



Yankee Lake Preservation Association, Inc. • Post Office Box 558 • Wurtsboro, New York 12790 • (845) 888-0474

Dear Neighbors,

As the ice melts and the sun begins to linger a little longer each day, we're thrilled to welcome everyone back to another wonderful season at the lake! After a long winter, it's time to reconnect, recharge and enjoy everything that makes our community so special.

This year's calendar is shaping up beautifully, with many of the classic events we all look forward to - like the Opening Picnic, Lake Concerts, Fishing Contests... We are also adding some exciting new activities designed to bring fresh energy and new faces together. We hope these additions will spark renewed enthusiasm for gathering and sharing good times at the lake.

Of course none of these events would be possible without the creativity and support of our community. The Board is always open to your ideas for new events or traditions - we'd love to hear what you'd like to see. In fact, the new events were the result of ideas from community input. If you have a little time to spare, we're always grateful for volunteers to help make each event a success.

Here's to a fantastic season ahead at Yankee Lake.

We hope to complete the much anticipated handicap ramp, making it more accessible for our members. The new kitchen renovation is planned, and is being funded by a generous donation by a member. We are also hoping to make progress on the reworking of the parking area across the street. Our aim is to keep it as natural as possible, but maximizing its capacity.

#### Board Responsibilities

Our volunteer board often faces issues that can be complex and challenging. At times, we may have to make decisions that don't align with every member's personal wishes. However, our responsibility is to serve the entire membership and uphold the Yankee Lake bylaws. We hope everyone understands that our goal is always to do what's best for our lake community.

The YLPA Board and I look forward to seeing everyone at our Annual Meeting in May and at our events this summer.

Alex Goodman

President YLPA

# Yankee Lake Spring Newsletter 2026

## Members of Your YLPA Board of Directors

Kevin Armistead, *Clubhouse & Property*

Galen Booth, *Legal Committee*

Alex Goodman, *President, Engineering*

Steven Langseder, *Engineering & Dam*

Jon LeTendre, *Legal Committee*

Doris Mutascio, *Membership, Tag Distribution*

Joan O'Keefe, *Secretary; Finance & Insurance*

Peter Pensec, *Fish Stocking, Legal Committees*

Rob Rogers, *Treasurer; Finance, Legal*

Jerry Squillante, *Fish Stocking Committee*

Ed VanBuren, *Membership, Deed Research, Legal*

George Venizelos, *Board Member*

Ray Volpe, *Engineering & Dam Committee*

Elizabeth Zambuto, *Vice President; Social Committee*

## The Spotted Lanternfly

Last year, the spotted lanternfly was seen in our area. The adults likely didn't survive the harsh winter, but their eggs often do, and if any hatch this spring, they pose a real threat to our community's trees and plants.

### What to Do if You See One:

Kill it immediately. Stomp, squash, or swat – they don't bite or sting

Destroy egg masses. These masses look like mud smears on trees, rocks and outdoor surfaces. Scrape them into a bag with rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer, then seal and discard.

Spotted lanternflies put stress on the trees and gardens we treasure, and taking a moment to remove them helps us care for the place we all enjoy.



## Invasive Water Chestnuts Discovered in the Lake

Last summer, invasive water chestnuts were found in our lake, and more than 120 were quickly removed by vigilant members. This fast-spreading plant forms thick surface mats that block sunlight, reduce oxygen, hinder recreation, outcompete native species, and drop sharp seeds that can persist in the lake for up to 12 years.

Because early action is the best way to control this plant, we ask all members to:

Be vigilant: If you see floating rosettes with saw-toothed leaves, pull the plant and report the location to [info@yankee-lake.org](mailto:info@yankee-lake.org). Photos are helpful.

These plants often appear along the shoreline in shallow, calm areas but can quickly spread into deeper water.

Prevent seed spread by cleaning boats, trailers, and equipment before launching or leaving the lake.

For guidance on how to remove water chestnuts, please visit: <https://yankee-lake.org/environment/invasive-species>.

If you would like to become a volunteer and help our team stay ahead of this invasive plant, please email us at [info@yankee-lake.org](mailto:info@yankee-lake.org).

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## Right of Way (ROW) Guidance

Lake access for non-lakefront properties is spelled out in the legal deed for each property. In order to have “Lake Rights,” the deed must define *two separate things*:

1. A *right* to use the lake, spelled out in the deed, *and*
2. A place (“Right of Way”) specified in the deed where the property owner can access the Lake without trespassing on someone else’s property.

A ROW is a contract between two property owners – the *ROW User* and the *ROW Property Owner*. The deed tells the ROW User where the ROW is, and may define other terms of use, such as whether the User can keep a boat, whether the User can use the ROW for a social gathering spot, or only as a point for getting to and from the water, etc.

### YLPA-Owned ROWs

Smith, Casey and Maclay are owned by the YLPA. In these instances – and only these instances – the YLPA has authority to oversee the property. We have Rules and Regulations for these ROWs. (<https://yankee-lake.org/ylpa/quick-downloads/>)

The YLPA is not aware of any deed that provides a right to use the Clubhouse, the North Shore Drive Parking area, the Big Island or the 45 “forever wild” acres. Thus, access to, and use of, these properties is limited to YLPA members in good standing, and their member-accompanied guests *only*.

Unless the YLPA owns the ROW in question, *we have absolutely no authority to intervene in, or assist in resolving, ROW disputes.*

## Managing Your Septic?

The schedule for pumping your septic system depends on a variety of factors, including: how old the system is, how well it has been managed, how much and what kind of use it gets, whether you flush pre-moistened wipe products, and the lay of the land.

If your system is brand new, you can probably get away with pumping every other year.

If the tank is new, but the system is old, if the whole thing is old, if your yard is chronically wet and doesn’t drain well, if you tend to have big family events at your property several times each year, or if you regularly flush pre-moistened wipes — all of these things can stress your system. In this case, you probably need to have your system checked, and then, based on the advice of your septic professional, create a recurring schedule on your calendar.

Some people know they have septic troubles, but ignore the problem, knowing that a whole new system can be quite expensive. However, in today’s world there are alternatives to a big expensive system. It may work to simply pump more frequently, or it

might even make sense to get a closed tank that doesn’t rely on a field, but is directly pumped as needed.

So, there are alternatives, and it is important for your health, your yard, and our Lake, to tend to this problem routinely.

### Pre-Moistened Wipes

We are hearing many stories about the problems caused by use of pre-moistened wipe type products that are advertised as “flushable.” These products are available under a variety of names and purposes, but seem to cause serious damage to both septic and sewer systems. Our neighbors in Bloomingburg are facing extremely expensive repairs to their sewer system as a result of use of these products. Likewise, we’ve heard of serious damage to local private septic systems. Here’s an article, if you’re interested: [https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/are\\_flushable\\_bathroom\\_products\\_safe\\_for\\_sewer\\_and\\_septic\\_systems](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/are_flushable_bathroom_products_safe_for_sewer_and_septic_systems)

For more information: <https://www.epa.gov/septic/how-care-your-septic-system>

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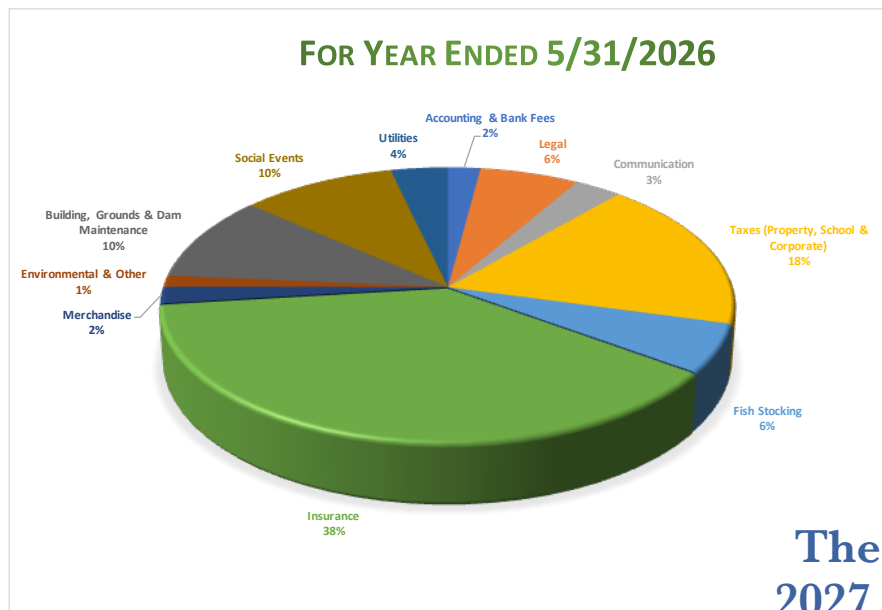
## WHALE’S TAIL UPDATE

The Ridgetop Lakes Conservancy Board (RLC), together with all dedicated pledgers and donors, put forth tremendous effort to raise the funds required to acquire the Whale’s Tail. The generosity and unity shown throughout this effort were extraordinary, yet the RLC was unable to meet the full fundraising goal, and our negotiations with the seller did not result in a successful purchase. Please be assured that every pledge made to the Whale’s Tail campaign was sincerely valued, and RLC will not be seeking any further action on those commitments.

The good news is that a few YLPA Members, with decades-long ties to the Yankee Lake Community, worked together and agreed to purchase the property. Their goal is the same as RLC’s—to acquire the property to protect it and Yankee Lake from the aggressive development that was pending through purchase by other parties. Luckily, this small group of Yankee Lake families joined forces and made an offer which was accepted by the seller. A contract was signed, deposit made, and the purchase was completed in December 2025.

RLC’s mission has not changed, and there is a possibility to acquire a portion of our watershed region within the Whale’s Tail property. RLC is collaborating with the new owners to carefully evaluate this opportunity.

Another positive update is that Sherry Li, the central figure behind the China City of America and Thompson Educational Center fraud schemes, has been sentenced to nine years in federal prison, in addition to the time she has already served awaiting trial. She was also ordered to forfeit over \$30 million in assets. The fraud perpetrated by this individual not only took millions of dollars from her victims for her personal gain, her scheme also threatened our Yankee Lake watershed and the environment. This was one fight won, but unfortunately there may be others so everyone needs to stay involved and work together to protect the place we love.



**Forecast of  
YLPA Expenses  
for the Fiscal Year  
Ending  
31 May 2026**

**The Budget for Fiscal Year  
2027 Will be Presented at the  
Annual Meeting on May 24**

*Percentages sum  
to > 100%  
due to rounding*