

# “Our Glimmerglass”

## **A Newsletter from the Otsego Lake Association**

Vol. I – Issue 1 Website: [www.otsegolakeassociation.org](http://www.otsegolakeassociation.org) Spring 2009

**Board of Directors: Wayne Bunn (President), Burr Southworth, David Sanford, Paul Lord, Scottie Baker, Mickie Richtsmeier, Mary Clarke, Carl Good, Ryan Davine, Tom Horvath, and Suzanne Kingsley. Directors represent the Towns of Middlefield, Otsego, Springfield and the Village of Cooperstown plus two At Large. Treasurer is Carrie Southworth.**

---

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2009 at 9:00 AM**

(Coffee and Donuts at 8:30 AM)

### Special Topic

### **“Zebra Mussels – 2009”**

They Are In The Lake – They Are Growing – How Do We Deal With Them?

#### Panel Discussion Presented By

Dr. Tom Horvath, SUNY Oneonta College – The “Science”

Canadarago Lake Association – Actual Experiences

Vince Stayter, Goodyear Lake Association – Actual Experiences

Chuck Hascup - Local Plumber & Mark Capozucco - Local Diver

Randy Reckeweg, Bruce Hall Corp. (Dealer for Zebra Mussel Filters)

#### Other Agenda Items

Election of President & 4 Directors – Committee Reports – Door Prizes

## Meeting Location

Town of Springfield Community Center

County Route 29A – Springfield Center – Just East of Fire Station

Members and Non-Members Are Welcome to Attend

OLA encourages you to attend this meeting to learn how to deal with the zebra mussels regarding your lake water supply, boats, docks, floats, and swimming areas. Representatives of the Canadarago Lake Association and the Goodyear Lake Association will explain the problems that they have experienced with zebra mussels over the past few years and how they have dealt with them. Local plumbers will discuss your water intake line and pumping system, and a local vendor will discuss a line of zebra mussel filters available in Cooperstown. Come to this meeting to have your questions answered and meet other people from the Otsego Lake community. For more information, please contact OLA President Wayne Bunn by telephone at [\(518\) 542-6630](tel:5185426630) or by e-mail at [otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com](mailto:otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com).

### Understanding the Color of Otsego Lake

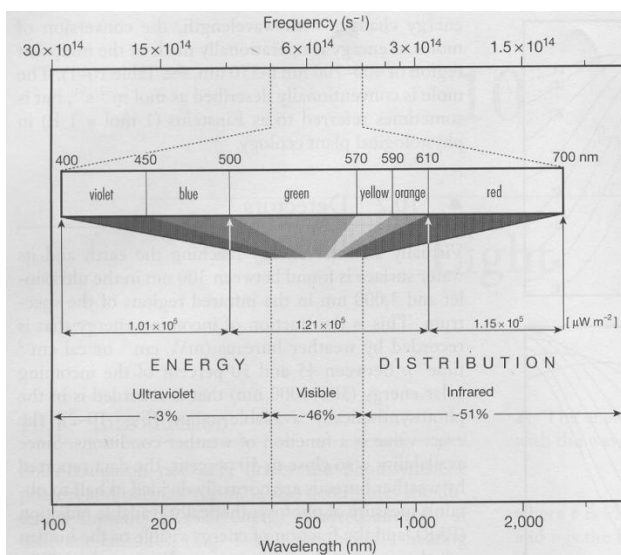
By Tom Horvath, Ph.D., Aquatic Biologist & Limnologist, SUNY Oneonta College

What happens when you jump into a lake? You get wet. What happens when light jumps into a lake? You get color. But how?

Light is made up of a spectrum of wavelengths, some of which our eyes perceive as colors. For example, light in the wavelength 475 nanometers (1000 nm = 0.00004 inches) appears blue to us, while light in the wavelength 650 nm appears red. In fact, we only perceive light in wavelengths from 400 nm to 700 nm (see Figure; from Kalff 2002, Limnology).

It's the fate of light after it enters a lake that determines the color of a lake. Light can be either 1) reflected, 2) absorbed, 3) scattered, or it can continue to move through the water (called transmission). **Reflected light** is light that strikes something but gets returned in a specific direction (for you physics buffs remember the angle of incidence equals the angle of reflection). A good bit of light is reflected from the lake's surface (more so when it's wavy because of the increased surface area). Generally, all the wavelengths of light are reflected, so the light appears white (or colorless), and hence doesn't affect color much. **Absorbed light** is light that strikes

something and is lost. For example, if an algal cell is hit by light, it will absorb light in most of the spectrum except green, which has the chance to get back to our eyes. So water that has a lot of algae growing in it appears green to us. **Scattered light** is light that strikes something and heads in a random direction. From physics we know that the smaller wavelengths (blue) are scattered more than larger wavelengths (green through red).



Water that is almost pure will look blue because all the wavelengths are absorbed and lost except blue, which is scattered. Some of the scattered blue light exits the water and reaches our eyes, hence the water appears blue to us. This is also why the sky is blue, at least on clear days.

Lakes come in many colors – some are blue, some are green, some are brown, some are even red – and the color of the water can tell us quite a bit about the lake. Glimmerglass got its name because the water was at one time crystal clear and appeared a deep blue. This was because very little stuff was in the water to absorb light, except the natural absorption capacity of water. There are times in the summer when Otsego Lake takes on a shimmer of green (almost fluorescent at times). This is because the lake is experiencing an algal bloom, which absorbs all the light except green, which is scattered back to our eyes. If you travel into the Adirondack Park, some of the shallow lakes along the roads look rather tea-colored. This is because the water has a lot of dissolved organic matter in it, which comes from the decaying plants all around the water. Dissolved organic matter absorbs light in blue to yellow range, so what gets scattered back to our eyes is the orange to red light, which looks brownish to us.

I hope you are now more familiar with your lake. Keep looking for new articles in future OLA newsletters. However, if you have specific questions about limnology and Otsego Lake, I will try to address them as well. Email questions to me at [horvattg@oneonta.edu](mailto:horvattg@oneonta.edu) and I will post both questions and the answers in this newsletter.

### **Reward for Photographs of Mud Plumes in Otsego Lake**

The OLA Board of Directors has authorized the cash payment of \$300 to anyone who submits an acceptable color photograph showing a “mud plume” in Otsego Lake taken during either 2008 or 2009. A mud plume is a large volume of mud or debris that flows into the lake from a tributary stream or shoreline embankment usually after a heavy rain storm or other unusual event like a beaver dam break. The photograph will be used to educate lakeside property owners, municipal officials, and the general public about the effects and impacts of mud in the lake. It will not be used to identify specific individuals or property owners. The OLA Board of Directors will have the final authority on the acceptability of any photographs and the awarding of prize money. Please submit a color print of your photograph to Otsego Lake Association, P.O. Box 13, Springfield Center, NY 13468 or by e-mail to [otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com](mailto:otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com).

### **Otsego Lake Assoc. “Adopts” Two Mile Section of State Highway 80**

OLA has “adopted” a two mile section of State Highway 80 (West Lake Road) under the NYS Department of Transportation’s Adopt A Highway Program. The section of the highway that OLA adopted starts about ½ mile northerly of Five Mile Point and ends about just southerly of Allen Lake Road. The purpose of the program is to allow volunteer organizations the opportunity to keep a section of a particular State highway clean by periodically picking up trash and debris those careless motorists or others have thrown on the side of the highway. The NYSDOT provides all training, hard hats, safety vests, and refuse bags. If you would like to help OLA keep this section of the West Lake Road clean, please contact OLA President Wayne Bunn by telephone at (518) 542-6630 or by e-mail at [otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com](mailto:otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com).

### **Don't "P" In the Lake**

When you purchase lawn fertilizer and/or dishwasher detergent for your camp or lakeside home, please think about Otsego Lake and buy phosphorus free fertilizer and dishwasher detergent sold in local garden supply stores, super markets, and health stores. Phosphorus (chemical symbol "P") is a huge food source or nutrient for the algae and weeds in the lake and OLA encourages everyone to do their part to reduce the amount of phosphorus that ultimately may end up in the lake.

Phosphorus (found not only in lawn/garden fertilizers and dishwasher detergents but also in human and animal waste) is a plant-supporting nutrient that feeds algal blooms and nuisance weed growth in water bodies. When it rains, fertilizer and other pollutants are washed into storm drains and streams that empty into the lake. You can have a beautiful lawn and still keep phosphorus out of the lake by using zero phosphorus fertilizer or by simply not using fertilizer at all. Have your lawn tested to determine if you really need fertilizer. When shopping for lawn fertilizer, look for the middle number on the fertilizer bag. The three numbers on the bag show its N (Nitrogen) – P (Phosphorus) – K (Potassium) content. A zero in the middle means there is no phosphorus! The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation has reported that "just one pound of phosphorus has the capacity to grow from 500 to 700 pounds of algae". You can also help by planting a waterfront buffer strip using certain plants and by "scooping the poop" from your dog.

### **BFS Volunteer Dive Team Needs Administrative Help**

The volunteer dive team at SUNY/Oneonta's Biological Field Station would like to recruit and train someone to help with the administrative duties associated with their work. Having someone attend to the "paperwork" would allow the divers to concentrate on their underwater work which involves setting out and retrieving all of the "no wake zone" buoys around Otsego Lake each year as well as assisting the BFS staff with their on-going research projects. It is interesting to note that members of the volunteer dive team were the first ones to discover the zebra mussels in Otsego Lake in 2007. Please contact Dive Master Paul Lord at [otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com](mailto:otsegolakeassoc@hotmail.com) or (607) 547-8778 if you are interested in obtaining additional information.

### **Otsego Lake Has Special Fishing Regulations**

As you may know, fishing in Otsego Lake is regulated by the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation. There are Statewide angling regulations which cover such local fish as largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye, pickerel, perch, lake white fish, etc., but there are Special Regulations for Otsego Lake as noted below.

<u>Fish</u>	<u>Open Season</u>	<u>Minimum Length</u>	<u>Daily Limit</u>
Brown Trout	All Year	18"	1
Lake Trout	All Year	23"	1
Land Lock Salmon	All Year	18"	1

Everyone 16 years old and older must have a valid NYS fishing license.

### **Some Boating Rules on the Water**

Boat being passed has the right of way. Boat on the right has the right of way. Boats meeting head on should keep to the right of each other. Sail boats or non-motorized boats have the right of way except when they are the overtaking boat.

All persons waterskiing, tubing, etc. must wear an approved Type III personal flotation device (PFD). An observer at least 10 years old is required in the boat.

A U.S. Coast Guard approved lifesaving device (PFD) is required for each person in the boat. Children under 12 years of age must wear a PFD at all times when underway.

Motor boats require a B-1 type fire extinguisher, horn or whistle, anchor and line, and distress flag or flares. Navigation lights must be on from sunset to sunrise.

### **New Personal Watercraft Operator Rules**

Effective January 1, 2009, no one under the age of 14 is allowed to operate a Personal Watercraft (PWC). Personal watercraft are sometimes referred to "jet skis". Previously, youths between the ages of 10 and 13 could operate a personal watercraft if they obtained a boating safety certificate and were accompanied by an adult. This new tougher law only affects the operation of personal watercraft. Anyone over the age of 10 that holds a boating safety certificate can still operate a motor boat.

### **Search & Shop Websites to Raise Money for Otsego Lake Assoc.**

Thanks to the efforts of OLA Director Carl Good, the Otsego Lake Association is now registered with **goodsearch.com** and **goodshop.com** which will enable OLA to receive \$0.01 each time that you search and to receive a percent of the purchase price when you buy something through those websites – powered by Yahoo! These two websites currently have over 76,000 non-profits registered with 100 joining each day. Please consider OLA and use these websites whenever you need to search or buy something.

### **OLA Merchandise for Sale**

If you are looking for some gift ideas, please consider buying OLA's ever popular but inexpensive, high quality and stylish short sleeve tee shirts (lake map on the back), long sleeve denim shirts, caps, and tote bags which proudly show your support of Otsego Lake and it helps OLA to raise money. We also have a 175 page lakescaping book to help you design your own buffer strip. Call Scottie Baker at (607) 547-5356 to order.

### **Other 2009 Dates to Keep In Mind**

OLA Entry - Springfield 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade: Sat., July 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM, Springfield Center

OLA Family Day: Sat., July 11<sup>th</sup> at Glimmerglass State Park, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM (In conjunction with Otsego Co. Conservation Assoc. – cookouts, casual, informal, fun)

OLA Informational Meeting – Sat., August 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM (separate announcement)

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Dear Friends of Otsego Lake,

As the President of the Otsego Lake Association (OLA), I would like to encourage all of you to **either renew your membership in OLA (if you have not already done so) or join us for the first time.** Please use the Application below. We are a very active group of like minded citizens, both lakeside property owners and those interested in the lake, who are very concerned about the present and future health and condition of Otsego Lake. Our basic mission is to implement “A Plan for the Management of the Otsego Lake Watershed” which was initially adopted in 1998 by the four municipalities that surround Otsego Lake – namely, the Towns of Otsego, Springfield, and Middlefield and the Village of Cooperstown. The Plan's major goals include: (1) ensuring the quality of drinking water drawn from the lake, (2) preserving the lake's natural beauty and its viability as a tourist attraction, (3) protecting the lake's fishery, (4) ensuring the safety of recreational users of the lake, and (5) preserving the lake as a recreational facility. Much has been accomplished since OLA was founded in 2002 and even more will be accomplished in the future but we need your help and cooperation.

We are primarily concerned with educating the general public and the municipalities surrounding the lake about the various issues that affect Otsego Lake. These issues include sediment and nutrient loadings (mud, road salt, phosphorous, wastewater, etc.) being discharged into the lake, non-native invasive plant and animal species (zebra mussels, milfoil, water chestnut, etc.), no-wake zones (boat speeds less than 5 miles per hour within 200 feet of the shoreline), and buffer strips along the shoreline (to reduce erosion).

You can help Otsego Lake by joining OLA, coming to our general membership meetings (see dates elsewhere in this Newsletter), and volunteering to help with our various projects. We even have some fun activities planned so you can meet your friends and neighbors. I look forward to meeting you this summer.

K. Wayne Bunn, OLA President

If you are not a current member of OLA, please consider joining or renewing now.

**See next page**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION**

Please complete this application whether you are renewing or applying for the first time.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City/Town) (State) (Zip)

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**SEASONAL MAILING ADDRESS:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City/Town) (State) (Zip)

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOWN Or VILLAGE** (Check One):

Otsego       Springfield       Middlefield       Cooperstown

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES** (Check One):       Renewal       New Member

Individual \$25.00       Family \$35.00       Business \$50.00

Annual Endowment \$75.00 and up

Additional Donation  
For Cooperstown Buffer Strip \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
For Erosion Control Measures \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Projects \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like information on volunteering:**

Helping at events (like buffer strip plantings)

Serving on a committee

Helping with newsletters and mailings

Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify)

**Please enclose your check payable to Otsego Lake Association and mail to:**

Caroline B Southworth, OLA Treas.  
1412 County Highway 31  
Cooperstown NY 13326

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION**