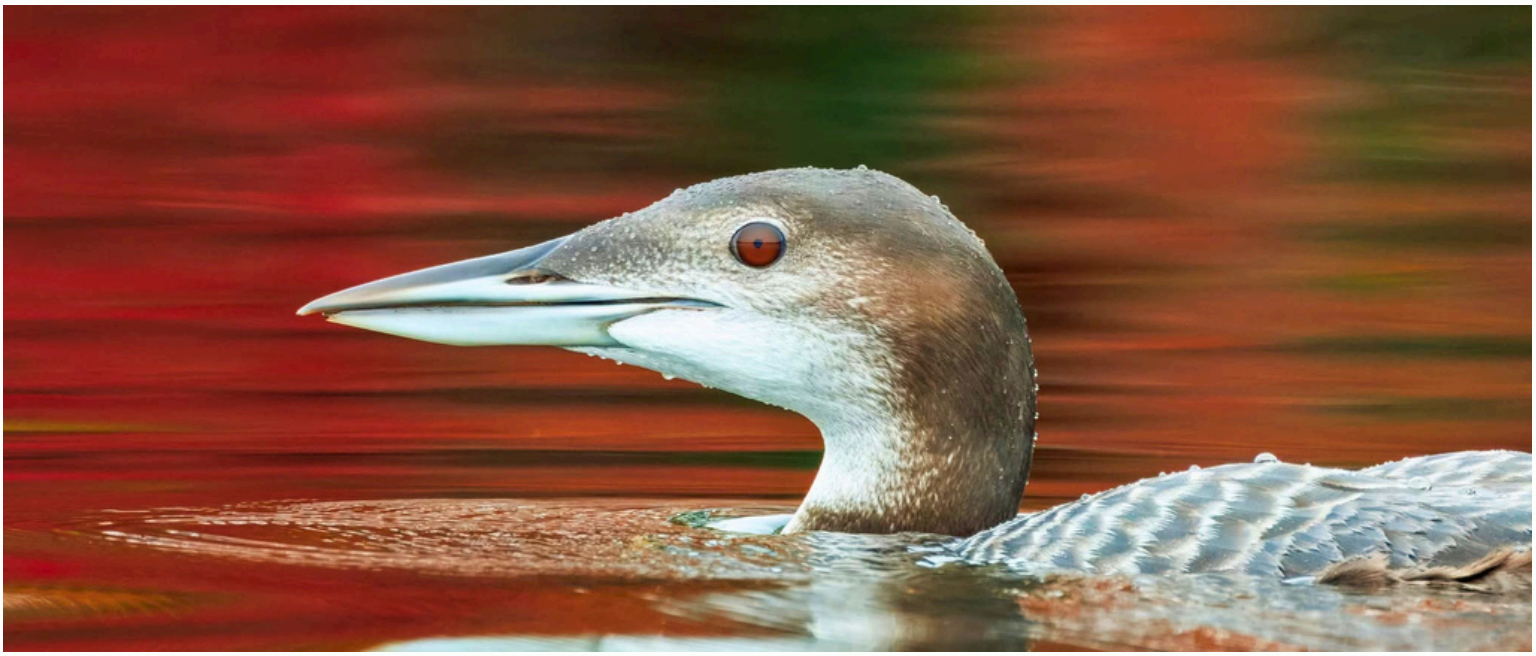
Volume 4, Issue 1 Autumn 2026

THE POINT

A LITTLE NEWS FROM OUR LITTLE LAKE SUNAPEE



Photograph by Peter Jacoby

Letter From Our New President

Greetings to our Little Lake Community,

It is with great pride that I write to you as the newly inducted President of the Board. While I have big shoes to fill, I am excited for the future of the LLSPA.

I have an undergraduate degree in Biology. Upon graduation from Middlebury College, I taught high school science for four years. I taught Biology and Physical science, but I also developed an Environmental Science elective for seniors. That was when I decided to go back to grad school to study Environmental Science. In graduate school, I studied microbial ecology and I researched bacterial dynamics in tidal marshes and the water chemistry that affected the bacteria.

I have to be honest though, working in saltwater isn't my first love. I much prefer freshwater and my first introduction to lakes was our very own Little Lake Sunapee. I learned how to swim in Little Lake Sunapee and more importantly I learned to love lake life here. My family first came to Little Lake Sunapee when we rented one of Cables Cottages back in the late 60s. Then in 1972 while we were renting the Andrews cottage by Bucklin Beach, my parents found out that TLV was selling property and before the end of the summer they bought one of their lots. We spent many glorious summers on the dock and beach at TLV enjoying swimming and boating. One of my favorite memories is sitting on the TLV dock on Sunday afternoons and watching the sunfish races. *To be continued on page 2*

Letter From The President Cont'd from page 1

There wasn't too much drama in those races – Polly Kidder or Laurie Jaques would usually win but some of the others, including my dad, would occasionally take the top spot. I also spent those summers exploring the woods in the area and the pristine beauty of Kidder Brook. Later my parents built a house in the West Basin of Little Lake Sunapee and we enjoyed many great years there. When we visited, my day always began with a morning dip and hot nights always ended with a skinny dip. We often fished right off their dock for bass and trout. And my dad was one of the original Weed Watchers and we affectionately referred to him as Millfoil Man. Dressed in an oversized long sleeve t-shirt and floppy hat to keep the sun off and his mask and snorkel and an old orange water ski belt, he was quite a sight.

Fast forward to 2018 when my husband Mike and I bought property on Colby Hill. It was wonderful to return to the lake and woods where I had spent all those childhood summers. But soon we discovered that the best part of living on Colby Hill is the beach on Little Lake Sunapee that we share with our neighbors. Since moving here, Mike and I have enjoyed the lake through swimming, boating and just hanging out on the dock or beach. And it wasn't long before we both got involved with LLSPA and LSPA. The two of us have been collecting water quality samples for several years. For the past 3 years I have been the treasurer of the LLSPA. But I am happy to say that I am also a weed watcher and my outfit is only slightly less ridiculous than my fathers.

In this new role, I am so enthusiastic to guide LLSPA as we continue to work to preserve and protect the water quality, beauty, and environmental health of Little Sunapee Lake and its tributaries for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Sincerely,

Kathy Thomas



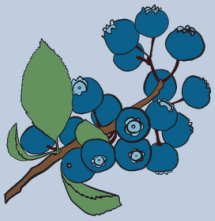
Annual Meeting: A Time for Transition and Plants!

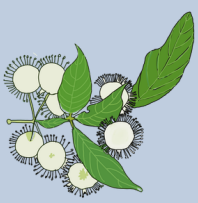


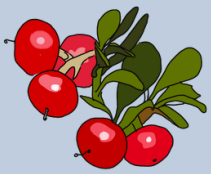
On July 11th we had an excellent turnout for our LLSPA Annual Meeting at the NL Historical Society. At the meeting, we had the opportunity to thank Deb Hoover for her incredible work as our President for the past three years. Deb helped us become better stewards of the lake we love and had an invaluable and inspiring impact on the board over the past three years. Deb created a collaborative atmosphere with patience, grace, and understanding. She helped achieve significant and measurable progress by using strength, respect, sage counsel, and significant investment of time. During Deb's tenure as president, she collaborated on an effective and measurable Strategic Plan, the LLSPA received a Commendation from the governor recognizing our association's efforts, she aided in creating a Lake Stewardship Resource Collection at the Tracy Library, she was a part of birthing the Love Our Lakes Initiative, the LLSPA's communication efforts boomed with the inaugural issue of The Point, ties were strengthened with the Town of New London, NH Lakes, and DES, and so much more. On behalf of the Board and the entire membership, Nancy Girald presented her with a token of our appreciation.

We then held the election of new officers: Kathy Thomas as President, Barry Fougere as Vice President, Amy Bucklin as Treasurer, and Don Castle as Secretary. Outgoing director, Peter Gunn, was thanked for his many years on the Board, particularly with the Lake Host program. Anne Hrabchak will step up as our newest member of the Board.

We closed the meeting with a fun social hour with members' delicious hors d'oeuvres and beverages to enjoy. There were tables to visit that featured Board member Roger Bloch with a Geologic Research table, a Water Quality table with LSPA representative Mike Thomas, a Love Our Lakes table with Board member Rich Badmington and Shoreline Planting table with New London's Nick Scheu. There was even a native plant giveaway. All plants were donated by our friends at Spring Ledge Farm.









Our Keynote Speaker: Plant to Protect

Our keynote speaker, Nissa Marks, a New Hampshire-based wildlife biologist, conservationist, and public policy advocate, gave an engaging presentation on reasonable action steps that watershed homeowners can take with regard to their property vegetation that will help protect water quality. Her message was entitled *Shoreline Plantings and Their Impact on Lake Health.* (Marks is a New Hampshire-based wildlife biologist, conservationist, and public policy advocate.) Marks is the founder of Odd Duck, LLC, a firm that provides support to nonprofit organizations and community associations to help maximize their local and environmental impact. She has worked on projects to improve water quality, protect endangered species, and lobby for environmental legislation.

Her Main Message:

1. Keep trees
- Trim to protect view
- Replace any tree you remove

2. Do lawn differently
- Plant a clover lawn
- Replant lawn areas you don't use
- Set your lawn mower to 3"

3. Avoid bare soil
- Plant upslope
- Plant shrubs/groundcover
- Gravel infiltration steps along path

4. Vegetate your shoreline

5. Choose native plants

If you are not sure where to begin, or want help, here are two excellent options: LSPA Watershed Wise Program and NH LAKES LakeSmart Program.

- Staff will help you with a plan;
- You will receive a plaque for your yard as recognition that your property is approved.
- It is free, voluntary and confidential

Take a look at LSPA's Watershed Wise Resources pages
- https://www.lakesunapee.org/www-resources


Photo by Peter Bloch

LOVE OUR LAKES
with all it takes



Habits We Can Expect of Neighbors... And Ourselves!

by Rich Badmington

In every community, there are norms—unwritten standards of acceptable and celebrated behavior. For example, you open a door for someone. Or, as in our community, littering is almost universally frowned upon… and most of us pick up trash we might come across on our hike or at the end of our driveway. We don't really think about it. It's reflexive. And we're not surprised… and just a little gratified when we see others do it.

All the lakes in our area are vital to our quality of life, our economy, our recreation, and even our identity. And all of them are under stress. A community-wide initiative—LOVE OUR LAKES with all it takes—invites everyone, regardless of where you live or whether you own or rent, to adopt six simple habits that help protect water quality and preserve our lakes. The idea is simple: lake-friendly behavior can become part of who we are.
And when we work together, lake-friendly behaviors can become norms in our community. Our rural lifestyle and even our livelihood depend, in large measure, on our beautiful, clean lakes. While few of us would intentionally harm our lakes, most of us can learn and practice more of those simple things that will help preserve our lake-dependent lifestyle.

Why a "habit?" And how?
There are countless "experts" on habits and how we form them. We're not fussy about which models or tricks you like or trust. We only invite you to become familiar with our six simple ideas and find your own way to make them a part of who you are.

Author of a best-selling book called, "Atomic Habits," James Clear asserts the best way to form habits is to create four steps or triggers.

1. Cue: Consider it a "reminder." Associate our six lake-friendly habits with the moment you pick up a tool to do yard work, or reach under the sink for a bottle of cleaner.
2. Craving: This is your motivation. While you certainly don't crave picking up pet waste, you likely do want to feel like you're being a good neighbor and want to swim in a crystal-clear lake. Make the connection between the two actions.
3. Response: Make it easy. Reduce the "friction" that discourages you from good lake habits. If you want to maintain a healthy plant buffer between your land and the lake, a stream, or a drain, do a little each week, rather than trying to complete a big project all at once.
4. Reward: Satisfaction teaches your brain to repeat your new action. When you jump in that lake or count the day's receipts from the many tourists who visited your business, thank your good lake-friendly habits (and your neighbors who share them)!

Maybe these work for you, or something else helps keep lake-friendly habits top of mind. In any case, we invite you to join us in challenging ourselves to do the simple things that protect our most precious assets. It's how to LOVE OUR LAKES with all it takes!

Six Simple Lake Friendly Habits

1. **Keep nutrients out of the water** by pumping septic, limiting fertilizer use, picking up pet waste, and keeping yard waste out of streams and wetlands.
2. **Help plants protect our lakes** by preserving natural vegetation and avoiding mowing right to shorelines and drainage areas.
3. **Slow runoff and keep it on land** by planting grass or native plants on bare soil and redirecting downspouts away from roads and waterways.
4. **Limit use of chemicals outdoors,** including lawn herbicides and pesticides.
5. **Use salt only as a last resort** and sweep up excess that may still be present on your property.
6. **Enjoy our lakes… wisely** by cleaning, draining, and drying boats and equipment before launching.

Winter Salting: Do you know about Green SnowPro? by Cynthia Kelsey

As we approach a winter of snow and ice, many of us—whether we live on the lake or anywhere else in town—are making arrangements with a local contractor or snow clearing service to keep us plowed and safe. One way we also keep our property lake-friendly is join many of our neighbors in asking if our contractor is "Green SnowPro" certified.

Green SnowPro is a voluntary salt applicator certification program developed in New Hampshire to help municipal road crews and private contractors use winter salt more effectively. Contractors and other participants learn how salt affects streams, ground-water, and lakes; how weather conditions should influence application rates, and how to properly calibrate spreading equipment. The goal is simple: use the right amount of salt, in the right place, at the right time – while maintaining safe roads, driveways, parking lots, and walkways.

For our Little Lake Sunapee, this represents an opportunity to turn awareness into action. Every pound of unnecessary salt we can keep out of our watershed, is one less pound that can ultimately reach our lake.

We know salt applied to roads, driveways and parking areas, even miles from the lake, is carried by melting snow and stormwater into streams and ultimately into the lake. Once chloride enters a watershed, it does not simply disappear. Reducing unnecessary salt and its source is therefore one of the most practical ways we can help protect the lake.

This approach does not mean sacrificing winter safety. It means changing old habits and replacing the mindset of "more salt is better" with informed application based on actual conditions. Communities that have implemented the Green SnowPro training have documented substantial reductions in salt use while maintaining safe, winter operations. *Continued on page 7*

Cont'd from page 6

New Hampshire law provides a specific liability protection for certified commercial winter maintenance applicators who follow the state's best management practices and maintain the required records. This protection gives contractors an additional incentive to follow documented best practices for salt application while maintaining safe services.

So, instead of spreading the salt, all of us can spread the word about the program among your friends and neighbors to ask your contractors if they are Green SnowPro certified. And, if not, encourage them to get certified or find a contractor that is certified. Contractors can find course dates and locations online. The Lake Sunapee Protective Association has offered courses.

A Floating Nest Makeover

After an event-filled season on Little Lake Sunapee, our floating loon nest was towed back to shore to remove and replace its top tier on Labor Day. The Loon Preservation Committee, along with John and Debbie Wilson and loon enthusiasts from Pleasant Lake undertook the task.



Photo by Nancy Girald



Photograph by Roger Bloch



Photograph by Peter Jacoby

A Letter from the Editor: Call of the Loons by Sarah Roberts

It is October eleventh, the day before the annual lake drawdown. My husband and I wade out to our boat for her Swan Song cruise of the summer. Within a few days, the boat will be shrink-wrapped and sitting in a lonely section of our lawn until the spring thaw. We are usually the first boat in the water, launching in our wetsuits, each of my daughters' lips a little blue, but their eyes wild with excitement, and nearly always, the last boat out of the water for the season. We moved to New London for Little Lake Sunapee. Each summer, I lose count of how many swims I take, diving and splashing with my children, extended family, friends, neighbors and, on rare occasions, alone for a stolen moment of quiet. I find myself yearning for one more dive but, alas, we have a job to do.

The lake is calm and the water is not nearly as cold as it could be for this time of year, but the air has that autumnal nibble to it. The girls are in puffy winter coats and my husband, Evan, carries them out to the boat so they don't have to get wet. The once vibrant shades of chartreuse and forest green from the trees that guard the shoreline all spring and summer have melted into a fire of crimson, gold, and sunset orange. Fall, in its splendor, has arrived, and while beautiful, we will miss our days and evenings spent in and on the lake.

Once aboard our vessel, before starting the engine, we pause to listen. While the lake isn't alive with swimmers, kayakers, paddle-boarders, cocktail cruisers, or children screeching with delight while making a sand castle, some of the animals that call our lake home are still here. Geese are honking their impatient tune in their perfect V across the gray sky, the mallards are calling their young to attention, and the green frogs are slowing down, readying for their winter "slumber" at the bottom of the lake. The trout are still zipping around somewhere, likely in a little deeper section of the lake. What we really want to hear, though, is the eerie Loon call. At the onset of any lake outing, we look for the loons, especially this year's loonlet, Scout. Had they already left? My oldest, London, takes out the dusty binoculars we keep aboard.

After a little bit of slow cruising we do see Scout and their mother, and breathe a sigh of relief. It isn't all over yet! We watch them for a while and with one last slow glance, I say a quiet goodbye to these creatures we all spend the summer watching with wonder. We head to the launch and get the boat out for the season.

As the writer of The Point and also the person responsible for LLSPA's Instagram, I take great joy in observing the antics of our loons all summer, whether it be an in-person sighting or second-hand through the photography of Peter Bloch and Peter Jacoby. Their passion for their craft is astounding- both Peters have been known to paddle out at truly all hours to witness loon (and lake!) activity with their lenses. While checking on an egg that turned out to be a goose egg, Peter Bloch paddled out to the artificial nest every day, sometimes multiple times a day (if the rumors are true!) *Continued on page 7*







Photo by Peter Jacoby

Call of the Loons Cont'd from page 8

One night in hopes to tag Scout's mother, the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) met in the East Basin and invited Peter Bloch to watch the proceedings from the shore of his brother's shoreline. Once they had the loon, the LPC put on the unique combination of leg bands, took a blood sample and little snippets of feathers which they tested and/or archived. Measurements of the leg bones and total weight were recorded, and after a half hour of activity on land, the loon was released back into the lake. The team from LPC included Caroline Hughes (biologist and Outreach Coordinator), Eli Lammi (Sunapee Region LPC field staff) and Sammy Schuchmann (LPC Tufts Intern).

Earlier in the summer, as we wrote about in the last edition of The Point, a goose found herself in a bit of a Goldilocks conundrum where it made its home in the artificial loon nest. It must have felt "just right." Later, a loon sat on the remaining goose egg for weeks, to no avail, presumably thinking it was a loon egg.

Meanwhile in the East Basin in a very secluded natural nest, a pair of loons hatched two chicks. Similar to last summer, only one survived (Scout). The self-preservation and familial protective nature of the loons was witnessed by onlookers and game cameras several times over the summer. The parent loons went toe to toe with merganser families, herons and eagles, and even canines on paddle boards, for getting too close to Scout and the nest.

Scout's mother will fly south soon and Scout will follow in a few short weeks. So to the loons, I say thank you for the magic and see you in the spring.



Here's mom (showing off her new bands?) and Scout
Photo by Peter Jacoby



Floating in Liquid Gold by Peter Blooch



Up Close by Peter Jacoby

Where can you find an LLSPA president?

Our current president, environmental biologist Kathy Thomas, has not only been testing the LLSPA waters as a Board member for the past 3 years as the treasurer, but also literally testing the water quality of our lake on a monthly basis. She can be found on the tennis court, pickleball court, golf course, local ski slopes, paddling weed watching along Colby Point's East side, checking for invasives; working with the Junior Choir at St. Andrew's Church, playing her violin and/or her viola at St. Andrew's Church services; walking daily through the woods with their dog, Abby, and her husband Mike; taking an early morning swim almost every day in the lake from May-October!; checking in with each board member, on call for studying and testing any spots of concern around the lake; staying in touch with her Middlebury College friends; attending numerous LSPA meetings; having fun with her three sons and their wives - and pups - riding bikes in interesting places, and exploring mountains from South America to NH to Europe.





Where can you find our former president, Deb Hoover, after she led the Board of Directors for 3 years in such an exemplary way? Deb, a member of the bar in DC, NH, and OH, is now serving on the NH LAKES Board of Directors; assisting with bedding down the gardens at the John Hay Estate (The Fells) for winter in her Master Gardener capacity; organizing the Pat Sheehan Memorial Collection of books in the New Hampshire Room at Tracy Library; staying in touch with her three kids and their families - especially her two grandchildren in Cleveland- staying in touch with her Williams College classmates; dressing up her trailer for the Hospital days parade; paddling around the lake; walking Moxie with her husband John and collecting litter (too much of it!!) along the Lake road and Burnt Hill Road; exploring many interesting places around the world, including Antarctica; and more! Deb will remain on the LLSPA's Board of Directors.

Our Lake in Numbers

21	Lake Hosts (Paid and Volunteer)
124	Days of boat ramp coverage (Memorial Day to end of September)
1,661	Boats inspected May to mid-September
1,055	Hours accrued by paid Lake hosts
536	Boats inspected by Lake Hosts in July alone
103	Hours donated by volunteer Lake Hosts
2	Board Members to thank for organizing this important Lake Host Program, Cynthia Kelsey and Amy Bucklin, who together gave 134 hours of training and scheduling.
9	Common Loons and countless Canada Geese providing joyful entertainment throughout the summer months
1	Published poet inspired by her Lake Host post (Pat O'Connor's book is available at Morgan Hill Bookstore)
2	Professional photographers named Peter kept us beautifully up to date on the lake's feathered friends(Bloch and Jacoby)
0	Invasive plants and critters discovered in motors and bottoms of those 1,661 boats
1	Little Lake Beloved by Many

LLSPA Happenings!

A NEW FIRST: LLSPA and Love Our Lakes friends created a float to honor Little Lake Sunapee at the Hospital Day Parade in July! It was so much fun! Loon calls were blasting, bubbles were floating, and there were Love Our Lakes bracelets and bookmarks (sorry, no candy!) for all! The Float was a sparkling masterpiece, we'd all agree! Many hands transformed Deb and John Hoover's Airstream into a 'real' lake, bedecked with the Giralds' gigantic loon and Sarah Roberts' hand-painted native plants and local fish; even this year's interloping mother goose was represented! Many voices from the sidelines called out, "Love Our Lakes!!" as we merrily rolled along.







July 22's weed watchers' paddle with LSPA's Conservation Program Manager Susie Burbidge and Aquatic Invasive Species Committee Chair Dave Beardsley started out from Roger Bloch's shore on the Eastern part of LLS this summer; the paddle included a sizeable crowd of 16 of our volunteer weedwatchers. These paddles are so informative for each of us - but the lesson learned on this day was that when thunder is rumbling and lightning is spotted, hurry home! Nevertheless, happy to report that there were no invasive species discovered on our Little Lake this summer!

On the Threshold of Autumn by Pat O'Connor

Golden peach orb
Awakens
And stretches its beam
Across the lake
Sharing beauty
Warmth
And the soft light of new day.

Water drops
Trickling off
Maple leaves
At water's edge
Fall into the lake
Creating
Watery circles which
Intertwine
Like friends
Rubbing shoulders
At a party.

Near translucent mist
Canopies the lake
It wafts eastward
As it floats
Heavenward
Little Sunapee
Is sharing
warmth
with the brisk morning air.

Loons
Echo out a warning
Other birds join in
Together, they Briefly disturb
Tranquility
Sharing a message
Of alarm
Beware the eagle.

Splashes of orange
Tuck in
Amongst a world of green
Sharing their message
Of caution
Or celebration?
Autumn
Is around the corner

Another summer
At Little Sunapee
Is slipping away
How much beauty, peace
Adventure and wisdom
Has she shared?
How well have we listened?
How well have we appreciated?

Pat O'Connor, one of our dedicated Lake Hosts, enjoys those quiet moments when she can write, especially while perched at the Boat Ramp in between inspecting boats for any lurking invasive weed.. A retired nurse practitioner, Pat has spent many years (over 50!) in health care, with a particular focus on those patients nearing end-of-life. Her book of poems is for sale at Morgan Hill Bookstore in NL.

The Legacy of Hank and Polly Kidder



To call Hank and Polly Kidder the fabric of Twin Lake Villa and Little Lake Sunapee would be an understatement. Hank's waves from his tractor and Polly's warm greetings were "the everlasting smiles of TLV." Taskmasters with hearts of gold, they introduced their love of the lake to so many of us. The memories of their hard work and the ensuing love of a place sparkles on through every sunrise and sunset. Keep their spirit alive by sharing a kind word, a smile or a wave with those who cross your path each day.

In Memorium

Jud Lawson, July 20, 2025
Brett Schweizer, May 13, 2026
Hank and Polly Kidder, January 1, 2026 and August 22, 2026
Judy Zilvitis, September 21, 2025
Janet Royle, July 15, 2025

LLSPA's Board of Directors

Kathy Thomas (President)
Barry Fougere (Vice President)
Amy Bucklin (Treasurer)
Don Castle (Secretary)
Deborah Hoover (Past President)
Steve Ensign (Director Emeritus)
Rich Badmington
Sallie Barker
Roger Bloch
Amy Bucklin
Ann Donnery
Nancy Girald
Anne Hrabchak
Cynthia Kelsey
Cesca Koron
Tory Lambert
Wendy Parker
Sarah Roberts
Holly Scrivani

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