



OLA News

March 2005

Otsego Lake Festival

Sat. July 9, 1:00 - 9:00 PM.

The 2005 Otsego Lake Festival will be held on Saturday, July 9 from 1:00 to 9:00 PM. Reserve that time now, come to this first of a kind festival, have a good time, and learn ways to help Otsego Lake. This Festival is sponsored by a number of organizations concerned about Otsego Lake who meet as members of the Otsego County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC). The WQCC includes the BFS, Cooperstown Water Board, Cornell Cooperative Extension, DEC, DOH, DOT, Otsego 2000, OCCA, Otsego County Planning Department, OLA, OLT, SWCD, Upper Susquehanna Coalition, Watershed Supervisory Committee, and USDA NRCS. The main venue will be at Lake Front Park

OLA Recognizes BFS Volunteer Divers



OLA President Dave Sanford congratulated Biological Field Station Volunteer Diver Jerry Munrett after presenting him an OLA t-shirt in recognition of his continuing contributions to the health of the Lake. The OLA President took time out from the October Board of Director's meeting to present OLA t-shirts to six volunteer divers. There will be more in a future OLA News regarding these volunteers.

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where the OLA will showcase a lake friendly buffer strip installed for the Village by OLA using a generous contribution provided by Betsey Hawn. The buffer strip will incorporate techniques discussed in the book entitled Landscaping for Wildlife & Water Quality which will be available for \$20 (\$10 off the list price) at the Festival. Please bring the kids. Music and games are part of the festival. We hope to involve them in activities that will entertain, enlighten, and motivate them.

Members are needed to help at the Festival in the OLA booth in selling the Landscaping book and in explaining the buffer strip. Contact Scottie Baker, (547-5356) to pitch in and ensure the success of this exciting new event.

OLA & OCCA: Alphabet Soup

A frequently asked question of OLA leaders is why OLA is needed with the presence the Otsego County Conservation Association (OCCA). It is a good question. Many of our members and a number of the OLA board of directors also belong to the older OCCA. Our technical director was just elected to the OCCA board of directors. OLA joins OCCA each year as an organizational member.

The two organizations frequently support similar initiatives and both have Otsego Lake as a major focus. OCCA was a principal contributor in the development of the Lake Management Plan that is now the reason for OLA's existence. The differences between organizations are subtle but substantial. OLA has as its sole focus Otsego Lake. We are unabashedly paying attention to Otsego Lake to the exclusion of other worthwhile interests – even when they are close to the Lake. OCCA has a wide variety of commendable initiatives across Otsego County involving trails along the Susquehanna River, paint recycling, burn barrel education, upland nature walks, Otsego Lake projects, and other initiatives. OCCA has a budget hundreds of times larger than OLA's and has a nonprofit status permitting it to administer such a budget and to employ a modest staff in a permanent office. It funds long-term and expensive initiatives around and for Otsego Lake such as Biological Field Station monitoring of stream inputs to the Lake and implementation of "best management practices" facilities for farms in the Otsego Lake watershed. It also sponsors the yearly BFS cleanup of debris around Otsego Lake. OLA is run completely by volunteers and has shunned accumulation of substantial sums of money. We have a P.O. box, but no office and beg locations for our meetings. OLA is focused only on implementation of the management plan for Otsego Lake. Still some folks question why we need both organizations. (My spouse can't tell you which organization is which. "It is all alphabet soup to me.")

Many of our OLA members belong to national organizations such as the Audubon Society or the Nature Conservancy and some belong to both. One could make the argument

that with good land stewardship, we could safeguard all the bird species that need protecting and that, therefore, everyone should support the Nature Conservancy to the exclusion of the Audubon Society. Well, birders would not see it that way. They almost certainly appreciate what the Nature Conservancy does for them, but they want an organization focused on protecting birds, performing research on birds, and educating people about birds. OLA members are similarly focused on Otsego Lake and implementation of the Lake Management Plan. We are a group with diverse interests on the Lake, but we are determined to see the Lake Management Plan implemented. We applaud and appreciate the many good works undertaken by the OCCA and others to implement the management plan, but impatiently we want it all implemented quickly and so seek to identify methods to implement the plan not yet adopted by OCCA or other concerned organizations. Implementation of "the plan" is our only reason for existence.

So, if you thought you were faced with a difficult choice, relax. You don't have to choose. Many of us write a check around New Year's to renew our association with OCCA and then write a check in the spring to renew our OLA membership. Both organizations are doing commendable work around the Lake and complement each other's efforts.

❖ **Check out the OCCA website:**

<http://www.occainfo.org/>

❖ **Visit our OLA website:**

<http://www.otsegolakeassociation.org/>

❖ **Learn from the NYSFOLA website:**

<http://www.nysfola.org/>

Automatic Dishwashers & Otsego Lake

Phosphorous compounds are the major nutrients making Otsego Lake green. Considerable attention is provided septic systems and farming practices around Otsego Lake to limit the amount of phosphorous coming into the Lake. An often overlooked source of phosphorous comes from automatic dishwashers which typically use detergents laden with phosphorous because phosphorous compounds enhance cleaning. If your home or camp is near Otsego Lake or near a stream feeding the Lake and it has a dishwasher and a conventional septic system with leach field, you should not be using just any dishwasher detergent. You should be using a detergent which cleans with enzymes and not phosphorous compounds. Look for the following brands: "Trader Joe's", "Seventh Generation", and "Ecover".

NYSFOLA Membership Benefit of OLA Membership

As members of OLA, we are all part of a larger umbrella organization, the New York State Federation of Lakes Association or NYFOLA. NYSFOLA is the one organization that lobbies in Albany with the legislature and executive branch for us regarding New York State lakes issues. Additionally, NYSFOLA provides publications, in print media and online (www.nysfola.org), for lake users and lakeside residents dealing with lake management issues. A regular newsletter is produced by NYSFOLA updating lake users on issues and information pertaining to lake usages. You can have a copy of this NYSFOLA newsletter delivered to you by noting your OLA membership and paying a \$10 personal membership fee to this eminently worthwhile organization. Finally NYSFOLA holds a yearly conference in nearby Hamilton, NY at the White Eagle Conference Center over the first weekend in May.

The yearly NYSFOLA conference is an amazing assemblage of lakeshore residents,

government officials responsible for aspects of lake management, academics performing research on lakes, and vendors selling various technologies (proven and not) for ameliorating the recreational and/or environmental potential of our lakes. In the course of a three day period all manner of lakes issues are addressed by experts with plenty of opportunity for questions. Since Hamilton is just a little over an hour away from Otsego Lake, all OLA members should try to attend at least some part of this unique three day gathering. If you can only devote one day to the conference, target Saturday when three concurrent sessions offer hard choices about which seminar one should attend. Better yet, attend with family and friends and participate in different sessions and compare notes at the end of the day. Most importantly, take advantage of the breaks between sessions and the social gathering to compare notes with folks from other lakes. Listening to the challenges faced by other lakes will provide insights into strategies for dealing with the issues facing Otsego Lake. Your Board of Directors hopes to see you in Hamilton 30 April – 2 May.

Take a look at the NYSFOLA website (www.nysfola.org) and sign up for the newsletter or the conference or a good lake user publication – or all three.

Redesigned Website

In moving our website to a more responsive host, we lost site files causing our new webmaster to redesign the entire website. The address is the same, but there is a new format and some new content. Check out the OLA website: www.otsegolakeassociation.org.



We recommend Landscaping for Wildlife and Water Quality by Carrol Henderson for lakeside landowners looking to mitigate their impacts on the Lake. Available now from OLA. Buy your copy at the Lake Festival or at the OLA Members meeting on June 18th.

Brookfield Compromise Reached

A contentious lakeshore development issue was recently settled amicably. Following a judge's request, Bill Miller, owner of the Brookfield property and his neighbor, Paul Batista, agreed on a development plan for the property that includes eight residential condominium units and as many as six structures. There may be four duplexes, one boathouse or pavilion, and one pump house. Sewage treatment is to be a state of art system that features phosphorus removal. The concern shown for the Lake by both Miller and Batista in arriving at this agreement is appreciated by OLA which had previously expressed concern about the development.

Miller purchased the Brookfield property some time ago with the intention of building four houses, subdividing, and selling four parcels. The Springfield Town Board appointed the Zoning Board of Appeals to review the application after the Springfield Planning Board refused to approve his plan. The Board of Appeals unanimously denied his proposal, on November 11, 2002, citing Local Law #3.

Miller then decided to expand the motel use of the property since, at the time he purchased the property, it had been a multiple building motel. Miller proposed several different plans in response to a variety of concerns expressed. Ultimately, the Springfield Planning Board approved a plan for 23 units.

In 2004, Batista (a neighboring property owner) filed an Article 78 grievance in the NY courts alleging the Town of Springfield acted improperly in approving the motel expansion. Following arguments between the Town of Springfield, Miller, and Batista, Judge OBrien asked Miller and Batista to agree on what was to be done to the 2.4 acre property. They have done so.

A primary benefit from the two years of controversy is that the Springfield Town Board appointed a group of residents to revise or amend the 1987 Local Law #3 to clarify the law without making extensive changes. OLA supports land use laws around the lake as described in the Otsego Lake Management Plan. We urge the three townships and the village to implement consistent land use laws to facilitate Lake protection.

OLA Shirts Available

T-shirts similar to those awarded to the dive team members of are available from Scottie Baker (547-5356). Our new 2005 t-shirts still feature the map of Otsego Lake and the OLA logo but these new shirts feature a "washed green" background.

2005 OLA Membership Meeting

Mark your calendars and plan to meet with other OLA members at the 2005 membership meeting. We will meet on Saturday, June 18, 2005 in the Cooperstown Graduate Program conference room (in the same building as the Biological Field Station). Join us at 8:30 AM for orange juice, coffee, and donuts. The meeting begins promptly at 9:00 AM. While the agenda is still being developed, be certain that the meeting will keep you apprised of Lake issues and our intended agenda for addressing them. Also keep the Saturday morning of 20 August available for an informational meeting. More details will be provided in a future OLA News.

Lake Dates

- April 30 - May 1: NYSFOLA Meeting.
- June 18: OLA Membership meeting.
- July 9: Otsego Lake Festival.
- August 20: OLA Information meeting.

OLA Apparel

Look stylish while announcing your support for Otsego Lake!



Call Scottie Baker (547-5356) to place your order for shirts and ball caps.

Otsego Lake Association
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Springfield Center, NY 13468