

Webster Waves

Catch THE LATEST LAKE NEWS

photo courtesy of JoLene Hum/
Portraits by JoLene

HOW THE COLLINS GOT TO WEBSTER LAKE

The Webster Waves Newsletter is a publication of the Webster Lake Conservation Association.

WLCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

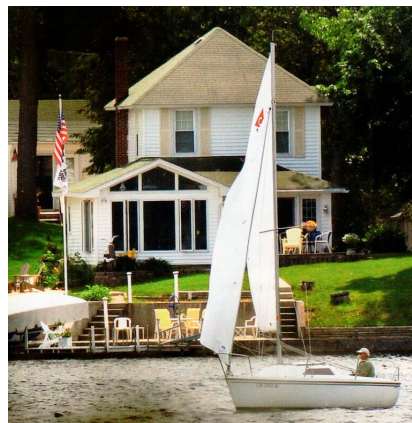
Mike Wyrick,
President
Ryan Spahr,
Vice President
Brent Hathaway
Secretary
Robyn Gertsbauer,
Treasurer
Ann Bell
Jill Colwell
Brandon Cortez
Ben Guy
Christopher Hurd
Tom Jones, Jr.
Steve Kemp
Jim Kerwin
Mike McCall,
Jeff Miller
Doug Moore
Mike Ripley
Joe Toth
Stephanie Yahne

The simple answer is our parents brought us here—and we never left! Linda's story began in the summer of 1947 when her parents, Vernon and Wanda Stanley, continued a family tradition of renting rustic fishing cabins at Ruple's Beach in Yellowbanks. Those early days were simple and centered on great fishing and time together. Each cabin had its own personality and name—"Barney Google," "Spark Plug," and "Shady Rest"—and the memories made there have lasted a lifetime. Tom's connection began a few years later. After time on the Barbee Chain, his family purchased their first Webster Lake home in 1956 along the long channel off Webster Bay.

Though both families lived in Muncie, Tom and Linda's paths first crossed at Webster Lake in 1961. Linda's family was renting a house just two doors from Tom's family home. Linda's father loved fishing. Tom's father embraced the social side of lake life—cruising the lake, visiting friends, and enjoying the community. Their "summer romance" continued back in Muncie and led to their marriage in 1965. They returned to Webster Lake each summer and stayed with Tom's parents. After a gentle nudge from his parents, they purchased a mobile home behind the family house. Eventually Tom's parents purchased a smaller house two doors from the Collins home and moved into it

leaving Tom & Linda in the larger home so that the family remained rooted in the same stretch of shoreline.

Webster Lake also became central to Tom's lifelong passion for water skiing. He joined the Webster Ski Bees in 1956 and remained active for decades—as a performer, boat driver, mentor, and, more recently, announcer. Linda supported the Bees throughout the years, especially enjoying the traditions surrounding the Mermaid Queen. Their children, grandchildren and other family members have all been part of the shows. For Tom, the greatest reward has been the



relationships built and the opportunity to guide younger generations. He says that he has been humbled and honored many times when people come up to him and thank him for impacting their lives through the Bees.

No matter where life has taken them in the off-season, Webster Lake has always been home in the summer—a place to gather, reconnect, and carry on traditions. While living in the mobile home, they began the tradition of an annual Collins family reunion over the Fourth of July and that tradition continues today. As Linda says, "Webster Lake is a place for family to gather and remain close."

WEBSTER LAKE CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION (WLCA)

WLCA is a volunteer-driven organization dedicated to protecting and preserving Webster and Backwater Lakes for everyone to enjoy. Funded by members and supported by local businesses, WLCA works year-round to keep our lakes healthy, safe, and accessible for all recreational use.

Membership and community involvement make everything we do possible. To learn more or join, visit www.lakewebster.net or follow WLCA on Facebook.

2026 Highlights

- **Family Dixie Ride** – June 13, 9:30 AM – Leaves from North Webster Town Park. A fun, family cruise on the historic Dixie Sternwheeler with snacks, activities, and prizes for kids.
- **Fireworks** – July 3, Friday ~10:00 PM (Rain date: July 11, Saturday) – Shot from big island in Webster Lake – Vantage points – North Webster Town Park and various locations around the lake, a community favorite made possible by member and local business support.
- **WLCA Dixie Day Booth** – July 25 – Arts & Crafts, Car Show, Food Court, Main and Washington Streets, North Webster – Sponsored by Chamber of Commerce. Stop by to learn about WLCA projects, enter a prize drawing, and meet volunteers.

WLCA also keeps members connected through newsletters, email updates, and social media.

2026 Projects & Initiatives

- **Conservancy District Development** Leading efforts to establish a tax-funded district for Webster/Backwater Lakes dam maintenance and repair. Currently in the public hearing phase with fundraising underway for engineering and legal costs.
- **Water Quality Monitoring** Ongoing collaboration with The Watershed Foundation and Grace College's Lilly Center to monitor lake health and aquatic life.
- **Weed & Algae Control** Funding and managing DNR-approved herbicide treatments to maintain navigable waterways supported by member contributions and grant funding.
- **Dredging Efforts** Advancing approved dredging projects to improve lake depth and water flow in key areas. Grant and property owner funding sources are needed for approved dredging sites.
- **Whole Lake Restoration Planning** Exploring long-term solutions to reduce phosphorus levels, improving water quality and reducing excessive weed growth
- **Island Shoreline Restoration** Continuing shoreline stabilization projects to reduce erosion, sediment, and nutrient runoff into the lake. An application for a L.A.R.E grant has been made for another project.

INVASIVE VEGETATION REPORT

The 2025 Vegetation Management Plan delivered a very successful season for the lake, and we will be following that same plan for 2026. Our goal remains to achieve the best possible vegetation control while using the least amount of chemicals.

The WLCA is currently scheduled to receive an invasive weed management grant from the LARE program totaling **\$24,400**. This amount is **\$10,000 less than last year's grant** and does not include funding for the treatment of Starry Stonewort or Curly Leaf Pondweed (also known as the "channel choker"). The grant funds will be used to treat **up to 75 acres of Eurasian Milfoil**.

For these treatments, we will continue using **ProcellaCOR**, a multi-year control product that has shown very promising results. Our surveys indicate that as milfoil pressure is reduced, native vegetation is returning at encouraging levels. While ProcellaCOR is

more expensive, it is significantly safer for native plants, aquatic species, and overall water quality.

To address **Starry Stonewort and Curly Leaf Pondweed**, we will continue to rely on your generous contributions to the **Weed Fund**. These funds allow us to use the safest and most effective treatment options available for these invasive species.

This year's management plan will also include **shoreline treatments**, and we are currently discussing the possibility of a **lake-wide or partial-lake algae treatment**. All of these efforts are dependent on membership dues and continued support of the Weed Fund.

We appreciate your ongoing commitment and generosity. Together, we are working hard to keep this all-sports lake healthy, accessible, and enjoyable for everyone.

AT THE LAKE
Swim in the rain
Dance under the moon
Feel the sun on your face
Hear the wail of the loon

WLCA 2025 YEAR-END FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Expenses:

Invasive weed treatment costs after LARE reimbursement	\$ 20,560
Shoreline weed treatments	\$ 17,550
Annual Vegetation Management Plan required by IDNR after LARE reimbursement	\$ 896
Dam Maintenance and related Legal Expense	\$ 19,088
Other Expenses: insurance (D&O, Liability, Boat), safety buoys, education expense, sediment studies, accounting fee & software, Website Maintenance, Public Relations & Member Events	\$ 17,035
Newsletter, Dues Billing, Printing, and Postage	\$ 4,866

Total Expenses Excluding Fireworks** **\$ 104,601**

Income: **Total Income from Dues, Weed Fund, and Dam Contributions excluding Fireworks*** **\$ 101,296**

Shortage: **\$ 3,305**

The total income from Dues and Weed Contributions does not include LARE Grant Income. The Grant income has been subtracted from the total weed treatment costs and the Net Weed costs are presented in this chart. LARE Grant income and the expenses paid with it each were \$24,604.

*Expenses for fireworks are paid by special contributions from both members and local businesses with most of the funds coming from the members. Moneys designated for fireworks are only used for fireworks and, therefore, are not included in the above General Fund Report.

WEBSTER SKI BEE SHOWS FOR 2026 North Webster Town Park

6:00 PM - Pre-Show Acts Prior to 6:00 PM
Bring Your Own Lawn Chair



June 13 - June 20 - July 4 - July 25 - August 8
(All Shows Weather Permitting)

Thank you to Sock's Marina/Main Channel and Lakeland Pier & Lift for their contributions of support to WLCA each year. Sock's Marina/Main Channel stores WLCA's pontoon boat during the winter and puts the boat in the water so that it can be used during Fireworks Weekend to stage the show on the island and for placement of the navigational buoys in the lake each spring. Lakeland Pier & Lift provides and installs the pier used to access the island during Fireworks Weekend and removes the navigational buoys in the fall.

2026 WLCA MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Please return this voucher with your mailed payment)

Name(s):

Lake Address:

Mailing Address:

Contact Phones:

Membership Dues \$ 125.00

Fireworks Fund Donation \$ _____

Weed Fund Donation \$ _____
(native/non-invasive)

TOTAL: \$ _____

Code – Spring Newsletter

E-mail Addresses:

E-mail Statements ☐ Yes ☐ No

Check Payable to WLCA

Mail to: WLCA
P.O. Box 79
North Webster, IN 46555

PAYMENT MAY BE MADE THRU PayPal
Information at www.lakewebster.net,
Pay Dues Tab

WLCA is a Not-for-Profit Charitable Corporation Under IRS Section 501(c)(3).

FAMILY DIXIE RIDE

Saturday, June 13, 2026, at 9:30 AM

The annual WLCA Family Dixie Ride is a fun event for WLCA members and their families of all ages. Snacks and beverages will be provided by WLCA. Activities and prizes are planned—especially for our young Cruisers. Please mark your calendar to bring members of your family of all ages with you on this Family Dixie Ride for an enjoyable hour of cruising on the Dixie around Webster Lake...**YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THE NEWLY RENOVATED DIXIE!!** The Ride is provided to WLCA and its members by the Dixie Sternwheeler, Inc., in memory of Tom Plew who was a longtime volunteer of both organizations.



photo courtesy of JoLene Hum/Portraits by JoLene

HOW AND WHERE CAN WEBSTER LAKE BE DREDGED?

Sites approved for dredging by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) are mostly, but not all, channels. Sites are roughly drawn in red on this picture:



The following sites, where sediment entered the lake from an off-lake source, are eligible for L.A.R.E. Grant coverage with the grant paying 80% of the dredging cost up to a maximum of \$100,000 for any one year in which a grant was awarded: the channel at Fisherman's Cove; the area from the Dixie Sternwheeler dock south along Dixie Drive; and the channel north of the marina along EMS W16. Residents and/or other entities will be responsible for the remaining 20%, any cost overruns, and contracted work exceeding the grant limit.

A new program offered by IDNR will provide LARE Grant coverage for the dredging of "Dead End Channels" where the sediment buildup is caused by the buildup of organic materials from within the lake. The L.A.R.E. Grants for this type of dredging pay 65% of the cost with channel residents or other entities paying 35% plus any cost overruns and contracted work exceeding the grant limit. With the advent of this new program, WLCA will be able to assist owners of approved dead-end channel properties in securing L.A.R.E. Grant coverage.

WLCA has secured a \$100,000 L.A.R.E. Grant for 2026, for the dredging of a portion of the area around the North Webster Town Park. WLCA is working with the Town to extend this project by combining it with another grant the Town is eligible to receive.

For any dredging project, dewatering sites are a "must have." Acceptable sites around this lake are hard to come by. If you have, or know of, vacant land that might be available for use as a dewatering site, WLCA would like to meet the owner regarding the use of that land.

Mike McCall joined the WLCA Board of Directors in September of 2017, initially serving on the weed management and fireworks committees and volunteering to be an alternate dam operator. In September of 2019, Mike was elected to the office of Secretary. He continued his work with the fireworks and projects committees. In September of 2025, Mike agreed to forgo the last year of his current term as Secretary to guide our new Secretary, Brent Hathaway, into that office. Mike remains an active participant on the WLCA Board, its committees,

and as alternate dam operator. His current term does not end (or renew) until August of 2028. In addition to his work with WLCA, Mike has been assisting in the remodel of the Dixie Sternwheeler with woodworking, including the making of new cabinets. WLCA wants to recognize Mike McCall for his nine years of service to Webster Lake and the North Webster community. Excellent job, Michael!

THANK YOU.