



THE UPPER SARANAC LAKE ASSOCIATION

# MAILBOAT

FEBRUARY 2021

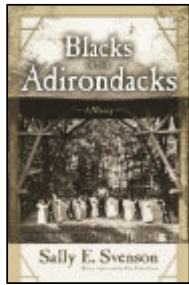
## Bitten by the Writing Bug

Sally Ward, Cultural Affairs

Meet four of your Upper Saranac area neighbors who have discovered the rewards and challenges of writing and are published or hoping to be. I spoke with Sally Svenson, Larry Loebell, Tom

Van Essen and Beverly Kolsky to learn how they got started, where they get ideas, what's most difficult about the writing process, and what advice they have for aspiring writers.

**Sally Svenson** is a former interior designer who decided it was time to pursue other interests when a client complained about his headboard. Svenson's avocation is researching and writing about historical topics. It all started in the '90s with a visit to a New Hampshire veterans' campground built by regimental associations. Fascinated by the buildings and passionate about the stories behind them, she began "chasing down rabbits into holes, finding out where they lived." She gets many of her topics while driving around the Adirondacks. A pretty little church in Minerva, NY, inspired the book, *Adirondack Churches: A History of Design and Building*. For her book, *Blacks in the Adirondacks: A History*,



Svenson traces the rich history of blacks in the North Country from 1850-1950. Many were cooks for Civil War regiments who followed the regiments north; others came to serve as waiters in Lake George hotels. With her curious mind always engaged, she's now writing another history book as well as getting 230 Adirondack photographs published. Svenson advises aspiring writers to choose something they'd love to write about. "The hardest part of the writing process for me," she says, "is narrowing it down."

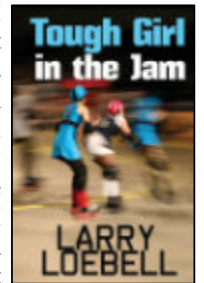


*Svenson's books are available for loan in most North Country libraries and for purchase on Amazon.*

**Larry Loebell** is a playwright, screenwriter, and teacher who began writing prose after retirement. His new novel, *Tough Girl in the Jam*, is set in the world of women's professional roller derby. He's currently working on *The Shanghai Kaddish*, a novel about the Jewish community in Shanghai. As Loebell tells it, his father wanted to be a writer but never pursued it. Dad planted the seed that encouraged young Loebell to get his first piece published in a junior high school newspaper. Loebell's primary themes address relationships and politics, though he has also written historical documentaries. Like Svenson, he finds



research fun. "Things set me off and then I want to explore them." He acknowledges that building a successful career as a writer has been a process of cobbling together several different income streams including teaching, producing and writing. His biggest challenge? "Publishers now rely on authors to promote their books. I'm very fond of writing, but I don't like marketing!" As for advice, "If you want to write, just do it. Sometimes you start down a road and it doesn't work out. Revise or discard it. Seek out criticism and learn from writers' workshops."



*Loebell's novel, Tough Girl in the Jam, is available on Amazon.*

**Tom Van Essen** obtained a PhD in English and spent thirty years at Educational Testing Services, with responsibility for the verbal section of the SAT exam and in various management roles. Writing was something he longed to do all his life. He first got the idea for a novel as a 25-year old graduate student, but gave up on it until age 50. His novel, *The Center of the World*, is based on an imagined erotic canvas by J.M.W. Turner, a 19<sup>th</sup> century English artist best known for turbulent marine scenes. Van Essen draws heavily on the Adirondacks and Great Camp Wenonah for the setting. In



the story, an industrial baron acquires the erotic painting and hides it at Wenonah in a barn. In preparation for writing, Van Essen studied Turner's biography and traveled to England to view his paintings. To bring his book idea to life, he wrote for an hour each morning before going to work. "It took four or five years. Mine is a salutary story for people who think it's too late!" he crows. "Believe in your own story. If you don't like what you wrote today, it doesn't mean you can't improve."



*Van Essen's novel is available on Amazon.*

# President's Letter

Larry Koch

A belated Happy New Year! Remember when you thought the summer of 2020 was crazy; but wait - the fall was crazier! Organizing 2021 USLA activities is a big challenge in the world of Covid19, but planning goes on anyway. So, save the Saturdays of July 10 and August 14 for the two summer meetings. It may be late spring before we know if these meetings will be in person or a Zoom affair. Right now we are just saving the dates and hoping for the best.

Your USLA board has been busy this winter with projects great and small. Hopefully you were watching the ice go in and out in December via the new lakeside webcam installed on Pelky Bay. And you have noticed our new website with links to lots of local places and happenings. This is also a year for mundane things like reviewing by-laws and redeveloping the membership database so it communicates with the new website. There are new events to plan with social distancing – my how we would all love to find ‘normal’ again! And then there is the Government Affairs Committee .....

The most important message we received in the 2018 Strategic Study membership survey was a demand that we needed to become pro-active in local community government activities. It took us a while to figure out what that looks like but ultimately we have reorganized the Government Affairs committee. The new members are Dave Powalyk (Vice President), Lynne Perry (Communications Chair), Cindy Rosenwald (former chair), Neil Kolsky (at large) and myself as temporary chair. Our feet were put to the fire immediately with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) proposal to update/renovate the Fish Creek Campgrounds and the town of Santa Clara proposed 6 month moratorium on commercial development. These two issues are very important to USLA members because both will likely impact Fish Creek and the waters of Upper Saranac Lake. I expect you will be hearing more about both these issues throughout the year.

One silver lining in the whole Covid19 mess is the waterfront real-estate market has been very hot for months. Camps that have been on the market for quite some time sold this past summer to those looking to find a new hideout away from the big cities. I know of several camps in the Saranac Inn area that have new owners and I am sure there are others around the lake. Let's be sure to welcome our new neighbors and tell them about the good works of the Upper Saranac Lake Association. With luck, maybe we will get to meet them at a Zone Party this summer – ah yes, heading toward normalcy again.....

Best wishes for a healthy, happy and successful winter!

**UPPER SARANAC LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
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THE USLA MAILBOAT  
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Photo of the mailboat, "Saranac", courtesy of the Adirondack Collection, Saranac Lake Free Library

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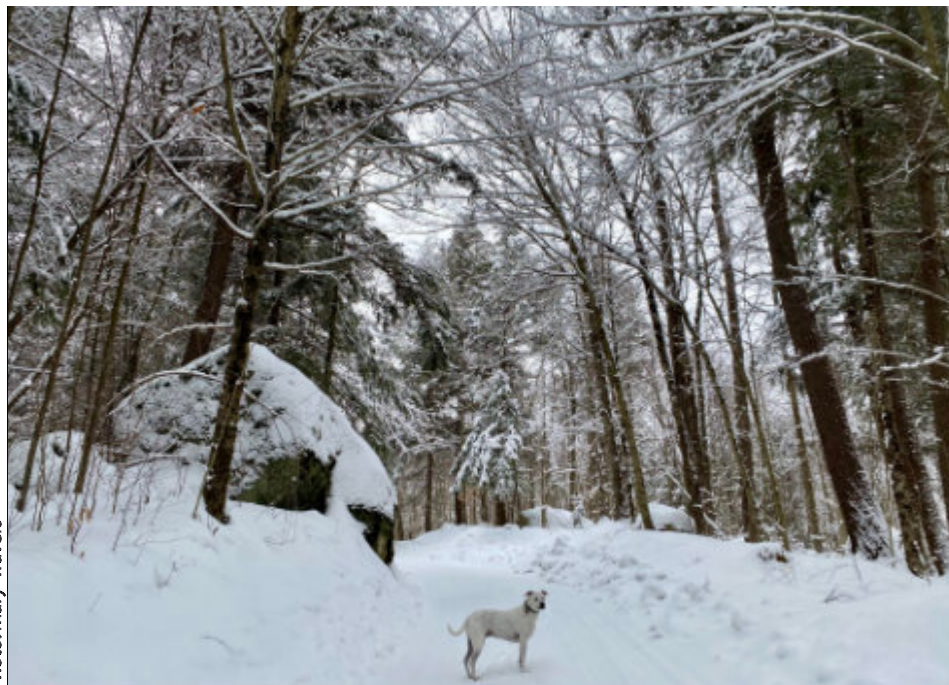
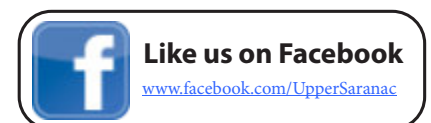


Photo: Mary Travers

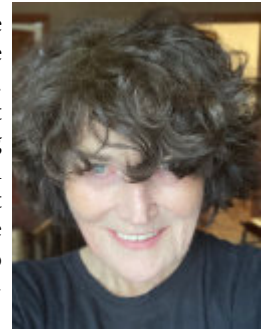


# Bitten by the Writing Bug

Continued from page 1

**Beverly Kolsky** is the newest author of the quartet. An English lit major, she, too, had always wanted to write, but her career as a social worker and psychoanalyst kept her too busy. Now a full-time resident on Upper Saranac, she enthuses, "Writing here in the Adirondacks is brilliant!" Kolsky's mission is to educate the public about psychotherapy, dispel harmful myths, and demonstrate its value. To that end, she turns to memoir, describing her own journey through analysis. "Once you've found your truth," she counsels, "life is so much more clear." Asked about research, she laughs, "Yes, it's taken me a lifetime. In the 60's, everyone was trying to find themselves. Psychotherapy

and psychoanalysis are now much more down to earth." To aspiring writers, she suggests, "Sit down and write every day. The discipline is really key." The most difficult part for Kolsky has been trying to combine memoir with practical advice which will teach readers about psychoanalysis and how to find the right therapist. Her next challenge is to settle on a title and identify an interested publisher.



## Local Resources

Want to try your hand at writing or storytelling? **The Adirondack Center for Writing** "brings people and words together."

For information, visit: [www.adirondackcenterforwriting.org](http://www.adirondackcenterforwriting.org)

## USLA Summer Events

Plans will be announced in the May *Mailboat*!

## Membership Committee

Dean Butts, Membership Chair

We did it! We ended 2020 with 550 paid memberships, a new high. This is two more than the 548 reported in 2019. This is remarkable considering the difficult summer we experienced when all activities were cancelled due to Covid-19. Thank you to the 550 who joined or renewed their membership and to the Zone Chairs who kept in touch with members in their zone.

Now it is time to become an Early Bird and join or renew your membership for 2021. Go to the USLA redesigned website: [uppersaranac.com](http://uppersaranac.com) and click Membership in the bar at top of the screen. Click "Join/Renew Membership", then choose between Pay by Check or Pay Online. Your early renewal or new membership will save your Association time and cost of reminders. Thank you.

## A Quick boating quiz for 2021



1. When must navigation lights be displayed?
2. Why is it important to know the length of your boat?
3. If your boat spills oil, no matter how small the spill, who do you need to contact?
4. What is the state speed limit on water?
5. When can you allow passengers to ride on the bow, back seats or gunwales?

See answers on page 6.

## Government Affairs

Larry Koch, Chair

The Government Affairs Committee has been hard at work this fall responding to two major issues important to USLA members. The NY DEC Fish Creek campground issue was covered in the Government Affairs article in the October *Mailboat*. The more current issue relates to a proposed commercial development moratorium in the town of Santa Clara.

The Town of Santa Clara encompasses 192 square miles in southern Franklin County including all but the southern 20 percent of our lake. With 345 legal residents or 1.8 persons per square mile, the deer surely outnumber the people. And there are only four relevant commercially zoned areas in the town, none of which have seen development in decades. Now, there is a need to update the town codes as development is on the horizon with the sale of Hickok's marina and the potential sale of the Saranac Inn Golf Club.

The Upper Saranac Foundation, hence USLA members have a substantial investment in time and resources cleaning up the waters of the Fish Creek area. The Fish Creek ponds are the largest tributary to Upper Saranac so we have a vested interest in the ponds' well-being. To that end, the USLA is supporting the proposed 5 month Santa Clara commercial development moratorium so the town can organize a building code that balances the needs of successful businesses with the needs of the local population. It is expected the town board will vote on this law at their February 11<sup>th</sup> town meeting with the rewrite of the code to be completed by July. We will stay tuned on this developing story. Assume there will be some significant changes to the Fish Creek area in 2022.

Members:

Dave Powalyk, Lynne Perry, Cindy Rosenwald, Neil Kolsky

# Upper Saranac Foundation

*It still is, and always will be, about Water Quality.*



## Upper Saranac Foundation: It still is, and always will be, about water quality

The Upper Saranac Foundation (USF) appreciates the support we receive to continue our mission of preserving and protecting the natural beauties, environmental quality, and recreational enjoyment of the Upper Saranac Lake (USL) watershed. Contributions made to USF are critical for our day-to-day operations.

Reflecting on 2020, here are a few highlights and accomplishments we achieved with your support:

### Aquatic Invasive Species Management

USF continued reduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS) through harvesting of USL and its tributaries: Fish Creek Ponds, Fish Creek (up-stream of the campground), and Follensby Clear Pond. Over 11,000 pounds of invasive milfoil were removed from the watershed in 2020.

### Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention

USL and Fish Creek Campground Watershed Stewards inspected over 3,750 boats and educated nearly 8,000 visitors about AIS. Watershed Stewards performed 192 boat decontaminations at USF's Decontamination Station on USL, and intercepted 13 confirmed AIS. USF expanded our AIS protection program with private launches that included outreach to convey preventive

measures for launching compliance. In addition, USF conducted AIS surveys to identify new introductions, assuring the best opportunity for eradication.

### Water Quality Monitoring

USF continued water quality monitoring and analysis of seven tributaries and the two basins of USL. Data collected is used to identify potential problems and trends with the intention to guide management, providing specific recommendations to protect the watershed against future threats.

### Outreach

USF launched a new, updated, and exciting website. This is not just a website: It's an interactive educational tool. The site offers real-time lake data, webcam photos, information on how you can help protect water quality, and much more. Viewers can now have a better understanding about what USF is doing to preserve the character of the region, what you can do to help, and how to get involved. Check it out: [usfoundation.net](http://usfoundation.net)

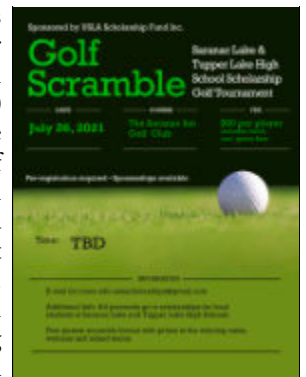
The Upper Saranac Foundation looks forward to the coming year as we prepare with optimism for the continuation of success and the opportunity to further protect the water quality of our watershed.

## Upper Saranac Lake Association Treasurer's Report 2020

REVENUE	-----2020-----	
	APPROVED	ACTUAL
	25,000.00	25
	5,000.00	12
	<b>30,000.00</b>	<b>37</b>
	6,823.20	3
	7,880.00	11
	2,000.00	
	800.00	
Gifts	1,000.00	
	4,036.00	3
	750.00	
	3,250.00	
	0.00	
	<b>26,539.20</b>	<b>19</b>
Balance 1/01/2018		27
Balance 2/31/2018		45
Outstanding check		
Approved, Treasurer, USLA, Inc.		

## USLA Scholarship Fund Second Annual Summer Golf Tournament

The USLA Scholarship Fund is hosting its Second Annual Summer Golf Tournament at the Saranac Inn Golf Club on July 26, 2021. The 2020 tournament was postponed so we would not contribute to the spread of COVID-19. The tournament will again be a fun team play event and prizes will be awarded for the best men's, women's and mixed teams. Last year prizes worth more than \$1000.00 were distributed to winning teams and in golf skill categories. All proceeds will go to the USLA Scholarship Fund for scholarships that are awarded annually to deserving seniors at both Tupper Lake and Saranac Lake Central Schools and honor our friend Chip Harrison. We will be seeking sponsors from both local businesses as well as our lake community. The tournament committee is working out additional details of this tournament and more information will be available in the May Mailboat. One of our goals this year is to double the golfers that enter this tournament and increase the number of tournament sponsors. So, get vaccinated, start forming your teams and be ready for a great time playing golf with friends at Saranac Inn and support a worthy cause.



## New USLA Board Member

# Barbara Franklin, Zone 4 Chair



It all started with sleepaway camp: Camp Arcady on Lake George. I was hooked on the Adirondacks. The next step was sending our son to Long Lake Camp for the Arts, pre-internet, sight unseen, and, on Parent Visit weekends, driving around the area pretending we were looking for a second home. That put us on the mail list of brokers, and several pilgrimages north in the winter, culminating on a minus 20 degree day of Winter Carnival, snowshoeing around checking out homes. We bought our camp on sight that day.

Our “weekends” quickly grew from 2 to 3 to 4 days, (okay, maybe even longer) and during Covid, to months. It has been our refuge, our playground, our soul soother. We have made wonderful friends, enjoyed sunset happy hour cruises, hiked, became Saranac Sixers (gave up on the 46er goal a long time ago) and paddled every chance we got. In winter, we cross-country ski and snowshoe on trails and our lake (that is another story for another day). Extended time spent with family and friends who come up to visit have become cherished memories.

I have rediscovered photography and paddle out at 4:30 am to

catch the spectacular sunrises, loons, herons and eagles waking up for breakfast. I especially enjoy photographing the newborn chicks (from a distance, of course), protected by their parents and, ultimately, claiming their independence.

We’ve both worked with the USLA before: I was the Environmental Chair, Michael was the editor of The Mailboat. We are so lucky to have two organizations on the lake — the USLA, allowing us to make new friends, learn the history and culture of the area, and perhaps most important, the Foundation, watching over our lake, protecting this jewel that drew us all here in the first place.

Oh, and the bio stuff: I began my career on Madison Avenue in advertising, then public relations, before moving to New Jersey, and embarking on a new career: commercial real estate, specializing in tenant/buyer representation, where I’ve spent more decades than I can believe or confess to working. And I’m still trying to write the great American novel, or at least a short story, often using memories and venues right here on the lake.

# USLA Calendar 2021

<b>July 10</b>	Membership Meeting	Details to be announced
<b>July 12-13</b>	NYS Safe Boating Course	Santa Clara Community Room
<b>August 9 – 10</b>	NYS Safe Boating Course	Santa Clara Community Room
<b>August 14</b>	USLA Annual Meeting	Details to be announced

Note: Additional dates will be announced in the *May Mailboat* and on the website



Photo: Elizabeth Evans

Barred Owl perched on a winter morning, Gull Bay

## 2021 USLA Store

The USLA Store is temporarily closed until Spring. We will have more information in upcoming issues of the Mailboat. When we reopen, we will have baseball caps, adult and kids' sweatshirts, wine glasses, USL maps and posters, car decals and Centennial posters and some new items. All have Upper Saranac Lake branding and are of high quality.

They will be available to order via the Upper Saranac Lake Association website. All proceeds go to support the USLA Scholarship Fund which provides student scholarships annually to a deserving student from both Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake High Schools.

The USLA Scholarship Fund, Inc. is completely separate from USLA and is a tax exempt organization, so a portion of your purchases and all of your donations are tax deductible. The USLA store is the main source of revenue for the USLA Scholarship Fund.

To make a donation to the USLA Scholarship Fund, mail your check to:

USLA Scholarship Fund, Inc.  
 PO Box 838  
 Saranac Lake, NY 12983

For further information about how you can support the USLA Scholarship Fund, Inc., please contact Ron Otten at 518-359-7841.

*The USLA Store Team*

## ANSWERS to boating quiz



1. Sunset to sunrise or in bad weather.
2. The classification determines what safety equipment you must carry.  
Your boat's length will also determine the registration fee.
3. The NYSDEC within 2 hours of the oil spill at (800) 457-7362.
4. The state law requires that all boats not exceed a speed of 5 mph when within 100ft. of the shore, dock, raft, float or an anchored or moored boat. Exception to this is when the boat is enabling a skier to take off and land.
5. Never. Operators who permit it risk being cited for reckless operation, a misdemeanor!



Photo: Mary Travers

## Military Aircraft Over the Adirondacks

Dave Powalyk



While most of our USLA members only experience the military training flights during the summer months the training flights occur all year long. Occasionally, if you're quick enough you may even catch a glimpse of a pair of fighter jets streaking across the sky. These aircraft use the designated training airspace over the Adirondacks defined jointly by the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Defense.

There are three Air National Guard units operating over the Adirondacks and North Country. They are:

- The 174th Attack Wing (New York)
- The 158th Fighter Wing (Vermont) home of the F35 Lightning II Aircraft since September 2019
- The 104th Fighter Wing (Massachusetts)

During the summer of 2020, a couple of our USLA members expressed concerns regarding the military aircraft noise and the occasional sonic boom. An individual even reported window damage from a sonic boom. The following information is available online to assist anyone seeking to file a report. The website link listed below provides details to assist you in determining which Air National Guard Unit to report your issue or concern. It appears the New York's 174th Attack Wing is willing and able to assist you when you know the following details: the date, location, and time of event.

Website includes phone numbers and contact information for each Unit:

[https://dmna.ny.gov/community/adk\\_aircraft/](https://dmna.ny.gov/community/adk_aircraft/)

The attached photo occurred in the summer of 2018. I nearly dropped my fishing pole into the lake just to get the shot.



## The New York Safe Boating Courses for 2021 season



The NYS Safe Boating Course is being taught at the Santa Clara Community Center. Please note, the new dates and times for the classes.

### WHEN

July 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM until 1 PM each day.  
August 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM until 1 PM each day.

### WHERE

The Santa Clara Community Center, located at 5367 State Route 30 just north of USL.

### WHO

Anyone interested in taking the course must be at least 10 years of age by the first day of the course. Anyone 18 and over is required to pay a fee of \$10.00 payable to NYS. The course runs for 2 mornings. You must attend both days to take and pass the test in order to qualify for a certificate.

### NOTE

NYS passed Brianna's law in 2019. The law will be phased in over 5 years and by 2025 everyone regardless of their age **MUST** take and pass the NYS Safe Boating Course if they operate a motor boat in NYS.

Course size is limited. Registration is required. Please contact Lynne Perry to register or if you have any questions at 518-359-2630 or [lgper2@optonline.net](mailto:lgper2@optonline.net)

Michelle Brown Garcia will teach the course.

### ★★★BRIANNA'S LAW IN NEW YORK STATE★★★

As of January 1, 2020, everyone operating a motorized vessel will need a safety certificate by 2025.

If you were born on or after January 1, 1993, you will need the certificate by the first time you operate a vessel in 2020.

If you were born on or after January 1, 1988, you will need the certificate by the first time you operate a vessel in 2022.

If you were born on or after January 1, 1983, you will need the certificate by the first time you operate a vessel in 2023.

If you were born on or after January 1, 1978, you will need a certificate by the first time you operate a vessel in 2024.

If you were born before 1978, you will need a certificate by the first time you operate a vessel in 2025.

THE UPPER SARANAC LAKE ASSOCIATION

# MAILBOAT

FEBRUARY 2021

Upper Saranac Lake Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 892  
Saranac Lake, NY 12983



## Eagle Island Camp

Marc Wanner, USLA resident and Eagle Island Volunteer



Photo: Erika Bailey Photography

When Eagle Island Camp was built in 1903 as a summer retreat for former United States Vice President Levi Morton, there were few Great Camps south of Buck Island. Designed by pre-eminent architect William L. Coulter, the camp was completed in only six months, starting in January 1903.

In 1910, New York City financier Henry Graves, Jr. bought the camp from Morton complete with all its furnishings, including fine

oriental carpets. Graves had to add boathouse space to allow him to house his growing collection of boats -- four motorboats, canoes, and guide boats. In 1937, after their two adult sons died in separate automobile accidents, the Graves family gifted the island and its contents to the Maplewood-South Orange Girl Scout Council of New Jersey.

The Girl Scouts turned the island into a residential summer camp by the summer of 1938 and operated it for the next seventy years. Eagle Island Camp offered sailing, canoeing, swimming, campcraft, hiking, and other activities. Many traditions developed over the years that were cherished by the campers. Some of those memories are now preserved in Historic Saranac Lake's Oral History Project; former campers, staff, and others with connections to the Island have been interviewed with the goal of archiving these unique connections to Saranac Lake and Eagle Island's place on the lake.

In 2015, the Island was purchased by a group of former campers and extensively renovated and modernized. It ran a successful Day Camp program in 2019.

Plans were developed for Summer 2020 to resume operating as a Girls' Overnight Camp, All-Gender Day Camp, Family Camp and Women's Weekends, but all programming was suspended due to the pandemic. These programs resume for 2021, in compliance with all necessary health and safety requirements, and registration is open now. Eagle Island is also hiring for a variety of positions for the summer. Information and applications are available on our website, [eagleisland.org](http://eagleisland.org).

Visit [www.uppersaranac.com](http://www.uppersaranac.com)