

WINTER 2023

# GPA Newsletter



## *News from the Georges Pond Association*

### **Progress Report**

## **Successful First Year of the GPA's Second 319 Grant**

The GPA has **successfully completed the first year of a two-year "Clean Water" grant** from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. This is the second 319 grant the Maine DEP has awarded to help the GPA address issues in the Georges Pond watershed. Funding for the grant, which is administered by the Maine DEP in partnership with the US Environmental Protection Agency, is provided, in part, under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

By upgrading **camp roads**, encouraging regular maintenance of **septic systems**, and making improvements to residential properties, including **planting more native plants as buffers**, GPA members and friends are working together to minimize stormwater runoff from getting into the lake, a major source of pollutants that build up over time and feed algal blooms. As GPA President John Eliasberg remarked recently, "The GPA is fortunate to have been awarded not one, but two of these highly competitive grants, and we appreciate the DEP's confidence in us that we'll continue to deliver."

After signing the grant contract, the GPA asked **Jennifer Jespersen of Ecological Instincts** to serve once again as **our project manager**, and she quickly engaged a steering committee to review and provide oversight of various components of the grant proposal, including making upgrades to Bunkers Beach Road, Cousins Road, and South Shore Colony Road. Plans for these upgrades are now completed, and we anticipate that the road work will get underway in the spring.

In addition, Jen has completed **13 site visits with property owners** and discussed various plans for protecting the pond. Greg Beane with the Maine DEP did a site visit with Town of Franklin leadership about the **public beach project**, and the DEP has authorized a permit for that work. The GPA held **two "septic socials"** this past summer with expert David Roque, who educated us about the variety of septic systems, how to maintain them, and how to recognize when they fail. And, finally, under the amazing leadership of Ginger Eliasberg, the GPA conducted **10 more LakeSmart evaluations**, which are free and voluntary, to assist property owners in taking next steps to protect the pond.



Photo courtesy Ginger Eliasberg

## Septic Systems: Another Piece of the Puzzle

Maintaining your septic system, even for a seasonal residence, is one of the most important things you can do to protect your property value as well as Georges Pond's water quality. Most septic system failures are due to lack of **proper maintenance** or misuse of the system.

As part of the GPA's 319 grant from ME DEP/USEPA, during 2022 the GPA sponsored free septic and bio-mat inspections for **six property owners** who **volunteered to participate** along with two well attended presentations by expert David Rocque. Here are a few things we learned:



- Properly maintained outhouses are effective septic solutions.
- Septic tanks should be **inspected (and pumped, if necessary) every 2-5 years**, depending on use. Finding problems early (e.g., pipes clogged with tree roots, improper installation, crushed pipes) can help avoid expensive repairs AFTER a system fails.
- **Systems installed prior to 1974 should be replaced.** That was the general advice from experts, but it also fits with our experience from doing physical inspections. Replacement was recommended for every septic system installed prior to 1974 that professionals inspected for our project.
- We also found potential issues with systems installed after 1974, even if installed according to code applicable at the time. In particular, the leach field could contaminate drinking water or the lake if it "connects" due to an inadequate filtration layer or proximity.
- **Any single failing or inadequate septic system can adversely impact water quality in Georges Pond.**

For your information, we have posted **David Roque's "user notes" on the GPA website**, which are helpful hints on how to use and maintain your septic systems. We've also posted a list of septic inspectors and installers that the Town of Franklin Code Enforcement Officer has provided. This list does not represent an endorsement of any of the providers, nor does the list order reflect any preference.

Because a number of people are interested in replacing their septic systems, given the likely expense **the GPA is searching for funding sources** and grants to provide some assistance..

If you're interested in having the GPA coordinate a septic inspection at your property, please contact us at [GeorgesPondAssociation@gmail.com](mailto:GeorgesPondAssociation@gmail.com).



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**Protect the  
eagles  
and loons**



In Maine Audubon's 2022 annual loon count, more chicks were found (298 compared to 224 in 2021), but slightly fewer adult birds (3,057 compared to 3,446 in 2021). "While the **increase in chicks** is a welcomed event," Audubon said, "threats remain abundant," including motorized watercraft that do not observe state laws requiring slow speeds near shores and islands. **The birds are vulnerable** to boat strikes, and nests can be washed out by wakes. Loons are also vulnerable to lead poisoning from ingesting fishing tackle.

## Renew your GPA membership for 2023!

It's once again **time to renew your membership** in the Georges Pond Association. Send your check to PO Box 30, Franklin, ME 04634 or renew online at [www.GeorgesPondAssociation.org](http://www.GeorgesPondAssociation.org).

THANK  
YOU

Thank  
you

**Regular members** pay dues of \$25 annually.

**Sustaining members** sign up at various levels:

Dragonfly: \$5 monthly (\$60 annually)

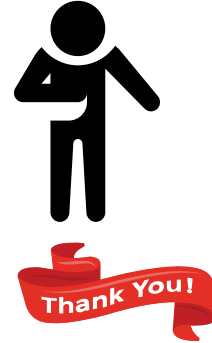
Chickadee: \$10 monthly (\$120 annually)

Hummingbird: \$25 monthly (\$300 annually)

Loon: \$50 monthly (\$600 annually)

Eagle: \$100 monthly (\$1,200 annually)

A GPA membership covers two persons;  
**add family members @ \$10 per person.**



## IN MEMORIAM

The GPA board notes with sadness that **Sue Dawes**, loving wife of board member Chuck Dawes, died Sunday, October 2, two weeks after marking their 52nd wedding anniversary and two months shy of her 73rd birthday. Sue began visiting the pond when she and Chuck first started to date back in 1967. As Chuck has shared, "Sue was a **lifelong lover of the pond**, the loons, the dark nights, the beautiful sunsets and moon-rises, kayaking with our kids Adam, Liz, and Nick, and just being together at camp." He then noted, "She was a beautiful soul and the world's best wife and mother. Her spirit remains connected to this place. She just loved it."

A celebration of Sue's life will take place at a later date in 2023.



## MEMORIAL GIFTS

The GPA has received the following gifts:

- Nancy Cooper and Marc and Elizabeth Ottinger **in memory of Dr. and Mrs. Richard L. Hall.**
- Marvin Ellison and Frank Brooks; Laurie, Martin, Gabrielle, and Will Mai; and Marie Phero **in memory of Sheila Todd.**
- John and Ginger Eliasberg, and Marvin Ellison and Frank Brooks **in memory of Sue Dawes.**

## YET ANOTHER

Brian Friedmann has made a gift to Lake Stewards of Maine **in memory of Diane Jordan**, who served on the GPA Board for many years and was an enthusiastic advocate for all things Georges Pond.

### Do you Clynk?



Many thanks to GPA members and friends who participate in the Clynk recycling program to **recycle beverage bottles**. We've received a \$65.50 check for donated bottles from folks who've elected to **designate the GPA as their non-profit organization to support**. Thanks especially to **Matt Bean** for suggesting this smart way to generate funds to support our lake association while doing good for the environment. That's **a win-win**, for sure! We encourage others to sign up through their local Clynk program.

### Pond Paddle Investigates Aquatic Plants

A small but mighty flotilla of kayaks, canoes, and a lone party barge spread out over Georges Pond in early September to check for invasive aquatic plants. **"Currently, we don't have any invasive plants in the pond,"** reported GPA board member Marie Phero, who organized the plant patrol, **"and we intend to keep it that way with your help!"**

Marie's team of volunteers, with scopes in hand, identified 30 species of aquatic plants in the lake, but none is invasive. Once samples were gathered and laid out on the beach, Mark Whiting and Lucy Leaf helped the team identify various species.

"We encourage other folks on the pond to join us next year," Phero added. **"Come learn with us,** and also make sure that all boats are cleaned, drained, and dry when visiting different lakes. We all have an important part to play in keeping Georges Pond clean and free of invasive plants."

2022 water quality was the second best on record, surpassed only by 2021 after our second alum treatment. **However,** we had **more phosphorus** than in 2021, so we must remain diligent!

Congratulations to **Lauren Woo and Bryce Spaulding** on their recent engagement **while paddleboarding on the pond!** Lauren is great grand-daughter of S.C. and Clara Shen.

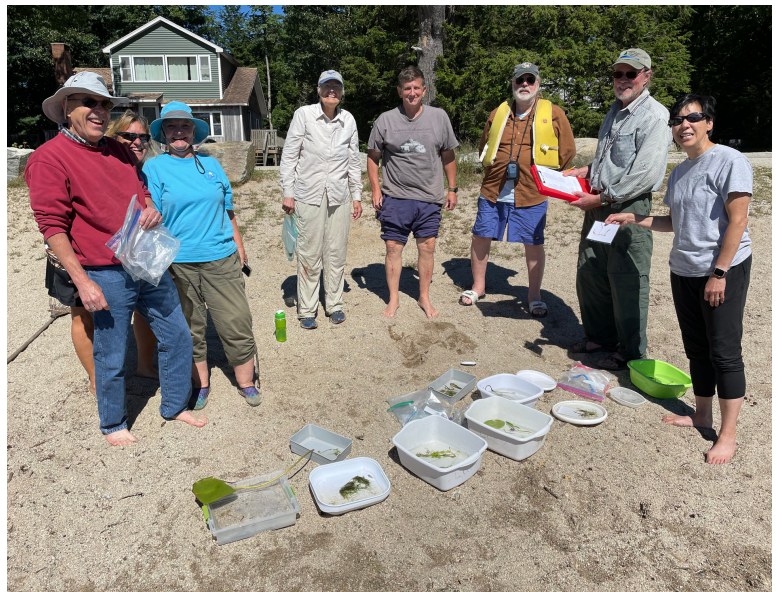
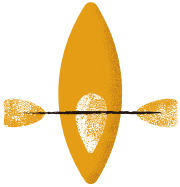


Photo courtesy Marvin Ellison

**Pond Paddle participants** (L to R): Frank Brooks, Lisa Branch, Marie Phero, Lucy Leaf, John Eliasberg, Mark Herklotz, Mark Whiting, and Ginger Eliasberg. Not pictured: Becky Dick and Marvin Ellison

## Three Generations . . . and Counting



Protecting the pond is a family affair as **the Krantz family** exemplifies. Henry Krantz owns the camp. His son Michael is pictured here along with his wife Leslie and their children Mike, Henry, and Abigail.

Congratulations, Krantz family, on **receiving this LakeSmart award** and for being dedicated stewards of Georges Pond.



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## Maine's Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act

Believe it or not, **50 years ago some of the most polluted waterways in America were in Maine.** In 1971, Maine passed the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act. A year later, Congress passed the Clean Water Act.

The shoreland zone is all land within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of normal high-water line of any great pond (lakes larger than 10 acres). The lakes of Maine belong to the people of Maine.

The purposes of the MSZA include:

- to prevent and control water pollution;
- to protect fish spawning grounds, bird, and wildlife habitat;
- to protect buildings and lands from accelerated erosion;
- to control building sites, placement of structures and land uses;
- to conserve shore cover, and visual as well as actual points of access to inland waters;
- to conserve natural beauty and open space; and
- to anticipate and respond to the impacts of development in shoreland areas.

**Check with Millard Billings, the Town of Franklin's Code Enforcement Officer** (CEO) and Maine DEP if you plan to stabilize a shoreline, create a new path, or otherwise disturb the soil within 250 feet of the lake. Even if projects are intended to protect the environment, contact the DEP and CEO to determine if a permit is needed. Several articles in local papers last summer documented significant fines and reconstruction required for homeowners found to be in violation of the MSZA.

A few key minimums of the MSZA (within 250 feet of the shore) set by the State include:

- New buildings and septic systems must be set back 100 feet from shore
- Paths must be winding and no more than 6 feet wide
- **Within 100 feet of the shoreline trimming the bottom one third of tree branches is permitted. However, there is a formula that limits tree removal. Take pictures and check with the Franklin CEO.**
- **Within 100 feet of the shoreline, removal of vegetation less than 2 inches in diameter and 3 feet high and other ground cover (including leaf litter and forest duff) is prohibited, except:**
  - o To remove safety hazards
  - o To cut a winding shoreline access not to exceed 6 feet wide
  - o To maintain openings in existence prior to 1971

The MSZA are **the minimum protection standards for the health of our lake. Consider doing more** to protect Georges Pond. Buffers are the last line of defense against pollution and runoff coming from your property; they act like a sponge, soaking up rainfall, absorbing nutrients and runoff, and reducing the flow of stormwater into the lake.

"We are so happy  
with the condition  
of the pond!"  
-- GPA member

Please *renew*  
*your GPA*  
*membership* for  
2023. Mail your  
check or renew  
online today!



Photo courtesy John Eliasberg

**Georges Pond Association**

PO Box 30  
Franklin, ME 04634