



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

President's Corner

As winter transitions to spring and the trees begin to bud and flower, noticeable seasonal changes also begin to take place with our lakes. Plants like Watershield (*Brasenia Schreberi*) once again rise to the surface of the lakes - reaching high to capture the sun's precious energy. Though sometimes viewed as a nuisance, plants like Watershield play an important role in serving as a shelter for young fish and food for waterfowl - both critical functions for the overall health of our lakes. Other, less frequent seasonal changes like the winter fish kill observed this year by many lake residents may also take place and serve as a reminder of just how fragile the balance of our lake ecosystem actually is. Though the factors that led to this fish kill are ultimately rooted in natural processes and are largely beyond human control, it is important that lake residents and visitors remain vigilant in their observations of the lakes and promptly report any issues using the reporting tool available on the Friends of Bolton Lakes web page. Prompt reporting of any suspected problems allows for a timely response to emerging issues on our lakes if necessary. If you see something... say something.

[Link to reporting tool](#)

Soon, the cool, breezy days of spring will transition to the hot, sunny days of summer and many more people will be out enjoying the Bolton Lakes. Our lakes represent an incredible natural ecosystem and allow for a wide range of recreational opportunities to enjoy. I encourage you to get out and explore your lakes as much as possible this year and share your love for the lakes with others. If you know of residents and visitors that are not yet members of the Friends of Bolton Lakes, please consider sharing this newsletter with them and asking them to join in our efforts.

Sincerely,
Jason Seacat
President, Friends of Bolton Lakes

Libraries Love Lakes

It's never too early to think about summer activities with the kids and grandkids. Again this year, FBL will be partnering with the Rockville Library (Vernon) and Bentley Library (Bolton) to promote the Libraries Love Lakes program. This project pairs public libraries with lake scientists to provide collaborative programming that will emphasize a lifelong appreciation for lakes.

On July 24th at 2:00 the Rockville Library will be hosting Kendra Kilson, a Research Scientist from Northeast Aquatic Research (NEAR), to speak to families and children, ages 4-8 and up, about lake wildlife and ecosystems, recreation, and conservation. This family friendly event will include a story time and a fun craft. Please mark your calendar and join us! The Bentley Library in Bolton will also be hosting a similar program over the summer. Once we have the date finalized, we will distribute the information. Of course, you may also contact the library for details.

Soil Testing

Green Grass, Not Green Lakes!

Can you have a green lawn without turning the lake green too? Yes, you can!

Improper and excessive fertilization is a major source of nutrients that can run off into our lakes. Phosphorus lawn fertilizers are restricted in Connecticut because of its adverse impact on our water bodies. Effective in 2013, Public Act No. 12-155 addressed the application of fertilizers containing phosphorus on established lawns. The phosphorus that contaminates our water bodies comes mainly from inappropriately applied fertilizers (both bagged fertilizers and organic amendments like compost) and faulty septic systems. Phosphorus can be carried into water sources by both surface and subsurface runoff, as well as leaching. Improper phosphorus management results in algal blooms, fish kills, weedy and uninviting lakes, and even health risks to humans.

The Act prohibits the application of fertilizers containing phosphate to established lawns except when a state approved soil testing method performed within the previous two years indicates the soil is lacking in phosphorus and fertilizer containing phosphate is needed for the growth of the lawn, or the fertilizer is used for establishing new grass or repairing the lawn with seed or sod. Fertilizers containing phosphate cannot be applied to lawns between December 1 and March 15.

Fertilizers containing phosphorus cannot be applied to any portion of lawn that is located 20 feet or less from any brook, stream, river, lake, pond, or any other body of water, except if the fertilizer is applied with the use of a drop spreader, rotary spreader with a deflector or targeted spray liquid, the application may occur on any portion of lawn that is located not less than 15 feet from any brook, stream, river, lake, pond, or any other body of water.

Excess nitrogen runoff can contribute to algal blooms that reduce water clarity and decrease dissolved oxygen levels when the algae decompose. Decreased levels of oxygen can stress and even kill aquatic life.

So what can you do to make sure your lawn care does not harm our lakes? Future newsletters will describe additional topics, but first: **TEST YOUR SOIL.**

Lawns do not automatically need fertilizing, so it is important to get a soil test to tell you if you need to fertilize or lime your soil. Responsible lawn care should begin with this simple step. Here are two readily available ways to get a good soil test:

UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory, 6 Sherman Place, Unit 5102, Storrs, CT. The laboratory will perform a lawn soil analysis for \$15.00. Please see their website for instructions on how to collect and submit your soil sample.

[UConn's Soil Nutrient Analysis Lab website link](#)

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, 153 Cook Hill Road, P.O. Box 248, Windsor, CT 06095. The CAES will perform a soil test free of charge.

[CAES website link](#)

Membership

FBL encourages all residents and visitors to the Bolton Lakes Region to join the Friends of Bolton Lakes. Membership in FBL provides you with periodic newsletters, email blasts of important information, forums with informative speakers, and strong advocacy with the towns and DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection). Your dues also support the FBL's continuing monitoring of the water quality of our lakes. Again this year, FBL will be purchasing lake related books to donate to our local libraries, which is just one of the ways your membership dollars are at work.

Your membership dues are our main source of working capital. Memberships run from January through December each year. The sign-up period runs from October through the end of September. So, if you joined in October 2022 or later, you are a 2023 member.

Please renew or start your membership on our [membership page](#). You can join online or by mailing in a membership form.

Spring Forum

Save the date May 31st for our spring forum. The main speaker will be Ginny Apple, Master Wildlife Conservationist, who will speak about bald eagles. Once we have more details, you will receive an invitation by email. Although the forums are held as an educational outreach to the FBL membership, we encourage anyone with an interest in the topics to attend; please invite anyone you know who might be interested.

The FBL Board of Directors