



Volume 2024-Issue 1
Spring 2024

Our Glimmerglass

Journal of the Otsego Lake Association

We Love Our Lake

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

EDUCATION • STEWARDSHIP • JOY



To Scottie Baker



PHILANTHROPY • CREATIVITY

Images: Top Row: Shoreline - Photo by Joan Dwyer; Paddlers - Photo by Jim Howarth; Dripping Paddle - Photo by Natura Productions;
Bottom Row: Scottie Baker, 2014 Boat Parade - Photo by Tina Claiborne; Lake Joy - Photo by Melissa Moore; Kingfisher Tower - Photo by Joan Dwyer.

RIPPLES: THROUGH COLLABORATIONS

Co-President's Message - We're Better Together

The mission of the Otsego Lake Association is to educate, advocate, and actively participate in protecting the health, beauty, and well-being of Otsego Lake by facilitating the implementation of the Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan. We are the only organization solely dedicated to our lake's health and future. To accomplish that mission OLA is fortunate to have a committed and growing membership, a talented, engaged, and diverse Board of Directors, and the region's preeminent limnologist, Dr. Kiyoko Yokota, as our Technical Advisor. But with the challenges now facing our lake, these people and resources are not enough. OLA both depends on and supports several organizations that actively work towards our lake's well-being. These organizations – new and old – are our partners in accomplishing our mission:



Glimmerglass Morning Fog - Photo by Tyrell Armant

- **The Otsego Lake Watershed Sustainability Fund** was created by the Community Foundation of Otsego County (CFOC) to support the long-term health of the Otsego Lake Watershed. The fund is dedicated to the long-term health of our lake and its watershed. The fund will provide important support for future work and provide an excellent opportunity for a united effort, encouraging more coordination among organizations interested in the lake to ensure its health.

CFOC Executive Director Jeff Katz has been instrumental in establishing the fund. An Advisory Committee has been formed, which includes the leaders of the Otsego Lake Association, the Watershed Supervisory Committee (Village of Cooperstown, Towns of Otsego, Middlefield and Springfield), and SUNY-Oneonta's Biological Field Station. This new fund under the auspices of the Community Foundation of Otsego County promises to be a significant benefit to our lake.

- **The Watershed Supervisory Committee** is a collaborative effort of the Towns of Middlefield, Otsego, and Springfield and the Village of Cooperstown, dedicated to protecting the health of Otsego Lake and its watershed. For most

OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 2002

OUR MISSION is to educate, advocate and actively participate in protecting the health, beauty, and well-being of Otsego Lake by facilitating the implementation of the Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan.

OUR MEMBERSHIP is open to any individual concerned with the health of Otsego Lake. Our membership consists of year-round residents, seasonal residents and local businesses.

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...AND PARTNERSHIPS

of its thirty-year history the WSC has concentrated on supervising almost 400 lake-side septic systems. While it now sounds unbelievable, prior to WSC's oversight many lake camps discharged sewage directly into our lake. Today septic compliance is almost 100%.

Chaired by Dr. Bertine McKenna from the Village of Cooperstown, with representatives of the Town of Otsego: Dr. Pat Kennedy, the Town Springfield: Dr. Bill Richtsmeier, the Town of Middlefield: Doug Willies, and the Village of Cooperstown: myself, the WSC's new focus is developing a Comprehensive Lake Management Plan. This plan will provide a structure for the study of Harmful Algal Blooms and other lake threats and, later, a road map for preventing or dealing with HABs. While OLA's mission calls for "facilitating the implementation of the Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan", the "current" plan is twenty years old. The new lake management plan will give OLA a goal to work towards. Last Fall, the OLA Board of Directors allocated our largest ever financial support to assist in research and work towards developing this plan.

- Otsego Lake is fortunate to have a scientific research institution on its shores. The **SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station (BFS)** is the home of the University's Lake Management Graduate Program that trains students to become water resource management professionals. An important by-product of this education is the research conducted by the BFS's students and faculty. Under the leadership of their new Director, Dr. Florian Reyda, important early steps are being taken towards formulating the Lake Plan. To assist their research, last year OLA pledged two years of financial support to transport lake water samples to an accredited laboratory.
- The **Otsego County Conservation Association (OCCA)** has long been a strong local force in environmental education, recycling, and – significantly for OLA – lake-related conservation work. OCCA is a regional conservation organization addressing a broad spectrum of basic environmental concerns and promotes the appreciation and sustainable use of our region's resources.

OCCA has taken a leading role in combating aquatic invasive species that are frequently spread by recreational boaters and fishermen who inadvertently carry them from one water body to another on boats, trailers, and other equipment. Working with Executive Director Amy Wyant, Program Director Jeff O'Handley, and Watershed Facilitator Will Kuss OLA supported an OCCA grant application, which, if awarded, would help support an important OLA volunteer program.

Together, OLA and these organizations are working to address the new challenges facing our lake. We are able to work towards accomplishing our mission because of the support of our members and donors. Your financial help is always appreciated. Remember that OLA is a 100% volunteer organization and every dollar donated benefits our lake.

To all our members, volunteers, Board members, partners, and advisors, thank you for your interest, support and hard work.

Jim Howarth Co-President 3



Evening Ripples - Photo by Joan Dwyer

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RIPPLES: CELEBRATING WHAT WE LOVE

Annual “WE LOVE OUR LAKE” Decorated Boat Parade SATURDAY, JULY 6TH AT 3:00PM

by K. Wayne Bunn

THIS YEAR’S EVENT IS DEDICATED TO SCOTTIE BAKER

OLA’s Annual “We Love Our Lake” Decorated Boat Parade will be held at 3:00 PM on Saturday, July 6th, 2024 - forming off Three Mile Point (weather permitting). *This year’s boat parade is dedicated to Scottie Baker with a theme of “Let’s Celebrate Scottie Baker”, a long-time, very active member of the OLA Board of Directors and pillar of the boat parade and OLA, who passed away in April of 2024.* Scottie always provided the decorations for the barge, organized the prizes, and served as one of the judges each year for the boat parade. She was also the long-time editor of Our Glimmerglass Journal and created the theme and content for each issue. Scottie was very passionate about the health and welfare of Otsego Lake and worked for decades to preserve and protect it. She was well known for her collection of classic wooden canoes and her posters of Otsego Lake. Scottie will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Unfortunately, the boat parade this year will not feature the “flying boat” as the grand finale that we had for the first time last year. A local pilot, who owned the “flying boat”, sold it this past winter while in Florida. It certainly added some excitement last year and we will greatly miss it this year. The SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station’s barge, the *Anondontoides*, will again be our lead boat where the judges on board will record the theme and owner of each boat for judging. The *Anondontoides*, captained by OLA Board member Paul Lord, will then lead the parade slowly along the westerly shore of the lake to a point off Lakefront Park in Cooperstown where a brief awards ceremony will be held. Please stay around for a few minutes at the end of the parade while the judges announce and give out the prizes. There will be five general prizes awarded - all as determined by the judges. All boats, large and small, are welcome - including antique or classic, human powered, wind powered, electric powered, jet powered, outboard powered, inboard/outboard powered, and, of course, any other “flying boats”.

We encourage you to decorate your boat using the theme of “Let’s Celebrate Scottie Baker” but you may decorate your boat anyway you wish. It can be unusually decorated, humorously decorated, patriotic theme decorated, joyful/party theme decorated, sports theme decorated, military theme decorated, etc. If you prefer, you do not even need to decorate your boat - just join in the parade and view the other boats up close. You can even join the parade at any time or anywhere along the route, especially for non-motorized boaters who might not want to travel the full route.

If you are unable to enter your boat in the parade, you can watch from shore at various points along the parade route including Three Mile Point, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown Country Club (members only), Otesaga Hotel, and Lakefront Park. There are no fees, registration forms, rules, or regulations except travel slowly, stay in line, and be courteous to other boaters. In the past, we have had over 50 boats participate in the parade.

The parade is meant to be a fun-filled, family event for all boaters to celebrate our love for Otsego Lake.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Wayne Bunn, Boat Parade Chairman, at bunnwayne@gmail.com or (518) 542-6630. You can also view photographs of boat parades from past years at www.OtsegoLakeAssociation.org. We look forward to seeing you on July 6th. Remember 6 (July 6th) – 3 (3:00 PM) – 3 (Three Mile Point)!

QUIZ

What should a boater do when one of these red and white flags is observed?

- A: drive over it
- B: slow down but maintain your course
- C: stay clear exactly 100 feet from the flag
- D: stay at least 100 feet from the flag and as far away as reasonably possible, considering the possibility that the diver and/or the flag may have drifted
- E. I have no idea as I have not completed the NYS Safe Boating course



ANSWER ON PAGE 6

RIPPLES: THROUGH RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Scientific Updates: Wake Boats

by Kiyoko Yokota, Ph.D., CLM, OLA Technical Advisor

One of the lake management topics that has been drawing attention at national meetings is wake boats. If you are not familiar with what they are, you can do a quick online search for videos showing how they operate. If you search for “wake boat UMN”, you will find links to controlled scientific studies on the magnitude of wakes generated by different types of recreational boats including a wake boat. The negative effects of wake boats on shoreline erosion, the stirring up of bottom muck (sediment resuspension), aquatic plant communities, and water quality have been well documented in peer-reviewed research in rivers and coastal areas as well as lakes. Based on these findings and the increasing lake user conflicts involving wake boats, some states have started to regulate wake boat usage in their lakes. The State of Vermont, for example, has passed the law to institute “wakesport zones”, which are defined as an area of a lake or pond that has a minimum of 50 contiguous acres that are at least 500 feet from shore on all sides, at least 20 feet deep, and at least 200 feet wide.

You can see what a wakesport zone looks like on the web page of Lake St. Catherine Association, VT (<https://www.lakestcatherine.org/blog/13316675>). Michigan is also considering a similar statewide wake boat regulation.

Otsego Lake, with 4,046 acres of surface area, an average depth of 82 feet, and east-west width of over 2500 ft even at the narrowest point (off Brookwood Point), offers excellent opportunities for both non-motorized and motorized water recreation. We also know how much wake can be observed at the shoreline when a conventional motorboat or personal watercraft (PWC; jet ski, wave runner, etc.) does not observe the 200-foot no wake zone regulation in place. One summer, I was cleaning research equipment for an invasive mussel survey at BFS Boathouse near Sunken Island, and there was a boat in the middle of the lake enjoying tubing, in a perfectly legal and courteous manner. Yet, the wind and water current at the time conveyed a significant amount of boat wake at the shore which at times almost washed away a 5-gallon bucket full of water and the mussel collection plates. I can not imagine what the effect of a wake boat would be on this narrow lake with steep shorelines.

Wake boat regulations have been fiercely opposed by the wake boat industry as well as those who already own one. While Otsego Lake is blessed with law-abiding boaters, our current 200-foot no-wake-zone does not provide sufficient shoreline protection for wake boats. No matter what type of motorboat or PWC you operate, **please remember that the no-wake-zone means that no visible wake should be observed within the zone.** It does not mean that you can be at full throttle because you are just outside of the no-wake-zone marker buoy. Per NYS safe boating laws, **a vessel operator is always responsible for any damage caused by the vessel’s wake** (<https://parks.ny.gov/boating/safe-boating-details.aspx?sb=lawful-operations>). Please be mindful of other lake users, including swimmers, divers, and paddlers.

From Sierra Club:
“Just one pass of a wake boat can be devastating to an ecosystem. Multiple passes in the same area cause long-lasting damage to shorelines, water quality, and lake bottoms. Wake boats erode vulnerable shorelines when the distance to shore is not adequate to dissipate the wakes.”

<https://www.sierraclub.org/minnesota/blog/2023/03/wake-boats-land-10000-lakes>



Above: Wakeboat image from pixabay.com

From Wikipedia:
“Wakeboard boats, also known as wake boats, surf boats or tow boats are designed to create a large, specially shaped wake, for a wakeboarder to jump the wakes from side...”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/wakeboard_boat

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Did you know? ... Otsego Lake is the only Lake Trout Fishery in the upper Susquehanna watershed.

NYS Route 80 Update

by Betty VanHeusen

In February 2024, the Otsego Lake Association formed a Lake Partners Team to work with the NYSDOT on Route 80 repairs and maintenance issues. Team members include representatives from other organizations concerned with the safety and environmental impact of NYS 80 along the lake. The team is addressing issues such as environmentally sensitive construction and mitigation of road pollutants flowing into Otsego Lake. OLA contacted NYSDOT about ditching along NYS 80 that was leaving raw earth exposed resulting in mud/silt flowing into Otsego Lake. NYSDOT was responsive and soon began hydro seeding the banks. NYSDOT has informed us that they have begun a project to identify seed options, plants and processes that will provide better erosion control. The team is researching possible remedies to NYS 80 challenges to share with NYSDOT. If you are interested in joining the team or attending meetings please let us know. For updates on the team meetings and progress check our website.



Sediment plume into Otsego Lake from State Route 80 following a spring rainstorm; Photo by Betty VanHeusen.

2024 Annual Gathering

by Mickie Richtsmeier

Join Otsego Lake Association at the Otsego Sailing Club, 5992 NY-80, Cooperstown, NY from 8:30am-11am on Saturday, August 10 for our Annual Gathering and learn about what's happening in and around Otsego Lake.

All lake lovers are welcome! We will be highlighting the State of Otsego Lake, including water quality, fish, no-wake buoys, harmful algae blooms (HABs), BFS research and awards.

This event is free and open to the public, OLA members and non-members. Invite your friends and neighbors!



2024 Annual Gathering

Saturday, August 10
8:30am-11:00am
at the
Otsego Sailing Club

QUIZ ANSWER IS 'D'!

D: stay at least 100 feet from the flag and as far away as reasonably possible, considering the possibility that the diver and/or the flag may have drifted




Source: https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nysparks/ny_boatingsafety20

Source: <https://solsticewatersports.com/.../inflatable-dive-platform>



Roadside drainage ditch with sediment draining to Otsego Lake; Photo by Betty VanHeusen.

Lake Pollution from Roads

by Betty VanHeusen

The Otsego Lake Association is trying to reduce road pollutants from entering our Lake. Roads contribute to lake pollution in many ways. For example, traffic deposits chemicals on road surfaces. Winter ice prevention uses more chemicals to ensure road safety. Road ditches that are poorly constructed and/or not maintained flush these chemicals along with harmful silt into our lake. Solutions to these problems are often difficult, labor intensive and expensive.

The Cornell University Local Roads Program conducts one day courses to provide methodologies to mitigate some of these problems. Courses such as “Roadway and Roadside Drainage” and “Stormwater Management” could help our local highway management and workers to reduce lake pollutants. These courses are largely funded by the Federal Highway Safety Administration through the NYSDOT which works with Cornell to provide these training opportunities to localities. Although these courses are not expensive, there are often related costs such as travel and many localities have not included adequate funds in their budgets for road maintenance training. The Otsego Lake Association has sent an invitation to 6 government organizations with roads that impact Otsego Lake offering to offset staff training expenses by up to \$300 to encourage attendance at these courses. We are hopeful that this will be the beginning of a mutually beneficial partnership to help protect Otsego Lake.

Did you know? ...

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IN MEMORY OF SCOTTIE BAKER

The Ripple Effect

by Mickie Richtsmeier & Susan O'Handley



Scottie Baker receiving the 2022 Presidential Award from fellow Board Member Mickie Richtsmeier.

Scottie’s concept for this issue, the ripple effect, is a perfect metaphor for her presence, her effect on everyone who knew her, and her influence on the operations of the Otsego Lake Association since its founding in 2002. She brought passion, joy and creativity to her work, particularly in regards to appreciation, education and stewardship of ‘Our Glimmerglass’, Otsego Lake.

Scottie caused a lot of ripples. Her energy and determination, like the ripples of her canoe paddles through the water, was contagious and resulted in making bigger ripples that became waves -- waves to cause positive change. Scottie sought to challenge apathy and complacency about threats to Otsego and its environs. Her input was on-target, clever, insightful and humorous.

When those of us who knew her well look out on Glimmerglass, we will think of Scottie, all that she accomplished and the gifts that she has given. We will be thankful for the ripples that she has made and try to honor her by continuing to make those ripples with the hope that we can also create the waves of positive change that Scottie so wished for.

RIDDLES: KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED

“Our Glimmerglass” Wins 1st Place in NYSFOLA’s 2024 Newsletter Contest (3rd Year in a Row)

by K. Wayne Bunn

“Our Glimmerglass” (Fall 2023 Edition), Otsego Lake Association’s Journal (formerly called Newsletter), won 1st Place (Professional Category) for Medium Size Lake Associations in the 2024 Newsletter Contest sponsored by the New York State Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) of which OLA is a member. OLA also won 1st Place in 2022 and 2023. There are three lake association categories for the newsletter contest: Small Size, Medium Size, and Large Size. A total of roughly 240 lake associations (some have more than one lake in their association) from across NYS are members of NYSFOLA. OLA has entered the newsletter contest in past years with no winners, so to win three years in a row is a great acknowledgement. This award is a great honor and recognition for the members of the OLA Board of Directors and other OLA members who contribute articles and photographs for each semi-annual edition. It is also a wonderful achievement for OLA Editor Scottie Baker (who passed away in April) and for Susan O’Handley, of Central NY Mobile Marketing, who actually produces the layout, prints, and mails the Journal. Congratulations to everyone involved with “Our Glimmerglass”.



ABOVE: OLA Board member Wayne Bunn accepts the award from NYSFOLA’s Nancy Mueller at the annual conference in Lake George on May 3rd. Photo by Deb Creedon.



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OLA is a tax exempt 501(c)3 not for profit organization.