

Annual Meeting Otsego Lake Association  
June 21, 2008

The annual meeting of the Otsego Lake Association was called to order by President, Paul Lord at the Thayer Farm Upland Interpretive Center. Paul welcomed those in attendance and introduced our first guest speaker, Matt Albright who is Assistant to the Director of the Biological Field Station. Paul stated that many of OLA's initiatives stemmed from Matt's research efforts.

Matt's talk focused on <sup>3</sup>Where are we, How did we get here, Where are we going?<sup>2</sup> Matt detailed the attitudinal changes about management of Otsego Lake that have occurred since the early 90's and attributed these to public education. He discussed the creation of <sup>3</sup>A Plan for the Management of Otsego Lake Watershed<sup>2</sup> and how the plan had been updated and modified. Progress in dealing with septic systems along the lake, roadway maintenance (hydro-seeding), agricultural best management practice projects, stream projects, and monitoring of exotic species were some of the areas which have resulted.

Matt indicated that we currently were dealing with more algae due to increased nutrient levels but that steady trends of declining water clarity had leveled off. He also indicated that oxygen, phosphorus, nitrate and chloride levels were being monitored. He noted that there had been a gradual increase in chloride levels since the roads had been salted and indicated that it would be worthwhile to look for alternative solutions.

On the subject of managing exotic species, he discussed the walleye stocking program which had been implemented to address the alewife overpopulation. (Alewives <sup>3</sup>mow down<sup>2</sup> zooplankton that naturally filter out algae.) He also talked about how purple loosestrife was being controlled by the introduction of beetles.

Matt indicated how important the boat wash program continued to be, and that although we now have zebra mussels, that we may not have as great a problem as in Canadarago Lake because we have deeper water with less relative bottom surface. Matt indicated that water intake pipe clogging would be a nuisance that would have to be dealt with. As far as water chestnuts go, one plant was removed from the Goodyear Swamp area, and this will not be a problem if monitored. Another species that is being watched is the white perch which is known to decimate the fry of game fish.

Matt agreed to stay to answer questions after the business meeting. Before introducing our second guest speaker, Paul informed the group that the Buffer Strip Project at the Lake Front Park was just about completed. He urged Springfield residents to speak with their representatives about allowing OLA to donate a similar project at the Springfield Public Landing. Paul also showed everyone the Smart Steps for Otsego Lake publication and suggested that members take an extra for neighbors.

Paul then introduced Win McIntyre who is Otsego Lake Watershed Coordinator and president of OCCA. Paul informed the membership that OCCA and OLA had combined efforts to publish Smart Steps for Otsego Lake and that OLA had donated \$1000. to the OCCA Lake Challenge Campaign with the caveat to strengthen the boat inspection program.

Win had been invited to update the group on the septic district. He began by giving a history of the project. He explained that we are in the fourth year of a five year program. 260 systems have been inspected. Of these, 150 failed. Of those, 90 have been replaced. Win detailed the problems with the lake front homes being on small lots, close together, and having poor conditions for wastewater treatment systems. He indicated that high tech individual systems were expensive and complex, but effective. Win outlined other potential solutions. One was a sewer line around the lake. This would be very expensive and a huge undertaking. Another solution was a shared system where two to five camps could share one system. This lowers the cost per camp considerably. A third solution is a community cluster system. This would involve six or more camps that must be legally organized (homeowners' association, Transportation Corporation, or sewer district.) The sewer district is the strongest legal entity, but the most difficult to create.

Win detailed the history of the proposed Otsego Lake sewer district. Originally it was to include 53 camps, now it would include 29. The total estimated cost is estimated at \$740,000. Each home would have to pay a \$5000. hookup fee and an annual fee of \$1180. Win shared that this has been a long and complicated process and a very tough sell. He said that what it all is coming down to is cost. Benefits would be: greater distance away from the lake, facilitate phosphorus removal, and have better reliability. (A licensed operator would have to monitor the system.)

According to Win, the big question is: Will it happen? A year ago a postcard poll of the residents came back 3 to 1 in favor. Today it appears 3 to 1 are not in favor. He outlined the procedure that would have to be followed to pass such a district, but said that a letter, fact sheet and postcard will be mailed to the 53 property owners who would be affected. Win stressed that it never was the intent to force a particular solution.

Paul Lord thanked Win for his presentation, and Win agreed to stay for questions after the business meeting. Paul introduced our new education project by posing a question about how many people knew that there was a difference between what was allowed in laundry detergent and dishwasher detergent. He informed the group that phosphates had been eliminated by law from detergents except for dishwasher detergent. He informed us that p-free dishwasher detergents were available locally at the health food stores in Cooperstown and Cherry Valley and were also carried by more and more stores including our local Price Choppers.

A motion was called for, made, seconded, and unanimously passed that the minutes from the 2007 Annual Meeting which had been circulated be accepted.

A motion was called for, made, seconded, and unanimously passed to accept the Treasurer's report. At a member's request, prior to the vote, a clarification was

made that the allocation to the Cayuga Lake Association was for the publication of Smart Steps.

Paul introduced the nominees for election to the Board of Directors. A motion was called for, made, seconded, and unanimously passed to have the secretary cast a single ballot for the election of the following directors: President - Wayne Bunn, Town of Springfield - Mickie Richtsmeier, Town of Otsego - Paul Lord, Village of Cooperstown - Carl Good, Town of Otsego - John Lambert, Town of Middlefield - David Sanford, and director at large - Ryan Davine.

Paul then opened the meeting to questions for the Board from the membership.

Scottie reminded the group about the upcoming Otsego Lake Festival on July 12 from noon until four at the Lake Front Park in Cooperstown. Paul and Suzy Kingsley will be present to give tours of the Buffer Strip Garden. Scottie also showed the festival poster which was for sale and a new tote bag addition to our OLA merchandise.

The door prize raffle was held.

Our newly elected President, Wayne Bunn, stepped in and, as his first official act, presented out-going President, Paul Lord with a plaque acknowledging his hard work as Board President. Wayne also gave an award to Mary Clarke who is stepping down as Treasurer.

Wayne reminded the membership of our next meeting which will be held on Saturday August 16 at the Thayer Upland Center at 9AM.

A motion for adjournment was seconded and passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mickie Richtsmeier