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Editorial

Missions possible

On its editorial page over the past few weeks, The Freeman's Journal has commented on, among other important issues, the fog-like haze that was smoke from the western wildfires that fell on the lake and village, leaving the air heavily dangerous for long periods of time, and the latest COVID surge that is gnawing, for the most part, on our unvaccinated and younger residents — children — as well as causing new concern among our older population. None of this was any good and all of it is sad and, no doubt to some, depressing.

However, for us here in Otsego County, this distant, remote upstate almost-forgotten (or, perhaps, not yet discovered) place, there is a special glimmer; something that can bring a smile; something to lighten our load and keep us on a happier track. Otsego Lake.

Nine miles of clear, deep water that laps endlessly on steep tree-lined shores and often reflects the changing sky and clouds and forest, the lake is a home to myriad fish and feathered wildlife, a reservoir for the village of Cooperstown and a summer and winter playground for boaters, tubers, swimmers, sailors, rowers, paddlers, divers, fishermen and water, and snow-skiers. Glacier-created during the last great Ice Age, and spring-fed as well as stream-fed, this superb natural resource is the headwaters of the Susquehanna River. In the past it has played a variety of roles in the Leatherstocking novels of James Fenimore Cooper, who called his – and our – beautiful lake The Glimmerglass.

Otsego Lake is spectacular, welcoming tourists and residents alike, because it is still pure, healthy and vibrant. It still beckons; its waters are cool and reflective, its waves gentle and lush. Unlike many lakes in this state and country that are becoming threatened by a variety of pollutants, Otsego's sustained beauty and growing health, despite its share of milfoil and zebra mussels, are the result of the anticipation and labors of a number of not-for-profit organizations that have been established during the latter part of the last century.

The first step, even before that, was made by Edward Clark in the 1890s, when he bought land on the eastern shore to preserve its pristine nature. That land remains pristine.

The Otsego County Conservation Association, from 1968, is dedicated to promoting the appreciation and sustainable use of Otsego County's natural resources through research, education, advocacy, planning and resource management and practice.

Otsego 2000, founded in 1981, protects the environment, agricultural, scenic, cultural and historic resources of the Otsego Lake region and northern Otsego County.

The Otsego Lake Association educates, advocates and participates in protecting the health, beauty and well-being of the lake with the implementation of the Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan and by supporting automated monitoring buoy, buffer strips and no-wake buoys.

The Otsego Land Trust, established by Otsego 2000 in 1987, conserves our natural heritage of woodlands, farmlands, and waters that sustain rural communities, promote public health, support wildlife diversity and inspire human spirit.

The Scriven Foundation supports these not-for-profits, giving them access to high-quality advice and professional development. "This effort is important because these programs and services touch every aspect of our communities," said Jane Forbes Clark, president. "We want them to be able to do their absolute best in achieving their individual missions."

SUNY's Biological Field Station provides living libraries, scientific information and outdoor laboratories for students, researchers, and the general public interested in the further understanding of the environment, and supports the Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan.

We thank them all for their monumental efforts.

[editorial](#), [edward clark](#), [Glimmerglass](#), [James Fenimore Cooper](#), [Otsego 2000](#), [Otsego Lake](#), [Otsego Land Trust](#)