

FALL /  
WINTER  
2021



# WEQUAQUET LAKE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

*People that care about Lake Wequaquet*

## *A Word from Association President*

Hello everyone,

As winter approaches and we are all in the holiday season, now is a great time to reflect and wonder if our efforts are making a difference. For the last two summer seasons our beautiful lake has not been closed due to Cyanobacteria. We have been able to swim, boat, and just enjoy this wonderful resource with our family and friends. Others on the Cape have not been so fortunate. We have a long term plan in progress, starting with a new sewer system around most of the lake and the worst road runoff areas being addressed by the town. But what can we do now to make a difference? Until you are hooked up to the new sewer system, proper maintenance and cleaning are imperative. The other main component is NOT fertilizing your lawn, whether you live on the lake or near it. The WLPA has been educating our members on these extremely important issues for years now, and maybe, combined with your help, we have made a difference. Every effort that you make to help this invaluable cause can be the difference on whether or not we are able to enjoy our lake this coming summer season. We cannot control the temperature or amount of rain we will receive, but we can control the above mentioned items that could keep us from having another major bloom. Please let's continue to work together to save Lake Wequaquet and feel good that maybe we are making a real difference.

*I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season and peaceful new year.  
Sincerely, Alan Horvitz, WLPA President*



### **WLPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President:

**Alan Horvitz**

Vice President:

**Ahvi Spindell**

Secretary:

**Mary Ann Anthony**

Treasurer:

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**Michael Falkson**

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**Richard Kramer**

**Gail Maguire**

**Karin Menegay**

## **WLPA Mission: Water Quality and Water Safety**

### **Issues Addressed by Town Officials at Annual Meeting**

*Notes compiled by WLPA Secretary Mary Ann Anthony*

Alan Horvitz introduced the first speaker, Councilman Eric Steinhilber, noting that it was through his efforts that the maximum property assessment for the new sewer system was reduced from \$17,000 to \$10,000 per property, saving residents \$7000. Mr Steinhilber thanked members for contacting him and lending their voices to the sewer project effort. In addition to the sewers, he has been working toward the Vineyard Wind agreement and drainage improvement, particularly on Huckins Neck Rd. The health of the lake is his priority.

photo by F. Ward

Police Chief Matthew Sonnabend began his remarks by addressing the issue of dispatch. His department is adjusting to new dispatch equipment, and has added 14 civilian dispatchers, trained just for dispatch. Uniformed officers are no longer dispatching, making them more available to respond to issues in the community. He said to call if there is an issue on the lake. Without calls from the public, police can't address the problems. Don't post it on the department's Facebook page. It doesn't get reviewed frequently. Call the police dispatch number, 508-775-0812, or 911 if safety is involved. Callers can be anonymous, but the call must be logged.

Jay Horn, Assistant Harbor Master made brief remarks, encouraging members to call the Harbor Maser's office first. They work with the police, and are all about customer service. The number is 508-790-6273. They return all calls, and the phone is checked twice a day.

Dan Santos, Head of DPW, spoke about environmental issues town-wide: waste water, storm water, and pond water. The CWMP (comprehensive wastewater management plan) is required by the state for every community as part of the Federal Clean Water Act which set the standards. Barnstable's CWMP was developed to meet those standards. The town relies on wells and ground water for drinking, so waste water disposal is essential. The 2015 plan is the latest iteration of a plan begun 30 years ago. After public meetings, a 60 year plan was accelerated to 30 years.



Due to pandemic delays in 2020, the WLPA 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was not held until August 14, 2021. The location was at Our Lady of Victory Parish Center.

# 2021 Bearse-Wequaquet Fanwort Removal Project

## Excerpts from Full Report

Provided by Matthew Vogt President/Owner of New England Aquatic Services

On August 24<sup>th</sup> New England Aquatic Services commenced a project to Suction Harvest Fanwort ( *Cabomba caroliniana* ) from Bearse Pond and Wequaquet Lake. The scope of the project was 12-7 hour days of removal for Bearse Pond for a total of 84 hours, and 5-7 hour days of removal on Wequaquet lake for a total of 35 hours. The project was completed utilizing two suction harvesting boats and increased hours each day to increase efficiency and decrease the actual duration of the project. The final day of harvesting was on September 2nd. In total 221 bags of Fanwort were removed from Bearse Pond and 190 bags of fanwort were removed from Wequaquet lake for a total of 411 bags which is the equivalent of 822 five-gallon buckets of material.

### Bearse Pond

The 84 hours of work, or "12 days", in Bearse Pond was the same scope as in 2020. In the attached images I have provided a map showing the points from 2021, and also a separate map showing the points worked in 2020. What can be seen is that the area we were able to cover in the same amount of time was dramatically increased. This is because the results in the areas worked in 2020 were so good that we were able to move through and clear those areas in much less time. The positive results were clear to our crews immediately upon commencing work. The shallow area of the Pond near Nyes Point Way took about 4 days to clear in 2019, 2 days in 2020, and the equivalent of about 1 day in 2021. As 2020 was the first year that our time was significantly increased, we were able to address the area by Holly Point Road and remove an extremely dense growth area. This is where the majority of time was spent in 2020 as it was a large area with large plant beds. This area took the equivalent of 7.5-8 days of work in 2020, and was cleared in 2.5-3 days in 2021. As can be seen when comparing the two images, entirely new areas were addressed and cleared in 2021. While it is very likely there are still unaddressed beds, I am confident during the next season those areas cleared this year will also be cleared more quickly which will allow us to address any remaining areas of untouched growth. One other metric we can use to measure the success of the efforts in Bearse pond is that while we have cleared a much larger area in the same amount of time, we actually removed 36 bags less than in 2020 due to decreased density in plant growth in those previously cleared sections.

### Wequaquet

The scope for the work in Wequaquet was also the same as in 2020, 35 hours or "5 Days". There are 2 areas that we have been able to focus on over the past several years; The Gooseberry section and what we refer to as the "Northwest Cove." The success in Wequaquet was the same as Bearse Pond in so far as we are seeing that those areas of removal are decreased in density and it has allowed us to work into new areas of untouched growth and expand the removal effort in the same amount of time. The Northwest Cove took us 3 days in 2018, half a day in 2020, and just about the equivalent of 2 hours in 2021.

Our conclusions on this project are very positive. Fanwort is a very difficult plant to combat but the results we were seeing from the work that has been done far exceeded our expectations. Our recommendations moving forward would be to budget the same 12 days for Bearse Pond. I would recommend increasing the time for Wequaquet from 5 days to 12 as well..

Full Report, Including maps, will be posted on our website:

[www.WEQUAQUETLAKE.com](http://www.WEQUAQUETLAKE.com)

BEARSE 2020



BEARSE 2021



Map points compare fanwort removal in 2020 and 2021. Although same amount of time was spent doing the work, far more area was able to be covered in 2021 due to work completed the previous year.

## Even without the use of fertilizer, actions can be taken for lawn care 5 WAYS TO PREPARE YOUR LAWN FOR WINTER

Advise provided by Wright Mowers (wrightmfs.com)

Winter is arriving soon and it's time to take the necessary steps to make sure your lawn is prepped for whatever the season may bring. With a few simple actions, you can not only make sure your or your clients' lawn can endure the harsh weather of winter, but that it will also reap some serious benefits when spring comes back around.

### 1. Use fallen leaves to your advantage.

While fallen autumn leaves can provide nutrition to a lawn, they can potentially smother your lawn if left untended. Leaves can be used for composting after they are removed from your lawn. If you don't want to rake or remove the leaves with a blower, you can always use a mulching mower and save yourself some work.

### 2. Maintain a compost pile and use it for insulation in the garden.

### 3. Aerate your lawn before winter hits- especially for cool season grasses.

### 4. Overseed your lawn 6-8 weeks before the first hard freeze.

Fall is a good time to seed cool season grasses and it will give the lawn a boost in the spring by preventing excessive loss of grass during the winter. If the lawn is too big to seed by hand, consider using a rotary spreader.

### 5. Leave the grass short in the winter.

As you move closer to your final mows of the season, gradually lower your cutting deck to ease the lawn into an overall lower height.

**Reminder:** Fall is a good time to double check that you've been keeping your septic system pumped. Every two years is recommended.



## DOCKS AND ICE - Can I leave my dock in?



Author: Joe McHale from "Best Made Products"

If you're finishing up your first summer at your new lake house and just now realizing all of your neighbors have removed their docks from the water and stacked them neatly on shore, you should be probably grab yourself a pair of waders or call the local dock guy and do the same thing. While ice may look beautiful and harmless, the crushing power of this frozen water is significant and has potential to be extremely damaging. The funny thing is, if you were to leave your docks in you may make it through most of the winter with little or no damage at all. You may even start bragging to your neighbors or your wife how smart you are. Then ice out happens and it all comes crashing down. You see, it's not the act of water freezing around a dock that's the big problem. It's moving ice. For example, let's suppose it's early March and the ice has receded away from your dock and life is well. This is the dangerous spot. All it takes is a change in the wind direction and those huge chunks of ice are now steaming towards your dock with the power of a Caterpillar D10 bulldozer and they'll mangle your docks right into shore. Catch the conditions just right and that ice may grab your docks and drag them out into the water and send them down to Davy Jones' Locker. "Well I never have ice moving in the lake so I'm OK." Maybe. But you need to also be concerned about ice heave – when in shallow water the ice freezes to the lake bottom and runs out of space and starts pushing up out onto shore. I know this happens to my lakefront every year before the spring high water and waves wash all the rocks back to their normal place.

Excerpt from *Front Lake Living* 11/27/2012

Police Chief Sonnebend answered questions at the WLPA Annual Meeting. Other Town Officials who spoke are seated at the table: Town Manager, Mark Eills, DPW Head, Dan Santos, and Councilman Eric Steinhilber. Also Jay Horn, Assistant Harbormaster (not pictured) spoke at the meeting.



photo by F. Ward

## WLPA MEMBERS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

WLPA Bylaws allow thirteen members to the Board of Directors. Presently, our association has eleven on the Board and would welcome two more.

### **What are some activities performed by the Board?**

**Meetings:** The Board meets about four times a year. Plans are made and goals are set and much discussion occurs during these 1-2 hour meetings. Matters considered most important to the lake's safety and health are addressed.

**Membership:** Keeping track of our membership involves maintaining a member roster: recording dues payments, making dues deposits, tracking property sales around the lake and sending welcome letters that include an invitation to join the association. In the future, we may set up a membership website which could have many benefits.

**Newsletter:** Presently, the WLPA produces a bi-annual newsletter. The newsletter requires assistance on several levels. Help is needed overseeing the letter. Help with the gathering, writing, editing and layout of the paper is required. Also photography is helpful and news ideas are solicited from members and Town Officers. The newsletter needs help with publication as well as mailing to the membership.

**Annual Meeting:** Once a year, the Association holds its' Annual Meeting for the entire membership. The meeting needs to be scheduled and coordinated with a venue, Keynote Speakers need be chosen and invited. Town Officials are invited, a program is created, supplies provided and membership notification provided.

**Website:** The Website has a link that is overseen by a Director who will answer or direct questions posed.

**Town Liaison:** Board members strive to maintain communications with various Town Officials and Departments concerning lake health and safety. Generally, WLPA is represented by a member or Board member at the Town Council meetings and most recently in connection with Sewer Activities.

All the above activities contribute towards keeping the WLPA alive and functioning. Please feel free to contact a board member or make note on our website if you would like to join the board or assist the WLPA in any capacity. EACH WLPA MEMBER BENEFITS FROM ACTIONS THAT PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF WEQUAQUET

## WLPA Mission: Water Quality and Water Safety

Issues discussed at Annual Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

The plan has been approved by 3 regulatory agencies, and involves a majority of the lake properties. The plan is the Cape's "Big Dig". It is aggressive – the largest project in the state just now: in 30 years 190 miles of roads will be sewerred, serving 12 thousand parcels, with 85 pump stations, for a total cost of \$1.4 billion. 19 projects are scheduled from 2021 to 2031, which will remove 40% of the nitrogen load going into the ground water. Work will start on Strawberry Hill Rd in the fall, and be completed in spring 2023. There are 250 homes along the route, and work will be done in conjunction with Vineyard Wind electrical piping. Sewers, main pump lines at Phinney's Lane and Rte 28 will start in 2022, be completed in 2024. At least half the financing for the project has been identified by the town: special accounts (short term rentals and meal taxes), 0% loans from the state, Vineyard Winds contribution; 25% subsidy from the Waste Water Fund; and \$10,000 property assessment per household. Property owners are responsible for the cost of hooking up to the sewer, depending on the configuration of their sanitary lines and distance from the street. The cost can be amortized over 30 years through real estate taxes. Anticipated range of hook up costs is \$4-8K. The sewer project is being communicated broadly by the town, as advised by a communication consultant; civic meetings, engaging residents about the design, a robust website, weekly emails, social media, and as the sewer comes closer, door to door communication. Mr Santos also addressed roads and drainage issues. Hundreds of old storm drains need to be upgraded or eliminated. There are 20 new drainage structures on Huckins Neck, and he is working with the WLPA to identify other road runoff locations on the lake. Several are on private property

Mr. Santos spoke about pond sampling efforts as well. There are 180 ponds in Barnstable. UMass Dartmouth has been a partner in sampling for many years, so there is a baseline from which to measure changes. There is a three step approach: 1. Monitoring ( storm runoff, cyanobacteria, low dissolved oxygen) 2. A management plan, and 3. Implementation. Gooseberry Pond/Bearse's Pond are in the top 10 needing treatment. 40 locations are being sampled, 8 of them on the lake, every two weeks. Sampling has been outsourced to APCC. The town posts warnings at public ways to the lake, on the town website, and on the APCC website. The town is working with the county, forming a task force to collect and consolidate information to deal with cyanobacteria.

Town Manager Mark Eills addressed the Clean Water Management Plan as being critical to the work of the town, but is not the only project the town is working on. He noted that Barnstable has the 4<sup>th</sup> largest road system in the state, and has the 4<sup>th</sup> largest number of land parcels. It is a complicated community with many needs. The town welcomes citizen input and cooperation as needs are addressed. He thanked the WLPA for its partnership over the decades. Alan Horvitz thanked Mr Eills, and urged members to be active and make their voices heard.

# SWAN LAKE RESCUE

By Ahvi Spindell



In August, the wing and back side of this mute swan were badly wounded.  
*Photo by Jane Gabbert*

Late afternoon just before hurricane Ida was about to blow across the Cape, a bloodied Mute Swan was spotted on the shoreline of Bears Pond in Lake Wequaquet. Its neck strained to reach its injured backside, scarlet red against white feathers. Had a boat struck it? How will it get through the night with the storm rapidly approaching? Will Animal Rescue respond before it's too late?

After the storm the next morning, the swan stood sheltered against inlet bushes. A large, saltwater fishing lure was hanging from its body, just out of reach of the Mute's orange beak. With little hope for a rescue on a Sunday, the swan was bleeding badly.

Early Monday morning, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, a closer look revealed a treble hook harpooned into its wing and back. Thankfully, Chris Nappi of the Department of Natural Resources, called to say he was already on his way to help.

On his first attempt, Chris unsuccessfully tried to net the swan from the shoreline. The bird swam off out of reach, so a 15ft. Boston Whaler was employed to circle behind the bird for a second go. Chris jumped from the boat with his pole net and trapped the frightened and stressed animal. He then



Thanks to emergency surgery and rehab efforts by Cape Wildlife Center, "Reed" the swan was saved and joined by its new mate, "Boston."  
*Photo by Ahvi Spindell*

lifted the fully-grown bird, carefully placed it into a large plastic box and drove to the Cape Wildlife Center on Rt. 6A.

The Wildlife Center veterinarians x rayed and performed emergency surgery to remove the lure. The wing had been injured and the body of the swan was badly cut. Zak Mertz, head of the Wildlife Center, said the prognosis was guarded and uncertain. A lot of blood had been lost.

A week later the swan was alive, but a long way from being out of danger. Another two weeks passed, and the swan was stable. However, the extent of his injury remained severe. By the end of September, the swan would live, but would it be able to eventually fly? If it could not, there was little hope for survival in the wild.

At this time, the Wildlife Center had admitted another swan, a gray cygnet from Boston Commons, who had an injured leg. The vets performed their magic, and this new addition was soon encamped outside in a large pen near our wounded friend.

The two birds met. They spoke. They became inseparable.

On-going reports from the Center noted they were never far apart and were obviously nurturing each other.

Mid-October the pair was ushered into the small pond behind the center. But first they were named. Boston was an obvious choice for the cygnet and Reed was named for his/her shoreline capture.

They were now free to winter at the pond or fly to another location. In November, the birds took flight together. Chances are good they have returned to Wequaquet, a short trip from the Center.

The Wildlife Center explained that most animal patients are the result of human negligence. Hopefully, this rehab story can serve as a cautionary tale for those sharing the lake with our local wildlife.

Swans mate for life and we shall keep a lookout for Boston and Reed who bring life and beauty to our magnificent lake.

(For those wishing to do so, donations can be made by visiting <https://capewildlifecenter.com>, or calling (508) 362-0111.)

Excerpt from: Fishing Tackle: Threats to Wildlife (published by the Wild life Center of Virginia)

## HOW CAN YOU HELP PROTECT WILDLIFE?

We can all prevent wildlife injuries and deaths caused by improperly discarded fishing line and hooks; the solution to this problem is to change our behavior.

Dispose of broken or leftover gear properly; never leave behind fishing line, hooks, lures, or bait. Some places offer designated fishing gear disposal options, such as fishing line recycling bins or tubes.

Do not release fish who still have hooks in them; if practicing catch and release, use barbless hooks.

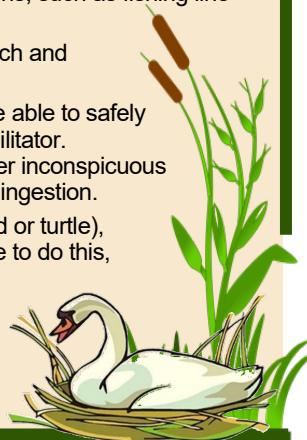
If you find an animal who is entangled in fishing line, and you are able to safely capture the animal, bring the animal to a permitted wildlife rehabilitator.

A rehabilitator can assess the animal to ensure there are no other inconspicuous injuries or problems related to fishing line entanglement or hook ingestion.

If you unintentionally hook an animal while fishing (such as a bird or turtle), remove the hook if it is possible to do so safely. If you are unable to do this, contact animal control or a permitted wildlife rehabilitator.

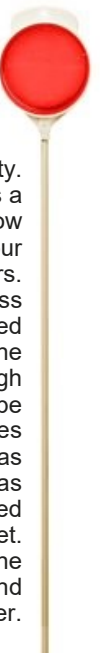
Organize a clean-up event at a local fishing spot or shoreline.

Share your knowledge. Educate friends, family, and neighbors who fish or recreate near water about the harmful impacts of improperly discarded fishing tackle.



## DPW Request to help the plows...

Please stake your property. One of the important actions a property owner can do to help plow drivers is stake the edge of your properties with plow stakes/reflectors. Plow stakes can be wood or fiberglass with reflectors on top or wrapped around the body of the stake. The reflective material needs to be high enough up the stake that it can be seen over the snow drift. The stakes should be driven into the ground as close to the edge of the property as possible. Generally, it's recommended that they be placed every 8 -10 feet. Installing stakes is easier before the ground freezes, so we recommend you do it sooner rather than later.



## KEEPING UP ON SEWER NEWS:

Town website: [barnstablewaterresources.com](http://barnstablewaterresources.com) includes up to date information concerning the Comprehensive Waste Water Management Plans. Installation of sewers around Lake Wequaquet is part of the plan to keep our lake healthy. The Town offers an online CWMP newsletter that includes updates on meetings, construction detours, and other water quality news.