



**HALFMOON LAKE ASSOCIATION  
SECRETARY'S REPORT  
June 30, 2018**

On Saturday, June 30, 2018, the first annual meeting of the 52<sup>nd</sup> year since the founding of the Halfmoon Lake Association was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by President Bill Mannion with approximately 48 members and guests present. The meeting was held at the home of Kate and Cliff Brown on Halfmoon Bay Drive and was followed by an enjoyable social during which members had a chance to mingle, catch up, and enjoy a wide assortment of delicious hors d'oeuvres, and refreshments.

Bill began the meeting by introducing the Officers and welcoming new members. Among the new owners we've learned about this year are: on South Shore Drive: Robin Varghessey & Christy Fryer; Steve & Emily Wilson; Brian & Jennifer Pittenger, and Jim & Kim Cassidy; on Crescent Drive: Douglas & Leah Mix and Alan & Lineah Halle; on New Castle Extension David & Jennifer Nolin; and on the lot at the end of Tamworth Trail, Joanne Willemsen & William Hauser who are in the process of building a new home there. Welcome to all new members, many of whom were present at the meeting. If you know of a new neighbor that is not listed here, please contact Kate Brown at [katebrown@browntech.com](mailto:katebrown@browntech.com).

Bill reminded members that they had already received copies of the August 2017 minutes (which can be found on file on the website: <http://www.halfmoonlakenh.com>). He asked for comments or objections. None were raised, so on a motion made by Elaine Wheeler, seconded by Steve Adams, members voted unanimously to accept the minutes as presented.

Treasurer, Linda Bramante, presented the HMLA Income Statement. Linda reported that the ending cash balance for 2017 was \$12,662.75, up from the prior year by \$1,580.38 This was due in part to T-shirt and Hat sales, a reduction in the association's contribution to the NH Lakes Association. Other expenses included membership fee for the NH Lakes Association, website registration, postage, printing, website domain registration, three water tests, purchase of apparel items, and a donation to the NH Loon Association. As of June 30, 2018, the Association has collected \$505.00 in 2018 dues. As in prior years, individual neighborhood associations such as Rustic Shores, South Shore Drive and Fernhill will pay their dues after their respective association meetings in July 2018. The full report provided at the meeting is attached. Linda reported that the cost of website registration has gone up, however, we expect an increase in apparel sales thanks to items made available at the Fernhill Colony ice cream stand and potentially at the YMCA camp. Debbie Fedorchak made a motion to accept the treasury report as presented, seconded by Cliff Brown, and voted on unanimously by members.

**OLD BUSINESS**

LAKE REPRESENTATIVES UPDATE

Secretary, Kate Brown, reported that there have been no changes in the lake representatives and that recent property transactions have been forwarded to her, so the database of members is reasonably up-to-date. To locate the name and contact information for your neighborhood representative please visit our website: <http://halfmoonlakenh.com/aboutus.html>.

DUES REMINDER

Treasurer, Linda Bramante, encouraged all 'non-neighborhood association' members to send in their dues for 2018 as soon as possible. Your contributions go a long way to offset the costs of water testing, invasive species removal, and other important initiatives as well as build a buffer to help keep our lake safe, clean and pristine. As

of 2016, dues increased to \$15 per year and may be mailed to Linda Bramante, 118 North Barnstead Road, Center Barnstead, NH 03225 (See Dues Form below). Please be sure to include your Halfmoon address, mailing address, and most importantly, your email address.

#### REVIEW OF 501c3 CORPORATION RESEARCH

Treasurer, Linda Bramante, reported that, after investigating what it would take to register HMLA as a 501c3 corporation, she has concluded that the work and cost associated with it is not practical at this time for several reasons. The original objective for looking into this option was to enable members to claim their dues as a tax deduction as well as any individual or organization who makes a large contribution to the association. However, with the recent change in federal tax laws, most individuals are limited in what they can deduct. For most individuals or families, real estate taxes will now consume most of their allowable deduction. In addition, there are relatively high fees associated with the application and it would significantly increase the amount of paperwork for the treasurer to provide each paying member with a receipt of their contribution. At the present time, the only rationale would be if the association purchased property or high-cost equipment. Linda reported that some lakes in the area have registered as a 501c3 corporation, but only because they are either fighting a significant Milfoil infestation or looking into a Water Shed Management program. Steve Adams commented that, unless circumstances change, it does not make sense to pursue this any more given the fees and work involved. As Renee Adams said, "Let's keep it simple."

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### WATER QUALITY/TESTING UPDATE

John Wheeler reported that the first of three lake water samples were collected and sent to the state on Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. The results have not come in yet but will be distributed when available. Normal monthly tests are typically conducted in June, July & August and involve taking samples for: Chlorophyll-a, total phosphorus, conductivity, pH, alkalinity, turbidity, chloride, E. coli, as well as a transparency test using the Secchi Disk, dissolved oxygen, temperature profiling and Cyanobacteria sampling. Once a year, a fish is frozen and submitted to the Volunteer Mercury fish program.

It was noted that at the same time last year, the water testing showed a jump in levels of phosphorous. This was not unique to our lake; many other lakes throughout New Hampshire observed the same phenomenon. However, the second and third samples of the 2017 season showed levels back to normal. High phosphorous can result in the growth of Cyanobacteria which is hazardous to people and animals. Cyanobacteria is a natural occurrence that results when the water temperature heats up. Blooms can appear as slicks of opaque, bright green paint. If it is discovered on Halfmoon Lake, an advisory will be posted immediately. and it is recommended that pets be kept away from the water and humans refrain from any swimming activities. Renee Adams recommended that any cleaning products or fertilizer be phosphate-free to help keep our lake at normal levels. There are non-phosphorous fertilizers on the market, and Linda Bramante reminded members that the best fertilizer for lawns is lake water. For more information on Cyanobacteria, please visit the website:

<http://halfmoonlakenh.com/links.html>.

Bill Mannion acknowledged the hard work of the team of volunteers who are responsible for monitoring lake water for quality and announced that Mike Fedorchak, who has headed up this team for years, is now stepping down. We sincerely thank Mike for all his diligence, organization, and knowledge base. We will miss him. Currently team members include John Wheeler, Frank Bramante, Paul Hersom, Jay Macken, and Rich Perkins, all of whom put in a lot of time and effort to assure our lake water is of the highest quality and to monitor for any changes that may be hazardous to fish, wildlife and humans. We are grateful for this group of dedicated monitors and for all the hard work they do.

## MILFOIL UPDATE

Debbie Fedorchak reported that efforts last year to pull Milfoil from the cove were extraordinarily successful. After Mike and Debbie Fedorchak located the source of the Milfoil plant in the cove by using their pontoon boat and a fish finder, divers from the State were called in to pull the weeds. Colored markers were placed in the cove in the area where the original plants were located. After the initial pulling activity, many fragments were found along the shoreline, so Kate and Cliff Brown dove again a few weeks later and pulled any remaining growth. This past season, Debbie has kayaked the entire cove and has not seen any evidence of Milfoil weed. She and Mike will go out in the next week or two on their pontoon boat and try to locate any growth with the fish finder. They will then place markers in any suspicious area, so Kate and Cliff can dive and check for new growth. Boaters, please be alert to the markers and leave them in place.

## LOON FAMILY UPDATE

This marks the year three of successfully raising loons on the man-made platform that John Wheeler and Bill Mannion built as part of project sponsored by the NH Loon Preservation Society. John and his grandson, Joey, put out the nest in early-May. It took about 2-3 weeks for the loon couple to discover it and begin building a nest. The platform is in the rocky cove off Rustic Shores where Pat and Bill Mannion have an ideal viewing spot. The first observation of mating activity occurred on May 29<sup>th</sup> and the first egg was seen on June 14<sup>th</sup>. A second egg was laid between then and the 19<sup>th</sup>. The incubation period for loon eggs is roughly 26-28 days, so we expect hatching to occur sometime around July 10<sup>th</sup>. Once again, we ask everyone on the water maintain a proper distance from the nest so as not to disturb the expectant family.

## BOATING ACTIVITY REPORT

John Wheeler reported that about 56 boats have put in at the Alton boat ramp since May 1<sup>st</sup>. These are primarily fishing boats. He also observed a growing number of kayak fisherman in the lake.

## NORTH BARNSTEAD RAMP CONDITION

Anyone who has launched their boat at the North Barnstead Road ramp knows that the condition of the ramp has deteriorated significantly over this past year. The material that had been placed there in prior years, to help level the ramp and fill in the ruts, has not been effective. Most of it has eroded away. The Board has made this a major priority in the past few years and has contacted Jim Norris, the owner of the blueberry farm and homestead across the street. The boat ramp is believed to be part of the property that Mr. Norris purchased in 2010 and the Board wanted to discuss ways in which we could help to improve the condition of the ramp. No opportunities arose last year to connect with Jim Norris. However, most recently Jim contacted Kate Brown via email to discuss the condition of the boat ramp and express his concern that a lot of 'dirty boats' are being launched into the lake there, potentially introducing Milfoil. He wanted to propose a few ideas to limit traffic using the boat ramp. Kate and Cliff Brown met with Jim at the boat ramp on Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>. They discussed the issue of Milfoil in Halfmoon Lake and emphasized that there was a very low infestation compared to other local waterways. Kate and Cliff also explained to Jim all the measures that the Association has taken to mitigate the Milfoil problem, including state and local divers who pull weeds 2-3 times a year. Jim proposed putting up a gate with a lock at the entrance to the boat ramp to block access to boaters who are not lake-front owners. There was a discussion of providing lake-front residents with a permit that would be displayed in the front of their car and access to a key-code lock. Jim also said he would consider improvements to the ramp provided it is done by a qualified firm who can obtain the proper permits and approvals, and use the most effective materials. Kate and Cliff also informed Jim, that following a recent survey contracted by Shelly Lalos, an abutter to the boat ramp, it was revealed that a corner of the boat ramp falls within her property lines. Jim requested that his ideas be presented to the membership to see what they thought.

Following this report, there was a great deal of discussion by the membership about the history of the boat ramp, it's long-time use by residents, and its poor condition. No definitive resolution was found, but Frank Bramante recommended that the Association form a committee to look at the various boat ramp issues. The membership voted unanimously on the proposal and a committee was formed consisting of Frank Bramante, Cliff Brown, Paul Hersom, Jean Le Blanc, and Cliff Mages. The Board is awaiting notice of the first meeting and will report back to the membership in August about any updates.

### LOCK LAKE DAM

At a recent Board meeting, representatives from the Locke Lake Association (LLA) attended and presented a proposal to place an additional board in their dam to raise the water level of Locke Lake by 6-12". They said that the DES told them to remove the board last fall, with which they complied. They said the board had been in place for 20 -30 years. The LLA reps said they wanted to put the board back and would carefully monitor water levels so there is no spillage of Locke Lake water into Halfmoon Lake. Locke Lake is man-made created by the construction of a dam in the mid-60's at the outlet of the Webster creek. The weir/dam between Halfmoon Lake and Locke Lake was installed by Halfmoon Lake to prevent co-mingling of water. At that time the issue was arsenic pollution from Locke Lake waters. Today it has more to do with a significant Milfoil infestation in Locke Lake. The Board members stressed that they wanted the traditional water levels to continue and the state specs and rules to apply.

In a subsequent email exchange with Steve N. Doyon, of the NH Dept. of Environmental Services Dam Bureau, more information about how the management of Locke Lake has/has not affected things at Halfmoon was provided. The Dam Bureau's last few inspections at Locke Lake have found that the lake level has been managed about 6 or so inches higher than what was originally allowed shortly after the dam was built. The Bureau has counseled LLA reps about it and issued a Letter of Deficiency mandating that they lower the level to that prescribed in the 60's – which they have done. In the longer term, the Bureau is trying to figure out what is the effect the higher Locke Lake level would have conditions at Halfmoon over the years, if any. The HMLA Board will continue to follow up with the Dam Bureau, which will include the goal of maintaining traditional water levels and adhering to original state specs for water levels.

### SAFE BOATING

Kate Brown emphasized that any motorized craft that operates on Halfmoon Lake must be registered by the state of New Hampshire and that operators should have a state license. It is easy to obtain a license; all one needs to do is take an on-line course and then a quick test at a Marine Patrol location: please visit <https://www.boat-ed.com/newhampshire>. We may be a small lake, but NH Marine Patrol checks regularly for unregistered craft, including those moored or docked at a residence, and may stop a boat to check for license and safety equipment. So please be compliant and register your craft to avoid fines.

Also, please be sure to practice safe boating practices. For many years, Halfmoon Lake has instituted a counter-clockwise direction for all boating traffic to avoid accidents. Please make sure your guests or renters are aware of this. All water Skiers, tubers, and wake surfers should abide by this practice and try to keep activities in the middle of the lake. It also goes without saying that alcohol and boating do not mix well. In fact, if a boat driver is stopped by Marine Patrol and deemed to be operating while impaired, he/she could risk losing their driver's license. So, let's keep Halfmoon Lake safe and accident free!

### AUGUST MEETING – Pot Luck Picnic at Camp Mi-Te-Na

For the third year in a row, HMLA has decided to combine the second annual meeting with a pot luck picnic which is scheduled for Saturday, August 26th at Camp Mi-Te-Na from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm. Please mark your calendar. We will start with an Association meeting, possibly with a guest speaker, Officer Hugh 'Chip' Dougherty from

Marine patrol. This will be followed with a barbeque of hot dogs and hamburgers generously provided by the YMCA camp. Each family is asked to bring a side dish or dessert. As with last year, the camp will open their facilities so there will be games, basketball, three-way tug-of-war, climbing wall and more. Come and enjoy the fun and meet your neighbors. More information to come.

A motion was made to adjourn by Kate Brown, seconded by Cliff Brown, voted on unanimously by members.

**OTHER NEWS AND ADVISORIES:**

DIVERS DOWN

Please be on the look-out for any boats displaying a dive flag, seen below. This indicates that there are divers in the water pulling Milfoil. Please do not approach the boat; the divers may be anywhere in the vicinity and are at risk of injury from any boat that come too close. We appreciate your cooperation.



NEW STATE LAW FOR BOATERS:

The Halfmoon Lake Association has been very diligent about monitoring and clearing the lake of invasive species such as Milfoil. However, we cannot control boats and trailers from launching into the lake that carry invasive plants from other locations. We have signs posted to alert boaters of this threat, but to better enforce this practice, the State of New Hampshire has recently passed a House Bill 1589 - the 'Clean & Drain' bill – which is now law. With this law, all boaters in New Hampshire are now required to clean off **all** aquatic vegetation - native and invasive - from the outside of their boat and trailer. Boaters are also required to drain their boat every time they exit a waterbody, helping to prevent aquatic invasive plants and animals from "hitchhiking" from one waterbody to another. We ask that any boater who puts in or out of Halfmoon Lake abide by this law. For the most part, lake front owners are aware of this, but if you are leasing your property, please post a notice for your renters. As a community, we can all contribute to maintaining the quality of our lake.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Brown  
HMLA Secretary

**HMLA OFFICERS / CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Bill Mannion, President	603-776-2362	<a href="mailto:wpmatlake@aim.com">wpmatlake@aim.com</a>
John Wheeler, Vice President	603-472-3228	<a href="mailto:goatroper144@yahoo.com">goatroper144@yahoo.com</a>
Linda Bramante, Treasurer	603-776-0486	<a href="mailto:lbramante118@gmail.com">lbramante118@gmail.com</a>
Kate Brown, Secretary	978-376-9598	<a href="mailto:katebrown@browntech.com">katebrown@browntech.com</a>