Ridge Satterthwaite Lake Fairlee Stewardship Award

Ridge Satterthwaite, our Treasurer and Director for two decades, died in May, a few months before his 90th birthday. (A thorough obituary was published in the Valley News on July 22, 2026.)

The LFA board has established in Ridge's honor and memory the Ridge Satterthwaite Lake Fairlee Stewardship Award in appreciation for his huge contribution to LFA and to our community.

Ridge was raised in Pennsylvania in the Friends tradition, taking to heart principles of integrity, equality for all, especially those with special needs, community service, and sustainability of our planet. Following his experiences through a varied education, world travels, outdoor and wilderness teaching and guiding with several camps, Ridge, with his beloved wife Sally, settled here adjacent to the lake in Fairlee in 1993.

Ridge quickly became a member of the LFA and became the Treasurer and Director in 2003, beginning his 20 years of service. He provided a thoughtful and stabilizing influence over this period. He really got to know and understand our board and the association members.

His treasurer duties included:

- Stewarding the collection of all gifts and grants and the payment of all expenses;
- Preparing and filing the Vermont and federal annual reports;
- Handling the payroll for our greeters;
- Preparing grant applications for the three abutting towns;
- Establishing and maintaining the mailing list and contact list for all of our members;
- all of this while keeping impeccable records.

During Ridge's term, our new dam was built, we established an Endowment and Reserve Fund with the Vermont Community Foundation, and revenues each year always exceeded expenses, for which we are grateful to YOU, OUR MEMBERS.

It took five years to replace Ridge, although for two or three of those years he really did not want to let go. Finally, in 2023 Ridge was replaced. I agreed to serve but only with a co-treasurer, Vicki Smith, whose knowledge and experience with non-profits far exceeded my own.

- We hired a nonprofit consultant to help with long-range planning and with our state and federal reports;

- We engaged a professional firm to handle the payroll and tax reporting for our greeters;
- We hired an experienced person to prepare grant requests;
- Tom Ward took over the endless job of updating and maintaining our membership list and contact information.

As you can see, it took many people to replace Ridge!

Ridge's efforts as Treasurer and board member have been invaluable. His deep connections with people of all backgrounds, his love of the lake, the mountains, and the environment have provided LFA with a cherished guide and steward for over 20 years.

In Ridge's honor, we shall now make the first presentation of the Ridge Satterthwaite Lake Fairlee Stewardship Award to a most worthy recipient, John Tarbell.