

FRIENDS OF MESSALONSKEE WATERSHED

FINDING BALANCE ON THE LAKE THROUGHOUT
BELGRADE, OAKLAND, & SIDNEY

SEASON'S GREETINGS!!!

*MAY THE HOLIDAY SEASON FILL YOUR HOME
WITH JOY AND YOUR LIFE WITH LAUGHTER
HERE'S TO A HEALTHY, HAPPY & PEACEFUL
NEW YEAR!*

FROM ALL OF US HERE AT FOM



FALL & WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Membership Report

The loons have taken on their winter plumage and they're getting ready to head to their winter homes on the coast. Like every fall, we are a little bit sad to know that they'll be leaving and that the ice is coming. But with the ice come the magnificent Bald Eagles en masse. We've seen up to ten or eleven on the ice at one time. It's remarkable!

With thanks to Kathy Moore, we have sent out two membership efforts, one with the spring newsletter and a "reminder" letter late this summer. We have had approximately 130 members join our lake association this year. Thank you to those of you who have chosen to participate this year to support FOM.

Those of you who haven't yet but meant to, it's not too late! Please visit our website and donate via PayPal or Credit Card or you can send a check to FOM with the membership form included in this newsletter. It's very important for you to join Friends of Messalonskee, more important now, perhaps, than ever before. Here's why: The majority of our funding is grants from the state and local municipalities. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we expect that going forward we will have funding shortfalls from those sources making our member participation even more important.

Friends of Messalonskee is run by volunteers and we have only one part-time administrative employee. Other lake associations in our area have paid staff and significantly higher expenses. But FOM is YOUR lake association, focusing on Messalonskee Lake exclusively. We don't have a lot of wiggle room in our budget if we are going to continue the programs that we all value and that promote the health of our lake.

If you watched the report from our annual meeting, you know that we were one strong wind storm away from the possibility of an algae bloom on our lake. This would be a catastrophic event and would endanger the value of our lakeside properties. It also means that the lake would become toxic to humans and animals alike. Our mission is important and linked directly to the health of our lake.

We need you, our lakeside neighbors and residents, whether you're here seasonally or year round, to kick in a few dollars to support your lake association. Please give whatever you are able in support of this beautiful body of water that we all love and value.

Wishing you and yours a great holiday season! Keep an eye on our Facebook page for pictures of the lake!

Linda Warner

Membership Committee Chair & FOM Vice President





Lake Steward Challenge

Winter is coming! At this point in the year docks are out of the water, seasonal cabins are boarded up, and lawnmowers are traded for snowblowers. Many of you completed long put off projects around camp during Coronacation and it is now time to move indoors. I'd like to encourage you to reflect on your accomplishments this year, no matter how small, and then think ahead at what the 2021 Maine summer might look like at the lake. I'd also like to challenge you to these three things:

- **Become Aware of Messalonskee Lake's Health.** Yes, health. Like us humans, lakes are sensitive to things like chemicals, heat waves, and terrible haircuts (tree loss). The state of health for Maine lakes is changing. Warmer summers, extreme weather events, and nutrient runoff are some of the components producing devastating events like the recent North Pond algae bloom. Natural events and processes along with human activity can seriously damage lake health. I'm not going to dive into it all here, but I'll refer you to our website to access the annual meeting video where Dr. Whitney King of Colby College lays out the current state of our lake. <https://www.friendsofmessalonskee.com/events> Keeping an eye on our website or Facebook page and attending annual meetings are great sources for current updates about the lake.
- **Consider your Perennials.** If you have property on the lake, I implore you to take inventory of your perennials. Specifically, look at your ground covers, shrubs, and trees. Obviously, if you are out of state or there is snow on the ground, you might not be able to achieve this task right now, but the point is to determine which parts of your property are promoting a healthy lake. Your lake association offers LakeSmart evaluations and advice to support lake health. Tips include things like, the more shoreline vegetation, the better! Staggered heights are ideal for interceding rainfall and groundwater runoff. Many properties already fit the criteria, while others may need a couple years of growth to achieve certification. The program is free, non-regulatory, and voluntary. Once certified, you get an official LakeSmart sign and well-earned bragging rights. This is one small program that can make a huge difference for the future of our lake!
- **Start a Conversation.** Whether it is at a 6-foot distance with a mask, or a post on social media, start a conversation about Messalonskee Lake. Promote your love of the water and the importance of keeping it clean. Meet a neighbor on your road to talk about lake health and what Friends of Messalonskee does for the lake. Invite people to see your certified LakeSmart yard or steps you're taking to become certified. Share this newsletter with someone- it will be virtual!

Like me, you love our lake. You chose to support Friends of Messalonskee because you believe in activities like Courtesy Boat Inspection and the Milfoil Program that continue to keep the lake healthy. Now it is time for you to take the next step. Consider the challenges put before you. Please reach out to us if you have any interest in learning more or want to get involved in a deeper way. FOM is a small organization with big goals and tasks. Thank you to our volunteer board and program volunteers!

Stay safe and be well,
Rachel White
FOM Board Secretary



2020 SEASONAL UPDATE

Milfoil Removal & Barriers

- 10,856 square feet of new barriers were installed
- 7,060 gallons of Milfoil removed by New England Milfoil
- 13,925 lbs (278.5 bags) of Milfoil removed by the FOM Milfoil Crew
- 2,399,258 square feet of completed Milfoil/plant survey & plant removal completed within the watershed



Courtesy Boat Inspectors

- 2,723 Boat inspections completed
- 14 invasive plant stops



Lakesmart

- 4 new Lakesmart Property Evaluations were completed by FOM volunteers
- One property has been Lakesmart Certified



Thank you

**New England Milfoil, FOM Milfoil Crew & CBI's
for another great season!**

Board of Directors

Michael Guarino - President
Linda Warner - 1st VP
Ned Hammond - 2nd VP
Robert Nardi- Treasurer
Rachel White - Secretary
James Jurdak
Gary Bennett
John Wiggin
Kathy Moore
Connor White
Greg Mercier
Janna Townsend



2021 Fishing Report

It was a wild and crazy fishing season on the lake this year. Right after ice out, trollers were catching some nice sized splake and quite a few brown trout too. In typical ice out fashion, the fish were scattered around, showing up along the shorelines and out in deep water. We had our best luck trolling Mooselook Wobblers and Rapalas anywhere from just under the surface to 30 feet down over deep water.

As late May and early June rolled in, smallmouth bass took center stage. I think we had a good spawning season this year which bodes well for the future.

It also seemed like the bass were running larger than normal and a lot of 4 and 5 pound smallies were caught. Whether you love them or hate them, northern pike are a big draw for anglers. Pike fishing can be feast or famine on Messalonskee; some days they practically jump in the boat and some days you wonder where they all went. But the chance at catching a 20-pound fish is always there and fishermen love that adrenaline rush. Having such an amazing resource here in our backyard was welcome more this year than ever. Now it's time to get the ice augers out and get ready for the hardwater season. Send your fish pictures to friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com and we'll try and post them throughout the winter.



Tight lines,

Mike Guarino

Friends of Messalonskee and Maine Wilderness Guide Service

FRIENDS OF MESSALONSKEE 2021 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Levels:

~Lake Friend: \$30 ~Lake Family: \$50 ~Lake Sponsor: \$75 ~Lake Patron: \$100
~Lake Steward: \$250 ~Lake Benefactor: \$500
~Business Sponsor: Gold: \$150-\$499 Platinum: \$500+

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Winter Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Summer Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____