BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
JOHN FORD

1ST VICE PRESIDENT
DON EMHARDT

2ND VICE PRESIDENT
MEG PICKARD

3RD VICE PRESIDENT
WILLIAM THOMAS

SECRETARY
PATRICIA HUBBELL, MD

TREASURER
DEBORAH E. MOORE, CPA

PAST PRESIDENTS
RUDOLPH J. MUELLER, MD
PAUL O. STAGE, CFP®

—

DIRECTORS

JOHN SITZENSTATTER
EDWARD P. WRIGHT, ESQ.
JAMES M. LARSON, D.D.S.
L. BRUCE ERICKSON
TERRY HAVENS-TURNER
REBECCA L. NYSTROM
PETER WIEMER
STEVEN COLUMBARE
CRAIG A. SEGER
BRUCE MICHAEL PFEIL
CRAIG W. COLBURN

YOU CAN VISIT CHAUTAUQUA LAKE (VIRTUALLY) ANYTIME!

■ For a view of current conditions at the shop, scan the code above or visit ChautauquaLakeAssociation.org/lake-cam/

Summary of 2023 Activities

Hello from the CLA Headquarters! With the leaves quickly changing I look back on another summer and already miss my time in the field.

Like every summer we faced new and different challenges. Mother Nature seems to want to keep us on our toes. Due to the mild winter it was predicted that the summer could be tough. As we prepared, we saw early curly leaf growth in several hot spots in the spring. Our pre-season crews were able to get things under control and the regular season began with mixed feelings about summer lake conditions.

To our surprise the summer conditions were great. We saw weed growth in deeper waters, but not in the normal places that we harvest. This caused more attention to the shorelines which seemed to please homeowners. When harvesting was not needed in an area, we used the harvesters with our traditional shore crews to make the clean-up more efficient.

As the crews traveled the shores, they raked directly onto the machines rather than scooping onto the barges. Not only was this less labor intensive, but it was also a much more effective process. We try to be versatile, resourceful, and use what we have to the best of our abilities. Sometimes this means thinking outside the box.

CONTINUED ▶

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the weather turns to winter, it's reasonable to look back at 2023 and wonder.

We had one of the nicest summers anyone can recall on the lake. There were fewer weeds than predicted. I found that almost everyone I asked had a different theory about why that was so, depending on the perspective of the observer.

We successfully collaborated with other lake organizations, Chautauqua County and the Town of Chautauqua in addition to our educational outreach programs.

Your Chautauqua Lake Association was proud to play its traditional role in weed harvesting and shoreline cleanup, both before and after the summer season. You will see elsewhere in this report the quantitative measure of our accomplishments. We were pleased to do our part in securing a pleasurable summer season for the thousands of locals and visitors who enjoy our lake.

2023 has indeed been a year to remember on the lake, and to be reminded that although we humans sometimes feel that we can control nature, in the end nature will have its way. And no one knows what it is in store for us in 2024.

Your CLA will be better prepared for whatever comes our way next year.

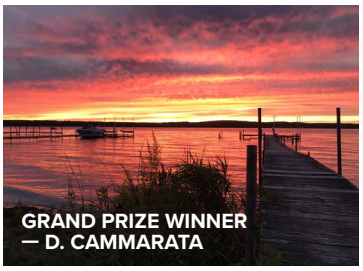
CONTINUED ▶

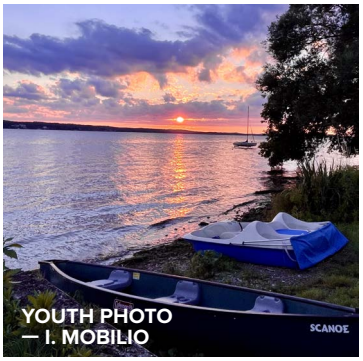
— K. SKOREPA

LANDMARKS & LANDSCAPES
— R. NELSON

CHAUTAUQUA LAKE PHOTO CONTEST

We received well over 300 photo submissions in our first ever photo contest! Images were entered into five categories: Chautauqua Lake Pets, Landmarks & Landscapes, Lake Plants & Wildlife, Life on Chautauqua Lake and a youth category for photographers under the age of 14. Each photo told a beautiful story about the lake we all love. Congrats to all our winners!


GRAND PRIZE WINNER
— D. CAMMARATA


YOUTH PHOTO
— I. MOBILIO

SCAN CODE TO SEE MORE LAKE CONTEST PHOTOS

SUMMARY OF 2023 ACTIVITIES

■ CONTINUED

This summer we were finally able to bring back our annual in-person fundraising events! Though it made it a very busy summer we had a great turnout at the Annual Meeting, with our annual flare sales, our Denim & Diamonds event, and the Dragon Boat races.

If you haven't attended or been part of these activities be sure to watch Facebook and our website for our 2024 events.

I am thankful for another wonderful group of employees this summer, mostly returnees. Working on the lake is a rewarding job. We are lucky to have such dedicated crew members and boat stewards.

Have a safe holiday season. See you all in the spring!

Heather

2023 BY THE TRUCKLOAD

2 WEEK PRE-SEASON		13 WEEK REGULAR SEASON		3 WEEK POST SEASON	
61 TRUCKLOADS REMOVED	+	354 TRUCKLOADS REMOVED	+	21 TRUCKLOADS REMOVED	=

HELP KEEP CHAUTAUQUA LAKE SAFE & CLEAN. DONATE TODAY!

Your contribution directly supports our lake maintenance programs.

■ ChautauquaLakeAssociation.org/donate/

CHAUTAUQUA LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

■ CONTINUED

Thanks to funds largely supplied through The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), a nearly $2 trillion economic stimulus bill passed by Congress in 2021, the CLA has been able to jump-start a program to replace ageing harvesters and support vessels with newer, more efficient equipment.

We expect to have in operation on the lake in 2024 a new harvester and two more versatile and effective support vessels.

Additionally, we aim to even more fully integrate our highly successful Watercraft Steward program into CLA operations, ensuring even better results in our fight to keep invasive species from hitchhiking on visiting boat hulls into our lake.

We are gratified to have an opportunity to take a leading role in achieving a better coordinated lake maintenance effort going forward, but we cannot do it alone.

No matter what nature throws our way in 2024, we will need your support more than ever. Please consider continuing or initiating your financial support for CLA, your lake stewards.

With very best wishes for the rest of this year and the year to come from me and your CLA board of directors.

John Ford

Starry Stonewort Project

In late September, the CLA partnered with the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, and the Town of Chautauqua for a Starry Stonewort Removal Demo Project that was funded by the Alliance.

The CLA was happy to be part of this project as it supports our mission to preserve, maintain, and protect Chautauqua Lake.

Starry Stonewort is an invasive algae with a plantlike structure. It was first discovered in the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1978 and has spread from the Great Lakes to inland lakes in NY.

As with all invasives, it is better to prevent the occurrence when possible. Though efforts have been made to decrease the spread, this demonstration project is an attempt to eradicate as much of the invasive as permitting would allow.

This was the first ever use of mechanical equipment of this kind in the removal and the results were very successful.

ASHVILLE BAY DEMO AREA SHOWN BELOW

TRUCKLOADS OF AQUATIC VEGETATION REMOVED

=

436

APPROX. 4,360 TONS

SPRING DEBRIS CLEANUP

9

TRUCKLOADS REMOVED

+

POST SEASON DEBRIS

1

TRUCKLOAD REMOVED

CLA STAFF ATTENDS CONFERENCES

Lake maintenance and management is ever changing. In order to stay up to date with new industry trends and technology, CLA staff attends several regional and national conferences annually.

This year CLA staff will attend the **NALMS 43rd International Symposium** on October 22-26, 2023 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie, PA. We also have the honor of presenting, which is a great opportunity to share our struggles and successes with others, and reflect on how the CLA activities impacts Chautauqua Lake.

The CLA is also an active member of NYSFOLA, a state-wide organization dedicated to the protection and restoration of NYS lakes. Earlier this year, staff attended their **40th Annual Conference** in Lake George and will also be in attendance at the **29th Annual NYSFOLA Finger Lakes / WNY Regional Conference** on October 28.

It's refreshing to meet with peers, hear their stories, reinforce current practices, and learn new things.

Fishing for Answers

CLA staff and volunteers are on the hook with some evidence based responses to a few of our most commonly asked questions.

1. IS EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL STILL A PROBLEM PLANT IN CHAUTAUQUA LAKE?
2. CAN EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL AND CURLY LEAF PONDWEED BE ELIMINATED FROM CHAUTAUQUA LAKE?
3. IS IT ACCURATE TO SAY THAT HERBICIDES ARE SELECTIVE TO ONLY CERTAIN TARGET PLANTS?
4. SOME SAY THAT THE LAKE DOESN'T REALLY NEED AQUATIC PLANTS.
5. IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN HERBICIDE USE AND ALGAL BLOOMS?
6. IS IT ACCURATE THAT THE PREDOMINANT SUMMERTIME NUISANCE PLANT THAT AFFECTS NAVIGATION IS EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL?
7. DOES THE HARVESTING PROCESS LOSE VOLUMES OF CUT PLANTS?
8. WHY DO MORE PLANTS ACCUMULATE ON MY SHORELINE AFTER HARVESTING HAS HAPPENED THAN WERE THERE BEFORE?
9. WHERE DO ALL THE FLOATING PLANTS COME FROM?
10. WHAT ARE THE GREATEST LAKE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES FOR CHAUTAUQUA LAKE?

1. Once considered an invasive nuisance plant, **Eurasian Watermilfoil has become well established throughout the lake in non-nuisance conditions.** It is generally no longer densely populated and has been brought under control by the weevil, moth, and caddisfly herbivore insects that feed upon it. It seldom grows to reach the surface like it did years ago.

Eurasian Watermilfoil

— Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologist Report 2019

Curly Leaf Pondweed

2. Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed are so prevalent and so intermixed with native plants that **the only way to eliminate them would be to also eliminate all plants.** The NYSDEC WNY Program for Invasive Species Management lists them as Tier 4 plants. This designates them in a category of not being justified as to what would need to be done to result in elimination. The two plants also play an important role in benefiting the lake's aquatic life.

— https://on.ny.gov/3rTTwcT

3. Herbicide product labels identify the plants that they target which are generally multiple varieties of plants. Herbicides that are utilized in Chautauqua Lake also affect multiple non-target plants including the important nutrient-absorbing Coontail and fishery-beneficial pondweeds. *— Diet for a Small Lake (pgs 155-164)*

4. The presence of aquatic plants is critical to the lake's health and ecosystem. Without plants, algae will likely dominate. The lake will thus have turbid water instead of clear water and it is possible harmful algal blooms will be present. Chautauqua Lake's world-famous fishery would disappear if there were no aquatic plants. *— Scheffer, Nature, October 2001*

5. Herbicide use causes the death of living plants. Much of their nutrient content is released to the water instead of into their roots for future growth. Herbicide use can also bare the lake bottom. When a bare lake bottom is disturbed by human or natural activity, the bottom sediments then release their nutrients into the water column. With plants being reduced, algae have more nutrients to consume. Excess algal growth is called a "bloom" and some become harmful. In an already nutrient-rich Chautauqua Lake, additional nutrient sources produced from herbicide use on living plants are available for algal growth. This is the reason herbicide use is not included as a best management practice in the DEC's Harmful Algal Bloom Actions Plan for Chautauqua Lake. *— Aquatic Ecology, 2021, 55:347-361*

FIND MORE ANSWERS

■ bit.ly/cla-popular-questions

6. The predominant summertime nuisance growing plant is Elodea, a native plant. The only allowed control treatment method for it is harvesting. *— Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologist Report Spring 2020*

7. The first machines that were used in the cutting process decades ago did experience a notable loss of cut plants.

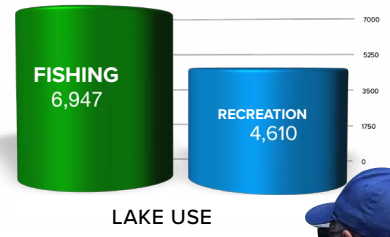
CONTINUED ▶

WATERCRAFT STEWARDS

This summer we had eleven boat stewards working Thursday through Monday at six public launches on Chautauqua Lake, Cassadaga Lake and at two Lake Erie launches.

Stewards survey boats as they launch and retrieve, do visual inspections of boats and trailers, and educate boaters about the transfer of vegetation and preventing the spread by cleaning their vessels and equipment. Data collected is logged into a state-wide database and shared with the DEC as we work together to protect NYS waters.

BOATS SURVEYED IN 2022



The CLA had the first ever steward program in this area and has just completed our eighth summer of the program.

As the program continues we hope to add additional stewards, coverage hours and a boat cleaning station in the future.

Chautauqua Lake Legacy

You can support future service to Chautauqua Lake by honoring a loved one's memory with a memorial contribution to a CLA Endowment Fund. These funds are held at the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation and earnings are used to assist with expenses.

- The Chautauqua Lake Association Fund supports general lake maintenance.
- The Scientific & Public Education Fund supports scientific monitoring and public education programs.
- The Julis & Ruth Weinstein Endowment Fund supports summer employment.
- The Eric Westrom Fund supports equipment maintenance and replacement.

Gifts can be made directly to the Community Foundation on the CLA's behalf or given to the lake association.

COLLABORATION & SCIENCE: AN INTEGRAL PIECE OF CLA'S LAKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A CLA volunteer has continued to work with SUNY ESF/iOLight Ltd and Cornell University to refine artificial intelligence apps that will be used to immediately identify the presence of algae and/or harmful algae. This app is expected to be released to the public in the very near future.

Throughout the year, CLA volunteers have also worked with a number of likeminded groups including: the NYSDEC/NYSFOLA Citizen's Statewide Lake Assessment Program, the Jefferson Project lake bottom algae study, NYS SUNY ESF algal bloom study, NYSDEC NYHABS Harmful Algal Bloom Reporting Program, NYS SUNY Oneonta Annual Aquatic Plants Inventorying Program and Rooney's Aquatic Biologists Herbivore Monitoring Program.

FISHING FOR ANSWERS

■ CONTINUED

Machine design has evolved such that the cutting process today results in the cut plants being collected and carried away in the harvesters. Plant loss is minimal. — *Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologist, 2021 Macrophyte Loss to Chautauqua Lake by Mechanical Harvesting*

8. Harvesting opens up surface water flow which then allows for plants that are floating out in the lake to come ashore. — *CLA Staff*

9. Floating plants can be caused by boat props, fishing and swimming activities as well as natural die-offs and storm turbulence. These factors often occur before the CLA's harvesters have even entered the lake for the season. — *Racine-Johnson Aquatic Ecologist, 2021 Macrophyte Loss to Chautauqua Lake by Mechanical Harvesting*

10. Contrary to popular belief, managing Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed does not pose the greatest challenge. Managing the lake's nutrients poses the greatest challenge due to the algal situation. Next comes dealing with new invasive plants. Starry Stonewort that is already here is topping the list. Every lake management plan has indicated that there will always be a need for plant harvesting in Chautauqua Lake. — *Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan, Executive Summary Sept. 2010*

LEARN MORE

■ bit.ly/cla-popular-questions

CHAUTAUQUA LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC.
429 East Terrace Ave.
Lakewood, NY 14750
716.763.8602
ChautauquaLakeAssociation.org

PRESIDENT
JOHN FORD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DOUG CONROE
DOUG@CHAUTAUQUALAKEASSOCIATION.ORG
ADMIN & COMMUNITY SERVICES MGR
HEATHER NOLAN-CASKEY
HEATHER@CHAUTAUQUALAKEASSOCIATION.ORG
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
NATALIE KING
NATALIE@CHAUTAUQUALAKEASSOCIATION.ORG
CHIEF MECHANIC
JAMES CAPPALINO

The CLA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

"NIGHT FISHING"
— J. SUMNER

NON PROFIT
Us Postage
PAID
Jamestown, NY
Permit No. 65

Upcoming Events

NOV 28, 2023

GIVING TUESDAY

Support the CLA with a year-end donation during this national day of giving.

WINTER 2024

CHQ LAKE ICE PICK

Weather permitting

SPRING 2024

ANNUAL MEETING

Join us for an evening of dinner and discussion on Chautauqua Lake.

GIVEBIG CHQ

Spend the day with the CLA during this annual day of giving hosted by the CRCF.

SUMMER 2024

DENIM & DIAMONDS

Break out your dancing shoes and bring your bling for this FUNdraiser to support the CLA.

DRAGON BOAT RACE

A fun team building and family event. No experience needed... Paddles Up!