



PHOTO BY JIM JAGIELSKI

2019 Lake News and Guide





The mission of the Merrymeeting Lake Association (MMLA) is to help preserve and protect the beauty, quality, integrity, and value of Merrymeeting Lake and its surrounding watershed for future generations. The organization exists for the betterment of the lake and for the enjoyment of its inhabitants.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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2019 ANNUAL MEETING Saturday, July 13

Please attend! Involved members - like you - are the key to a strong, successful MMLA.

Not a member yet? To join, see the membership article on page 3 for details.

MMLA
PO Box 468
New Durham, NH 03855

www.mmlake.org

Message from the President

What happens when like-minded organizations and dedicated community members come together over water, wildlife, and recreation interests? The successful campaign to conserve 2,000+ acres in the Merrymeeting Lake watershed and create the new Birch Ridge Community Forest.

This treasured property has been a local and regional priority for conservation for over a decade. On June 28, the purchase of Birch Ridge by Southeast Land Trust and Moose Mountain Regional Greenways finally will make conservation of the land a reality. This is the **BIG STORY** for 2019, and many chapters led up to this happy ending.

After the sudden sale of this huge parcel to a logging company in August 2017, Russ Weldon set the wheels in motion for a second attempt by the MMLA to purchase the land. With full backing from the Board, Russ and Mark Sullivan met with the new property owner and came away with a verbal agreement. The required deposit was secured by a small group of lake residents, and a signed purchase agreement soon was in place.

Given the need for both quick action and expertise in putting land into permanent conservation, the Merrymeeting Lake Association entered into a partnership with Southeast Land Trust (SELT) and Moose Mountain Regional Greenways (MMRG). The funding campaign to raise \$2,950,000 through public grants and private gifts quickly got underway, and the goal was reached in record time.

On behalf of the Merrymeeting Lake Association, I thank everyone who donated to this important conservation effort. In addition to helping reach the funding goal, your financial backing demonstrated significant community support and involvement, which was a determining factor or at least a consideration in the grant awards received from the U.S. Forest Service, NHDES Aquatic Resources Mitigation Funds, and NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program.

About our partners, I can't say enough about the expertise and resources brought to the effort by SELT and MMRG. It was their professional leadership that enabled the MMLA to succeed in its initiative to place Birch Ridge into conservation for the next generations to enjoy. Be sure to read the article on the adjoining page that talks about all the exciting future uses of the land by the public.

On a personal note, I regretfully have informed the Board that I will not be able to complete my two-year term as president due to family issues. It's been rewarding to work with the directors and so many volunteers to grow and strengthen the MMLA. Your support has resulted in a strong, vibrant association that is committed to preserving Merrymeeting Lake for generations to come. The question always will be: If we don't protect the lake, who will?

Bill Bassett
President, MMLA

The New Birch Ridge Community Forest

Now that clean water, wildlife, and recreation are here to stay, the focus turns to the new public forest itself - and the exciting opportunities for use by area residents and visitors.

For months, a Steering Committee of more than 20 volunteer community members and partners has been hard at work, bringing a variety of unique perspectives to the discussions about the future of this special place. In November, a community visioning session was held with 70+ people in attendance. Participants enthusiastically shared ideas about the future of the landscape and discussed topics ranging from trails and wildlife to educational opportunities and uses for the property's ridge-top cabin. A community survey also was mailed to New Durham residents and property owners to provide further input to the committee as it continues to map out a comprehensive plan.



To introduce people to this beautiful property, a variety of activities and hikes already have been offered. Among them, MMRG led "Hawks and Walks," a guided hawk watch, as well as "Fungi Foray-Mushrooms at Merrymeeting," a hike to Caverly Mountain.

Birch Ridge is a haven for wildlife with a diverse range of habitats from ridge tops to wetlands. There are numerous streams, a 25-acre beaver pond, more than 30 vernal pools, and Coldrain Pond for fly fishing.

Recreational opportunities abound. Miles of hiking and cross-country ski trails will be enhanced by kiosks and trail maps. Snowmobile enthusiasts know the property well, as it includes Corridor 22, the main east-west snowmobile trail connecting Maine to central NH. The land also is a popular destination for archery and firearm hunters, as the predominantly oak and hickory forest provides food sources for a variety of wildlife.

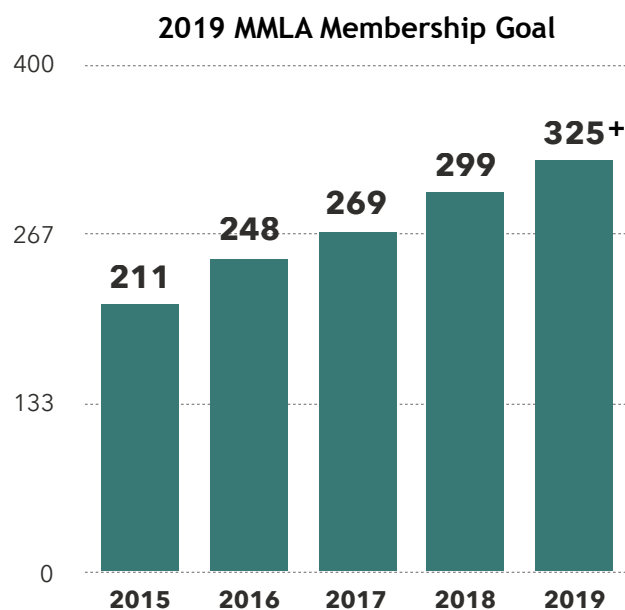
As you look to the ridge this summer, you'll see the landscape beginning to green as it fills in with new growth. The year before the timber harvesting began was a good mast year, and oak seedlings abound. Wildlife also is making its way back into the cleared areas. We all can be proud of the New Durham community and our partner organizations for working together to create the Birch Ridge Community Forest through permanent land conservation.

Stand Up and Be Counted!

Renewing your membership in the strong, active Merrymeeting Lake Association is one of the best investments you can make. Merrymeeting Lake is one of the cleanest and clearest lakes in New Hampshire, and your lake association is dedicated to helping keep the lake beautiful and its waters clean.

Protecting our watershed with the highly successful Birch Ridge acquisition is the most prominent example of this, but the roadside cleanup, lake host program, and ongoing water quality testing are additional ways in which the MMLA acts to protect quality of life on the lake. Show your commitment to protecting everyone's shared lake investment with your 2019 MMLA membership. Please also consider contributing to the special land conservation and water quality funds.

The MMLA Board of Directors is an all-volunteer board that is your voice on lake issues. Your participation gives us a greater voice to act on your behalf. If you haven't already, renew or join today! Simply take advantage of the expanded online payment options at mmlake.org - or mail your check to MMLA, P.O. Box 468, New Durham, NH 03855.



Special MMLA Summer Events

- **Paddle Sports Demo Day** – Saturday, July 27, Town Beach, Details TBA
- **MMLA Ice Cream Social** – Saturday, August 3, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., Meetinghouse/Cove Cottages
Co-sponsored with Johnson's Restaurant and Dairy Bar
- **Your Birch Ridge Community Forest** – Trails, Maps, and More – Details TBA
- **History of Settlement Around Merrymeeting Lake** – Sunday, August 11, 10:00 -11:00 a.m., Meetinghouse/Cove Cottages *Presented by Cathy Orlowitz, Town Historian*

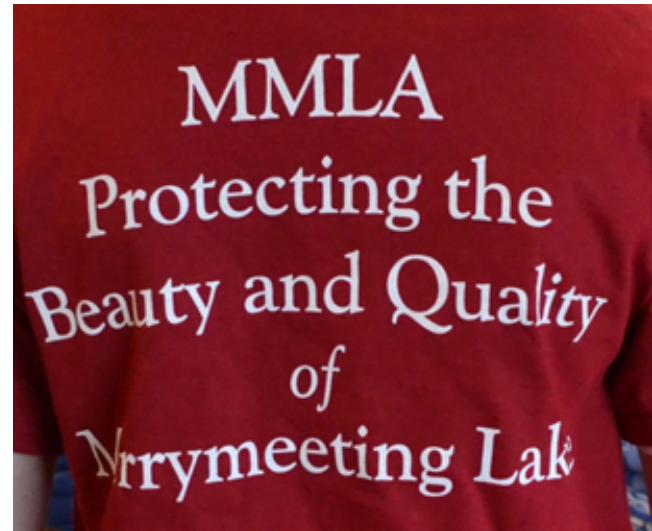
Join Us for the Annual Merrymeeting Lake Community Roadside Cleanup!

Last year's roadside cleanup was a tremendous success, with nearly 50 volunteers participating and collecting more than 20 bags of trash!

Bring your family/friends and neighbors to participate in the MMLA Annual Roadside Cleanup on **Sunday, May 26, 2019** (Memorial Day Weekend).

Please join us at 9:00 a.m. at Meetinghouse/Cove Cottages for complimentary coffee and donuts. Plastic bags and gloves will be provided for collecting trash and recyclables. Volunteers will be assigned sections of Merrymeeting Lake Road, South Shore Road, and North Shore Road.

In appreciation of your participation in this important community activity, volunteers will each receive a MMLA t-shirt! Let's clean up the roadside together and protect our lake environment for all to enjoy.



MMLA Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 13

To remain an informed and involved member, be sure to attend this year's annual meeting. Come early to enjoy coffee and donuts while catching up with your neighbors!

Please join us at the New Durham Elementary School.

8:30 a.m. - Member sign-in and coffee & donuts

9:00 a.m. - Meeting opens

AGENDA

- Welcome and overview
- Birch Ridge purchase status
- Merrymeeting River milfoil update
- Merrymeeting Lake Watershed Management Plan - *new!*
- Preserve and Protect Committee's summer events
- August Ice Cream Social
- MMLA programs and finances
- Election of officers and directors

11:00 a.m. - Meeting adjourns

Fireworks up in the Air

Since last season, the MMLA Board of Directors has taken steps to ensure that the Association's liability insurance policies provide adequate coverage for its directors and all of its activities. As part of that process, the MMLA's insurance policies have been moved to a different insurance broker/agent.

The new broker/agent has informed us that the MMLA's liability coverage did not and cannot extend to the association's co-sponsorship of and/or financial contribution to the Independence Day fireworks display as put on by the Merrymeeting Marina staff each year.

Since the Board of Directors also has been unable to obtain any alternative liability coverage relative to any involvement by the MMLA in the Marina's annual fireworks display, the association no longer will be able to co-sponsor or financially support this event.

For the show to go on, the Merrymeeting Marina has offered to match, dollar for dollar, all individual donations to a fireworks fund. Lake residents who want fireworks again this summer are encouraged to stop by the Marina and make a contribution.

Merrymeeting Lake Clarity and Quality Among New Hampshire's Best

Pristine, clean, and clear are three words frequently used to describe Merrymeeting Lake. In fact, this beautiful gem of a lake consistently ranks in the top two or three cleanest lakes in the state.

For more than three decades, a dedicated MMLA volunteer team has headed out by boat on a weekly basis to take water samples from several places around the lake. These volunteers are part of the New Hampshire Lay Lakes Monitoring Program, which is affiliated with the UNH Center for Freshwater Biology. Results are shared with the MMLA community at the annual meeting in July and also can be found at mmlake.org.



This year, the MMLA Water Quality Team will be paying particular attention to any effects from the logging of the 2000-acre Birch Ridge property. Although the impact of this activity on the lake is being monitored carefully by the state, these volunteers will be able to make their own determination once they begin testing in May.

What is the importance of keeping Merrymeeting Lake so clean and pristine? Obvious reasons would include natural beauty, recreational value, and a healthy habitat for fish and wildlife. However, many studies also have determined that water clarity directly impacts the value of properties surrounding a lake. For each three-foot loss of water clarity, property values can fall up to 20%.

What are some of greatest detriments to maintaining water clarity and quality? Use of fertilizers on lawns and plants, failure to maintain or replace old septic systems, and run-off from the reduction of natural shoreline vegetation all are high on the list.

How can you help? The MMLA Preserve and Protect Committee recently completed and distributed a booklet entitled, *20 Ways To Protect Merrymeeting Lake: How We Can Preserve The Lake We Love*. Look for the online link at mmlake.org or pick up a copy at the annual meeting. With everyone working together, Merrymeeting Lake will remain clean, clear, and pristine.



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Lake Host Program Continues To Prove Its Worth

Each year Lake Host Inspectors at the public boat launch perform courtesy boat inspections to keep invasive species from entering Merrymeeting Lake. This important program is funded by your membership dues and donations to the Water Quality Fund along with a small grant from NH Lakes that administers the program statewide. It is the first line of defense in the battle to keep Merrymeeting Lake free of invasive plants and animals.

Last year, MML's dedicated lake hosts recorded 1,772 boat inspections and removed 12 samples of plant life from watercraft and equipment. All were sent to the lab for testing. **One sample, confirmed by the lab as an invasive species, was removed from the boat before it was launched into our lake!**

Statewide, more than 25 "saves" were made as lake hosts worked to keep aquatic invasive species from entering New Hampshire's lakes. Of those saves, eight occurred on waterbodies (Merrymeeting included) that are not known to contain AIS infestations.

Coverage at the launch this summer is planned as follows: • late May to mid/late June – weekends 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • mid to late June until late August – weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and weekends 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. • Fridays during busiest summer weeks – 7:00 p.m. time extension • last week in August through Labor Day – weekends 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to man the boat launch for a few hours on weekends in June until all of the paid lake hosts return for the summer and again in September after they've returned to school. If you could help out during these times, please contact John or Jan Chapin, this season's co-point persons, at jmchapin@gmail.com.



Merrymeeting Lake New Hampshire's One Millionth Boat Inspection Winner

The NH LAKES Lake Host program has been conducting courtesy boat inspections to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species since 2002. This program reached one million inspections last summer. To celebrate, NH LAKES randomly selected a participating boater and Lake Host program to receive a prize as the official one millionth inspection!

Sara Kowalski, long-time lake host and program manager, thought she was participating in a promotional video. While doing a routine boat inspection for the video, Sara found and read the announcement that Merrymeeting Lake had won.

Watch the fun video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/GZxzQiiPgoM>

The Merrymeeting Lake Association was awarded \$500 toward the cost of the Lake Host program, and the lucky boater also won \$500. Thanks to Sara for being a good sport and for her long-standing commitment to the Lake Host program.



John Chapin, co-point person for Merrymeeting's Lake Host program, accepts the \$500 check. Left is Krystal Costa of NH Lakes Association, and center is Sara Kowalski, Merrymeeting's lake host manager for 2017 - 2018.

Loon Preservation Committee's Annual Loon Census on Saturday, July 20

The eight volunteers who officially counted loons on Merrymeeting Lake last summer were rewarded with eight beautiful sightings - five adults and three chicks. Sadly enough, despite such promising starts, none of the chicks survived. One reportedly was attacked by an eagle, and the other two were trapped by the early winter ice.

But there still is hope! Come summer, loons on MML will have another chance to build nests and raise chicks. And their presence/ activity will be observed by teams of boaters participating in the 2019 Annual Loon Census on Saturday, July 20, from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. Aside from enjoying a peaceful morning cruise, volunteers will report valuable data to help the Loon Preservation Committee better understand and protect the loon population throughout New Hampshire.

Interested in helping with this year's census? Just send an email to mmla@mmlake.org.



Good News for New Hampshire's Loon Population Lead Tackle Buyback Program Expanded

The lead tackle buyback pilot program, conducted last summer by the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) and NH Fish and Game, collected 4,786 individual pieces and 29 pounds of lead fishing tackle. This was a huge success since every single piece of lead tackle taken out of circulation has the potential to save a loon.

But there's more work to do. Nearly three years after the ban on the sale and freshwater use of lead sinkers and jigs weighing one ounce or less went into effect, the LPC has seen no reduction in the number of loon deaths from lead poisoning. Many tackle boxes still contain illegal fishing tackle purchased previously, which anglers easily can use by mistake. That's why the lead tackle buyback program is being expanded this summer from two participating retailers to an additional 10 stores.

To learn more about the lead tackle buyback program, including where to purchase lead-free tackle that's loon safe, visit fishleadfree.org.



Loon Fun Fact

Unlike many bird species, loons do not have separate dress codes for males and females. Interestingly, they have identical, not just similar, black-and-white breeding plumage, which makes one loon just as beautiful as the next.

In Remembrance



Suzanne "Sue" Morgan Bowman of Exeter, NH, passed away on June 1, 2018, at the age of 85. Sue was born in Whitefish Bay, WI. For 23 years, she was an elementary school educator, first as a classroom teacher in Wisconsin and California, and then as a Title 1 specialist in the Exeter public schools.

Sue was a loving, dedicated, vivacious woman who embraced the joys of life. She laughed easily and often, and she generously shared her warmth and wisdom with her family, friends, and community. During the summer, she enjoyed swimming, sailing, and kayaking with family and friends at her Merrymeeting Lake cottage.

Sue was predeceased by her husband of 48 years, Jim, as well as a son. She is survived by two daughters, a son, grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.



Alan E. Rose, 85, passed on September 29, 2018, following a brief illness. He was the devoted husband of Martie M. (Head) Rose, with whom he shared over 62 years of marriage.

His early upbringing was in Yalesville, CT, and Ipswich, MA, before moving to Shenandoah, IA, where he graduated from high school. He resided in Peabody, MA, and in New Durham on Merrymeeting

Lake for 55 years. Alan was a graduate of the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and started his career with General Electric before moving to GTE Sylvania where he retired in 1986 as the Director of Financial Analysis. Besides his loving wife, he is survived by his two sons. He was predeceased by a son.



Terrence (Terry) P. Crickett, 83, died October 3, 2017, at Parkland Medical Center, Derry, NH. He was born in Lowell, MA, May 12, 1934, and resided in Ayer for over 50 years. He grew up in Westford and was a graduate of Westford Academy. During the Korean Conflict, Terry served his country as a military policeman in the United States Army.

Terry worked for many years in the quality control department of the AVCO Corporation in Lowell and later Wilmington. While working at AVCO, he achieved the "Snoopy the Astronaut" Award from NASA for his fine performance on the Apollo/Saturn program.

He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and spending time at his summer home on Merrymeeting Lake.

He was predeceased by his wife of 50 years, Mary A. (Hudlin) Crickett, who died in September 2014. He leaves behind three daughters and seven grandchildren.



Josephine "Josie" Crickett (DiPalma) passed away peacefully on December 15, 2018, at Treasure Coast Hospice House, Stuart, FL. Josie was born and raised in Tewksbury, MA. After graduating from Tewksbury High School, she worked at GE and later assisted her husband in managing their professional accounting business.

Josie was the optimistic matriarch, sharing her wisdom, intelligence, and wit on a daily basis. She kept things simple and let her actions show what everyone meant to her. Josie enjoyed her flower gardens, road trips with her husband, Jack, and swimming at Merrymeeting Lake with her family.

The beloved wife of Jack for 64 years, she leaves behind four children and four grandchildren.



Robert (Bob) A. Snow, passed away peacefully at his family home on Merrymeeting Lake on Aug. 23, 2018, from ALS. He was 68. He and his late beloved wife, Linda, cherished almost five decades on the lake, bringing up two children and later introducing grandchildren to its simple splendors and bucolic beauty.

Bob was an educator, writer, mentor, and community activist. He was a proud graduate of Malden High School, Class of '67. His education culminated at the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1993, when he was recruited as assistant superintendent in Somerville after 21 years in a variety of teaching and administrative roles in Malden.

Bob also enjoyed a 20-year hobby in the hockey world as a writer for NHL.com, covering Division I college hockey before joining Bruinsdaily.com. He was a past president of the MMLA, serving in 1988 and 1989.

Bob leaves behind a son and a daughter, as well as four grandchildren.

Town of New Durham Summer Offerings

New Durham Parks and Recreation will be offering summer swim lessons at the town beach on Merrymeeting Lake. Lessons will be held Monday-Friday, with the following three, two-week sessions available:

- Session A: July 1 - July 12
- Session B: July 15 - July 26
- Session C: July 29 - August 9

For more information, visit <https://newdurhamnh.myrec.com/info/default.aspx>.

The department also will organize a town yard sale on June 22 and 23. New Durham residents and property owners are welcome to participate on just Saturday, just Sunday, or both days. Registrations are due Sunday, June 16, to be included on the printed and online maps.

Another *Celebrate New Durham Day*, including the annual 5K road race, is being planned. Check the above website for updates.

The Rec staff also is planning additional summer programming, including workshops, classes, and exercise sessions. Any insights into local programming is appreciated and encouraged. Simply contact the Recreation Director at ndrec@newdurhamnh.us or 859-5666.



New Durham Public Library staff reminds all Merrymeeting Lake summer residents that they are eligible for a library card and invites them to take advantage of everything the library has to offer, including great collections for all ages, DVDs, audio books for kids and adults, and a telescope. The library also offers a wide variety of programs, downloadable books, and puzzles, as well as access to all libraries in the state through the Interlibrary Loan program.

Please call 859-2201 for details on current programs. As of this writing, the library staff anticipated continuing Tai Chi and Yoga throughout the summer.

The Summer Reading Program's theme is "A Universe of Stories," and all children who have completed kindergarten through sixth grade are welcome at this free drop-off program. They will enjoy activities, professional entertainment, art, food, prizes, and a huge helping of fun.



Sessions are Wednesdays, July 10, 17, 24, and 31, from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Entertainment at the top of three sessions, July 10 (Mad Science), July 24 (Lindsay and Her Puppet Pals), and July 31 (Magic by George) is free and open to the public.

Important Contact Numbers

Town of New Durham

- Town Hall 859-2091
- Police Department 859-2752
- Fire Department 859-3473
- Transfer Station/Recycling 859-8080
- Post Office 859-5200
- Recreation Department 859-5666
- Public Library 859-2201

Services

- NH Marine Patrol 293-2037

Area Hospitals

- Huggins/Wolfeboro 569-7500
- Frisbie Memorial/Rochester 332-5211
- Wentworth-Douglass/Dover 742-5252

Utilities

- NH Electric Coop 800-698-2007
- Eversource 800-662-7764
- Atlantic Broadband 800-952-1001
- TDS 866-571-6662

Merrymeeting Marina 2019



It's a girl, our third! Annabelle Kate Weldon was born October 27, right after we closed last season. She will be scooping you ice cream in no time.

The marina staff is looking forward to serving you. If you need anything, please call us at 603-859-2000 or send a message to merrymeetingmarina@gmail.com.

Marina store **opens**: weekends beginning Friday, May 24
Marina **closes** for the season: Saturday, October 19

Marina Services: We're Here To Help You!

- ☑ **CHAIN CHECK** – The best way to protect your boat. Have our diver check your mooring chain, mooring, and attachments for just \$75. If you need a replacement chain, the fee will be deducted from the total cost.
- ☑ **SPRING BOAT DETAILING** – Call early to get your boat on the list for interior detailing and hull waxing. Something you will enjoy all summer long.
- ☑ **GAS** – Gas is available seven days a week. If the store isn't open, simply look for an attendant or call the marina at 603-859-2000.
- ☑ **BOAT AND JET SKI REPAIRS** – Local, fast, and affordable service is provided on inboards, outboards, and jet skis.
- ☑ **TRAILER STORAGE** – Is there a trailer in your way? We store trailers for \$50 a half season or \$100 all season (free for our winter storage customers). Indoor summer storage also available for snowmobiles, cars, and campers.
- ☑ **SUPPLIES** – Need oil, boating accessories, or even fishing bait? Just stop by and save yourself a trip to town.
- ☑ **LAKE APPAREL** – Hats, shirts, and sweatshirts are souvenirs of great times spent at Merrymeeting Lake.
- ☑ **REFRESHMENTS** – Ice cream, candy, cold beverages, and coffee make your days on the water refreshing and delicious.
- ☑ **WINTER STORAGE AND SHRINK WRAPPING** – Indoor storage, shrink wrapping, and outdoor storage are available on site. Labor Day weekend special: 10% discount on shrink wrapping!
- ☑ **SNOWMOBILE SERVICE AND REPAIR** – All makes and models are quickly serviced/repared at the marina by an experienced mechanic. A well-running sled is a safe sled.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Memorial Day Weekend to Labor Day

Friday – Sunday
9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Other Weekdays All Summer

Monday – Thursday
Gas and ice cream available
(just ask an employee for assistance)

Monday, October 14

Last call for boats

Friday, November 1

Snowmobile repair begins

Want Fireworks This Summer?

We will match all donations dollar for dollar. Stop by the marina and let us know your thoughts.

We thank all of our loyal customers for your patronage.

We also thank everyone who helped raise nearly \$3 million to put 2,000 acres around Merrymeeting Lake into conservation. Some said it couldn't be done, but the generosity of many supporters made it happen in just seven months.

Have a Safe, Sunny, and Happy Summer at Beautiful Merrymeeting Lake!