



# Our Glimmerglass

*Newsletter of the Otsego Lake Association*

## *Wintering Over*

Little sign of life - but still beautiful.

Dim winter light and -10 degree temperature make for a different view.

Coupled with these is almost 10 miles of frozen surface that - with a north wind - deposits several feet of drifted snow at the south end of the lake.

This will all change in early April when the ice turns black, disintegrates, and floats down the Susquehanna.

*Poem & Photo by Jim Howarth*



### **Toast the Holidays**

OLA Aprons - \$20.00

**To place an order, contact:**  
**Scottie Baker, (607) 547-5356**  
[npscottieb@gmail.com](mailto:npscottieb@gmail.com)

### **Fully Automated Research Buoy**

*Kiyoko Yokota*

On July 27th, 2017, SUNY Oneonta researchers Kiyoko Yokota and Paul Lord, the BFS Volunteer Dive Team and interns, installed a new permanent research buoy in the middle and deepest (168 feet) part of Otsego Lake, just north of Five Mile Point. This buoy will monitor 47 water quality and weather parameters year round. Data is collected every 15 minutes via cell service to a remote server maintained by the buoy manufacturer. The data will then be downloaded and used in the ongoing research on Otsego Lake and to predict future water quality after a major rain or wind storm and to evaluate long term trends in relation with changing climate.

The new buoy was acquired with a National Science Foundation (NSF) Field Station and Marine Labs (FSML) grant awarded to SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station (BFS) and supplements data from the existing research buoy just off shore at Five Mile Point whose data have to be downloaded manually on site (no data transmission capacity). Additional details can be found at <http://otsegolakeassociation.org/news>. OLA members have also been very instrumental in keeping an eye on the buoys to ensure that they remain fully operational and do not pose issues for general lake users. If you see anything about the buoy systems that are not working properly (e.g., beacon not flashing at night or parts coming loose), please contact [Kiyoko.Yokota@oneonta.edu](mailto:Kiyoko.Yokota@oneonta.edu) or 607-436-3742.



## Message from the Presidents

The mission of the Otsego Lake Association is to EDUCATE about, ADVOCATE for, and PARTICIPATE in the well-being of our Otsego Lake. Though this statement is seemingly simple, the work is difficult, complex and never-ending. The reward, however, is to reflect upon all that has been accomplished, which translates these three words into action.

\*Once just a vision of OLA, the Carl B. Good Lakefront Boat Wash completed its first season of operation, staffed by knowledgeable, trained inspectors. This is a giant step toward our efforts to control invasive species.

\*OLA's educational publications, newsletters, newspaper articles and editorials call attention to water quality issues and safety on the water. The OLA up-to-date and attention getting website continues to supply information and news.

\*When threats to our lake occur, OLA's response is swift, whether attending meetings at the local level or reaching out to DEC and elected government officials.

\*OLA's newly designed display boards will enhance our presence at festivals and public events, and summarize our good works at-a-glance.

\*The well-attended OLA annual meeting combines science and history programs and is a forum for lake-minded citizens to converse and share ideas.

\*The number of OLA public buffer strips is continuing to "grow". Their maintenance and repair are a constant challenge for our volunteers.

\*OLA continues to support the BFS dive team in their efforts to install, remove, maintain, and replace the no wake zone buoys which protect the lake shoreline.

\*The OLA "Just for the Love of Otsego Lake" July 4th decorated boat parade continues to bring joy to participants and onlookers.

Our membership growth and your enthusiastic support indicate, for certain, that our efforts do count toward preserving the health and beauty of our local gem, Otsego Lake! Please remember: We are volunteers with no office and no paid staff. All of your donations go directly to our good work which benefits us all. Warm regards, Co-Presidents Mickie Richtsmeier and Scottie Baker



Susan O'Handley and the NEW OLA Display Boards. Photo by Jeff O'Handley.

## 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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**ON THE WEB:**

[www.otsegolakeassociation.org](http://www.otsegolakeassociation.org)  
<https://www.facebook.com/Otsego-Lake-Association-Cooperstown-NY-1066851160050413/>

## Sounds of Winter on Otsego Lake

*K. Wayne Bunn*

Once the summer crowds are gone and winter sets in around Otsego Lake, the sounds on the lake are very different than during the summer months with all of the seasonal residents, tourists, Dreams Parkers, opera buffs, boats, and other activities. The off season starts right after Labor Day, shifts into high gear after Columbus Day, and really is in full mode after Christmas. The lake generally freezes over sometime in January although some years as early as December and some years as late as February. It did not freeze over completely during the winter of 2012 (Dec. 2011 – Feb. 2012). The SUNY Oneonta's Biological Field Station (BFS) maintains a continuous record of ice-on (freeze), ice cover (number of days), and ice-off (break-up) – called ice phenology - which dates back to the spring of 1843 (173 years!). The complete record, located at <http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/biofld/PUBS/ANNUAL/2013/29-Otsego-Ice-History-2014.pdf>, was compiled by Holly A. Waterfield, CLM and covers the period from 1843 through 2014. The faculty and staff of the BFS observe the lake conditions throughout the winter months.

During a normal winter (do we have those anymore?) with ice covering the lake, there is much activity on the lake including people walking, ice fishing, snowmobiling, and four wheeling but the noise level is quite low if any at all. Years ago, one would see cars and/or pickup trucks on the ice but basically not in recent years. Winter is a very peaceful and beautiful time on the lake.

In the spring, when the ice starts to break up – generally in April but in some years as early as March and in some years as late as May – the sounds of the ice shifting and moving can be quite loud. Sometimes, it sounds like thunder or a shotgun blast! Some years, especially when the ice is particularly thick (upwards of 30 inches or more), the ice breaks up into large chunks and is moved around the lake by the wind and waves. Many camp owners leave their dock in all winter but use a de-icer system, either a compressed air bubbler system or an electric motor driven propeller system, to keep the ice from forming around the dock. These systems generally work well to keep the ice from forming around the dock during the winter months but they are of no help when the large chunks of ice are driven into the shore area by the wind and waves during ice-off in the spring. Some years, the thick sheets of ice will actually “ride up” onto the shore line and come to a stop in a nearly vertical position, taking out anything in its path – docks, pilings, buoys, etc. The sheets of ice can produce a lot of noise when they come ashore and do their damage.

Once spring and warm weather return to the lake, the normal sounds of increased activity are again heard around the lake as seasonal residents open up their camps, boats are launched, fishing season begins, and the tourists start to arrive. At this point, the quite sounds of winter on the lake are long gone until next year.

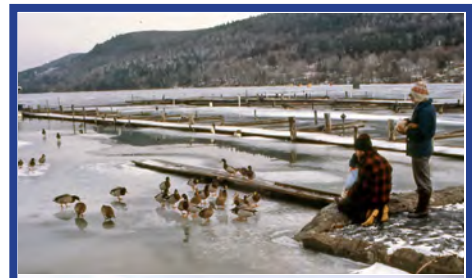
## More Sounds of Winter

*Melinda Hardin*

“When we moved to Cooperstown, we lived in our Peggs Bay camp full time for about two years. We were fascinated by how the lake looked different every day, even when it was solid ice and covered with snow. We never tired of waking up in the morning and looking out the window to see what the lake would offer us that day.

Many summer mornings we awoke to the voices of fishermen whose boats were right off our shore. Even though they were speaking at conversational volume, the sound carried right into our bedroom window. The winter days, on the other hand, were incredibly quiet. Most of the time we were the only residents on our little road.

But on President's Day Monday in 2009, we were startled from a sound sleep by....voices right outside our bedroom window! Ice fisherman had ridden their snowmobiles to our shore and were pitching their tents and digging their holes. Even though the lake was frozen solid, the sound rose up from the shore and traveled right through our tightly closed windows and into our bedroom!” 3



## Winter Lake Memories

*Photos by John Davis*

**Top to Bottom:**

*Lakefront Ducks; Ice Skating; Dog Sled; Ice Fishing Huts, Hauling Supplies, Lakefront Docks*





*Snow Covered Canoe, Photo by Paul Donnelly*

### FREEZE & THAW CONTEST 2017-18

As referenced in Wayne Bunn’s article (p.3), fascinating data about the ice phenology for Otsego Lake from the years 1843-2014 are available at the following website: <http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/biofld/PUBS/ANNUAL/2013/29-Otsego-Ice-History-2014.pdf>

Holly Waterfield at the Biological Field Station was kind enough to give us the following update:

Winter	Freeze Date	Break-up Date	Ice Duration
2013-14	1/22/2014	4/14/2014	82 days
2014-15	1/14/2015	4/18/2015	94 days
2015-16	2/14/2016	3/12/2016	27 days
2016-17	did not freeze		0 days

Now it’s your turn to predict what will happen this year! Closest Guess will win an OLA T- Shirt! Send your guess to [info@otsegolakeassociation.org](mailto:info@otsegolakeassociation.org) by December 15 and don’t be caught on thin ice!

*When the snow melts and boats go back in the water...*

### “We Love Our Lake” Boat Parade Winners

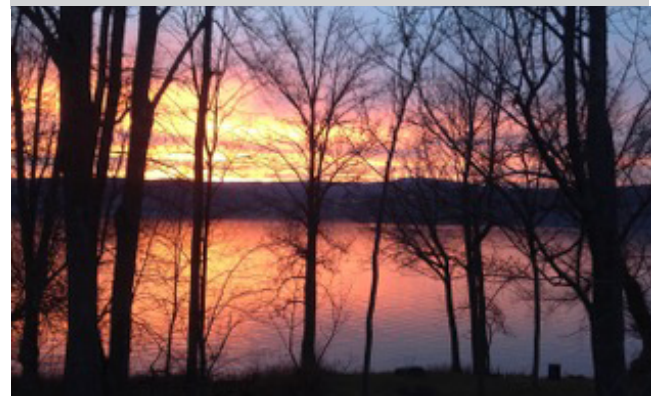
The Otsego Lake Association held its Fourth Annual “We Love Our Lake” Boat Parade on Monday, July 3rd under ideal weather conditions. OLA thanks all the boaters who decorated their boat and participated in the parade. There were many very creative decorations using a variety of themes. We also thank the many spectators on shore at various locations who watched the parade go by. We thank the numerous local businesses that allowed us to place a flyer in their window or on their bulletin board. In addition, we greatly appreciate and thank the SUNY/Oneonta’s Biological Field Station for allowing us to use their barge, the “Anondontoides”, as our lead boat and judging stand.

The following themes and families were winners of the Top Prizes (random order): “Wedding Chapel” - Marlette Family; “OLA Fire Truck” - Chase Family; “Carpe Diem” - Nelson Family; “Tioga or Bust” - Barone Family; and “Ice Cream Truck” - Harris Family. The Honorable Mention winners were: “Mayflower Ship” - Richtsmeier Family and “Take Me Out To Otsego Lake” - Woodhouse Family. Images can be seen at <http://otsegolakeassociation.org/news.html>. The boat parade is intended to be a family centered fun event to show our love of Otsego Lake. We hope to see you again in 2018 (date to be announced).

*K. Wayne Bunn, Chairman  
OLA Boat Parade Committee*



*Kingfisher Tower-Frozen Lake, John & Amanda May  
“We have always enjoyed the lake once it freezes.”*



*Sun on Winter Lake, Pati Grady  
“Nothing ever stays the same and we never catch up.”  
- Emily Carr*



*Fire and Ice*  
 Photo by Bill Harman  
 & Natúra Productions

**[www.otsegolakeassociation.org](http://www.otsegolakeassociation.org)**

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**We Appreciate Your Support!**

Please complete the form below and mail along with your contribution to:  
 Otsego Lake Association  
 PO Box 13  
 Springfield Center, NY 13468.

*All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.*

**SUPPORT YOUR OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION**

**We have vital projects that need your support:**

UNDESIGNATED DONATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would be interested in volunteering by (check all that apply):

- Serving on a Committee
- Working on the Board of Directors
- Representing OLA at Community Events
- Working with the Volunteer Dive Team

**MEMBERSHIP**

Annual Membership Dues (Check One):  Renewal  New Member  
 Individual (\$25)  Family (\$35)  Business (\$50)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Studying Lakes in Winter

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



Winter Lake - Photo by Paul Donnelly

Lakes may seem quiet in winter months, but most of the basic physical, chemical and biological processes in lakes do not stop completely just because it is cold. Winter limnology is the study of inland water bodies in winter; an increasing number of researchers are involved in it as what happens during winter often correlate with what happens in the following spring and summer (e.g., algal blooms).

As a graduate teaching assistant in Minnesota, I had the privilege (?) of driving a university minivan full of undergraduate students onto a frozen lake to teach winter limnology labs. I always wondered if the university would fully cover all losses should the ice give in, as the official fleet policy probably did not have provisions for driving on a lake...

To learn more about how winter limnology is taught in the field, visit <http://www.otsegoLakeassociation.org/news> and check out the Winter Limnology YouTube videos.

## Annual Meeting

Bob Sutherland

A big THANK YOU to Glimmerglass Theatre Festival who hosted the 2017 OLA annual meeting. We were spoiled with comfortable chairs, professional sound system, amazing technical support and of course the beauty of Otsego Lake and theatre grounds. Approximately 90 people were in attendance and listened to presentations by Paul Lord, Kiyoko Yokota and grad students from SUCO's Lake Management Program. They brought us up to speed with updates on the health of the lake, invasive species and the new lake monitoring buoy. The second part of the program focused on the Town of Springfield's theatrical heritage; starting in the late 1800's in the library of what is now Swanswick to present day Glimmerglass Theatre. A lively interview between presenter Bob Sutherland and current owner of The Dukes' Oak Theatre Don Fenner entertained all with tales of the infamous theatre and after hours club.

Congratulations again to Bill Harman who is the recipient of the 2017 OLA citizen of the year award. Thank You for all that you have done and continue to do, to protect and improve the natural environment in and around Otsego Lake.

Mark your calendar for next year's meeting - Saturday August 11, 2018!



Photo: Blue Mingo Dock by Paul Donnelly

*"A memory of winter on Otsego Lake enjoying a gym-kana on the ice for sports cars during winter carnival in a large crowd until I heard a very loud cracking noise... I couldn't get off the ice fast enough!!" Bill Murdock*



*"Guardians of the Lake" doing their thing....each year. Bringing in the buoys that make boating safer for all! Photo by Paul Donnelly*

## "Guardians of the Lake"

Each year, Paul Lord gathers together a group of volunteers to bring in the lake buoys that provide water safety on Otsego Lake. This volunteer activity has been going on for years! It is a great public service that helps to make our waters safe for all to enjoy. This year was no exception to this public service duty.

## Ice Diving

*Paul Lord*

The Biological Field Station (BFS) Divers dive in each of the twelve months of the year. Ice diving is a particularly adventurous and bracing experience. It is difficult not to be intimidated when you ponder an entry into a small triangular hole full of slush in a lake full of ice several feet thick. The ice is impenetrable from underneath, your breathing equipment is subject to malfunction from icing, and your senses are dulled by the cold and the many layers of exposure suit worn to protect you from the cold. So, why do we do it? We do it because we are adventurers and because the lakes we study have stories yet to be revealed of life under the ice. Our volunteer divers will tell you that the water is generally clearer under the ice, that the preparation time invested in each dive is enormous, and that they totally rely on their buddies when under the ice. BFS divers have recovered expensive equipment lost through the ice, inspected wrecks, gathered samples of aquatic plants and the insects that eat them, and noted the growth of aquatic plants under the ice. Our divers are always inquiring about the next study that will send them deep under ice and water. If you want to see what is involved, please contact the BFS divemaster and instructor, Paul H. Lord, 607-435-4989. The BFS divers are always looking for people to assist setting up for and cleaning up after their ice dives.



*Photos by Paul Lord.*

## Late Summer Otsego Lake Birding

*Becky Gretton*

With fall approaching, I made an effort to bird around the lake on September 1 for a list of those birds still feeding locally. It was 49 degrees when I started out at 8:45 AM. I am listing only new species on the trip around the lake.

- At Mohican Farm on the lake side, there were numerous E. Bluebirds, and Belted Kingfisher, E. Phoebes, Gull species, adult Bald Eagle, Catbirds, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Baltimore Orioles, Red-eyed Vireos, Warbling Vireo, Chickadees, Chipping Sparrows, White-breasted Nuthatch, Canada Geese, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Crow, European Starling, and Song Sparrow.
- Clarke Pond had a Green Heron, American Black Ducks, and Wood Ducks.
- On Public Landing Rd. I saw Mourning Doves, Goldfinches, Red-tailed Hawk and a juvenile American Kestrel.
- Seven Wild Turkeys were in the field on Mill Rd.
- Glimmerglass Park provided Killdeer, Great Blue Heron, Ovenbird, E. Wood Peewee, Robin, Raven, Flycatcher species, and E. Kingbirds.
- Brookwood Point had Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Common Yellowthroat and the biggest surprise of the season for me: juvenile Carolina Wren!

I depend on hearing sounds to find birds, and assumed that it would be a literally quiet morning, but there were young birds of many species still begging from their parents and feeding feverishly, making my journey more rewarding than expected.

## Warm & Fuzzy



Fleece Vests - \$50.00

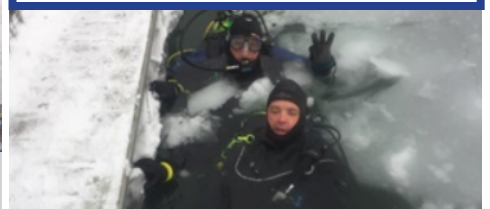
Front: Embroidered OLA Logo;

Sizes: Adult S, M, L, XL

Ladies'-Deep Sea Blue; Men's-River Blue

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Scottie Baker, (607) 547 5356**

[npscottieb@gmail.com](mailto:npscottieb@gmail.com)



*Late Winter Visitors.  
Photo by Becky Gretton*

*Neither from nor towards  
Neither arrest nor movement  
Neither ascent nor decline  
At the Still Point.....*

*From "Still Point" by T.S.Elliot  
Looking North - Photo by Paul Donnelly*



*"Who knows what the fate of ice fishing will be? Will our beautiful lake freeze solid again?" Melinda Hardin*

### Memorial Donations

Recently we have been most grateful for generous donations in honor of deceased OLA members and friends of Otsego Lake. Last year Carl Good was honored in this way, and this summer Mary McDonough's family chose to designate OLA for memorial bequests in her honor. Our hearts were warmed to hear of Mary's fondness for Otsego Lake and the many wonderful times she spent at her family camp, Owl's Nest. To read more about Mary, please see <http://www.mayfuneralhome.com/obituary/Mary-B.-McDonough/Rydal-Pennsylvania/1751436>

Thank you to all who remembered Mary and Carl in this beautiful way. Your gifts will support efforts to preserve and protect the lake that Carl and Mary loved so much.



Protecting the health and beauty of our water.



Glimmerglass Film Days  
2017 Sponsor



- T-shirts - \$15.00
- Denim shirts - \$35.00
- Caps - \$18.00
- Tote bags - \$18.00

### Support the Good Works of OLA!

To place an order,  
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[npscottieb@gmail.com](mailto:npscottieb@gmail.com)



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