



Newsletter

Fall 2020

From your President:

This 2020 season has been like no other! The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has universally set a different pace and outlook for each of us. As for all Watershed owners and patrons, it certainly solidified the valuable asset the Watershed is. Spending time on the water has a value that goes beyond the monetary and it has allowed for easy social distancing and created a safer haven during this unprecedented time. The Watershed continues to give experiences and memories that last a lifetime, even during a pandemic. Unlike the stock market, what it delivers cannot be measured in percentage points. The Megunticook Watershed protects this waterfront life and provides something that is priceless and worth protecting.

Water levels throughout the Watershed have been very low, primarily due to the statewide drought. Having to delay the repairs to the West Dam due to the pandemic didn't help matters either. Regardless, we have been able to sustain good water quality throughout. Our continued efforts must be to maintain the quality of the Megunticook Watershed, even during these unpredictable times.

While most everyone on the Watershed experiences the value of our protective measures to maintain the beautiful, clean waters to be passed on from generation to generation, we must engage more and grow our membership.

We need to reach out for continued donations and partnerships to allow our organization to develop new projects, protect our Watershed from persistent issues that threaten the quality of our waters, and strengthen the foundation of the Megunticook Watershed.

Let's work hard to set a course to protect our lake, ponds, streams, and river and change the status quo. More and more people are needed to engage in our membership to formulate ideas for our Watershed to be the healthiest and accessible to all the community and its visitors.

Regards,

*Jamie Weymouth, President
Megunticook Watershed Association
jamieweymouth@gmail.com*

Treasurer's Report: 2020 has been a year like no other! As we reach the half-way mark of our fiscal year, we are showing a slight decrease in our total income as a result of lower membership and contribution totals. At the present time we are down 7% in memberships and contributions are down 33% compared to this time last year. This summer we had a slight decrease in payroll expenses as well as a decrease in various boat maintenance, fuel and office expenses and are currently operating well within our current budget (Budget can be found on Pg. 2). One note about the budget: since we are a non-profit, and rely heavily on contributions for our funding, it is hard to forecast yearly income. We traditionally have been conservative in our budgeting for contributions, hence the deficit. But with your generous support, most years the MWA ends up in the black. Keep up the good work!

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to thank everyone for their continued support of MWA especially as we all navigate the uncharted waters around the pandemic. 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.

Sarah Marriner, Treasurer smarriner80@gmail.com

MWA Budget– FY ‘20/’21

Ordinary Income/Expense		May '20 - Apr 21
Income		
Merchandise.		
Merchandise (Other)	\$150.00	
<u>Apparel</u>	<u>\$150.00</u>	
Total Merchandise.		\$300.00
Interest - CDs		\$40.00
Interest Income-Checking acct		\$5.00
Reimbursement--MWA Services		\$11,700.00
Contribution		\$16,800.00
Grants		
Partners In Monitoring Cont	\$3,000.00	
<u>Milfoil Grant/Watershed Steward</u>	<u>\$2,800.00</u>	
Total Grants		\$5,800.00
Membership		
Business	\$1,150.00	
Friend	\$2,000.00	
Regular	\$15,000.00	
<u>Sustaining</u>	<u>\$16,000.00</u>	
Total Membership		\$34,150.00
Total Income		\$68,795.00
Expense		
Partners in Monitoring Expenses		
Water Monitoring Supplies	\$300.00	
<u>Water Analyses</u>	<u>\$2,000.00</u>	
Total Partners in Monitoring Expenses		\$2,300.00
Lake Smart		\$250.00
Merchandise		
<u>Apparel</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>	
Total Merchandise		\$500.00
Invasive Plant Expenses		\$250.00
Map Expense		\$50.00
uniform		\$250.00
Maine Lakes Dues		\$600.00
Legal & Accounting		\$695.00
Insurance		\$5,500.00
Office Expense		\$3,500.00
Payroll Expenses		
Interns/Water Stewards	\$8,500.00	
Wage Expenses	\$56,000.00	
<u>Payroll Taxes</u>	<u>\$4,930.00</u>	
Total Payroll Expenses		\$69,430.00
Postage		\$550.00
Equipment Expense		
Boat Maint	\$1,500.00	
Vehicle Expense Boat registrati	\$60.00	
Repair & Maintenance - Other	\$250.00	
Fuel	\$500.00	
<u>Mileage</u>	<u>\$3,000.00</u>	
Total Equipment Expense		\$5,310.00
Total Expense		\$89,185.00
Net Ordinary Income		-\$20,390.00
Net Income		-\$20,390.00

MWA Officers

President- Jamie Weymouth

jamieweymouth@gmail.com

1st Vice President- Dody Urquia

urquiad@aol.com

2nd Vice President- Hillary Jackson

hillaryhope1@yahoo.com

Secretary - Wendy Wickenden

wendyllynwick@gmail.com

Treasurer– Sarah Marriner

smarriner80@gmail.com

MWA Staff

Exec. Director - Paul Leeper

207-592-8540; paul@megunticook.org

Lake Warden –Dale Dougherty

207-390-0030; lakewarden@megunticook.org

Asst. Lake Warden– Justin Twitchell

207-975-1721; jtwitchell@knoxcountymaine.gov

IMPORTANT!!!

**Do we have your current e-mail address,
mailing address and phone number?**

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. **Forward all information to Paul Leeper: paul@megunticook.org or 207-592-8540. Thanks!**

Interested in serving on the MWA Board of Directors, or helping out on a committee?

please contact Paul Leeper or one of the Board officers. *paul@megunticook.org*

*Check us out at
www.megunticook.org and on Facebook/
Instagram*

Please don't forget your dues!

If there is a **yellow dues card** and **envelope** included with this newsletter, it is for your 2020-2021 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.

We need everyone's continued support!

Exec. Director Report: Well the pandemic certainly changed the way we conducted the Association's business this past year. In preparing this newsletter I looked back at past issues stuffed with announcements for parades, pizza nights, raffles, and informational talks. This year, social distancing and limits on gatherings meant virtual Zoom meetings, face masks, and hand sanitizer. The **Watershed Stewards Program** is now in its seventh year. This year's boat inspection #s indicate what many of you noticed. The lake and pond are busier than ever. This year our Stewards inspected over 2300 boats, a 46% increase from last year. Inspections/hour at Bog Bridge jumped 32%. This program's costs are approaching \$10,000 per season. If you know of a funding source for a program such as this please contact me.

Low weekly bacteria levels were found during this past summer on the pond, lake and river. The exception was at Shirttail Point on the river in early July, The Town had to issue a swimming advisory due to levels above the EPA threshold. This occurred just after we had our only heavy rain of the summer. Many thanks to all our volunteers, especially Kate Killoran, for conducting this valuable program.

The dry summer, with little runoff into the lake and pond, made for some clear water. The clarity in Megunticook Lake in August was over 27 feet. However, we shouldn't get complacent. Harmful algae blooms occurred in area lakes and ponds, including Damariscotta, Chickawaukie, and the Wildlife Pond which feeds into Megunticook. We should all do our part to prevent siltation and harmful stormwater runoff from entering the waters. Having said that, if you would like some assistance, or would like to be educated on ways to prevent runoff from flowing directly into the water you can take advantage of our free **LakeSmart program**. **LakeSmart** is a program that offers **FREE** opportunities for homeowners to learn how to manage their home and yard to protect the water quality of our waters. The program is not regulatory, no one gets reported to the EPA, it's volunteers helping neighbors with practical, common sense, solutions to erosion problems. Contact me for further info. *Exec. Dir. Paul Leeper Tel. 207-592-8540 Email: paul@megunticook.org*

Lake Warden's Report: What a great summer! The weather was fabulous, warm and sunny, day after day. Boats of all types were put into use this summer. Many had not been in the water for years. Old boats were dragged out of the woods and fields, cleaned up, and fired up. Repowering was popular when the local boat shops ran out of boats for sale, with lots of boats from the 60's and 70's put back into service. The older boat looked great, some even got painted to look brand new. Not only power boats but the paddlers were out in large numbers. On some weekends the paddle boats made a line of boats all the way from the jumping rock to Bog Bridge

The water level was an issue this fall. At present you cannot get a larger size power boat past the Bailey Bridge narrows. The water there is about 20 inches deep but only about 4 feet wide because of rocks on either side of the channel.

Work on the West Outlet Dam has begun. The coffer dam is in place and the water only trickles under it. Fixing the gate on this dam will help with the water levels in future years, but the lack of rain over the summer is the main reason that the water is so low now. There are many floats and boats that have grounded out and need the water to come up some before they can get their equipment out of the water for the winter. Lots of boats were taken out early to avoid this problem.

The fishing has been good this fall with many folks catching some large browns and rainbows on the surface of the lake and pond. A beaver is trying to dam the waters at Bailey Bridge. The low water levels have given it an opportunity to build a dam. It uses sticks, branches, mud, rocks and grass to build. I have been removing it nightly. Some days not much construction happens but on others, wow can that little guy accomplish a lot. Hopefully if the water comes up some the beaver will give up and go away.

Hunting season is going on now. Goose and duck and archery deer hunters are around the watershed. Please respect the hunters and give them a wide berth as not to interfere with the hunt. It's illegal to interfere with a hunter legally hunting. The gun season for deer opens on the October 31 resident only day and November 2nd regular season opens for everyone. Wear some blaze orange gear for safety when tramping about.

The water is getting colder daily; we are down into the low 60's. If headed out remember to be careful. Tell someone when and where you are going and when expected back. Have a great time out this fall the colors are bright but will soon be gone, get out and enjoy!

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

Nature Notes with Amy

“ ‘Sexy REXY!’ Could be a new plant for gardens!”, Bill Cullina, then director of the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden, excitedly commented as he pointed to a pretty plant blooming in a rain garden display near one of the buildings. Well, the nickname sure helps to remember the botanical name, *Rhexia virginica*! More commonly known as Virginia meadow beauty or Handsome Harry, it grows in the wild in wet areas and usually acid conditions. This perennial is attractive enough to be of interest to gardeners but in truth, so far, there are only a few sources of seeds, and rarely, plants (see below). *R. virginica* has the widest distribution of all 12 species of *Rhexia* found in the US and can be found in the entire eastern part of the country. Locally, in mid-to-late summer, it rings the edges of the lake in various places such as Land’s End, often near another wetland specialist, cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*). Sometimes plants quickly grow and bloom as the water retreats seasonally from the previously submerged fringes.

Paddling along the shore, you first notice a group of pink flowering plants. They spread by rhizomes, underground roots that encourage this colony formation. Then if you get out of your kayak and look closer, you note the arrangement of the four flat broad petals of the flower, held at the top of the foliage, highly visible and quite showy. They certainly do nicely frame the complex array of longish, yellow stamens that dangle from the middle of the flower. “Aha”, you think. “Pollinator magnets!” and you might be interested to learn that even though the stamens look like they should be loaded with readily available pollen, they only sell their wares to insects that can ‘buzz pollinate’. Only bumble bees and some other native bees, as well as at least one fly species, are able physically to create the buzzing vibration that releases the pollen from small openings at the top of the anther. Aren’t insects interesting (as well as essential!)?

Later in the season, the stems take on a reddish tinge and the seed pods add more character. In fact, Henry David Thoreau wrote in his journal on October 2, 1856: "The scarlet leaves and stem of the rhexia, some time out of flower, make almost as bright a patch in the meadow now as the flowers did. Its seed vessels are perfect little cream pitchers of graceful form." (1)

So please look for this sweet reminder of summer, now perhaps glowing more with its fall foliage hues as you row along the shore. Perhaps you might be intrigued enough to find a source of seeds and try to grow some if you have a suitable place along the shoreline. And perhaps in time Bill Cullina’s comment will inspire yet another common name for this native flower - ‘Sexy Rex.’

<https://www.prairiemoon.com/rhexia-virginica-meadow-beauty>. Also source of Thoreau quote. Source for seeds but beware of provenance

Other sources:

<http://hawthornhillwildflowers.blogspot.com/2013/06/handsome-harry-rhexia-virginica.html>

<http://bonap.net/Napa/TaxonMaps/Genus/County/Rhexia>

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=RHVI

<https://www.almostedenplants.com/shopping/products/11762-handsome-harry-virginia-meadow-beauty/> Possible source of plants but provenance not the best for Maine. Amy Campbell

Editor’s Note: The black and white photos don’t do this plant justice. Look for color pics and more Nature Notes at www.megunticook.org soon!

