenni Friere, Beth Torpey, Ron Kolar, David Wieselmann, Erik Lessing, Rhonda Shippee, Charles Woods, Andy Barter
- Volunteer Invasive Patrollers (VIP): David Wieselmann; Ray Bolduc, Lee McLendon, Candy Moot, Janet Selby, Cindy Smith, Kit Walker, Betsy Walkerman, Gerry Cahill, Erik Lessing, Andy Barter, Cooper Barter
- Online:Candy Moot, Karen Abada, Chuck Nichols, Erik Lessing, Andy Barter, Rhonda Shippee, Wendy Franklin
- Seymour Lake Reclassification: Peggy Barter, Sean Selby, Larry Labor, Tom Adams, Bill Kilpatrick

Note: Name under-lined is Committee Chair. Others are Committee Members.

Greeters at the Boat Launch: Bud Bergh, Kim Germain, Dave Siciliano, Steve Sheltry, Liam Torpey and Kristchan Selby. They were joined by the new crew of Dennis Ullery, Dean White and Corrie Desilets

Town of Morgan www.townofmorgan.com

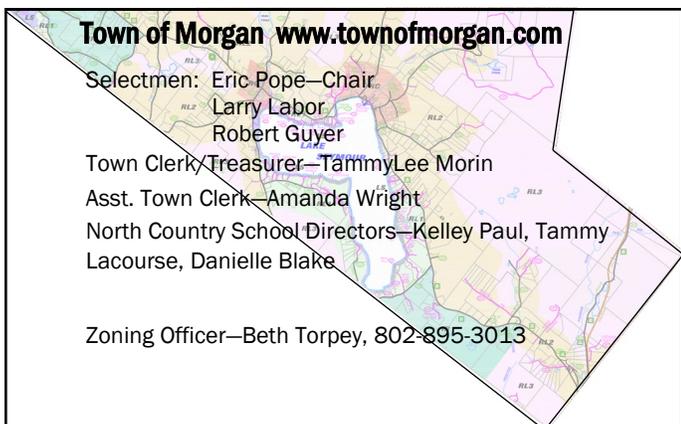
Selectmen: Eric Pope—Chair
 Larry Labor
 Robert Guyer

Town Clerk/Treasurer—TammyLee Morin

Asst. Town Clerk—Amanda Wright

North Country School Directors—Kelley Paul, Tammy Lacourse, Danielle Blake

Zoning Officer—Beth Torpey, 802-895-3013



Recognition

The newsletter is paid in part with support from VT Department of Environmental Conservation funds. □

Shoreland Protection Permitting

For questions regarding Shoreland Protection Permitting, the contact person is Lindsay Miller who can be reached at Lindsay.Miller@vermont.gov and 802-490-6200.

Note that the Town of Morgan now requires a shoreland permit (if needed) prior to issuing a zoning permit. □

Relentless Generosity (Continued from May 2021 Issue)

by Chuck Nichols

As most Seymour Lake residents already know from previous SLA newsletters, Independence Day this summer was particularly sweet for David Wieselmann, the Director of SLA's Vermont Invasive Patrollers program. Paralyzed from the chest down in 2010 in a mountain biking accident, David has been using a wheelchair when on land and a kayak when on Seymour. Transitioning from wheelchair to kayak, and back, was difficult. In the past, David's neighbors at Seymour East relentlessly gave of themselves to physically get him in and out of his kayak.

But thanks to the brains and tenacity of Seymour's Erik Lessing who designed and oversaw the building of the lift with critical help in construction from Dan Brush, Reno Gervais and Peter Goodell, for the first time in over a decade, David was able to independently get from his camp and wheelchair, to his kayak. The cost of the lift was paid for by donations of nearly 100 Seymour Lake residents.

Members of SLA's new Online Committee organized two press conferences, to share this great news. Go to the recently updated SLA website at www.seymourlake.org and click on the arrow to the right of "In The News" where you will find "Current News." There you'll be able to watch the story run by WCAX, our local CBS affiliate; a front page story in the Barton Chronicle; the national story run by National Public Radio (NPR); and a



David celebrating his independence on the structure with his trusty kayak.



David getting set to lower himself into his kayak.



David in his kayak about to take off for one of his multi-hour jaunts around Seymour Lake

drone video by Clayton Kolar, showing the sequence David uses to get into and out of his kayak. The same video is available on YouTube; search "Wheelchair to Kayak Long Cut."

It is now almost four months that David has been using the structure to get himself into his favorite lake in the world. He says he can go from wheelchair to kayak in less than 3 minutes. His tenacity and perseverance is a very important part of this success. What a guy! □



Reno Gervais and Peter Goodell finalizing the alignment of the structure in June.



Surrounding David are Erik Lessing and Dan Brush

Understanding Your Property Taxes, Part 2, Property Assessments

by Rhonda Shippee

home. The house or improvements should be valued using the same schedules and practices as were used in the last town-wide appraisal. This is often referred to as 'back dating' the appraisal. Also, if a property is sold, the sale price does not impact the tax assessed value. The practice of adjusting an individual property's appraised value to the value reported in a recent sales transaction for that parcel is not an acceptable assessment practice.

How often are town wide reappraisals conducted? There is no mandatory requirement to conduct town wide appraisals at certain time intervals. However, the state closely monitors the accuracy of town assessments by annual-

ly comparing the ratio of the assessed value to the sale price for all arms-length sales over the prior 3-year period. If the grand list values are generally less than the sales price, the town will end up with a Common Level of Assessment (CLA) less than 100% and cause an increase in education tax rates. If grand list values are generally more than sale prices, the town will have a CLA more than 100% and cause education tax rates to be reduced.

One impact of COVID has been both an increase in demand and price of real estate. Morgan is no exception as several property sales in 2021 were for amounts significantly more than their assessed valuation. It is too early to

predict the impact recent sales may have on Morgan's CLA, however, if they cause our CLA to fall below 85% the state may require a town-wide reappraisal. If our situation is not unique and other VT towns experience a reduction in their CLA, it is likely the state education tax rates could be reduced and hopefully the impact on property tax bills would be reduced. If there is one thing I have gleaned from my research for these articles, it is that Morgan's overall tax rate is one of the lowest compared to both other NEK towns and statewide. For that we can be thankful! □

SLA Emails

by Chuck Nichols

If you're an SLA member and have provided an email address, but have not been getting our occasional emails re fun and interesting issues and events, please try the following:

If the email is in Promotions:

1. Find the email in Promotions.
2. Click on it and drag up to the Primary tab.

3. A pop-up will say, "Conversation moved to Primary. Do this for future messages from members@seymourlake.org?"

4. Click on "Yes."

If the email blast is in Spam:

1. On your computer, phone, etc. open Gmail or other emails, like Comcast.
2. On the left, click on "more."

3. Click on Spam.
4. Open the email
5. At the top, click on Not Spam.
6. Add the sender to your contacts.

And if all else fails, call Chuck Nichols at 802-917-4282 and he'll try to help you. □

Sponsorship

by Linda Buzzell

Once again SLA will sponsor two local kids, either boy or girl, to attend the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Green Mountain Conservation Camp (GMCC). SLA will pay the \$250 camp fee for a week at one of the camps of the child's choosing.

There are two camp sites, one on Lake Bomoseen and one at Buck Lake, Woodbury, VT, and there are both boy

and girl sessions. A camper must be at least 12 years old before or during the week he/she attends. There is a Basic Week session and an Advanced session for boys and girls 12-16 who have completed the Basic session. For more information, the camp website is <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/gmcc>.

Registrations will begin February

2022. If anyone has a child in mind who would like to attend, please contact Linda Buzzell, Secretary of SLA (t-lbuzzell@comcast.net or 603-448-3245). □

Seymour Lake Reclassification

by Peggy Barter

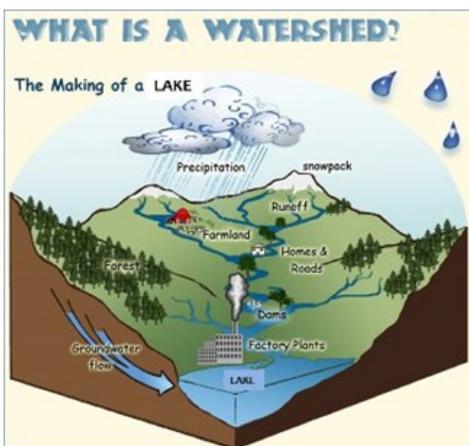
SLA has been invited to petition the state for additional protection for Seymour Lake using a process called reclassification, in which we would petition the state to reclassify our lake from a B(2) level to A(1). This process is well explained at the SLA's web site seymourlake.org under "In the News". Read Rhonda Shippee's overview and DEC's fact sheet first, then read the three Caledonian-Record articles which are well written and accurate.

Some may ask why Seymour Lake needs more protection from excess phosphorus and the possibility of toxic algae blooms. That is an excellent question! If in the future, phosphorus levels become unstable and begin to rise, the higher classification allows for quicker help from the state to stop the rise. A(1) lakes have a threshold of 12 units per liter to be eligible for state technical assistance and first in line for financial assistance. B(2) lakes have a threshold of 18 units per liter before receiving extra help.

The following information about watersheds may help with understanding why reclassification includes not only the lakefront properties, but the entire watershed. Seymour Lake's watershed includes most of the Town of Morgan, a small part of Holland and a smidgen of Charleston. Understanding how watersheds function, clarifies why Seymour Lake and its watershed are part of Echo Lake's watershed.

This diagram from Vermont's Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC) web site illustrates how precipitation supplies the water in a lake.

A watershed is all the land which



drains into a body of water. All who live and recreate in Seymour Lake's watershed have the responsibility to act to protect water quality.

Some rain and melted snow soaks into the ground and some evaporates back into the air, but the rest runs downhill into streams and ultimately into lakes, rivers or oceans. Thus, there are many sources located in all parts of a lake's watershed for pollution to impact a lake. Sources of phosphorus and sediment include roads, driveways, agricultural practices, stream bank erosion, poorly functioning septic systems, lake shore erosion and sometimes logging practices. Land management throughout the lake's watershed affects water quality.

All of the following can happen over time when water quality deteriorates:

- Increasingly cloudy water
- Increasing dense aquatic plant growth
- Less enjoyable swimming and boating
- Less wildlife
- Poorer fishing
- Blue green algae blooms
- Lower property values

Where Are We?

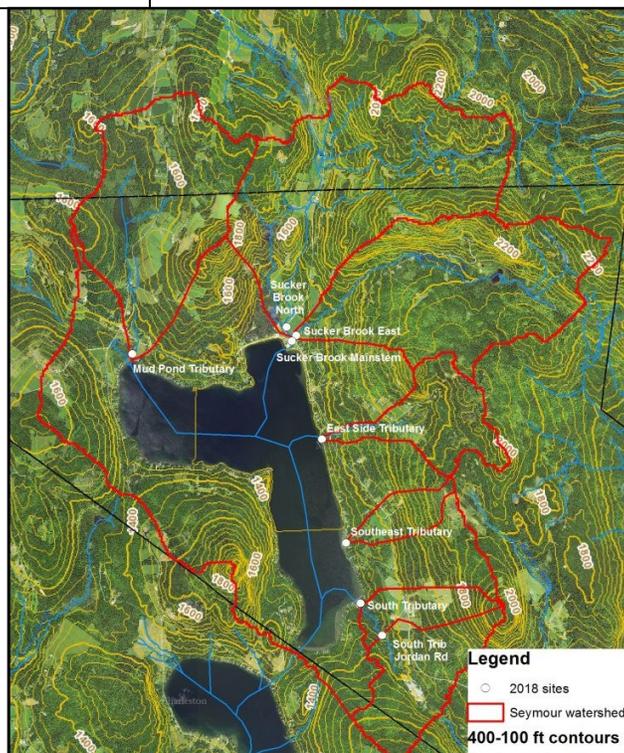
The primary mission at SLA is to preserve and protect the water quality of Seymour Lake and an A(-1) classification can help reach that goal. Because reclassification has the potential to affect the entire watershed area, SLA's Board of Directors feels it is critical to have the support of the Town of Morgan before proceeding with a petition. SLA is concerned and looking into the protective restriction for A(1) watersheds regarding septic discharges that may unnecessarily impact land development. Interestingly, because Seymour Lake's outlet drains into Echo Lake, Echo's water-

shed includes the entire Seymour Lake watershed. Motivated by their increasing phosphorous levels, Echo Lake has submitted a petition to reclassify their watershed, which, if approved, would reclassify Seymour's watershed.

We continue to study the situation, work for a solution to the outdated septic restriction, and seek the community's comments, concerns and questions. We will follow closely the progress of that petition.

SLA's new A(1) Investigation Committee is working with Morgan to ensure a petition would have their support and with the state to achieve the desired changes to septic restrictions. Committee members are: Sean Selby, Larry Labor, Tom Adams, Bill Kilpatrick and Peggy Barter. The Committee is seeking input from **all people** in Seymour's watershed. Please send your comments, opinions and **q u e s t i o n s** to Water_Quality@seymourlake.org. A Committee member will reply. When SLA has robust community input and the septic issue is resolved, SLA's Board of Directors will make a decision regarding next steps. □

Outlined in red below is a map showing the land making up Seymour Lake's Watershed.



Boat Parade

After a day's postponement due to inclement weather, our annual Seymour Lake Boat Parade took place on our rain date of July 4th. It was a bit chilly and somewhat overcast, but the weather did not dampen the spirits of those in boats and those greeting us on

land. We had an excellent turnout of decorated boats, but again, the number of lakeside viewers far exceeded that number. So much so, that we decided to post pictures this year, not only of the boats in the parade, but also the enthusiastic viewers from the shore

cheering us on in patriotic colors and great form! Hope you again enjoyed what has become a tradition here at Seymour Lake—same time, next year. □



Greeter Program at the Boat Access by Beth Torpey

We're happy to report another successful year of keeping invasive species out of Seymour Lake. The greeter program ran from Memorial Day weekend to the last day of fishing season, October 31.

The boat decontamination station has continued to work well this season. This unit is used to decontaminate any watercraft that may be coming from a lake with animal invasive species, such as zebra mussels. Many of the animal invasive species have life cycles that are microscopic, which is why decontamination is recommended. This process consists of running hot water (>140° F.) through the engines and live wells and over equipment that may have any standing water. We are NOT washing boats for people.

Although the Canadian border has been closed for the last two seasons and boats from Canada have not been on our side of the border, the zebra mussels in Lake Memphremagog are making their slow progress down the lake from Magog to Newport. So, if you take your boat into Lake Memphremagog (or any other animal-infested waterbody, such as Lakes Champlain, George, Bomoseen or Dunmore), it's advised that you wait 30 days before entering a non-infested waterbody, especially Seymour.

This year, our greeters inspected 1,441 watercraft, with 33 intercepts and 9 of them an invasive species. All of the invasives intercepted were Eurasian Watermilfoil. A big thank-you to our superb greeter staff listed on page 2. □

Bruce Remick New to SLA Board of Directors

Bruce is a native Vermonter who grew up in the Burlington area and graduated from UVM as a Civil Engineer. After graduation, he joined the Navy, qualified as a Navy carrier pilot and deployed on aircraft carriers numerous times. After completion of Naval Test Pilot School and completion of a Masters Degree in Aeronautical Engineering, he worked as a Navy Test Pilot, was Commanding Officer of an S-3B Viking Squadron onboard U.S.S. Saratoga (CV-60), and then Commanding Officer of a flight test squadron at the Naval Air Test Center in Patuxent River, Maryland. After retiring from the U.S. Navy in 1998, Bruce began a civilian career in aviation, flying for



Delta Air Lines, was a test pilot for Lockheed Martin, Chief Test Pilot for the FAA during an 18 year civil service career. Bruce's love of Seymour Lake began when he married the love of his life, Kathy, in 1983. Bruce then became acquainted with our wonderful lake that his wife's family had known since purchase of their camp in 1971. Bruce is very excited to support the Seymour Lake Association as a Board Member. □

Community Helpers by Peggy Barter



Who are these guys? You may remember them from the Nov. 2018 issue of the Newsletter. You surely remember them every Saturday at a place better known as "The Dump." Yes, that is Paul Berube, Bob Durgin, and Clare Dane. Always willing to help you properly dispose of your trash or recyclables. Several years ago, they established a tradition of hosting a community barbeque at the Transfer Station on Labor Day Saturday. The barbeque is funded using some of the proceeds from the redeemable or returnable cans and bottles. Two years ago, during our Covid summer, the Staff used the excess funds to give a generous check to the Circle of Friends to support the Circle's many charities. They continued that generous and much appreciated gift again this year. □

Map Update

The lake map on the SLA website has been updated with map data sheets (alpha and numeric data) for 2021. Go to maps on seymourlake.org to view the data sheets. □

Smelt helpers wanted

Any members interested in the smelt project to improve our fish population should reach out to Bill Bilowus as helpers are needed. Call Bill at 802-895-2540. □