



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Thank you for your continued support of The Friends of Bolton Lakes. Getting through 2020 without face-to-face spring and fall forums was disappointing to say the least. It's our hope that these communications to you are informative and reassure you that your organization remains active.

### **Membership Drive**

The 2021 membership drive is now underway. It has never been easier. Please renew or start your membership [here](#) by either using the online form or downloading the form and mailing it in. Your support helps us advocate for the health and recreational use of our lakes. As a reminder, memberships are for each calendar year.

### **Watershed Management Plan**

The Bolton Lakes and Watershed Management Plan draft has been completed. The plan was written by Hillary Kenyon Garovoy, consultant, Northeast Aquatic Research along with steering committee members. The steering committee for the plan consists of town officials from Bolton, Vernon, Coventry and Tolland, along with FBL. FBL is represented on the committee by David Forrest and John Williams. Many of our members responded to a watershed survey in the fall to help develop the plan. We thank you for your input. A forum will be established this spring to allow the public to voice comments.

### **Hatch Hill Dam Reconstruction**

The Hatch Hill Dam reconstruction project - to the best of our knowledge - is still targeted to begin work in the Fall 2021.

### **Spring Virtual Seminar**

A virtual Spring Seminar is in the final planning stages. In the fall of 2020 FBL commissioned CAES (Connecticut Agricultural Experimental Station) to do an inventory of the plants in Middle Lake. That study has been completed and Greg Bugby, who was in charge of the study, will give a presentation on what was found.

### **AIS Grant**

In 2019, the CT legislature passed HB6637, an act requiring an invasive species stamp for the operation of a motorboat on the inland waters of the state. A portion of the fund was to be used for fighting invasive aquatic species. This year DEEP (Department of Energy and Environment Protection) called for grant applications to be submitted. The towns of Vernon and Bolton along with FBL jointly submitted their grant request for \$35,000. The intent is to use the grant money to combat invasive species in the Bolton Lakes and provide educational outreach to local residents and visitors. The text of the grant can be found [here](#). The grants are expected to be awarded at the beginning of April.

### **Boat Launch Ambassadors**

Last fall five FBL board members were trained by DEEP to be boat launch ambassadors for our lakes. The role of a lake ambassador is to engage boating enthusiasts at our boat launches by educating them about environmental issues. Lake ambassadors will keep track of where boaters are coming from and pass out literature on how to keep invasive species out of our lakes. If you are interested in becoming an ambassador, contact FBL at [FBL@friendsofboltonlakes.org](mailto:FBL@friendsofboltonlakes.org). If we have enough interest we'll set up a second training session in the spring.

### **Jellyfish**

At the end of last summer, Middle Lake had a bloom of freshwater jellyfish. They are small, somewhere between a nickel and quarter in diameter. Here is a picture:



The scientific name is *Craspedacusta sowerbyi*. What we saw on the lake is the adult phase. Most of their life is spent as small polyps on the bottom of the lake. Only when conditions are right in terms of availability of food, mainly zooplankton, temperature and light are hydromedusae produced. Hydromedusae are the small jellyfish we saw. Lakes can go years and years between blooms while the polyps sit on the bottom of the lake. Like all jellyfish, the freshwater jellies have stingers that they use to paralyze their prey. But the

stingers are so small they cannot penetrate human skin. So, they pose no danger to swimmers. Late summer and late in the day is when the jellyfish are most active.

On our website is a [link](#) to a video shot by Heath Frazier this past summer from jellyfish he caught in Middle lake. And here is a [link](#) to find out more about freshwater jellyfish from the United States Geological Survey.

The following is an interview with an expert on freshwater jellyfish. Warning: the first eight minutes is on the freshwater jellyfish and then the video gets weird... jellyfish in the atmosphere, maybe aliens.

[https://youtu.be/-b2H4uva\\_kw](https://youtu.be/-b2H4uva_kw)

### **Monthly FBL Meetings**

We continue to have members with diverse information and knowledge join the monthly meetings. We urge everyone to stay involved with FBL and attend a virtual meeting. It's easy. Just send an email to [fbl@friendsofboltonlakes.org](mailto:fbl@friendsofboltonlakes.org) to request the ZOOM link. The meetings are held at 6:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month.

Stay safe.

FBL, Board of Directors