



# Newsletter

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Fall 2021

## *From your President:*

It may have been a rainy summer, but, wow, what a glorious fall we've had in the watershed! And it wasn't actually such a bad summer, as long as you weren't counting on the weather. The high water temperature at our dock was 80, warm enough for even the thinnest blood. In addition, there have been many reports of reduced brown tail moth numbers this year, another reason to appreciate the season just passed.

With the coming of the colder weather, we are getting ready to say farewell to our long-time Executive Director, Paul Leeper, who is retiring at year end after over nine years of truly devoted service to the Megunticook Watershed Association. Paul was hired in April of 2012 to replace the late Ken Bailey, who had been our part-time lake warden since 1984 and executive director since 2004. Paul had big shoes to fill after Ken's death, and he managed to fill them beautifully in his own way with everything he did. Paul had a low-key, science-based approach which, in combination with his administrative and people skills, kept the focus on our mission of "protecting, preserving, and restoring the natural resources of the Megunticook watershed to ensure a healthy ecosystem for the benefit and enjoyment of all." Thank you, Paul, for being just the person we needed all these years!

With Paul's retirement, we welcome Aaron Bailey, our new Executive Director, who will be serving the association on a full-time basis as both the Executive Director and Lake Warden. Aaron, the son of Sandy and Ken Bailey, grew up in Camden, spending summers on Norton Pond and Megunticook Lake. He returns to the watershed area after 22 years with the Brunswick Police Department and time as Assistant Director of Security at Bowdoin. He is very happy to be back and we're even more happy to have him. Thanks, Aaron!

Dale Dougherty, our Lake Warden, will continue on part-time through the summer of 2022 to help train Aaron and to help cover the lake warden duties through next year's busy summer season. Thank you, Dale!

This seems to be a season of changes, as Jamie Weymouth and I have switched roles on the MWA board, a switch made necessary by the volume of Jamie's real estate business. Jamie is taking my job as the board's vice-president while I am taking his job as president. Speaking of big shoes to fill, I will have to work hard to do this job with as much grace and skill as Jamie had.

Thank you, Jamie, for your good work!

Wherever you may spend it, enjoy the winter!

*Micki Colquhoun  
President  
mickicol@aol.com*

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**Lake Warden's Report:** Hello to all, hope you are well as the pandemic rolls along into its second fall. The Patrol boat still continues to work well. The motor now has over 1200 hours of run time, which is a lot. The windshield is getting hard to see thru as the Lexan plastic is crazing and clouding up. Replacement should be as easy as unbolting the old and bolting on the new.

We had an interesting phenomenon this summer. Eels started showing up dead on the surface of the lake. Maine Fish & Wildlife sent a crew to work on the lake and while they were here they saw several dead eels. They asked for a sample eel to take to a biologist to examine. I met them and supplied a dead eel. They also said the only place where it was happening was in our watershed. The Fish & Wildlife pathologist thinks a parasite is most likely the cause. Early on the eels were only found the lake but towards the end of August they started showing up in Norton Pond as well.

The outlet dams are fixed and working well. This has improved the water level control. The watershed was able to stay near full all summer and the wet early fall kept the lake full. The dam agent for the Town of Camden is now bringing the water level down to its winter level, around 2 feet down.

The July 4th boat parade at Norton was small due wet weather. It rained all day until just before the parade started. Only the hardy showed up and we had about 12 boats and a few kayaks.

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<p><b>Treasurer's Report:</b></p> <p>As we reach the half-way mark of our fiscal year, we are showing a small net loss in our total income due to lower contribution totals, however at the present time we are about equal to last year in memberships. Although we had a decrease in payroll expenses later in the summer due to weather we will see increased payroll over the next quarter as we transition and bring our new Executive Director/ Lake Warden up to speed.</p> <p>On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to thank everyone for their continued support of MWA. If you have not already done so please consider renewing your MWA membership. Be sure to like us on Facebook and Instagram to keep an eye out for upcoming events and current watershed photos. <i>Sarah Marriner, Treasurer smarriner80@gmail.com</i></p>	<p><b>MWA Officers</b></p> <p><b>President– Micki Colquhoun</b> mickicol@aol.com</p> <p><b>Vice President- Jamie Weymouth</b> jamieweymouth@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Secretary - Paul DeOrsay</b> pdeorsay@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Treasurer– Sarah Marriner</b> smarriner80@gmail.com</p> <p><b>MWA Staff</b></p> <p><b>Exec. Director/Lake Warden- Aaron Bailey- 207-522-8794; aaron@megunticook.org</b></p> <p><b>Outgoing Exec. Director- Paul Leeper</b> 207-592-8540; paul@megunticook.org</p> <p><b>Lake Warden- Dale Dougherty</b> 207-390-0030; lakewarden@megunticook.org</p>
<p><b>IMPORTANT!!!</b></p> <p><b>Do we have your current e-mail address, mailing address and phone number?</b></p> <p>We need current e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, and phone numbers for all members. We have a number of old addresses, e-mails, and phone numbers. Emergency notices and seasonal updates are sent by e-mail making the importance of having them current crucial. MWA does not sell or share its e-mail or mailing lists. <b>Forward all information to Aaron Bailey: aaron@megunticook.org or 207-522-8794.</b></p>	<p><b>Interested in serving on the MWA Board of Directors, or helping out on a committee?</b> please contact Aaron Bailey or one of the Board officers. <i>aaron@megunticook.org</i></p> <p><i>Check us out at</i> <b><i>www.megunticook.org and on Facebook/Instagram</i></b></p> <p><b>Please don't forget your dues!</b> If there is a <b>yellow dues card and envelope</b> included with this newsletter, it is for your 2021-2022 dues. Please send in your membership check today. If you are not a member please consider joining and/or making a donation at this time.</p> <p><b>We need everyone's continued support!</b></p>

**Exec. Director Report: Happy fall everyone! Aaron Bailey here.** I started work for the MWA at the end of September as full-time Executive Director And Lake Warden. I continue to work with Paul and Dale as they bring me up to speed about the inner workings of the MWA. I have been out in the patrol boat a few times and have been able to get my eyes on most of the properties around the lake and pond. I have spent some time driving around and familiarizing myself with the watershed as well. It will be a busy winter continuing to be brought up to speed, keeping an eye on the watershed and getting things ready for spring. I want to thank everyone again for the opportunity to keep an eye on the watershed as I work to further the mission of the MWA. Hope to see folks out and about, and look forward to introducing myself to all the MWA members!

*Exec. Dir. Aaron Bailey Tel. 207-522-8794 Email: Aaron@megunticook.org*

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**Outgoing Exec. Director Report:** Well MWAers, this will be my last newsletter report. I announced my retirement to the Board this past summer and am looking forward to relaxing in this beautiful Watershed in the coming years. Your Board of Directors, after a long involved search, offered the position to Aaron Bailey. Aaron is the son of the late Ken Bailey who was instrumental in making the MWA what it is today. I think Aaron will do great in his new position and I hope everyone will assist him in any way possible as he learns the ropes.

I have enjoyed my time working to protect the Watershed that I love... although some of my duties were more enjoyable than others! As my wife said when I took the job, "you've spent your entire career trying to be outdoors as much as possible, and now you're going to stare at a computer screen?" Oh well, sometimes life throws you a curveball. It was a job that needed done and I thought I could help. The outdoors stuff was grand, the back office work, eh, I managed.

MWAers, looking forward I see a host of challenges for our Watershed: larger boats, user conflicts, overuse, water quality changes from less ice cover, invasive plants, both in the water and on land, to name a few. It will be up to all of us in the MWA community to help find solutions.

So folks, I'll get off my soapbox and, See you on the Water!

*Outgoing Exec. Dir. Paul Leeper Tel. 207-592-8540 Email: paul@megunticook.org*

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### ***Lake Warden's Report Continued from Pg.2***

The Music on the Lake Concert was also a damp evening with showers. The Jason Spooner Band played until it was raining hard. They called it for the night only 15 minutes early. Some boats left early with the showers but most stayed until the end. The area was clear of boats 20 min after the show just as darkness fell on the lake.

**Issues on the watershed-** Paddleboards without PFD's (Personal Floatation Device or life jacket). I continue to hear from Paddleboarders that their board is a PFD. This is not true, the regulations state that each paddleboarder must have their own PFD. Yes, your board will not sink to the bottom, because all boats sold in the states must have positive flotation. Source: BIA (Boating Industries of America)

Boat size is growing every year. The larger boats have larger wakes. Boaters think they're good only going half speed. But boats with bows high in the air at slower speeds are making a large wake that is harmful to people, shorelines, docks, and floats. Operators of boats are responsible for the damage their wakes cause. Check behind you just like you do with the rear-view mirror of your car. If your wake is big adjust your speed to reduce the wake. When in doubt, slow down and enjoy the ride.

Stay safe on the watershed this fall.

*Lake Warden and Camden Inland Harbormaster Dale Dougherty, Tel. 207-390-0030 E-mail: lakewarden@megunticook.org*

## Nature Notes with Amy

**UNWANTED: INVASIVE PLANTS** - And now for something different. These Nature Notes have always been about plants or animals that we enjoy seeing around the watershed; often ones we thrill to seeing. This time, not so much.

This late summer I have noticed ever more areas that are overwhelmed by invasive plants. This is true in a watershed where there is an ever-present concern about the introduction of invasive water plants that decrease enjoyment of recreation, disrupt the ecosystem, and have a negative effect on property values. Invasive alien plants also have an impact on land. And this can affect the wildlife that more and more we want to help preserve or encourage.

“A plant that is both non-native and able to establish on many sites, grow quickly, and spread to the point of disrupting plant communities or ecosystems” is a good definition of an invasive plant. Bottom line, they are nasty. Not being native, they have no natural controls (pests or diseases or animals that gobble them up) so nothing will stop their spread. They push out native plants that do have benefit for the ecosystem, plants that provide food and shelter to any number of animals for example, or ones that collectively form a habitat for many species, each with different ecological roles. Unfortunately, and what doesn't seem fair, sometimes these undesirables have lovely flowers. Think of purple loosestrife, (*Lythrum salicaria*), with their spires of pink/purple flowers that spread too easily usually in wet locations. Another one is Himalayan balsam, or ornamental jewelweed (*Impatiens globulifera*) whose interesting pink to white flowers entice bees and other insects to enter and collect nectar and pollen. I have seen people with out-of-state licenses stop to make photos where stands of this plant line Route 1 and have heard of people mowing around groups of these tall, pink-adorned plants in their yards. Stand back because the next year there will be more since the seeds spray out of the seed pods, guaranteeing their spread. Pretty flowers aren't enough to justify the presence of an invasive plant. Time to go beyond that.



Purple Loosestrife

Other plants such as Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) have brightly colored berries, and you might think, well, that is good for birds. Not so fast. The nutritional quality of many nonnative plants is not necessarily good enough to help birds put on enough weight for migration, for example. Many native berries are much higher in fat, which has more calories (don't we know that!) needed for lengthy flights, if not survival over frigid nights. Non-natives are high in sugar content, basically junk food in comparison. And in the case of barberry, an added negative feature is that it can increase the humidity in its local area to help disease-causing ticks survive.



Japanese Barberry Berry

Dominicus Johannes Bergsma, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia

Truly, isn't it time to encourage property owners to take more responsibility for dealing with invasive plants on their land? At least the state has now banned the sale of some of the more ornamental species, but what to do about burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) or Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) planted years ago by former property owners? What about seedlings that arrive from a neighboring property? Some of these non-native plants are atrociously difficult to eradicate so vigilance is important. It's easier to pull out a few small plants and keep them out than to be faced with a huge monoculture. In England, (and I also heard of a similar case in Massachusetts) having Japanese knotweed substantially decreases the value of the property. Now that would get people's attention.

When you look for invasives on your property, take care to inspect not only the area around the dwelling but also along the access road. We have found lots of seedling glossy buckthorn trees (*Frangula alnus*) along our road, for example, and are trying to eliminate them. You might wonder where they come from in what seems like pristine forests, but often the seeds are 'deposited' by animals and birds. If you share a road with others, plan a day to get together your neighbors to search for and eradicate invaders. And don't forget to have a plan to help keep the invasives from coming back!

I am continuously reminded of the famous quotation: “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.” We need to keep this in mind and act accordingly. This is one place where we can make a difference.

See [www.megunticook.org](http://www.megunticook.org) for references, color pictures of invasives, and more info.