



Fall 2021

atthelake

Mountain Lake Community Association



Upcoming Events

MLCA Membership Meeting: Friday, January 14 at 7 pm at Mt Lake Fire House

Featuring presentation by Princeton Hydro on results of 2021 Mt Lake monitoring program. Appropriate COVID-19 protocols will be followed for all attendees. The meeting will also be accessible via zoom. Go to MLCAWAG.org for zoom meeting link.

Recycle Beyond the Bag: Ongoing

Foyer of municipal building, M-F 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Christmas Tree Recycling: January

Volunteers Needed

To help with community events, webpage, lake monitoring, research, data management, and more. If you're game to help out, email us at mlca.wag@gmail.com

Board of Trustees

Robert Ballou	President
Daniele Nevins	Vice-President
Nancy O'Leary	Treasurer
Buffy Harrison	Secretary
Alice Bechok	Trustee
Patty Hoffman	Trustee
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Porcupine Cribs Enhance Fish Habitat in Mt Lake

Collaborative Project is First of its Kind in NJ

The Mountain Lake Fishery Habitat Enhancement Project culminated on October 19 with the installation of 18 structures, known as Pennsylvania Porcupine Cribs, in several locations along the south and west sides of Mountain Lake. The project was led by the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, in partnership with Liberty Township, the Mountain Lake Community Association, and the NJ Chapter of Muskies Inc.

The cribs were set in clusters of 3 or 4 at depths ranging from 10 to 15 feet. The cribs are designed to provide protection for juvenile fish, thus helping to maintain and enhance the lake's ecology and recreational fishery. Each crib is 4 x 4 x 4 foot in size and constructed of rough-cut hemlock with built-in concrete blocks to secure them on the lake bottom. The use of hemlock makes the structures long-lasting and biodegradable.

The project was launched a few years

ago, when the first four cribs were installed in a cluster off the concrete pier on the east side of the lake. With the addition of 18 more, Mountain Lake now has a total of 22. The cribs have a proven track record in a number of lakes in Pennsylvania. The Mountain



Lake project is the first of its kind in New Jersey.

Over time, the new structures will serve as new habitat for small fish, which will help to grow the overall fish population in the lake. In the years ahead, the Lake Association will coordinate with the Division of Fish and Wild-

life and Muskies, Inc. to monitor and assess the project.

Thanks to all who helped out with the project, including Jeff Snyder, Liberty's DPW Supervisor, who dedicated a full day at the boat ramp, hoisting the structures onto the state's boat.

For more information, contact Ross Shramko, NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife, at 908.236.2118 or

President's Message



It's such an honor to greet the Mountain Lake community in my new capacity as president of the Lake Association. My family's proud history at the lake dates back to 1906. Over the years, my grandmother, Ruth Ballou, rose to become a local icon. She was a special person in my life, both dear family and best friend. Among her myriad activities, she helped establish the lake association in 1967 and served for several years as president. To follow in her shoes is a high honor.

As is following in the shoes of Shannon Schaaf. I am awed by her incredible leadership over the past 9+ years. Her commitment, competence, and passion are reflected in how appreciated and respected the Lake Association continues to be. It will be a tall task living up to the standard she set.

Looking ahead, it's clear we face several important and challenging issues pertaining to the lake, particularly with regard to water quality and aquatic weeds. I'm confident we'll rise to the challenges. If there's one thing that binds our community, it's our lake. I sense there's a strong and common desire to do what needs to be done to keep our lake clean and healthy.

My MO is to learn as much as we can about the issues affecting the lake, develop well-informed approaches, seek broad consensus, then do what needs to be done. We'll need adequate funding, but I trust we'll find it.

I am humbled by the opportunity to take the helm of the Lake Association. I will do my best to maintain and grow our venerable organization, recognizing its vital role in the long-term stewardship of Mountain Lake.

On behalf of our seven-member board, we need your help! The lake is a big ship that needs all hands on deck, pitching in, working together, charting the course, ensuring we sail in the right direction. In my first official act as president, I am sounding the horn, and urging everyone to get onboard. Let's do this. Let's commit to working together to ensure a clean and healthy lake.

I look forward to getting to know all of you. My wife Sherri and I live at the northwest corner of the lake. Feel free to give us a shout. I can be reached directly at mlca.wag@gmail.com

With warm regards,

Bob Ballou

Membership & Contribution Update

Our recent membership drive was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who helped bring our total membership level back up to almost 150. While it's impressive that we're 150 strong, the number of households in Liberty is about ten times that. So we can do better. Indeed we need to do better. Our lake's entire watershed lies within Liberty, making it a community asset, and a community responsibility. The stronger and more committed we are as a community, the better able we'll be to keep our lake clean and healthy for generations to come.

If you have not yet renewed your membership for this year, please do so. And if you are not yet a member, please become one.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the many kind and generous friends of Marge Joseph, who contributed to the Lake Association in her memory. We are deeply grateful for all that Marge did to enrich our lives and nurture our lake.

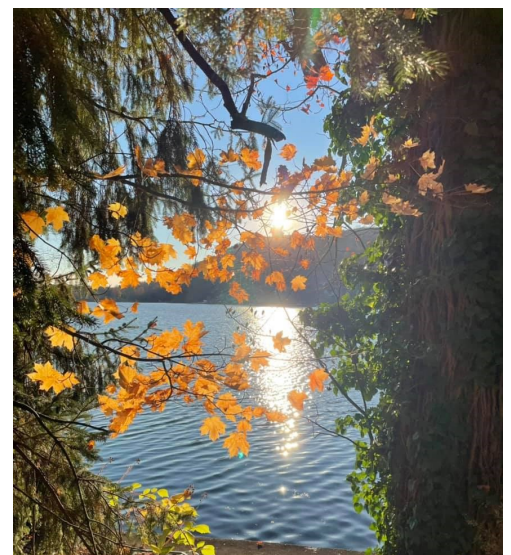


Photo courtesy of Fran Salerno Becker

New Water Monitoring Program Completes First Full Year

Princeton Hydro Will Analyze Results and Issue Report

The Lake Association's revamped lake monitoring program completed its first full year. The last set of measurements for 2021 were conducted on November 17. The full results for the year have been submitted to Princeton Hydro for review. The firm, renowned for their expertise in lake management, will review the data and report their findings and recommendations. The Lake Association will hold a membership meeting on January 14 for the presentation of the report.

The expanded water monitoring program kicked off in May. Since then, every two weeks, a dedicated group of volunteer monitors anchored at three stations in the lake twice a month, col-

lecting data on temperature, clarity, dissolved oxygen, pH, and phosphorus. At each station, the measurements were taken throughout the water column to better understand the changing conditions of our seasonally stratified lake. During the summer and most of the fall, the lake remained well stratified with the thermocline at about 18 feet below the surface. Above the thermocline, the waters were generally average in temperature and well-oxygenated, with average levels of phosphorus. Below the thermocline, the waters were cold and anoxic, with high levels of phosphorus. By November 17, the lake was vertically mixed everywhere except at the deepest spot in the

center, where the thermocline had dropped to about 33 feet, or about 6 feet off the bottom.

An additional component of the Association's expanded lake monitoring program included regular sampling for cyanobacteria, aka blue-green algae, which are responsible for harmful blooms. The sampling took place at the three lake stations and the boat ramp. All samples were submitted to NJDEP for analysis, and all results were quickly made available. A big thank you to NJDEP's Bureau of Freshwater and Biological Monitoring for partnering with the Lake Association on this important November 17 were all well below the thresholds of concern.

Kudos to the gallant crew of monitors for a highly successful year: Bob Ballou, Larry Supp, Rich Larsen, John Ward, Art Addie, and Dan Kurela, with Daniele Nevins and Sarah Longo providing dry-land support.

To those interested in participating in next year's lake monitoring program, contact us at mlca.wag@gmail.com. And to all members whose dues help fund this important initiative, thank you for your support.

Roadside Cleanup Earns Clean Communities Grant Award

On Sunday morning, October 10, an intrepid group of volunteers from the Lake Association donned safety vests and with pickers and trash bags in hand, took on the task of

ridding a local county road of litter. They walked Townsbury Road for two miles and collected 10 pounds of regular trash, 15 pounds of recycling, and even a truck muffler! The effort was a big

success in two ways: a local road looks great, and the Association received a \$1,000 contribution from the Warren County Clean Communities Program.

NJ Clean Communities is New Jersey's only statewide comprehensive, litter abatement program. Thanks to Kelly Spaar, Warren

County Clean Communities Coordinator, for providing the safety vests, pickers, and general guidance, and to our wonderful volunteers, particularly: Antionette Marie,



Matthew Perrucci, Laylah Rutt, Makenzi Nevins, Beckett Nevins, Daniele Nevins, Dustin Nevins, Charlotte Nevins, Westin Nevins, and most important, Patricia Hofmann, who organized the event.

The Lake Association plans to continue and expand these litter pickup projects. Stay tuned for information on upcoming opportunities.



New Lake Funding Opportunities Expected Soon

> Thanks to passage of a new \$10 million appropriation for lake funding in NJ, a new funding opportunity for Mountain Lake is expected to open in early 2022.

> And word has it that NJDEP will soon announce a new round of funding under the NJ Water Quality Restoration Grant Program (319(h)).

Highlights from Second Annual Trunk or Treat



We had a wonderful turn out and can't wait to do it again next year!



Clockwise from top left: Grand prize winners Jordan McCrea and Adam Bejna with their awesome SpongeBob trunk; Nevins clan and friends; Fran Salerno Becker and her bronze-winning Popcorn trunk; Mike and Sarah's wildly popular wagon; Silver medalist Marilyn Kayal and Family with their steamy Graveyard trunk.



MT. LAKE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION 2021 MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

Mountain Lake Community Association
P.O. Box 275
Great Meadows, NJ 07838

Send form with check made out to MLCA.
 Or send form and use Paypal on our website.

Your \$30 annual membership donation helps to support the many activities and projects undertaken by the Lake Association. Those wishing to contribute more than the annual membership amount help to boost our effectiveness as an all-volunteer organization. A Lifetime Membership is available for a donation of \$1,000; this includes corporate funds matched in your name. MLCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all donations and memberships are tax deductible.

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I am game to receiving future newsletters via email, recognizing it reduces costs for the Lake Association and is the green thing to do