**The Westmore Association Spring 2019 President’s Letter**

Greetings to all members and friends of the Westmore Association! I was reading my letter from last year and had to laugh at the different weather conditions and considerable change of perspective from when I wrote my first annual. This time last year, I had already turned my garden and had begun to plant early vegetables. This year it seems the snow is clearly in no hurry to recede. As they say, things change, nothing stays the same. I just spoke to a resident who lives on Long Pond Road on Friday and she informed that she still has to step “down” onto her porch from the snow pile that is still covering her stairway leading “up” to her front porch entry to her home! Our neighbor Burke Mountain has had one of its best seasons in many years with banner snow accumulations. Well-deserved for a mountain that is always going through changes of ownership and stability.

Speaking of changes that we all have experienced; my family has had its fair share in the last year. My wife and I moved from our home of 24 years in Boston, MA and moved to the “suburbs” to get away from the increased traffic and congestion of the city as well as providing our daughter closer access to her love of all things equestrian. It was hard to leave our first house that held a (gasp) quarter century of life experiences but has simultaneously opened new doors and opportunities for us all as a family. Unfortunately, the year also saw the passing of my wife’s mother who is dearly missed. I know many other individuals in our community have experienced loss of loved ones which is never easy.

As a community and Association, we too go through changes. We are all aware of the increased activities on our beloved Willoughby Lake over the last few years. I know it’s been a source of concern for all of us. I hope to have some collective discussions about this issue. I’d love to see what we can do to make sure that the allure, cleanliness, safety and beauty of our area is maintained while embracing the reality of the fact that our world continues to get smaller. To this end, I have had the great pleasure of making the acquaintance of many people in our area that I had not previously met. Many individuals have reached out to me to express concerns about changes they see. Several others have shared amazing experiences of their time in Westmore with me and expressed their willingness to volunteer their time to help make improvements. I’m inspired by the stories, kindness and selfless contribution of so many people I’ve met and worked with, from the lifelong residents, both full-time and seasonal, to those who work for the town, as well as local entities like Northwoods Stewardship whose generosity, efforts and energies are seemingly endless. We are rich as a community and together we embrace the inevitable changes we face and help to lift each other who may struggle with those changes. Change is never easy and sometimes painful, but change can also provide opportunities once thought impossible and open doors that were previously closed.

Speaking of change, we’d like to make some changes to our website this year. My hope is to make it more accessible and user friendly to all who choose to visit. If you have suggestions or a willingness to help implement some of the changes we’re considering, I welcome your feedback and time. A change I’m sad to report is a decrease in our annual membership. As president of the Westmore Association, I know that we can do a better job to generate awareness of the importance of our Association and the important role we play in the community. It’s our mission to protect and preserve the natural beauty and health of Willoughby Lake and our natural resources, something I know we all cherish. Isn’t that why we choose to live in this area?! We also provide activities, educational outreach, entertainment, scholarship assistance to local youth and other social outlets so vital to our community. I hope you will take the time to renew your membership and reach out to your friends and neighbors and encourage them to do the same! Our dues are nominal for what we give in return in my humble opinion.

I’d also like to make a plea for you to attend our annual meeting on July 25th. It is the one opportunity we have each year to collectively share a meal, share our thoughts and vote on important issues. Last year, I initiated a program where we honor an important member or group in our community. The Westmore Ladies Aid was our first honoree! I do hope you’ll be there (with your family and friends) to help us carry on this new tradition.

Respectfully submitted with my warmest regards,

Daniel Ian Smith

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