## LOOKING BACK

*by Hague Historical Society Board Members Shelly Gautreau and Nancy Young*

(EDITOR'S NOTE: THE SPACING AND PUNCTUATION OF THE POEM ARE FROM THE ORIGINAL.)

*The Hague Chronicle– November 1975*

*We ran across a poem in the Grand Mara (Michigan) Pilot and Pictured Rocks Review which we would like to share with you. It is entitled Ghost Apples.*

***GHOST APPLES***

*Ghost Apples without a will*
*Are what I pick. Atop a hill.*
*The leaves of autumned colored trees*
*blow*
*on a lake-born wind that smells of snow.*
*Whose tree this was I cannot know*
*There is no house or grave to show*
*His name. He found this valley long*
*ago.*
*To mine for copper, didn't know*
*That market prices far from here*
*Could kill his dream. That pioneer Dug*
*and built and planted*
*And never reaped what God had granted.*
*The mines are gone, mere holes.*
*Foundations overgrown mark where*
*these souls*
*Struggled, built, then went away*
*Defeated. They never knew that here,*
*Today*
*I'd come to pick the wealth they left*
*behind!*
*A load of apples that remain*
*Of all their struggle and their pain.*
*God only knows what of our age*
Shall be the next man's heritage.

**UPDATE 50 YEARS LATER**

The poem likely depicts a sadness pertaining to the lives that labored and could not remain to enjoy the sweet fruits of the orchard they planted.

However, "Ghost Apples" are natural ice sculptures that occur when freezing rain coats decaying apples which are still clinging to trees. As the fruit rots and collapses, the icy shell remains, creating a fragile, glasslike casing that resembles a ghostly version of the original fruit.

In Native American tales, some tribes saw ghost apples as "winter fairies." In European folklore they are linked to "frost fairies" that steal fruit souls. In modern symbolism, ghost apples are a metaphor for beauty in decay. They are also featured in poetry and act as a sign of nature's impertinence.

Agriculture studies help scientists understand ice formation dynamics that may improve frost resistant varieties and inspire protective coatings for crops. This could also lead to new preservation techniques for fragile artifacts.

The best places to see ghost apples in person are in Michigan, Canada, and Northern Europe from late December to February in the early morning.

Meanwhile, enjoy fresh apples and apple products at any local orchard. This is the time of year for apple harvesting and apples are low in calories, high in fiber, Vitamin C, and antioxidants.

## LGLC: NEXT GEN MEET UP AND HIKE

The Lake George Land Conservancy's (LGLC) Next Gen Committee will host a late-fall hike to the Schumann Preserve gazebo at Pilot Knob on **November 15, 2025, from 10 am to noon.**

The route is an easy-to-moderate 1.2-mile round trip.

All are welcome — bring a friend, dress for the weather, and pack a snack to enjoy at the summit.

Click HERE for more information and to register.

## LGLC: PROTECTING A HAGUE STREAMFRONT

The Lake George Land Conservancy (LGLC) has permanently protected three-quarters of an acre of land in Hague, which includes nearly 300 feet of an unnamed tributary and the associated floodplain.

The seller, Sandy Radke, contacted the LGLC because she wanted to see the property protected for its water quality and habitat benefits.

Under LGLC ownership, the land will remain undeveloped and will be actively stewarded to maintain and enhance its habitat and water quality values.

## LGA HOLDS TENTH ANNUAL SALT SUMMIT, CONT'D

- Adoption of new practices and technologies that have led to measurable progress, including chloride levels in Lake George showing signs of decline.

Click HERE to see the StoryMAP. Learn how collaboration and science-to-solutions are making a difference for Lake George.

You can also watch recordings from the summit on topics that include statewide salt reduction efforts, local success stories, practical strategies such as brining, and private-sector leadership.

Click HERE to watch the videos from the summit.