



# For the Love of Birds

By Michele Johnson Baker

Before they were married, Linda and Harold Johnson were high school sweethearts, growing up in New Hampshire. They have visited most of New Hampshire, but when they found a cottage on Webster Lake in 2005, they didn't need to go anywhere else. With beautiful water and a kind community, this quiet spot on the lake became a home away from home.

In years past, the two would be up before 6 and board their boat in anticipation of what amazing things they might see. Linda in front with her camera and Harold, the lookout captain, would spend hours slowly cruising the lake's coastline, looking for the day's new story.

Linda enjoys the thrill of the hunt and the capturing of an image that stops time perfectly. But if you ask her, the most fulfilling thing is watching the stories of life unfolding. Each bird she photographed became a part of their lake family—and each had a story. Some of her most memorable stories and images she has posted on her Facebook page “Loons, Eagles, and More”.

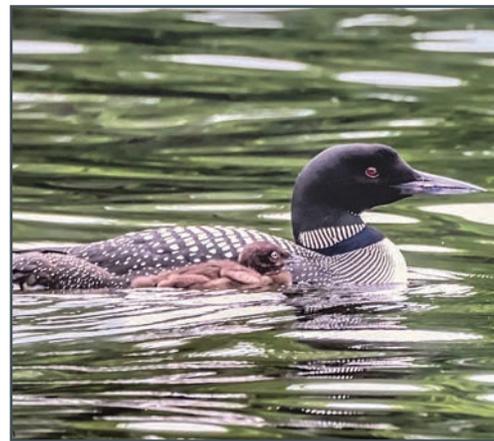
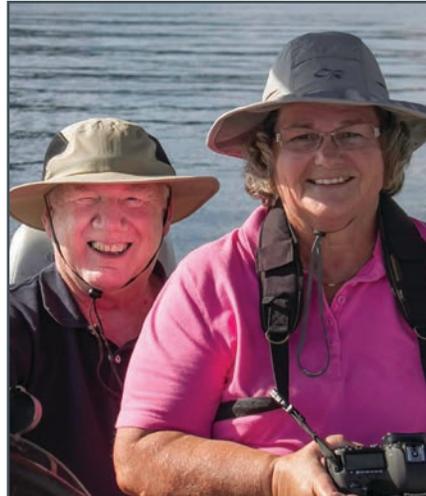
One of the first years Webster Lake had a pair of loons, Linda and Harold went out each day to check on them. But then they lost touch with them. Not seeing the pair for a couple of days, she worried that something might have happened to them. Early the next morning a lone loon glided by Linda and Harold's cottage. Back and forth the loon swam in front of the cottage, as if to say, “Follow me. . .

Follow me!” Linda and Harold jumped into their boat and followed the loon, carefully coasting into the cove past Griffin Beach. From the shoreline filled with reeds and grass, the other loon appeared. Swimming proudly, the loon revealed a baby chick sitting on her back.

Loons were Linda's favorite subjects to photograph. When not on the water, she would read and ask questions of professionals, learning everything she could about loons and their behavior. As the eyes on the lake, local biologists and students called Linda to swap information on what was happening on Webster Lake.

So many birds; so many stories. Hooded Mergansers, Golden Eagles, Loons, Blue and Green Herons, and of course the Osprey and Bald Eagle. Once, when Linda was kayaking, a storm came onto the lake quickly and she had to hunker down in a cove under a pine tree until it past. Soon a Bald Eagle landed two branches above her. The two sat in the shelter of the tree until the storm passed.

One of her most famous images is of a Blue Heron standing on a rock that peaks out of the water. Doing what birds do, washing and pruning his feathers, he gave a shake of his feathers and outstretched wings—and snap! The image was caught. This tall, beautiful bird was caught in an odd but unique pose resembling an old wizard. She named the photo “The Wizard of Webster Lake” (see photo above right).



# Where History Lingers

By Meagan Currier



On a quiet rise at the western edge of Webster Lake, along Apple Farm Road, rests Webster Lake Cemetery . . . once known as Sawyer Cemetery when this land was part of Andover, long before Franklin grew into the city it is today. Modest in size, the burial ground is one of those places where history lingers in the air. Worn stones lean gently under the weight of years, while newer markers stand sharp and clean, creating a landscape where time seems to overlap and mingle. Walking among them, you can almost hear the rhythm of generations who lived, worked, and played by the lake.

One of the names you'll find here is John Shaw "Pond John" Pervier (1804–1877) . . . a man remembered for making his life at the west end of the lake. The Pervier family, sometimes recorded as Peveare, left a visible mark on the cemetery. Their plot reflects the endurance of those who built their homes and livelihoods in the shadow of the water and the hills. Standing before their stones, you're reminded of how much the early families carried on their shoulders . . . carving out a community while weathering the hardships of 19th century life.



But not all the stories told in stone are about age and endurance. Near the center of the cemetery, there is a small memorial that stops you in your tracks . . . a lamb carved in honor of Emma Breed. Her exact age is unknown, but the lamb itself speaks volumes. In cemeteries of this era, lambs were often symbols of innocence and youth . . . used to mark the resting places of children whose lives were cut heartbreakingly short. Emma's marker, delicate and poignant, serves as a reminder that even in the hardest of times, families clung to faith, memory, and love as they mourned their little ones.

Adding to the atmosphere is the natural life that continues to thrive around the graves. Just off the old path once known as Sand Hill Road, a dying tree still serves as home to a family of eagles. Year after year, they return, raising their young above the very stones that mark past lives. There's something both humbling and comforting in that image . . . while human stories are etched in granite below, new life still spreads its wings above. The circle of life is present here in the most literal and striking way.

Webster Lake Cemetery is more than a burial ground . . . it's a living storybook. Its stones tell of strength, of grief, of families who endured, and of children who never got the chance to grow old. And its setting, quiet but vibrant with wildlife, ensures that those who rest here are never far from the beauty of the lake and the trees they once called home.

Next time you find yourself on Webster Lake, pause for a visit. Wander the rows, notice the names, and take a moment to pay respect to those who loved this place long before we did.

## Preserve & Protect

By Mark Lorenze

Over the past 25 years, hundreds of acres of land in the upper watershed of Webster Lake have been protected from development. Much of this protected land was placed into conservation in conjunction with the NH Natural Resources Conservation Service in their Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Owners of large parcels, including David Sinclair and Todd Workman, led the effort that protects these lands for perpetuity. All of this land is contiguous and connects to the D. Blakely Hoar Sanctuary (bird preserve) in Hill. In total, there are approximately 2,000 acres of permanently protected land in the sensitive upland watershed.

In addition to the conservation land, Todd worked with the State of NH (NHDES aquatic mitigation reserve) to restore natural wetlands along Lake Shore Drive to help the water to infiltrate and not runoff with pollutants that cause cyanobacteria outbreaks. Some of us can remember the five one room cottages that were removed to make way for this restoration.

In addition to the protected property on the north end of the lake, the NH Dept. of Forestry manages 43 acres on the east side that were placed into conservation thanks to the efforts of the newly formed Webster Lake Association in 1974.

# Keeping Webster Lake Healthy

By Val Perkins

Every summer a group of dedicated water testers board a pontoon boat to gather water samples from the deep spot in the lake or go by foot to test the water from its four tributaries. This activity is the Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP), coordinated by the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). The Webster Lake Association (WLA) became a part of this program in 1986, a year after its inception. These samples are gathered four times each summer: in June, July, August, and September.

Special equipment is needed to gather water samples. A field data sheet is also used to record weather conditions at the time of sampling and depths at which the water samples are taken. A Kemmerer bottle is used to gather samples at three different depths. These samples give NHDES information from all layers of the lake: the Epilimnetic, Metalimnetic, and Hypolimnetic. Samples are poured into bottles labeled with location, date, time, and depth. These samples are tested for Color, E-Coli Bacteria, PH, Turbidity, Total Phosphorous, Chloride, Conductivity, and Acid Neutralizing Capacity. An Integrated Tube is used to gather a water sample at the Mid-Metalimnetic depth. This sample tells what the Chlorophyll-A levels are in the lake. A Secchi Disk and Viewscope are then used to check the clarity of the lake.

After gathering samples at the deep spot, samples are gathered from the four tributaries: Sucker Brook, Rte 11



Water Testing Team: (l-r) Neil Twomey, Mark Lorenze, Denis Duguette.

inlet, Gagnes Brook, and Lake Avenue. How well the water flows at these locations determines whether samples can be retrieved. These samples are also tested for the above noted categories, just not at different depths. After each sampling date, a report is sent to the WLA with results. A year-end report is sent in late Winter/early Spring. Having almost 40 years of data is most valuable and a testament to the dedication of the volunteers who have been a part of this program for the WLA.

The WLA volunteers are trained in methods of collecting samples via in-person training sessions or online video training. Every other year, a VLAP biologist participates with our group of testers to ensure samples are gathered correctly and protocols are followed. New Hampshire has over 800 lakes and the VLAP program empowers citizens to assist NHDES in evaluating lake quality throughout the state. The information gathered allows state biologists and lake associations to make educated decisions regarding the future of New Hampshire's lakes and ponds.

## WLA 2026 Calendar Available

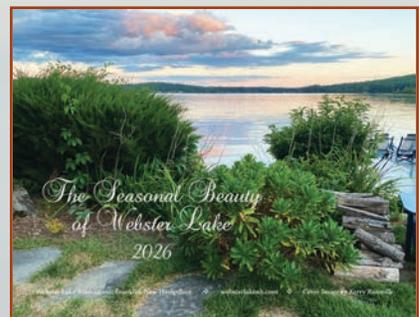
Not only are all the seasons beautifully represented in our new 2026 WLA Calendar, but sunrises, sunsets, pink skies, lake mists, and even the Aurora Borealis complement the images of our amazing lake. The challenge was

selecting just 20 from more than 80 beautiful photos that were submitted.

"The Seasonal Beauty of Webster lake 2026" will decorate your wall and is a perfect holiday gift for friends and loved ones.

### To purchase, go to:

CreatePhotoCalendars.com, click on "Shop Marketplace," and enter "WLA".



# Activities to Look Forward to in 2026



**Game Days:** Friends and neighbors join for social time and games! Bring games you like to play, or join a table.



**Water Meet-ups:** Boaters and friends put boats next to each other to visit and enjoy water recreation.



**Sailing Events:** Given the number of sailboats on the lake, we plan to have some events where sailors can meet each other and provide a spectacle of sails on the water.



**Boats and Books:** Gather together with other readers to read and discuss books chosen by the group.

## Meet Our Lake Hosts

By Linda Stronge, Lake Host Coordinator



### Tony Mattson

This was Tony's second year as a lake host. He moved to Franklin to be closer to his wife's son, who is co-owner of Vulgar Brewing. During the winter months, Tony lives in Texas, where he pursues his passion for boating and fishing. He enjoys spending time near the lake, interacting with boaters, and appreciates the social aspect of his role as a lake host.



### Cindy Daigneault

Cindy recently moved to Franklin. She owned and operated a small beauty salon for 20 years in Laconia which she had to close unexpectedly for medical reasons. Cindy was looking for a small position where she could meet people and keep busy. She enjoyed the interactions with boaters and their families and by the end of the summer started to recognize 'repeat launchers'. "Franklin is full of

wonderful people who also want to keep the lake safe."

They monitored our ramp on the weekends and holidays from Memorial Day through Labor Day. They both hope to return next year. The NH Lakes Annual Report is not yet completed but Cindy let me know that she did 355 inspections this year!

## 2026 Calendar of Events

### WLA Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, June 13th, 9am  
30 Lake Shore Drive

### Boat Parade

Saturday, July 4th  
2:30pm meet at Griffin Beach  
(Rain date Sunday, July 5th at Noon)

### WLA Annual Yard Sale

Saturday, July 18th  
181 Webster Lake Road  
9am-3pm  
Drop-off items at 181 Webster Lake Rd.,  
Friday, July 17th, 3pm-6pm

### Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 1st  
Franklin Elks Club, 125 S. Main St.  
9am Coffee, 9:30am Meeting

### Annual Ice Cream Social/Food Drive

Saturday, August 15th, 2-4pm

### WLA Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, September 12th, 9am  
30 Lake Shore Drive



## WLA Purpose

The WLA exists for the purpose of preserving and protecting our lake. We are not a homeowner's association that requires membership and dues, with rules and regulations governing properties and residents. We are an organization whose membership and dues are voluntary. We educate residents on ways to keep the lake healthy so that future generations will be able to enjoy it for years to come. Rules and regulations regarding lakefront property are governed by the State of NH, the Shoreline Water Quality Protections Act created in 1991, and the City of Franklin. Marine Patrol is the governing body for water safety and boating regulations. The WLA is not an enforcement organization.

## WLA Resources

Boater Education Classes	603-267-7256
Boater Safety/Marine Patrol	603-293-2037
Franklin Municipal Services	603-934-4103
Exotic Plant Concerns	603-271-2248
The Loon Center	603-476-5666
Shoreland Concerns	603-271-2147
Water Quality Concerns	603-848-8094
Weed Watcher Volunteers	603-271-2248
Wetlands Concerns	603-271-2147
Webster Lake Association	603-671-7961

### Webster Lake Association

PO Box 44, West Franklin, NH 03235  
www.websterlakenh.com  
Email: info@websterlakenh.com  
Phone: (518) 477-0823

### Board of Directors

Bruce Browne - President  
Bonnie Moore - Vice President  
Shawna Pinnette - Secretary  
John Miller - Treasurer  
Denis Duquette  
Jeff May  
David Moniz  
Eric Morton  
Neil Twomey

