



Reflections



FALL 2023

Westmore Association, Inc. Newsletter

Number 53

Letter from the President

By Deb Smith

Another beautiful day at the lake, something I know none of us take for granted this late in September, as I sit out on the back deck contemplating writing a proper President's Letter, grateful for the company of my almost 14-year-old sweetly naughty NEK-born & raised golden; the view of Pisgah looming ever large, and the perpetual "Willoughby kid" in me unable to not notice the lake below still calm enough for waterskiing.

While it doesn't seem possible, another summer has seemingly flown by at Willoughby Lake. And for those of us blessed to still be enjoying our early morning coffee (or tea, or smoothie) outside with October upon us, each day gently demands to be savored just a bit more than the last.

Thanks to all of you, the Westmore Association is still relevant, flourishing and continuing the mission on which it was founded in 1967 after a group of thirty-five passionate Willoughby Lake summer residents met informally to discuss how they might assist the town in managing such timeless and universal concerns as unplanned growth, water quality and traffic control. A letter was soon sent to all property owners inviting them to attend an open meeting. One hundred and fifty-five people showed up and the Westmore Association was born.

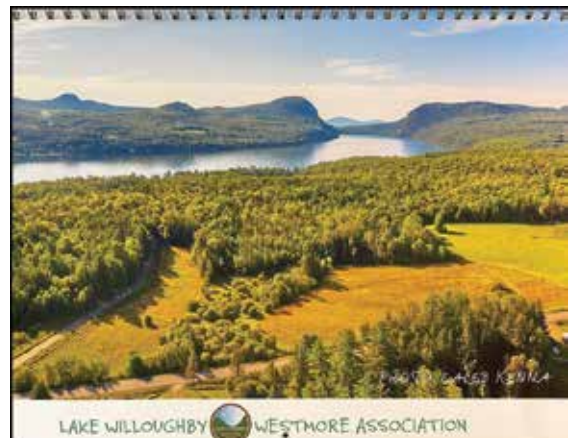
Restoring our magnificent lake to its original pristine water classification has been a priority along with protecting the integrity of our shoreline, the purity of our surrounding mountain brooks and streams, and the habitats of our resident loons, hawks, eagles, owls, peregrine falcons, rainbow trout and salmon. To that end, the Westmore Association is committed to and intent upon raising awareness re: risks of allowing wake boats on Willoughby at any distance, at any time; prompting a well-considered well-met formal announcement at this year's annual meeting in July: The best thing for Willoughby is no wake boats on Willoughby.

In conclusion, on behalf of both the outgoing and incoming Westmore Association boards, I would like to thank you for your ongoing membership support and involvement in the Westmore Association. Because of your generosity and care, the Association remains a vital, valuable, and viable organization whose mission serves to protect and preserve the natural beauty of our enviable environs.

Westmore Association Calendars

Looking for a gift for your loved one or friend? Check out the 2024 Lake Willoughby Calendar, available to purchase on our website or at the Westmore Town Clerk's Office.

<https://www.westmoreassociation.org/shop/>



Westmore Association Board Members

The 2023 Westmore Association Board includes Deb Smith as President, Irene Salerno as Treasurer and Jennifer Woolard as Clerk. The Vice President role is currently vacant. Board Directors include Peter Miller, Bruce Tanner, and Deborah Baskin. This year, we also welcome back past and new members, Ellie Majchrzak, Peggy Zimmer, and Pastor Bob Leibold to the Board of Directors. A fond farewell to Abbie Gowdy-Chase and Deborah Richards for all their contributions.

Membership on the Board is a great way to provide leadership and stay engaged to support the mission of the Westmore Association: To promote, develop and conserve the natural resources and community life of the Westmore area. We are currently looking for dedicated and committed volunteers to join our Board in both Officer and Director positions.

The Board meets once a month between February and October and members actively participate in Association committees and community events. Board terms are three years in length with an option to extend. Board members do not need to be year-round Westmore residents, virtual meeting options are available.

*If you are interested in joining the Board or for more information,
please contact: president@westmoreassociation.org*

Membership Report

By Abbie Gowdy-Chase

In trying to increase membership we expanded our outreach in the 2023 Spring newsletter by including all residents of Westmore. We currently have 160 households in our membership, an increase from the 143 members in 2022. With the current members, we have received donations totaling \$16,900.00 for the 2023 Year. This year we also received some local corporate sponsors, which has increased our donations by \$1080.00. Those sponsors include:

The Gap Pub and Grill, C & C Supermarket, Vermont Beef Jerk, E.M. Brown & Son, Century 21 Farm & Forest, Devaney Farm Stand and Conley Country.

We are grateful for our member and corporate donations; they enable us to do so much for Westmore. We know by your donation you also want to help preserve this treasure of a community. As a personal touch, we try to connect with each member through email to acknowledge contributions. Please feel free to share your email with Abbie at: abbiegc@aol.com or add to the membership form when renewing: <https://www.westmoreassociation.org/>.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Scholarship Committee Report

By Deborah Richards

The Westmore Association has a long tradition of supporting the educational pursuits of its citizens and, as such, offers an annual scholarship to a student or individual pursuing post high school education.

This year we were pleased to award a scholarship to Bria Lacoss who is currently in an early childhood program at the Community College of Vermont (CCV). It is her intent to work with special education students when she graduates.

2022 Treasurer Report

By Irene Salerno

We were pleased to see our total income for 2022 climb to over \$25,550. Membership and donations totaled \$21,050, sales from products (calendars, notecards, tote bags etc.) reached \$3000 and income from events (puppet show, plein air, concerts etc.) was \$1500.

It is worth mentioning these programs by name as they are the heart of the Westmore Association:

- Lake protection through milfoil harvesting and boat greeter programs.
- Scholarships for post-high school continuing education
- Trail maintenance
- Community beautification
- Local music events, lectures and

In addition, we were proud to sponsor/support: The Westmore community Church Carillon, Providing U.S. and Vermont flags for Westmore Community Church lakeside park, Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds & Memphremagog Watershed membership, Westmore Community Church Fall Festival, Westmore Mountain Challenge, activities with the Old Stone House Museum, and more.

All of which totaled, with production and administration costs, \$42,000. This budget shortfall of \$16,450 was by design, and still left a positive balance in our Credit Union Account. It is worth emphasizing however, that the current and future success of the Westmore Association and its outreach programs, preserving lakes, trails, gardens, and the type and quality of life that we love and wish to continue in the Northern Vermont area, depends on your membership.



Events

We had a wonderful lineup of events this past summer and we thank everyone who was able to join and make them a success. From our annual meeting and boat parade to the modern times show, Abenaki and wildlife discussions and musical concerts, it was a fun summer to be in Westmore.

Check out some of 2023 event highlights:

Annual Meeting

The 2023 Annual Meeting was a great success. Many thanks to all those involved in planning and facilitating the meeting and the many members that attended. We recognized incoming and outgoing board members, reviewed the treasurer report, and heard a great update from Maria Young at Northwoods Stewardship Center and Bevin Barber-Campbell from the Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District. And of course, enjoyed a delicious potluck. One thing that stood out during the meeting was that we're all in this together. Our shared interest is the stability of Lake Willoughby and our community. We appreciate you all and we look forward to gathering again next year.

22nd Annual Boat Parade

This year's theme was Superhero's! Thanks to all the boats that came out and made it such a success!

For the 2024 July 4th Boat Parade, we encourage our members to join our Theme Contest! Submitting Is Easy-- Come up with an idea for a theme for the boat parade and send us your ideas via email or you can mail it in. The contest is open to all, and the winner will receive a prize! The winner will be announced on social media and email next Spring.

Please submit your theme ideas by December 31st, 2023.

Submissions: Email: jewoolard@gmail.com or P.O. Box 143, Orleans, VT 05860



Plein Air

Our 8th annual event, always on the first weekend of August, was once again a success. Our painters had a fabulous sunny day to choose their spot to paint in the Willoughby Lake area and the paintings were exceptional. The wine and cheese reception and art sale were well received and several of the paintings sold. Mark your calendars for next year's painting day!



Modern Times

Once again Justin and Rose entertained us with their original Punch and Judy puppet show. This local talent team has been a favorite annual mid-August event for children and adults. After the show Justin adds to the program by auctioning off delicious local homemade pies, a special treat for all.



Trails and Recreation

By Maria Young, Northwoods Stewardship Center

In 2023, the Westmore Association supported one week of youth crew work. This summer, that work included one day of maintenance work in the Westmore Town Forest, where the crew cleared drainage and water bars as well as blow downs and corridor clearing, this is called Level 1 Patrol. For the remaining four days, the crew worked on the North Trail of Pisgah in the Willoughby State Forest. Here, they were able to use advanced rigging technique as well as the traditional teamwork with rock bars to move large stepping stones and install rock steps. The stepping stones were used to cross a perennial stream. This improvement will not only keep hikers happy with dry feet, but will also protect water quality in the stream, reducing erosion around the crossing and keeping hikers out of the stream itself. NorthWoods was glad to share and learn at the Annual Meeting of the Westmore Association and sees several opportunities ahead to continue to be a resource of the town of Westmore for recreation and conservation.



Water Quality Committee

By Bruce Tanner

Lake Watershed Action Plan

The Westmore Association is currently undertaking a Lake Watershed Action Plan (LWAP) in cooperation with, and under the direction of, The Memphremagog Watershed Association (MWA) and the Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District (OCNRCD). This project was initiated in the beginning of 2022 and is motivated by a concern for the steadily increasing Spring concentration of Phosphorus (P) in the waters of Willoughby Lake – a limiting nutrient for aquatic plant and algae growth. By any measure, Willoughby Lake is one of the cleanest lakes in Vermont today, but this status is under threat if P input isn't curtailed, and the sooner the better. While cyanobacteria blooms are not in the immediate future for Willoughby, other non-toxic algae blooms are already occurring – the canary in the coal mine, so to speak. The main goal, therefore, of the LWAP is to mitigate the input of P from Willoughby's surrounding watershed. Since P readily binds to sediment particles, decreasing the amount of sediment entering Willoughby will also decrease the amount of P.

continued ...



Willoughby's watershed basin area is relatively small with respect to the surface area of the lake (7:1) compared with other lakes' watersheds. The average gradient of the watershed, however, is steep, due to the surrounding mountainous landscape. Thus, stream flow into Willoughby tends to be rapid, energetic, and forceful, especially during storm events, so stream bank erosion and storm water runoff are of particular concern.

During the Summer and Fall of 2022 and the Spring and Summer of 2023 professional experts from MWA and OCNRC D surveyed streams, roadways, culverts, agricultural lands, shorelands, and developed infrastructure throughout the watershed. This was accomplished via boots-on-the-ground observations as well as reviewing prior surveys, maps, data, and remote sensing archives. All this information was distilled into seventy possible projects to mitigate P input to Willoughby, ranked according to cost effectiveness.

At the July 6th, 2023, LWAP Stakeholders meeting in the Westmore Community Church's Fellowship Hall, three projects out of the seventy identified were voted on and selected for a 30% design, as stipulated in the grant agreement. These were: 1. The North Beach gullying/erosion problem; 2. Hinton Hill Road storm drain outlet redirection; 3. Grandview Farm (previously Lacross Farm) Best Management Practices implementation. As of this writing, project #3 has already obtained a commitment to proceed with a 30% design from the landowner, while the North Beach project has been put on hold, due to some reticence expressed at Westmore Select Board meetings. Project #2 is still under discussion, with committal letters still awaiting approval from the town Select Board and Church Council. At this stage, any commitment is just to go forward with the 30% design and does not commit anybody to carrying out the proposed project. The 30% design is merely provided as a support for pursuing outside funding, should recipients choose to go forward with the proposed project.

There are many other worthy projects to pursue, both big and small, and your Board of Directors will be engaging with as many as possible in the coming months and years. So, if someone knocks on your door, please give them a kindly ear, and ask questions, as we are committed to helping everybody to live lake friendly. To that end, the WA is promoting the Lake Wise Program established by the Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Lakes and Ponds division for lake shoreland property owners. Your participation in this program is strictly voluntary, costs you nothing, and is an opportunity to learn if your shoreland property qualifies for a Lake Wise Award, or else what could be done to qualify for one. Awardees will receive a plaque to display proudly, and they can rest assured that they are doing their part to preserve and protect the health of Willoughby Lake. For more information on Lake Wise go online to <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/lakeshores-lake-wise>.

Volunteer Lake Monitoring

Since 1980 off and on, and from Memorial Day to Labor Day, volunteers have been going out biweekly to sample Willoughby Lake water for analysis and to take measurements on surface water temperature and water transparency (i.e., turbidity), via the Secchi depth method. The water samples and filtrates thereof are delivered to the Vermont Agricultural and Environmental Laboratory (VAEL) in Randolph, VT, for determination of total Phosphorus concentration (TP) and of total Chlorophyll-A (Chl-A), a proxy for algae concentration. In addition, DEC staff analyze water samples for TP taken shortly after ice out in the Springtime. This sample provides a better baseline measure of TP concentration, independent of summer weather variability which can cause variable input of P. For a graphical summary of these data go online to: https://anrweb.vt.gov/PubDocs/DEC/WSMD/Lakes/Lake_Score_Cards/WILLOUGHBY.HTML

The data summarized at the above link provide the incentive to try to mitigate the input of P into Willoughby Lake. Data from the 2023 season will be added by early 2024.

Larosa Partnership Program

In 2021 the Westmore Association was accepted into the LaRosa Partnership Program (LPP), administered by the VT DEC. Funds are provided by this program for lake associations throughout Vermont to carry out water analyses of lake tributaries. By monitoring tributary chemistry, one can determine where, when, and how much certain pollutants of interest are entering the lake. For Willoughby Lake, six major tributaries were selected for monitoring: 1. Roaring Brook on the west side south of Crescent Beach; 2. An unnamed brook on the northwest side draining beaver ponds in the Westmore Town Forest; 3. Stoney Brook on the northeast side; 4. Wells Brook (“Church” in the tables) along Hinton Hill Rd; 5. Mill Brook along Long Pond Rd; 6. An unnamed brook entering the lake at the west end of the eastern South Beach (“SE Beach”). The pollutants being monitored are total Phosphorus and total Chloride by SEAL (an analytical technique). A link to online data can be found here: <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/map/monitor/larosa/lpp-data-and-reports>. At this web page click on the “Water Chemistry Data Report” link and then in the “Partner” window scroll down to select “Lake Willoughby – Westmore Association,” then click the “View Report” button. Please keep in mind that the annual average summer TP concentration for Willoughby Lake is 10.4 $\mu\text{g/L}$. Because total dissolved Chloride is only present in significant concentrations in the SE BEACH tributary, starting in 2023 Chloride will no longer be monitored in the other tributaries.

Clearly, from a close reading of the tabled data, we will need to make all tributary stream banks more resilient to storm events and to identify sources of P feeding into these tributaries if we are to succeed in preventing the steady increase of TP in Willoughby Lake.

Greeter & Milfoil Program by Katherine Busby, Greeter Program coordinator

Our Greeter season ran from Memorial Day to Labor Day. There were ten Greeters in the program. All Greeters and Staff took online training with Olin Reed of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Thanks to a generous donation from the Westmore Association, we raised the Greeter hourly pay rate to \$17.

We inspected 4,516 watercrafts. Of those watercrafts: 39 boats had plant material removed by our Greeters, 11 had invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil removed (4 boats were carrying Eurasian Water Milfoil upon launching and 7 upon retrieval). The Greeter Program is essential to keeping Lake Willoughby free of invasive species and protecting other bodies of water.

Thanks to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and with the help of the Memphremagog Watershed Association, the Town of Westmore received a grant award amount of \$6,157 for the Greeter Program and \$9,357 for the Milfoil Management Program. The Westmore Association also provides \$8,000 for the Greeter and Milfoil Program.



Looking for opportunities to stay up to date with some of the Association activities?

Sign up for our summer newsletter delivered to your email inbox:
<http://eepurl.com/g5RTs5>



OR
Scan the
QR Code

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:

www.westmoreassociation.org

Volunteers:

The Westmore Association is always seeking volunteers to assist with website upkeep, communication, events, and more. If you're interested, please contact us:
info@westmoreassociation.org

Westmore Association
Officers & Board of Directors
2022-2023
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Vacant, *Vice-President*
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NEWSLETTER

