



News of Blue



An informal newsletter for Blue Mountain Lake residents, friends and all who want to nurture the town and to protect the Eckford Chain: Blue Mountain Lake, Eagle Lake and Utowana Lake

Blue Mountain Lake, NY

August 2019



Sunrise over Blue Mountain Lake

photo by Charles McPherson

Salt still major issue for lake water

Here's an update on the lake's salt situation from Paul Monroe, co-chair of Water Watch:

I met with two New York State Department of Transportation officials—Sam Zhou, Assistant Commissioner for Operations and Asset Management, and Rob Fitch, Director of Transportation Maintenance—as well as Indian Lake Supervisor Brian Wells. DOT is not interested in starting another pilot program now, but they were interested in our data. I am hopeful that, with the local town board's support, we can advocate for a less complex study of the effect of using simple

methods (better plows and measurement of the rate of application) to decrease the salt in our streams. We will keep pressure on DOT.

*Note: the water in BML is saltier than 86 percent of the lakes tested in the Adirondacks, due to the hill road draining a calculated 300,000 pounds of salt into Blue Mountain Lake each year. Water Watch and the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) monitor the salt content year around and are working with state and county to reduce the current winter salt spread on the road while keeping motorists safe. **

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WATER WATCH meeting
September 1
See page 6

50% OFF septic pump-out!
Rid yourself of guilt!
See page 3

Invasive plants threaten health, wealth and the natural environment

Have you seen “The Little Shop of Horrors” where a giant flower named Audrey consumes everything in her path, including humans?

While Blue Mountain Lake, as yet, has no Audrey, we are home to Japanese knotweed, phragmites, purple loosestrife and wild parsnip. These are terrestrial invasive plants which can do much damage to our natural ecosystems and even to us—wild parsnip can cause a terrible skin rash if touched. In some areas, these plants rampantly out-



Knotweed can overwhelm your land and reduce the value of your property.

compete native plants, create fire hazards and could even lower property value.

What to do?

Enter RIIPP, the Regional Inlet Invasive Plant Program, an organization that, for 11 years, has been fighting these invasives. It started back in 2008, when Doug Johnson, *knotweed.....see page 7*

Illegal Island Fires a Serious Concern

...what to do if you see one...

Andy Coney

On July 8th an alert paddler spotted a fire on Canakwa, sometimes called Picnic or Balter's Island. An incompletely extinguished illegal campfire reignited in the wind, burning the forest floor, searing trees in a 25-foot swath, scorching previously beautiful moss-covered rocks and stopping only because it reached the shore.

Island stewards Jake Collins and Ava Anderson, along with friend Rob Catanzarita, contained the blaze until the fireboat with chief Greg George and Kyle Curry could respond.

This was our second island fire in two years; last summer another illegal and improperly-put-out campfire on Long Island also required the fire boat. While both were extinguished without more serious damage, each could have been devastating to our scenic lake.

We asked fire chief Greg George what to do if we spot a fire. Should we try to put it out or go for help? Greg said, "Unless you have firefighting tools, rakes and buckets, go directly to the nearest phone to call for help (see box at right). If you're in a kayak or canoe, don't waste time. Flag down passing motorboats. Tell the dispatcher the fireboat is needed and be as accurate as possible about the location."

Next we asked Jason Scott, our resident NYS ranger, what we should do if we spot camping or a campfire anywhere other than the six designated state campsites. He replied, "Don't hesitate to call me. If you can't reach me, call Ranger Dispatch. Live and let live is not the right answer." *

Blossoms and Barrels Spread Beauty

No doubt you've noticed lovely gardens, barrels filled with petunias and planters and window boxes scattered throughout BML. They appear on Memorial Day and stay beautiful all summer. Magic?

Nope, not exactly magic. The fact is that, daily, all summer long, fourteen volunteers spread out through Blue Mountain Lake watering, feeding, weeding and generally caring for more than a dozen sites around town.

One of the volunteers is Belinda Block who, with her husband, spends five or six months in Blue every summer. She wrote this up about her experience:

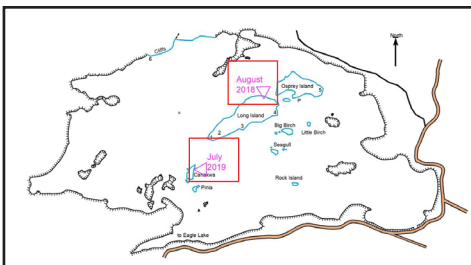
"I'm not sure exactly when the BML Beauties got started, but I'm sure Ellen Collins and Kathy Radler were involved from the start. We are the group of women who are always out putting in the public flower beds and barrels. Our year starts in May, when Kathy contacts us and makes sure all the beds and barrels will be cared for by volunteers. We're a relaxed group. If one of us needs to take time off, someone else steps in to help.

"Around Memorial Day, half-barrels are dropped off at various sites around Blue Mountain Lake, and Ellen organizes the planting of window boxes and barrels. (She also stores the tubers the town's dazzling red dahlias, as those have to be kept in a cool basement through the winter.

"During summer, the chores we share are weeding, watering, feeding, and deadheading. The only spray we use is deer repellent, and that has to be applied carefully, as it is always breezy in BML, and it's likely to blow back in your face.



Belinda Block tending the dahlias at the public beach. Fourteen volunteers keep Blue Mountain Lake's streets, sidewalks and beaches welcoming and colorful.



Sites of 2018 and 2019 island fires

Blue Mountain Lake Fire/EMS
518-352-7711 or 911

Resident Ranger Jason Scott
518-352-7676

NYS Ranger Dispatch
518-891-0235

"When fall comes, Ellen organizes those of us who are still here to cut back the perennials and dig the dahlias. It's work, but it's also a lot of fun. I enjoy talking to locals and tourists who stop by the beach when I'm there. I was recruited four years ago by Carolee Berg, and then I recruited Betsy Hershman. I would love to see more volunteers and more barrels placed around town!

"My background is as a California Certified Nurseryman, but not much of what I know from Southern California works here, as I learned last year when the sweet potato vines I love so dearly failed me miserably. Volunteering with this group has helped me make new friends and learn about a wider palette of plants. It's been fun." *

Time's running out! Get your septic deal today.



Craig Goodspeed, driver for J H Schrade, pumps out a septic tank for the Eckford Chain program. He cheerfully explained the process to his curious audience. The whole visit took only about 45 minutes.

Several community organizations have joined to offer you a break on pumping out your septic. The deal benefits 20 non-commercial property owners in the Eckford Chain watershed—Blue, Eagle and Utowana—who haven't had their septs cleaned for five years. You

pay half and the program pays half. Your cost is about \$145 for a \$290 job. The offer is good for this year.

The July newsletter described the program which involves the Blue Mountain Lake Association, Water Watch and the Blue Mountain Lake Fund. Services are provided by J H Schrade of North Creek.

So far, eight homeowners have responded. Six have completed the pump-outs and two are intending. That leaves 12 unused slots. What about you?

Prevailing wisdom says pump out your septic every five years or so. Why? Because it gets full, and it clogs, it leaks, and it becomes less and less efficient. Pumping also protects lakes and creeks from contamination.

It's a simple procedure: just call Schrade at 518-251-3115, say you're part of the program and make an appointment. For more information, contact Andy Coney at andyconey@pobox.com. *

Happy Anniversary!

Thursday, August 15, was a big day at Prospect Point Cottages. It marked 65 years of marriage between Ann and Julius Oestreicher, the proprietors of this lovely historic spot on Blue Mountain Lake. Their sons, Paul (left) and David held a celebration with speeches, music, dancing, laughter and tears. This family is beloved in Blue Mountain Lake.

Three cheers!

The Oestreichers have made Prospect Point probably the prettiest place in Blue. The many welcoming gardens are filled with colorful, interesting plants all summer long.



Church gets more than facelift



The Church of the Transfiguration, BML's Episcopal church right on the water, displays a temporary wall while under repair.

Blue Mountain Lake's iconic Church of the Transfiguration has recently faced surgery. Some logs in its west wall, which gets the brunt of winter storms, were being replaced when the contractor discovered the entire wall was in danger of coming down. Consequently, the outer section of the west wall has been replaced with a sheathed bearing wall which will be covered with a log veneer of white pine.

Paying for this work hasn't been easy. Grants have come from the Bull Trust and from Sacred Spaces. The Kirkham family, through Walter Kirkham's bequest, has offered to match donations up to \$5,000.

Anyone interested in donating, please send your check to the church's treasurer: Kathy Duffendack, 885 Deerland Road, Long Lake, NY 12847. For more information, contact the church's priest-in-charge, Rev. Dr. Chip Lee, at 518-624-3845 (camp) at 240-442-2152 (winter). *

The Hedges

The Hedges is having a very good summer and has developed a newsletter of its own. If you want to see it and sign up to receive it, go to www.thehedges.com/clippings/.



Also, you're welcome to come for breakfast or dinner if there is space. Call 518-352-7325 for reservations. Hedges also has cabins available most of the summer.



Hedges is beckoning those not staying in its cottages to visit the Crow's Nest, its gift shop full of goodies.

Greetings to News of Blue readers:

This is the second and last newsletter for Blue Mountain Lake this summer. Thanks to the Blue Mountain Lake Association and Water Watch for support. We'll resume early next summer, so please send on your concerns, announcements, insights, observations—and maybe even jokes and recipes—to:

Mea Kaemmerlen, editor
meakaem@aol.com

Paul Monroe
paul@drpaulmonroe.com

Mary Lynne Heldmann
mheldmann@achieveinst.com

Many thanks, Mea

P.S. Please forward this to anyone interested or send us their email address and we'll put them on the list.

Blue Line Market



The Blue Line Market on the corner of 28 and 30 has sandwiches, coffee, gifts, staples—and all kinds of Battenkill ice cream.

Blue Mountain Designs



What's new at Blue Mountain Designs? Lots. That includes these charming bags decorated with Dala horses, iconic in Swedish tradition.

ALCA gift shop



As always, the Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts in BML has upcoming concerts, talks, shows and other events. But have you been to its gift shop, chock-a-block with beautiful works by local and other artists? Below is a tray with Blue Mountain Lake molded into it. Trays also portray Tupper and Raquette. See <http://www.adirondackarts.org/giftshop>.



Down Dog or Up Dog Pose? Either one in yoga class, but watch out for the Half Frog Pose



Every Thursday morning at 8, Nanette Shovea leads a yoga class at the Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts. It features the good, the bad, and the beginners. Ouch! But after an hour and a half, all say they feel wonderful. Here, students break into Warrior 1.

Two fundraisers for the Blue Mountain Lake Association

SIZZLER - AUGUST 11



Jennifer Marhevka, left, and Kathy Radler pose after discussing the color of next year's race shirt. Jennifer hopes it will match her current race pants. A guest at Hedges, Jennifer came in first among the 5K walkers. Kathy is a steadfast volunteer at races and other BML activities.



Paul and Sara Monroe, 249 and 248, and their family celebrate at the end of the Sizzler. All but Alex, who had an injury, participated. Sara got first in her category.



Andy Coney, founder and director of the Sizzler and BluMouLa-BuFuRa, congratulates youngest female winners of the race.

Join the BML Assn

The Blue Mountain Lake Association is a community-based group dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the economic, cultural, and physical facets of the Blue Mountain Lake community for the benefit of current and future generations.

If you are not a member, consider becoming one for only \$25. Join online at www.runreg.com/bmla-2019 (with a \$1.50 service fee). Or through the mail at Blue Mountain Lake Association, P.O. Box 245, Blue Mountain Lake, NY 12812. Please share your email address to receive updates about BMLA.

Paul Monroe, chair
Andy Coney, vice-chair
Barbara Sullivan, treasurer
Pamela Aall, membership
Mary Lynne Heldmann
Sarah Lewin
Kathy Radler
Christine Pouch
Ellen Butz
David Kahn
Bob Curry
Ralph Coon



Alex Provost came in third overall, with wife Chelsea and doggie.



Ella McPherson and her daughter Daphne happily made it to the finish line.

Keith Koster, a passionate volunteer for the American Legion, came in third among the runners. He is running a 5K race in every county of the Legion's District 4 in New York. Last year, carrying the American Legion flag,



he climbed all 46 High Peaks in celebration of the Legion's centennial.

BLUMOULA-BUFURA - JULY 28

50 BOATS, 80 PEOPLE



Above: preparing for the race
Left: the Collins/Callaghan family all participated in kayaks, canoes and a paddleboard.

Right: a rowboat with six kids and two adults finishes a slow but very fine race.





Kristina Oliver, raking the sand on the Blue Mountain Lake public beach, is one of nine summer lifeguards hired by Indian Lake to staff its two beaches, on Lake Abanakee and on BML. The lifeguards monitor and clean the beaches seven days a week from 11 to 5. Lifeguard, Jessica Bruso, who also gives free swimming lessons at the beaches, declares, "This job spoils you. It's a little heaven on earth."

Water Watch Meeting



Prospect Point welcomes all on Sunday, **September 1, at 8:30 am** for the summer's second Water Watch meeting. Delicious breakfast begins at 8:15 am.

Water Watch is a group of community members, working with and through the Blue Mountain Lake community, to maintain the high quality of the Eckford Chain waters and shorelines. The group is seeking interested board members. For more information or to join, contact Dick Cunningham at rcunningham@passonnopaints.com

Mary Lynne Heldmann, co-chair
Paul Monroe, co-chair
Dick Cunningham, treasurer
Lee Williams, secretary
Christine Blakeney
Phyllis Georges
Charlie Pietrow

EMS

Get valuable training and help your neighbor

Most of the time, up here in the North Country, we all feel strong and healthy.

But, who knows, it might just happen that, one morning, you can't get out of bed, or your partner faints for no reason, or your child falls out of a tree.

Help is a quick phone call away, 518-352-7711, to the Blue Mountain Lake's Emergency Medical Services. These well trained EMS volunteers will arrive quickly, give you what medical help they can, and then, if necessary, rush you to the Glens Falls Hospital.



Easy, right? Easy for you, but not so easy for the EMS volunteers. Tim Leach, the squad captain, says, "We need new volunteers. Right now, only two of the EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians) are under 65. We love what we do, but we're getting older."

Tim joined five years ago and says that the training is excellent. "It takes about 140 hours, two evening a week for several months. I know it's a huge commitment, but it's very rewarding. You're helping your neighbor. And, who knows, one day you might need help."

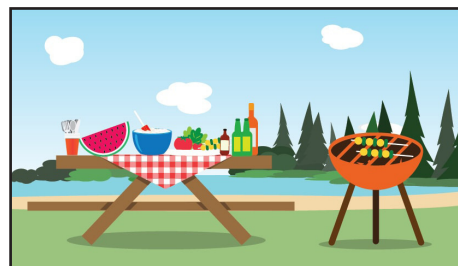
Blue Mountain Lake is pretty quiet, emergency-wise, with 20 to 30 calls a year. The most recent call was for a woman at one of the lodges whose back went out. The EMTs took her to the Glens Falls Hospital.

Please think about it. This is your chance to help the commu-

Chicken Barbeque volunteers needed

A request from Peter Bauer and the BML Fire Company

The annual Blue Mountain Lake Fire Company chicken barbecue will be held **at noon on Sunday September 1st**. We need volunteers to help in the kitchen with organiz-



ing the side dishes and helping to serve. We also need people to take shifts helping to keep the main hall clean as, depending on weather, there are often lots of people who enjoy their barbeque at the firehall.

We ask that folks sign up to help, starting with set-up at 11. Please let me know if you can commit to an hour or two. Best to respond by email, peb1962@gmail.com, or our BML number 518-352-7627.

Thank you for your support of the BML Fire Company!! *

If you'd like to receive the two previous News of Blue newsletters, please email me at meakaem@aol.com. Feel free to send me your comments and suggestions.

Mea Kaemmerlen, editor

nity and to learn some critical life-saving skills. Your neighbors will thank you.

For more information, call Tim Leach at 518-352-7096 or email him at coachleach31@yahoo.com. *

a medical doctor with a seasonal residence on Seventh Lake realized the growth of Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) here in the Adirondacks lagged well behind its explosive growth in Vermont. He resolved to begin to stop the invasion in the Adirondacks. He initiated RIIPP and helped the program gain strength in Blue Mountain Lake, Indian Lake, Saranac Lake, Chestertown, North Creek and other communities.



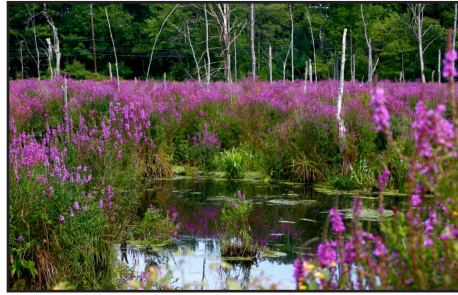
Wild Parsnip looks like Queen Anne's Lace, but can cause serious rash and crowd out native plants.

In Blue Mountain Lake, the coordinator is Ellen Collins. She explains the process:

"I educate people about the program, which has no cost to them, so when homeowners discover a patch of knotweed on their property, they know to call me. I then give them information and they sign a permission paper for proper treatment. It does no good to cut it down or dig it up—it only comes back stronger and fragments of root or stem can start new plants. The only way to kill it is to inject or spray each and every cane with the chemical, glyphosate, which must be applied by a certified professional. I pass the permission sheet on to the professional applicator who then treats the property, best in the late summer or early fall be-

fore frost. Signs are erected to indicate treatment."

Ellen now has 38 Blue Mountain Lake properties in the program. "Six former sites appear to be knotweed-free, but, who knows...." she says. "We keep our eye on them."



Purple loosestrife is beautiful but often overwhelms a marshy environment.

There is no cost for the treatment—RIIPP pays the applicator directly. The program runs mainly on donations from the public and property owners, with an occasional grant. The Blue Mountain Lake Association gives an annual donation. RIIPP works with APIPP (Adiron-



In a few years, phragmites can choke out all other plants in a wetland.

dack Park Invasive Plant Program) and other partners on the program.

RIIPP concentrates on eradicating Japanese knotweed, but is beginning to treat wild parsnip as its resources allow. Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) is similar to Queen Anne's lace, but with a bright yellow flower.

For more information, call Ellen Collins at 518-352-7717. For more about RIIPP, see

Museum's Minnow Brook Trail leads to elegant new boathouse

On June 30, the Adirondack Experience opened a short trail from the museum grounds to Minnow Pond. The delightful 20-minute walk along Minnow Brook Trail takes guests through the woods to the pond and its spacious new boathouse. The boathouse houses a number of vintage boats, some of which can be taken out on the pond by guests at a small charge, with the help of docents. Standing at the dock of the boathouse are, left to right, Lena Giordano, Ellen Collins, Micaela Hall, Charles McPherson, Benjamin McInerney, and Ethan Burns. *

weed.org. To donate, send a check to Hamilton County SWCD-RIIPP, 103 County View Road, PO Box 166, Lake Pleasant, NY 12108, with "Blue Mountain Lake" on the message line. *

Note: Speaking of Audrey, the flesh-eating star of "Little Shop of Horrors," the invasive "wagon-wheel" plant (Aldrovanda vesiculosa) seems to be moving north from the Catskills where there is much concern about its spread across lakes and rivers. How does it live? It eats seed shrimp, tadpoles and even small fish.



Owner and brewer Jason Sahler, here with his wife Christine, has created a very warm, welcoming spot in this part of the North Country. Cheers to you, Jason, to your crew—and to your brew!



Rich Storrs, right, here with his father-in-law Dave Porteous, gave an opening speech. His great grandfather was an early investor in Potters, Steamboat Landing and the Church of the Transfiguration, all in Blue Mountain Lake. Rich himself has missed only two summers in Blue since 1974. Note the many signatures on the walls behind Rich and Dave. Back in the day, when Potters Elbow Room was here, patrons penned their names making sure they went down in posterity.

On Friday, August 9, at noon, the Strong Rope Brew Pub, a branch of the Strong Rope Brewery in Gowanus, Brooklyn, opened its doors in Blue Mountain Lake. Instantly, a very happy crowd poured in, and the toasting and congratulating began.



Above: A very happy Pete and Connie Sahler on opening day. Pete is the owner of Potters Resort and uncle of Strong Rope proprietor Jason Sahler.



The father of all plastics “returns” to the North Country via the Indian Lake Theater

The Indian Lake Theater does it again. On Thursday, August 22, at 7:30, it will present a documentary of great local interest. “All Things Bakelite, the Age of Plastic” is the story of Leo H. Baekeland (1863–1944), responsible for one of the most transformative discoveries of the 20th century, Bakelite, and subsequently known as the “father of modern plastics.” The local connection is strong: the Baekeland family had and still has a camp on Utowana, the third lake in the Eckford Chain (Blue, Eagle, Utowana). The executive producer, Hugh Karraker, and writer/director John Mayer will attend and field questions. Karraker is the great grandson of Baekeland and spent 10 years researching his great grandfather’s life for this film. “I wanted to celebrate Baekeland’s life. His invention had a huge impact on our lives, but little is generally known about him.” For more information and the trailer, go to info@indianlaketheater.org. *

First arrivals were eager cheerful and appreciative.

