



Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting

Friday, September 20, 7-9 pm
Mt Lake Firehouse

Litter Clean-up

Early October - date, location and more info coming soon

Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October 27, 2-4 pm, location TBD

Holiday Lights

December

Our Members, Our Community

We often refer to our members and our community in the same sentence or same breath. That's because the MLCA has been a community-based association since its inception in 1967, and because the Association relies upon membership support to carry out our mission and serve our community. If you live at or near Mountain Lake, and/or if you use, enjoy, and care about the lake, you are part of the Mountain Lake community. Are you also a member of the Mountain Lake Community Association? If not, you should be. Annual dues remain just \$30/year. The funding support means a lot, the membership status means even more. Please join, or renew, now. Thank you!

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Annual Membership Meeting Set for Friday, September 20

The 2024 Annual Membership Meeting of the Mountain Lake Community Association will be held Friday, September 20 at 7 pm at the Mt Lake Firehouse. The agenda will include a review the Lake Association's activities over the past year, as well as our ambitious agenda for the year ahead. Other topics will include lake monitoring and water quality, the ongoing project by Princeton Hydro to develop a lake and watershed plan, weed management, our new Mountain Lake History project and new Mural Project, and upcoming events. The Ruth Ballou Award will also be presented. We plan to set aside time for an open forum to hear from our members and the community on any matters of interest. Refreshments will be served. All meeting materials will be posted on our website, MLCAWAG.org, prior to the meeting. We look forward to seeing you!

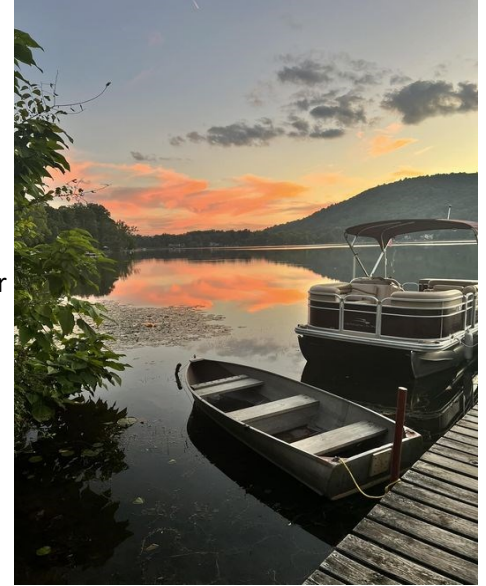


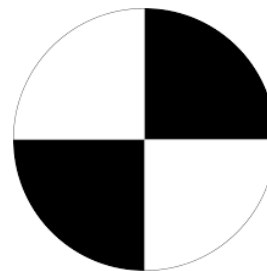
Photo courtesy of Karen Dos Santos

Standout Year for Water Quality in Mountain Lake

Weed growth also down

To date, 2024 has been an excellent year for water quality in the lake. For the first time since 2021, there were no algae blooms in the lake through the spring and well into the summer. A bloom did develop in August and has continued since then; but it has been relatively modest and consistent with late-summer conditions in past years. From mid-May through mid-July, water clarity was exceptionally good, peaking at 11 feet on June 26. That was the best clarity ever recorded for the lake, based on MLCA monitoring data going back 30+ years.

Coincidentally, weed growth in the lake was down significantly from prior years. Whereas the lake is typically impacted by high densities of invasive Eurasian milfoil throughout the summer, there was significantly less milfoil this year; in its place, there was more native coontail, as well as native pondweed. Levels of filamentous algae were also down. It's uncertain why these favorable conditions occurred, but they bode well. A balanced aquatic ecosystem that features native species and supports recreational uses is what we want, and essentially what we had this summer. We hope this trend continues!



A Secchi disk, used to measure water clarity

The Archaic Period 10,000 – 3,000 years ago

During this time, as the Wisconsin Glacier slowly disappeared, the climate slowly became warmer and more hospitable. Sea level rose, forcing coastal inhabitants to move inland. A landscape initially dominated by birch, spruce, and fir trees eventually transitioned to mixed forest with pine as well as oak, beech, hemlock, hickory, and chestnut. Acorns, nuts, and berries supported deer, elk, black bears, turkeys, and squirrels, which in turn supported mountain lions, wolves, and foxes. By around 5,000 BC (7,000 years ago), the climate and natural environment became largely similar to what we experience today.

The Native Americans who inhabited our region during this time relied wholly on nature's bounties, since they had no way of raising their own food. They hunted, fished, and foraged on wild plants. They used raw materials, such as stone and wood, to make tools and weapons, as well as mats and containers.



Hunting was carried out with spears tipped with notched and stemmed points. These were hurled with atlatls or spear throwers that greatly increased speed, distance, and penetrating force. As reported in 1998, an ancient spear point dating back to the early Archaic Period, known as a Hardaway Side Notched Point, was recovered from the mucklands at Great Meadows, just above the Mountain Lake watershed.

It is generally assumed that early native Americans lived in small, highly mobile bands spread thinly across the landscape, favoring areas near the coast and large rivers such as the Delaware. Over time, small encampments formed on inland sites, particularly near glacial lakes and streams, in rock shelters, and on mountain tops – i.e., in places very similar to Mountain Lake. Given the ready availability of springs providing potable water, as well as a lake teeming with fish, frogs, turtles, and birds, and large rock shelters such as the Faery Hole in Jenny Jump State Forest, Mountain Lake and the woods and streams surrounding it would have been an ideal location for a more or less permanent, year-round base camp.

Toward the end of the Archaic Period, a new method of cooking became possible through the use of soapstone and pottery vessels, including clay pots. With these, people, perhaps for the first time, were able to boil soups, stews and porridges directly over a fire, thereby eliminating the need for potboilers. (Potboilers being fire-heated stones dropped into the liquid contained in a pot to heat it up – not an easy way to heat your meal.) This new method of cooking did more than soften food; it started the process of digestion by releasing nutrients, providing nourishing broths and gruels that could be fed to infants and children and to older, perhaps toothless, individuals unable to chew their food. The times, they were a-changin'!

History of Mountain Lake — Part 2

In the last issue of our newsletter, we launched a new initiative, aimed at compiling and documenting the history of Mountain Lake. We began, appropriately, at the beginning – when the lake first formed and the first humans came upon the area, about 12,000 years ago (10,000 BC). In this issue, we pick up on the next 9,000 years, particularly the prehistoric time known as the Archaic Period, which spanned from 8,000 BC to 1,000 BC.

We have a good understanding of the natural history of Mountain Lake thanks to geologic and fossil evidence. However, the native people of our region had no written history, and left few traces of their existence.

Much of what we know about the region's prehistory is a result of work done by archaeologists and scholars to reconstruct the life and culture of the native people and their ancestors through the study of artifacts, seeds, pollen, bones, and other clues found in the soil. The most definitive compilation of our region's prehistoric past can be found in *The Lenape-Delaware Indian Heritage, 10,000 BC to AD 2000*, written by Dr. Herbert C. Kraft of Seton Hall University in 2001. The information provided here is drawn from this wonderful book.

Our Region's Historic Name

The term "Lenapehoking" (pronounced Len-nah-pay-haw-king) has emerged as



the name for our region during prehistoric times. It translates to "Land of the Lenape." It spans the region from present-day

Delaware to western Connecticut, including all of New Jersey and parts of eastern Pennsylvania.



At the Lake with Gene Leddy

We spent some time with Gene Leddy, a long-standing, iconic and beloved member of our community. There aren't many whose prominence in the community is of such magnitude that parades are held in their name. Gene has earned that status through a lifetime of dedicated service, warmth, and integrity. As an MLCA member, we are proud to call him one of our own, and we are delighted to share this interview, conducted by MLCA Treasurer, Buffy Harrison.

How young are you?

I turned 95 on April 1st this year.

When did you first discover Mt. Lake?

A co-worker actually discovered it by accident. He was traveling to Pennsylvania from New York for vacation during a horrible storm. It was too hard to see so he stopped at a diner on Route 46 and asked if there was lodging near by. They directed him to cabins at Mountain Lake. He drove up to the lake, rented a cabin for the evening, and decided to stay there for the week. When he returned he told me all about it so I decided to vacation here too.

When was that?

That was in 1968 and as soon as I arrived I inquired about purchasing the place from Mr. Kelly who owned the cottage, but lived in Philadelphia. Skip Buckenmeyer, who owned the Beach Bar, introduced me to a banker for a loan. At the office, the banker asked if I was an honest kid. I said yeah. He then said I needed to get approval from the board, so he stood up, walked through a door on one side of a room and immediately out the opposite side and said you're approved, which we sealed with a simple hand shake. The loan was for \$6,000 for seven years. It's the same home I live in now.

Were there other homes around the cabin when you purchased it?

There were other summer cabins mainly and a trailer park.

Did you move to Mountain Lake immediately?

No, I was a NYC firefighter, so we traveled back and forth from East Flatbush, New York with our five children. Every time we drove to Mountain Lake, as soon

as we passed the old Yellow Rock stables, I would say to my kids here we are at my Shangri-la. My daughter asked what's a Shangri-la, and my wife said that means your father's crazy. She was right [laughs].



How long were you a NYC firefighter and did you serve on the fire department at Mountain Lake as well?

I started as a NYC firefighter on June 1, 1957 and retired on November 1, 1990. Not too long after that, Pete Kolln introduced me to the Mountain Lake Fire Department, and I was voted in. I served with the Mountain Lake Fire Department for nine years.

What differences do you see from when you first moved here to now?

The homes were mainly summer rentals and vacation homes near my residence. Now it seems that as people retire,

they're making their former vacation homes their permanent residences, myself included.

Why the St. Patrick's Day parade?

I'm 100% Irish. My family tradition was to participate in the New York City St. Patrick's Day parade every year. I'm not able to go anymore so my family wanted to bring the parade to me. I love it when the community participates in the parade with us. I thought it was great that Marie Emery followed us the first year and handed out candy. We started doing that too. I'm so grateful to the community for allowing us this privilege and hope they enjoy it.

What do you like most or find special about Mountain Lake?

The sunrises and sunsets on the water and the community.

How important is it to protect the lake for future generations?

I have nine grandchildren and six great grandchildren. They love it here and find any excuse to visit pop-pop at the lake. I want to make sure they can enjoy it as much as I have for years to come. It's so important to me that this lake remains beautiful for them and I'm very grateful for all the efforts of the Mountain Lake Community Association in protecting it.

The MLCA extends our gratitude to Gene Leddy for his military service, his dedication as a fireman in NYC, and as a pillar of our community here at Mountain Lake. We salute you Gene, thank you for all you have done, and continue to do, to enrich our lives.

The Mountain Lake Community Association announces a fundraising drive to support an exciting initiative to beautify the lake with a mural painted on the old Beach Bar stand. The image below, featuring a sailboat, will be used as a guide for the artist. Please consider making a special donation to support this wonderful cause.

Mural of the old days on Mt. Lake



FUNDRAISING

Help us give a facelift to the Old Beach Bar Stand

With your support we would like to fund a mural for the old Beach Bar stand.



Your donations will help us commission local artists from Belvidere. Examples of their art work can be seen on the railroad bridge on Water St. just prior to the bridge to Pennsylvania.

PLEASE SEE AN MLCA OFFICER TO MAKE A DONATION OR MAIL DONATIONS WITH THE NOTE MURAL TO:

MT. LAKE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 275
GREAT MEADOWS, NJ 07838



The Mountain Lake Community Association is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Your membership and donations are tax deductible.

MOUNTAIN LAKE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Contact us for more information

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<https://mlcawag.org/>

