



# Friends of Lake Williams Newsletter

2009 Issue 2

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## FLW Awards Volunteer of the Year Award

During the annual meeting in June 2009, Frank Catalano was presented the FLW Volunteer of the year award for 2009. He was recognized for his enthusiastic effort as a Board Member and for his actions as the Vice President of FLW. Frank was the prime catalyst in starting our Annual Boat Parade that is in its 4<sup>th</sup> year. His enthusiasm for that event has spilled over into fund raising and other activities. Frank is a Lebanon resident and maintains a seasonal cabin on one of the Lake Williams islands adjacent to Fox Island.

The Volunteer of the Year Award began in 2000 and is funded by an anonymous donor. It is designed to honor those members who have given their time and effort to improve the quality of our lake life and our organization.



Former FLW President Steve Looby presents the "Volunteer of the Year" award to Frank Catalano, who is also our newly elected President.

## What is a riparian buffer?

Thanks to the Candlewood Lake Authority newsletters and the CLA web site that served as a reference for much of this article.

A buffer, or "riparian buffer," is a strip of land with vegetation such as plants, shrubs and trees along the shoreline that separates your lawn from the water. A riparian buffer helps to stabilize the shoreline and prevent erosion while catching runoff from your lawn. It will help to absorb things such as fertilizers and pesticides and trap sediment before they can enter the Lake. In addition, it also provides habitat for birds and other small wildlife while acting as a barrier to nuisance Canada geese because they may fear a predatory animal is hiding. Finally, it will serve as a barrier that will help prevent blowing fall leaves from reaching the water.

Besides creating your own riparian buffer, there are other things you can do to make your property lake-friendly. Storm water runoff is a large contributor to lake-issues.

Storm water carries nutrients from fertilizers, pesticides and sediment, all of which are detrimental to the health of our lake. Runoff can build in both volume and speed as it runs downhill, causing erosion. Properly dealing with and trying to prevent storm water runoff are important lake protection measures. Below are five suggestions for making your property more lake-friendly.

1) If you must have a turf grass lawn, choose wisely. Resist the urge to grade to the lake, limit compacting the soil and use landscaping techniques such as swales and rain gardens that slow or stop water flow toward the lake. It will also help if you limit the existence of lawns that run to the water's edge. You can reduce the adverse effect of the lawn on lake-water quality by having natural vegetation buffering areas (riparian buffer) between any lawn and the lake.

2) Install rain gardens and rain barrels. A rain garden is a depression in the ground, which is filled with plants and shrubs, that acts to catch runoff from rooftop downspouts, driveways etc. The depression fills with the water so that it doesn't run down the property, and the water is absorbed into the soil and used by the plants. A rain barrel would also collect rooftop runoff from downspouts. Rain barrels also collect and hold the water for such things as gardening and watering other yard plants.

3) Reduce impervious surfaces. Impervious surfaces such as rooftops, driveways and sidewalks don't absorb storm water. Instead it runs down those surfaces, building in speed and volume. Reducing the amount and effects of impervious surfaces is important. Strive to reduce the overall impervious surface totals on one's property. For example, you could replace an asphalt driveway or cement walkway with a more porous surface, such as block or crushed stone.

4) Ensure proper lot drainage. By adding culverts, diversions, ditches, sump pumps etc. where necessary you can help to prevent erosion and encourage infiltration of runoff into soil.

5) Utilize twisting and narrow paths. Long straight paths and walkways that lead down a hill towards the Lake act as direct water chutes into the lake, carrying nutrients, sediment and debris with the water. By creating a narrow, twisting path, the water won't have a straight run into the lake and instead it will encourage infiltration of the runoff into the soil and lead to less erosion.

## Did You Know?

*By Paul Cote*

The brochure for the Airline Trail, a 26 mile linear State Park that passes to the north of our Lake, provides the following information related to Lake Williams: "Lake Williams was first made popular when the train brought visitors from New York City to vacation at local farms and

at the resort at Williams Pond. The pond was enlarged as clay was excavated to supply a local brickyard. Today, the pond is called Lake Williams and the Spa at Grand Lake is still operating at the southern end of the lake." The segment of the above caption that intrigued me refers to the enlargement of the lake by clay excavation. I researched the matter extensively at the Lebanon Library with no success. When I became aware that brick kilns existed in the early days of Colchester, I extended my research to the Cragin Library in Colchester in the hopes that the trail might lead to Lake Williams as the source of the raw material. Again I had no success. Finally, I corresponded with the Town Historians of both towns. Stanley Moroch, Town Historian of Colchester, assured me that the kilns I sought were not in Colchester. He said kilns were typically located very close to the source of material to increase the brick yard's efficiency. In the meantime, Alicia Wayland, Town Historian of Lebanon provided some valuable leads that I am still pursuing. If anyone reading this newsletter can help resolve the mystery of where in the lake the clay was excavated and where the brickyards were located, it would satisfy the curiosity of this reporter and perhaps anyone else who may have read the Air Line Trail brochure.

## 2nd Annual Lake Cleanup Day

On August 8, 2009, the Friends of Lake Williams conducted its second annual lake clean up. Approximately fifteen volunteers gathered at the 2<sup>nd</sup> beach at 9:00 AM. Each was assigned an area of the lake to scour the shoreline on foot and to examine the shallow areas in boats and remove any visible trash. Many noted that the lake was noticeable cleaner this year than during our first cleanup. The entire project took about two hours. A significant pile of trash was assembled and left near the dam parking lot on Route 207. The trash included plywood, 2X6 beams, 2X4's, old tires and many beer and soda cans that were consolidated in plastic bags. With the co-operation of the town's First Selectman's Office, the trash was scheduled for pickup during the next week. FLW hopes that through our example, more people will become aware of the need to remove their trash rather than discard it in the lake. If this goal can be reached, the need to conduct annual cleanups will disappear.



After the cleanup Frank Catalano once again offered the use of his island for a picnic that was held for the volunteers.

## Lake Survey Update

Friends of Lake Williams (FLW) Inc. announced previously that Lake Williams in Lebanon Connecticut was chosen by the Invasive Aquatic Plant Program at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) to be surveyed. The survey was conducted in June 2009 just prior to the lake treatment. Results will be evaluated and compiled and published in the fall on the CAES web site.

Scientists at the CAES began surveying the State's lakes and ponds for invasive aquatic plants and to test various control options in 2004. The program is supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture whose goal is to help develop baseline data of the geographical distribution of aquatic invasive plants through surveys of Connecticut lakes and ponds. So far, surveys have been successfully completed for over 130 lakes or ponds. Surveys are focused primarily on invasive plant species, but the location and abundance of native submerged and floating-leaved plants is also recorded. The research will allow CAES to track the spread of invasive plants and to record the arrival of new invasive plants. The surveys also provide baseline information on how native plant communities change in response to invasions. Control studies include tests on the effectiveness of herbicides and on the effects that mechanical removal has on plant communities.



A CAES team conducts their lake survey on Lake Williams in June 2009.

## Milfoil Treatment Status

*By Paul Cote*

Another section of the Lake was treated in June 2009 with the herbicide named Reward by Aquatic Controls Technologies (ACT). FLW partners with the Town of Lebanon every year to split the annual cost. This was the first treatment that was witnessed by this reporter. From my

observations of the treatment process, it appears that water is drawn from the lake by the ACT boat utilizing some sort of pump. The water is then passed through a drum containing the chemical where it is mixed and sprayed on the lake's surface in the vicinity of the milfoil. The lake treatment area is limited by the Department of Environmental Protection and the contractor controls this by arriving on site with just enough chemical to treat the specified area. When the chemical in the drums has been used up, the treatment ends. Mary's Cove was extremely infested this year and I monitored the effectiveness of the treatment by observing the herbicide application during the application and by periodically inspecting the Cove afterward. It was remarkable to me how the Reward is so selective. I did not observe any effect to other aquatic vegetation over time save a yellowing of surface lily pad leaves that were sprayed. The lily pads seemed to regain their color and vigor within a few days but the milfoil turned brown and eventually disappeared. The Reward application is preferred and was recommended by the state DEP because the herbicide breaks down into harmless compounds within seven days. The results of the state's aquatic vegetation survey will be available in the fall and it will help FLW now and in the future to assess the effectiveness of our chosen course of action against variable leaf milfoil.



Aquatic Controls Technologies applies herbicide treatment in Mary's Cove.

## High School Student Volunteers

During the June 2009 general FLW meeting, Rebecca Smith, one of our newest members, was introduced to the membership and revealed that she intends to focus her High School Senior Project on something that will be of benefit to Lake Williams.





Rebecca Smith addresses the Friends of Lake Williams

Rebecca submitted the following article to introduce her proposal.

**My Senior Project – Helping With Lake Management at Lake Williams**

My name is Rebecca Smith and I am a senior at Lyman High School, here in Lebanon, CT. For my Senior Project, I would like to assist the Friends of Lake Williams in the area of lake management. I am very interested in this topic, as I have lived on a lake in Massachusetts in the summertime my whole life. I have learned that a beautiful lake to be enjoyed does not happen all by itself. Lake management takes a lot of effort from many people. The problems of invasive weeds and exotic species infestation are always ongoing. A zebra mussel infestation has just been identified in a Massachusetts lake for the first time last week, and this lake is quite near my own. So here is yet another problem issue for lake associations to address.

I have had the pleasure of attending the FLW annual meeting and have become a member myself. I have learned about the terrific activities that the FLW is involved in – the fundraising, monitoring water quality, weed control measures, boating safety classes, and a community boat parade, among other things. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cote have taken me for a lake tour on their pontoon boat which helped me to understand the lake, its history, and its beauty. You truly have a gem of a lake. While munching on cheese and crackers and fruit (such nice hospitality!) as we toured the lake, I learned a lot about some of the projects the FLW are working on to keep Lake Williams a beautiful recreational lake. To complement these projects, I have some ideas that I would like to put into practice as part of my senior project. These include: building a kiosk at the boat launching area to hold informational material that boaters on Lake Williams should be aware of; use of desktop publishing to prepare some informational pamphlets specific to Lake Williams; and taking a survey of Lake Williams residents to gather some baseline data on lake management issues important to homeowners and how each homeowner can help. If you

have other ideas that you think would be suitable as part of my senior project, I would like very much to hear them. You can contact me at: [thpsmith@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thpsmith@sbcglobal.net). I am fortunate to have the FLW to partner with during the completion of my senior project. I have been warmly welcomed and will do my best to help meet our shared goals of protecting Lake Williams.

Thank you.

**Membership**

The FLW annual membership drive kicked off again in the spring of 2009. The organization’s fiscal year is July 1 to June 30. New memberships are accepted at any time during the fiscal year.

**Do you have favorite pictures of Lake Williams or interesting lake related information that could be included as a column?**

The newsletter committee is seeking pictures or interesting lake related information either for the newsletter and/or the FLW Web site. If you have a favorite Lake Williams picture or interesting story and want to share it with others, please forward it to the newsletter committee (see contact information at the end of this newsletter). Perhaps you have a unique picture of activity on the Lake, animals in the wild, a fisherman’s catch that stands out from the rest, etc. If you have a short story to pass along to supplement the picture, it would greatly enhance the value of the addition.

**Season odds & ends**

On May 2, 2009, lakeside residents and visitors were surprised to see a small airplane with pontoons make multiple landings and take offs from the open area of the lake. Upon landing, the plane appeared to taxi to the north end of the lake where there are a large number of cottages. The cottage area is blocked from this reporter’s view by Fox Island but it can be surmised that the plane may have been picking up and dropping off sightseers who wanted the thrill of a short airplane ride.



During the summer, a fallen tree on the eastern edge of the lake just south of the Lake Williams Beach Association's 1<sup>st</sup> beach took on the countenance of a sea creature, a Lake Williams version of the Loch Ness monster. The wind and weather have eroded the formation and it now less fearful as it has lost its head.



On June 26, 2009, in addition to the unseasonable wet weather, the lake was treated to an early evening thunderstorm that brought hailstones the size of golf balls. They fell on the cottages with deafening fury and regularity as the storm crossed the lake from the northwest. The foot high splashes in the water from the falling orbs of ice as the storm approached created a rarely seen sight. So rare, that one did not know what was happening until the ice began bouncing on the ground and on their cottages.

Rainbows have been rare at Lake Williams. The year 2008 marked the first year that I sighted a rainbow in the twelve years that I have been a seasonal visitor. Pictures were taken then by many and a few appeared in a previous issue. However, in early July 2009, we were treated to two rainbow shows in the course of a few days. I was able to photograph both, the second of which was a double rainbow. I plan to post them on the FLW web site. As a coincidence,

during the annual boat clean up, I was assigned a segment of the eastern shore where I also observed as the origin point of both rainbows. We searched for the "pot of gold" but alas, someone must have got to it first.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Boat Parade was held on July 11, 2009. The contingent of decorated boats met at the Lake Williams Beach Association 2<sup>nd</sup> Beach and circumnavigated the lake one time. At the conclusion of the parade, a boat was selected to be the "best decorated." This year's winner, Rich and Barbara Lesh, decorated their boat with the theme "At the hop."



Picture provided by Vic and Mary David.

## Friends of Lake Williams newsletter can be viewed on our Web Site

The Friends of Lake Williams web site can be viewed at [www.lakewilliams.com](http://www.lakewilliams.com). Web Site space was donated by FLW member Jim Smith on one of his company's servers. His company, Blarneystone, LLC, is one of our advertisers and you can find more information at the end of this newsletter. Newsletters will be posted on the web site in Adobe Acrobat format and you will be able to view the content, particularly the pictures in full glorious color.

## Invasive Aquatic Plant Workshop

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Invasive Aquatic Plant Program (CAES IAPP) offers invasive aquatic plant workshops to interested groups. The intent of the workshops is to increase the likelihood that the invaders will be found early, so they can be more easily eradicated. During the workshops, CAES IAPP scientists will offer instruction on how to distinguish invasive from native plants, conduct lake surveys and map vegetation. Live native and non-native plants will be available for close inspection, and identification aides will be provided. In addition, information about the prevention of invasive aquatic plant introductions will be discussed.

Since the workshops began in 2005, nearly 1000 people have attended from over 100 Connecticut towns. Groups have included lake associations, municipal officials, state and federal government employees, Connecticut Envirothon

students, Connecticut Federation of Lakes (CFL) members, etc.

Groups interested in scheduling a workshop should call or e-mail Gregory Bugbee (203) 974-8512 or gregory.bugbee@ct.gov.

## FLW Initiates Fundraising Campaign to Sell Merchandise with Its New Logo

During the June 2009 general meeting, Frank Catalano and Lisa Berquist introduced a concept of selling selected merchandise with the new FLW Logo as a prominent feature. This venture would help the organization raise money to further its goals of maintaining the pristine beauty and quality of our lake. Order forms were distributed at the conclusion of the meeting. Additional order forms were distributed with the Boat Parade announcements and also during our organization's participation in the Mile Long Yard Sale on Lake Shore Drive where volunteers manned an informational booth. Because FLW was uncertain of the response, we opted to have anyone desiring the merchandise to prepay before placing the orders. The response was better than expected and consequently, two separate orders for merchandise were placed, one in late spring and the second in mid-summer. The next order will be in the spring of 2010 and order forms will be distributed at that time. Please check future newsletters and our web site for additional information.

## The Newsletter Committee seeks your help

The Newsletter Committee requests your help in producing this newsletter. Articles or ideas concerning the lake, or information relevant to FLW's mission will be welcomed. You don't need to write the article. If you prefer, provide the facts from which news stories can be developed. FLW Committees are also encouraged to provide input after completing any significant activity such as identifying where invasive weed infestation is located on the lake, stories related to the lake treatment process, the results of water quality testing, etc. Please send your facts, articles or ideas for articles to:

Paul Cote  
70 Pruett Place  
Oakdale CT 06370-1819  
E-mail: cotehome@snet.net.

## Advertise Your Business with Friends of Lake Williams

For \$25 per year, you can advertise your business and show your support for Friends of Lake Williams in this newsletter.

Please send your business card and a check for \$25 to the FLW address shown on page 1 at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> column.

## Join FLW

Thanks to our members for their support over the past year. Please renew your membership, and if you are not currently a member, please consider joining this worthwhile organization. If you are a member and are aware of other members who have not renewed, please remind them. Lets all work toward maintaining a strong, viable and successful FLW. This, in turn, will assure that the management activities needed to control the quality of the lake environment will be jump started and monitored for effectiveness. Please clip the below section of the newsletter and forward it to the following address:

For the 7/1/2009 – 6/30/2010 fiscal year:

- \$30 Individual Membership (1 person)
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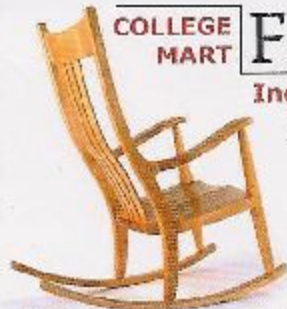


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