

May 2026 SLA Newsletter



President's Message By Rhonda Shippee

As I sit to compose this message, the signs of spring abound. The ice left the lake April 18th, I have heard the first loon call and am hoping they are planning to nest and bless us with chicks again this year. I am sure Denis and Eli Fortin, our dedicated "caretakers of the loons", will soon be setting up the two loon nesting platforms.

I would like to welcome Nancy Bullock to the SLA Board of Directors (see more about Nancy on page 8). She fills the vacancy created by Chris Blais resignation. Nancy has also agreed to step into the role of Chair of the Membership Committee, one of the most critical jobs in SLA. Many thanks to Chris for her service on the Board and Membership Committee where she will continue to serve and make sure everyone on the Morgan-Charleston Road has joined SLA!

A hearty "thank-you" to all members who have renewed their SLA membership for 2026. More than 80 members renewed using the envelope from the November newsletter, speeding up the process. It

also allowed us to reduce the number of renewal letters we printed and mailed.

Hopefully, we will reach 100% renewal soon. There are still a number of lakeshore owners who are not SLA members that we would love to recruit. If you know someone who hasn't joined, please encourage them to do so. Dues and donations provided by members are critical to support our work to maintain water quality and keep the lake free of invasive species.

An update on the results of the annual water sampling is included in an article on page 7. While attending the FOVLAP (Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds) annual meeting last fall, our resident water quality sampler, Tom Emery, was recognized for his 23 years of service taking water samples on Seymour. Check out a picture of his iconic boat, the Scotch and Soda, as part of that article. If you see Tom, please thank him for his many years of service to the lake. Speaking of long-time service, please note on page 2 that Ric Pare is the new Morgan Fire Warden, replacing Bob Cain who retired from that

role after 23 years of service to the town. Remember that if you are planning to burn brush, you must make a call to the Fire Warden to be sure there are no burning restrictions in effect. We also learned that there is a new game warden serving our region. Learn more about Chase Reagan on page 4.

Changes to the current wakesport rules are expected to be effective for the coming boating season. The State has spent the past year proposing changes and holding public meetings. While not yet finalized, the changes we expect to see are outlined in more detail on page 7.

Finally, as we head into a new summer season, I want to acknowledge the many volunteers SLA relies on every year. Some have been serving in their role for decades. Many have more than one role! Please take a moment to read through the volunteers on page 2 of this newsletter. If you know them, please thank them! As president, I am so very grateful for all the work they do. □



2nd Annual Youth Art Contest By Bonnie McWain

This Year's Theme
**Making Memories
at Seymour Lake**

The first Seymour Lake Association Youth Art Contest was a HUGE success last year so "LET'S DO IT AGAIN!!!" The theme was "What Do I Like About Seymour Lake?" With 27 entries, it was fun to see all the wonderful art the youth created expressing their love for Seymour Lake. Look for more information in an email blast in the coming months with this year dates and entry forms. □

Seymour Lake Association

PO Box 36

Morgan VT 05853

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

Photos by

Rob Hofmann, 2025

President

Rhonda Shippee

Tim Buzzell '26

Michael Tule '27

Bonnie McWain '28

Vice President

Bruce Remick

Nancy Bullock '26

Charles Woods '27

Candy Moot '28

Treasurer

Jean McKenny

Bill Bilowus '26

Tracey Becken '27

Denis Fortin '28

Secretary

Linda Buzzell



Activities

Bonnie McWain,

Molly Bilowus, Kathy Remick

Nominating

Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain,

Michael Tule

Boating

Tim Buzzell, Bonnie McWain

Communications

Candy Moot, Denis Fortin,

Bruce Barter, Rhonda Shippee, Karen Abada, Chuck Nichols, Andy Barter, Wendy Franklin

Fishing

Charles Woody Woods, Bill Bilowus

Membership

Nancy Bullock, Chris Blais Tim Buzzell, Gerry Cahill, Ann Torpey, Bonnie McWain, Chuck Nichols, Andy Barter, Dick Morley, Jim Mitchell, Ann Stafford, Michael Tule, Janet Clemons

Dam Lake Level

Tim Buzzell, Chuck Nichols,

Ron Kolar, Candy Moot

Loons

Charles Woody Woods, Denis Fortin,

Nancy Bowen, Eli Fortin

Audit

Marie Tule, Doug Jangraw

Volunteer Invasive Patrollers (VIP)

David Wieselmann, Clayton Kolar

Water Quality

Tracey Becken, Peggy Barter, Kit Walker, Dan Barry, Beth Torpey, Rhonda Shippee Ron Kolar, Rob Hofmann, David Wieselmann, Trish Clark, Gerry Cahill, Tom Emery, Andy Barter, Kate Bednaz

Lee McLendon, Candy Moot, Janet Selby, Kit Walker, Betsy Walkerman, Gerry Cahill, Andy Barter, Rob Hofmann, Sylvia Geiger, Cindy Smith, Sean Selby

Milfoil

Rhonda Shippee, Beth Torpey,

David Wieselmann

Greeters at the boat launch (2025)

Bud Bergh, Kim Hier Germain, Bethany Howe, Cora Kelly, Leslie Martin, Kerry Wevurski, Dean White, Cassidy Mitchell, Karla Braunesreither, Liam Torpey

Note: Underlined is committee chair, Others are Committee members

Shoreland Protection Permitting

For questions regarding Shoreland Protection Permitting, the contact person is Laura Woods who can be reached at

laura.woods@vermont.gov 802 490 6100 **Note** That the Town of Morgan requires a shoreland permit (if needed) prior to issuing a zoning permit

Town of Morgan www.townofmorgan.com

Selectmen Eric Pope -chair

Larry Labor, Morgan Bruce Remick

Town clerk/treasurer Tammy Lee Morin

Asst. Town Clerk Christina Pare

North Country school directors Danielle Blake Chair

Sean Selby, Tammy Lacourse

Zoning Officer Beth Torpey 802 895 3013

Fire Warden Ric Pare 802 323 2637

Game Warden Chase Reagan 802 279 9845



The Lemere Cottages and Store By Margo Burns

Seymour Lake has been a beloved summer destination for a long time. In the early 1940s, Reg and Lizzie Lamere were renting out cottages across from the sandy beach. They started with two, at the rate of \$16/week for the 3-room one and \$21/week for the 4-room, both with screened-in porches. In 1947, they bought seven more small ones. That April, the *Newport Daily Express* reported that “a crew of men are doing extensive remodeling on the ‘Reg’ Lamere cottages at Seymour Beach.”

The family rented them out to summer tourists for about a decade. Reg added several more tiny cottages, brought over from Long Pines Cabins in Bloomfield, along with a building that had been a Texico gas station. He turned that into a small restaurant for Lizzie, with a couple of booths and space out back for the family in the summer.

Lizzie loved to cook. She sold groceries, ice cream, home-made pies and doughnuts. There were even pinball machines! Reg sold bait that he kept in the brook behind the restaurant, where he also had an ice-house to store the blocks he’d cut from Sey-

mour Lake over the winter to supply the ice-boxes in the cottages in the summer. The restaurant is long gone, but it was to the right of where the Ways’ more modern camp (6766) is today, one which has been in their family since 1970. The small shed just behind their place is original, located on the left of the restaurant, which you can see in the postcard. Others are still standing at the edge of Route 111 and look vintage: the twin camps at 6722, once owned by Mr. Ping, but even worse so, the yellow hip-roofed one at 6738. Look for the tiny cottages back from the road, behind more modern camps.

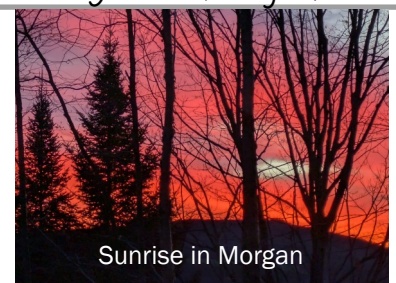
A few of the original cottages have undergone such major transformations that they are hardly recognizable when compared to the Richardson photo-postcards of the original buildings. Reg Lamere passed away in 1951, and within a few years, Lizzie sold her restaurant and some of the cabins to George Wilfred of Groveton, NH. Their daughter, Sandy (LaMere) Philbrick, still comes to her camp on Seymour Lake in the summer, and very kindly supplied a lot of this information.□



Richardson postcard of the Lameres’ restaurant, circa 1950. There are more of these postcards, which are posted on the Morgan Historical Society Facebook page.



From the *Essex County Herald*, July 17, 1947



Help Us Keep Our Lake AIS Free, Job Openings at the Boat Access By Beth Torpey

We are looking for help at the Fishing Access to inspect boats and educate the public about aquatic invasive species (AIS). Morning, afternoon and weekend shifts are available from Memorial Day weekend until the end of October, paying \$15 - \$20/hour depending on experience. Training will be provided. Great job for a student, teacher or retired person. Prerequisite: must love Seymour Lake! Contact Beth Torpey at bethyl1@gmail.com (802) 323-3235.□

Morgan Historical Society Event By Dan Brush

The Morgan Historical Society will be holding its annual meeting at 1 p.m. on Sunday July 11th at the Morgan Historical Society which is located at the corner of Toad Pond Rd and Route 111 in Morgan, Vermont. All are welcome and our main topic of discussion will be our upcoming event

on August 15th featuring a talk by renowned Vermont historian and author Howard Coffin.

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest Benjamin Franklin.□

Save the Dates

June 5th Lake Seminar 2026, South Burlington Library 9:30am-3:30pm

July 4th Boat Parade, 2pm, rain date July 5th

July 5th Echo Lake Color challenge 10am

July 12th Annual meeting ,Morgan Historical Society

July 25th SLA Annual meeting @ Community House, 9am

August 1st Annual Community Bazaar, tag sale, plus craft and bake sale, Morgan School

August 8th Summer Social @Camp Winape 5:30-7:30pm

August 12th MWA Annual meeting 5:30-7:30pm, Eastside

August 15th Morgan Historical Society with Howard Coffin

LAKE SEMINAR 2026

Friday, June 5 9:30am - 3:30pm

**HIDDEN WORLDS:
LIFE UNDER THE SURFACE**
*Do you know what's going on in your lake?
You might be surprised!*



IN-PERSON AT THE SOUTH BURLINGTON LIBRARY AND VIA ZOOM

Our New Fish and Wildlife Game Warden By Bill Bilowus



Bill and Chase

Our new game warden for Morgan and Orleans County is Chase Reagan. He is a 24 year old who graduated from the University of Vermont in 2023. Afterwards, he completed six months of training at the Police Academy, and eight months of field training which included boat operations.

Chase started thinking about being a game warden when he was eight years old and fished with a game warden on occasions. His job is to help all of us to understand and follow the law. He also wants to

help educate the hunters and fishermen through personal experiences with them and public engagement.

Chase wants citizens, sportsmen and sportswomen to call him to report an injured or dead animal on their property or their road. Also to call for any reason relating to fish or wildlife. Chase said that he has seen a lot of smelt in Seymour Lake and saw caught Lake Trout with good girth and smelt in their stomachs. □ Chase's phone number is **802-279-9845**.

New Fishing Regulations and Smelt for 2026 By Bill Bilowus

The most significant change related to pan fish, baitfish, bluegill, bullhead, black crappie, white crappie, pumpkin seed, sun fish, rock bass and yellow perch is that they have a new daily limit of 50 pan fish per angler, per day. The existing rule that black and white crappie can make up no more than 25 of the total remains in place.

Panfish Sales: The sale or purchase of crappies is now prohibited in Vermont. A "Fish Sellers" endorsement on their fishing license is required if anglers want to sell panfish or crappies. Endorsements are free. **Baitfish:** the largest minnow trap is now up from 18 inches to 24 inches. The opening for the minnows can be as large as 2.5 inches wide, where as

before it was an inch in diameter.

Anglers can now catch and collect bait fish all year long. A wild bait fish endorsement is now required for anyone interested in harvesting wild bait fish. Anglers need to pass a quiz in order to receive it, which is good for three years. □



It took five years of work by the Smelt Committee to get the smelt back into Seymour Lake. The Committee was determined and persistent to get this job done. Thanks to our Presidents of the SLA Chuck Nichols and Rhonda Shippee who supported the Smelt Committee and Pete Emerson and Levi Brown who helped make it hap-

pen. The Committee members over the five year period were Denis Fortin. Bob Durgin, Shawn Austin, Shawn Selby, Mike Stevens, Dana Seguin, Marie Cargill, Hunter Judd, Rick Delia, Mike & Tracey Rossi, Nathan Maez, Bruce Remick, Matt Shippee, Tim Buzzell and Woody Woods. Thousands of smelt were seen in Hatchery, Twin Culverts, Valley

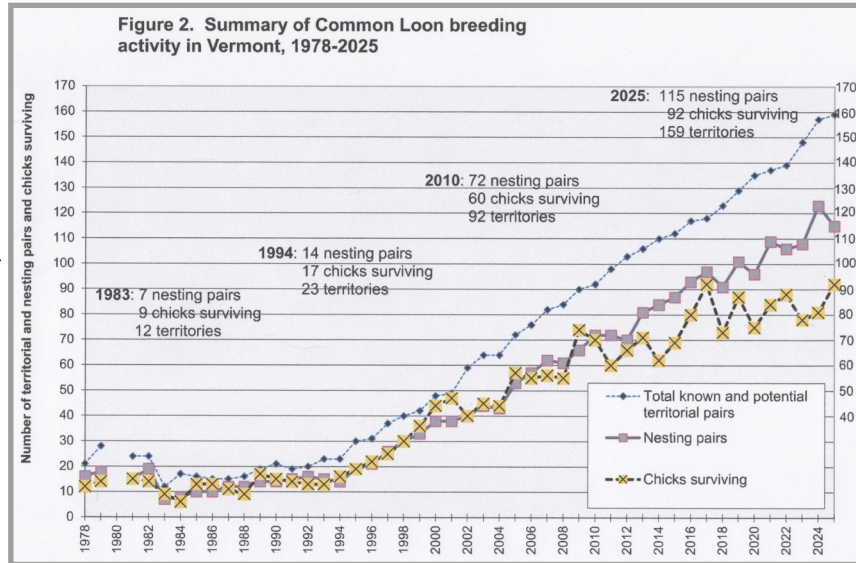
Brook and Cranberry Brook in late April and early May 2026 with more which come. Fishing will gradually improve, along with the length and weight of our fish in the next few years. If you are a fisherman, be sure to join SLA for the work this Committee has put into bringing the big fish back to Seymour Lake. □

Vermont Loon Conservation Project Update By Eric Hanson & Eloise Girard

The Vermont Loon Conservation Project (VLCP), launched in 1978 after a dramatic decline in the State's loon population, has seen remarkable long-term success.

Following years of coordinated monitoring and management by the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD), Vermont's loon numbers have grown from just 7 nesting pairs in 1983 to 115 nest attempts in 2025. The species was removed from Vermont's Endangered and Threatened Species List in 2005 thanks to decades of conservation and community support.

Why was the Vermont loon population so low? Threats included mortality from lead poisoning via fishing tackle, monofilament, flooding of nests especially on reservoirs, where water levels changed dramatically, loss of nesting habitat, disturbance of nest sites by people, hunting, and mercury contamination. Successful conservation practices have brought the loons back through the use of nest warning signs, giving them a quiet space, use of floating nesting rafts, a law banning ½ ounce or smaller lead sinkers, hydro companies stabilizing water levels when they can, and much greater awareness by boaters and lakeshore owners of what loons need to be successful.



From 2021–2025, VCE received a five-year U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant to boost loon productivity statewide as part of the Bouchard B-120 oil spill settlement. One major strategy—deploying artificial nesting rafts in vulnerable areas—proved highly effective, with an 88% success rate. The new raft on the west end of Seymour Lake was part of this project to replace 500 loons lost in the spill which happened in Buzzards bay, MA in 2003.

After flooding-related setbacks in 2023 and 2024, loon productivity rebounded in 2025 with a record 103 chicks surviving through August and a few new nesting pairs appearing on additional lakes. With the Vermont loon population currently doing well, we expect chick survival rates to level out toward long-term averages be-

cause of competition between loons, more bald eagles, and newer pairs using more marginal nesting habitat. With the grant period now complete, VCE will reassess where nesting rafts remain necessary and where loons can be encouraged to nest naturally as we plan for 2026 and beyond.

We also need more donor support to keep our outreach, management, and volunteer programs strong, continue our work managing people's needs and loons' needs, responding to loons reported in distress, including rescues, and assessing and responding to continued threats that loons face□

Thanks for your support, from the loon team at VCE (Eloise Girard and Eric Hanson) www.vtecostudies.org Donations can be sent to: Vermont Center for Ecostudies (att: loon project), PO Box 420, Norwich, VT 05055

16th Annual Boat Parade By Bonnie McWain

Save the date for the 16th Annual Seymour Lake Boat Parade, Saturday, July 4th, 2026, at 2:00 pm, starting at Rositer's Point and heading counter-clockwise around the Lake. The rain date is July 5th.

Come celebrate the 250th birthday of our Country as we continue the Boat Parade tradition on Seymour Lake. Join us from lake or shore and decorate in your patriotic colors to start another great summer in Vermont!□





The Vermont 100 classic!

New England XC Racing brought their 2026 tour to the ice of Seymour Lake on a cold January Day. Many of the racers were in town a few days earlier to practice!

New Owners of the Morgan Country Store

By Bill Bilowus

Jim Magoon is the new owner of the Morgan Store. His daughter, Adrianna, and his son, Dylan, will be helping him run the operation. Employees Andrea and Julia will stay on to help with the cooking. Jim wants to maximize the operation. There will be a bigger deli menu and a bar which will serve wine, beer and mixed drinks. Special dinners will be offered on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights with some good background music.

Music will be played on new indoor and outdoor wireless speakers. Takeout specials will be added. New seating will be installed for 30 people along with outside seating for approximately 30 people. An additional gro-

cery section will be added with freezers and coolers for steaks, meats, and sea food besides the regular coolers for a variety of drinks, milk, cheese products and ice cream.

A special corner inside the restaurant will be for Veterans with seats, lighting, and a tv. Five other tv's will be added on brackets higher up on the walls around the room. Jim is a ten year Marine Corp Veteran and a fifteen year Army Veteran. There will be a larger deck added on to the front of the store and the parking lot will be extended and properly paved. He is looking at a three-year plan to make this operation work.□



CORRECTION: It has been brought to our attention that our email blast crediting the "First Dock In" award to Matt Shippee

was in error. The first dock installed on the lake was actually on Birch Point by Peter Goodell on April 16th around 2 pm. Congratulations Peter!□

Wakesport Rule Changes Imminent By Rhonda Shippee

After months of debate and public input, the State is nearing completion of significant changes to the wakesport rules that were passed originally in 2024. At this time, what they will present for final legislative approval will increase the size of a wakesport zone due to safety concerns that were not addressed in the original rule.

This will reduce the number of inland lakes eligible for wakesports from 30 to 18 (Seymour will be one of the 18). The home lake rule will be eliminated, however, the rule is clear that any wake boat traveling between water bodies must have received a hot water decontamination prior to entering another water body. Quarantining will not be a substitute for decontamina-

tion.

While SLA strongly opposed the elimination of home lake rule, we are hopeful the stringent decontamination requirement and elimination of quarantining as a substitute will protect Seymour Lake from any “visiting” wake boats bringing invasive species, to the lake especially zebra mussels. Because there are no hot water decontamination facilities in the NEK, Seymour Lake’s wake boat owners should plan to stay on Seymour Lake for the entire season or provide proof of decontamination before reentering Seymour Lake if they travel to another lake. With fewer wakesport eligible lakes, we could expect to see more wake boats on the remaining 18 lakes. We must remain vigilant to be

sure all are mindful of the stringent decontamination requirements.

Deserving recognition is a very dedicated team of SLA volunteers who spent hundreds of hours working to support retention of the home lake rule. Their efforts included not only providing feedback on the proposed rule changes but also working to have legislation passed putting home lake rule in state statutes (which would override the rules). This was not successful in this legislative session but could be re-introduced next year.

Candy Moot, Beth Torpey, Kit Walker, Rob Hofmann, Chuck Nichols and Tracey Shadday all worked tirelessly in this effort. We expect final approval of the amended rules will occur sometime in May. □

How Is Seymour Lake Doing? By Kate Bednaz & Peggy Barter

Seymour Lake’s water quality remains relatively good, thanks to the thoughtful stewardship of lakeshore and watershed residents. Simple actions like maintaining native plant buffers, keeping septic systems in good repair, and managing dirt roads and driveways to reduce runoff all help protect the lake from cyanobacteria blooms. If you know neighbors doing this work, thank them because it makes a real difference.

Each summer our Lay Monitor, Tom Emery, tracks water clarity and collects samples to measure phosphorus, chlorophyll, and caffeine. These samples are analyzed by (DEC) Dept. of Environmental

Conservation, scientists, and over time the data helps them assess the lake’s overall health. The data can be found by searching “DEC Lay Monitoring Program.”

In recent years, Seymour Lake’s data has remained stable, but not as low as before the year 2000. Low phosphorus levels mean less nutrients for algae growth, and that’s reflected in low chlorophyll and clear water. Caffeine monitoring, which was added a few years ago as an indicator of septic system performance, is very low indicating minimal septic pollution. But there are reasons to stay alert. New sampling at deeper water levels, as well as near the surface, shows higher phosphorus concentrations near

the lake bottom, likely tied to erosion from recent heavy storms. During spring and fall turnover, this phosphorus mixes throughout the lake, making it more available to algae near the surface which can result in cyanobacteria blooms.

Seymour Lake continues to be classified as oligotrophic—the most pristine category—based on its clarity and relatively low nutrient levels. To learn more or see how Seymour Lake compares to other Vermont lakes, contact the SLA Water Quality committee. at slalakewise@gmail.com.



The Lay Monitor office aboard Tom Emery’s Scotch and Soda! Tom has been testing Seymour Lake’s water for the past 23 years!

CALLING ALL RUNNERS Susan McKenna

This year’s Echo Lake Color Challenge takes place on Sunday, July 5th, 2026 at 10am. The 5K race follows a circular course alongside beautiful Echo Lake where participants are met by a rainbow of colors, adding to the day’s festivities. All levels of walkers and runners are encouraged to sign up for this family-fun event which supports the ELPA. □

Seymour Lake Association

P.O. Box 36

Morgan, VT 05853

SLA Has a New Board Member, By Candy Moot

Nancy's love of all things Vermont started with skiing and freshwater lakes. Leaving behind the world she grew up in near Albany, NY and the one she and her husband, David, raised their children in Rye, NY, they ventured north. First, it was weekends at Stratton and then Sue and Frank Antonelli introduced them to the NEK and the exquisite beauty of our lakes and mountains.

After a long career in NY as part of administrative teams in hospitals, retirement centers, nursing homes and finishing 20 years managing a long-term care center for 169 medically complex children, Nancy wanted more than weekends and holidays in Morgan. In 2021, she and David became full-timers in Morgan at a home once built by Mavis and John Miller. They bought a 1967 Old Town wooden boat at a country auction, added "Bob" (a used Whaler) and committed to season passes at Jay Peak. Nancy's son was married at Jay and daughter at Burke and their 6-year-old granddaughter takes the lead on skis and the 4-

year-old grandson skis but loves skimming and painting rocks.

When not outdoors, Nancy is a Board Member of North Country Hospital and is passionate about preserving and advancing this jewel of excellent, rural healthcare. And on particularly cold days or when black flies visit, Nancy reminds herself that "it's only difficult if you are standing still." All the welcoming friends around the lake keep everyone moving and share a deep appreciation for the beauty outside the door. Nancy is very enthusiastic to support Seymour Lake Association as a Board Member and welcome others to our membership. □



Nancy Bullock

A couple of interesting links by Peggy Barter

MWA announced on 2/9/2026 a report about progress on Valley Brook <https://memphremagogwatershedassociation.com/valley-brook-restoration-project/>

FOVLAP recently presented Lake Shores, Gravel Roads and clean water projects by Patrick Hurley <https://vermontlakes.org/lake-shores-and-gravel-roads-webinar/> or on You Tube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vik8rfB_smM

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