



## Myers Donate Wetland to CWC



**CWC Lands Manager Jeremy Woolson  
with Joan and Jerry Myers**

Joan and Jerry Myers have generously donated 11.9 acres of wetland along Route 394 (Sherman-Mayville Road) west of Mayville in the Town of Chautauqua to the CWC. This wetland is tributary to Mud Creek, which flows through Chautauqua Marina before reaching Chautauqua Lake. This site helps trap and absorb stormwater runoff from Route 394 and surrounding lands, slowly releasing it to the headwaters of Mud Creek. It may be a small property, but its position in the watershed gives it greater impact than some other locations in performing its ecological and hydrological roles. It is also home to a variety of wetland plants, salamanders, frogs, snakes, mammals and birds. The Myers stated, "We wanted to protect this land as wildlife habitat in perpetuity. We were pleased that the CWC could provide this conservation opportunity to us."

We are very grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Myers for committing this sensitive and ecologically and hydrologically valuable site for permanent conservation. Many small wetlands like these have been lost to intentional fill for other uses all over our region, leading to excessive stormwater runoff and downstream flooding, erosion and lake sedimentation. With the addition of this site, our Chautauqua Watersheds Tributary and Wildlands Preserve System is now comprised of 32 sites protecting 1,071 acres across the region. Counting lands that CWC has conserved and lands that CWC pre-acquired or facilitated for NYSDEC conservation, CWC has conserved a total of 1,138 acres across the region.

## Creekside Conservation Projects Highlight CWC Action

Topping the land conservation projects CWC is working to complete in 2021 are two creek-side projects comprising its *Fish Hawks and Steelhead Habitat Conservation Campaign*. We've been excited with our Osprey families returning this spring to raise chicks at both the Ball Creek and Loomis Goose Creek Wetland Preserves at Chautauqua Lake. CWC is launching this new campaign to conserve more habitat for these and other spectacular water-related raptors.

First, we intend to purchase 33 acres along nearly one-half mile of Goose Creek directly across from our Osprey nest on Route 394 in the Towns of Busti and North Harmony. This will help package as much as possible of the Goose Creek stream corridor as a floodplain-wetland fish and wildlife habitat greenway. CWC already owns 30 acres of wetlands between Route 394 and Chautauqua Lake on the west side of Goose Creek. CWC owns an additional 21 acres upstream on Hoag Road south of Ashville. Second, CWC is pursuing the conservation of



**Proposed Goose Creek Conservation Site**

14 acres to protect the lands between Route 5 and Lake Erie on the west side of Chautauqua Creek. This project will conserve 1,160 feet of creek bank, adjacent flood plain and lakeshore as well as the scenic beauty and ecological integrity one of the most popular and most scenic steelhead fishing sites in the Great Lakes and the scenic view from adjacent beach and creek side lands owned by the Town of Westfield for public use. Both sites are frequented by Ospreys and Bald Eagles. Anyone interested in supporting or helping to promote this new campaign is encouraged to email Whitney Gleason at [Whitney@chautauquawatershed.org](mailto:Whitney@chautauquawatershed.org) or call her at 716-664-2166 x 1006.



# CHAUTAUQUA WATERSHED CONSERVANCY

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**CWC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with a mission to preserve and enhance the water quality, scenic beauty and ecological health of the lakes, streams, wetlands and watersheds of the Chautauqua, NY, region.**



## Message From The Executive Director

Recently, I have had some very rewarding wildlife experiences. On my way to CWC's golf tournament in June, I drove on Route 394 by the Stow Farm Lakeshore, which has been conserved by CWC and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and saw two spectacular Bald Eagles fly just in front of my car and into this NYS Wildlife Management Area. What an inspiring way to start the day to raise more funds for conserving the lakes and habitats of our region! Then a few days later, on two separate days while fishing, I spotted a Bald Eagle roosting high in a tree along the shoreline of the Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center Forest, a site conserved by CWC with a conservation easement. I don't remember every seeing a Bald Eagle or Osprey near Chautauqua Lake as a child, so these recent sightings were incredible to witness and brought me immense joy as a conservationist.



**John Jablonski III,  
Executive Director**

On June 9th, CWC and RTPI celebrated the opening of the Art of the Osprey, a photo exhibit telling the story of the Osprey, who were nearly lost to DDT but then restored to abundance through the science and persistence of Roger Tory Peterson and many others. These amazing birds have been featured in photographs taken by Mr. Peterson and in 2020 by CWC and RTPI board member Dr. Jeanne Wiebenga at the CWC's Loomis Goose Creek Wetland Preserve. Successful conservation work takes good science, hard work, persistence and teamwork among scientists, conservation organizations and the public. CWC's Ball Creek Preserve and Loomis Goose Wetland Preserve currently host active Osprey nests, contributing to the resurgence of local Osprey populations. CWC members, sponsors and granters can be proud of their role in providing homes for these incredible birds! CWC staff, directors and volunteers have worked hard for more than 30 years to engage landowners to voluntarily save important spaces for wildlife like these at lakeshore and upland sites across the Chautauqua County. CWC has conserved 2.75 miles of lakeshore: 2 miles of Chautauqua Lake and Outlet shoreline and 3/4ths of a mile of Cassadaga Lakes shoreline. CWC has also leveraged a total NYS investment of \$9.5 million toward open space and outdoor recreation in the county. Healthy lakes require healthy, natural landscapes. Healthy fish and wildlife populations require healthy landscapes and clean, chemical-free waters to maintain their abundance. The results of your investment in the work of CWC can be seen in these magnificent birds, trout in streams and waterfowl in wetlands and through enjoying a walk with your family on one of our many preserves. In 2021, we are embarking on the Fish Hawks and Steelhead Habitat Campaign, an important initiative to conserve creek side lands frequented by these birds near Chautauqua Lake and Lake Erie. At the same time, our conservation staff is providing over 100 consultations to landowners on how to landscape their yards for wildlife and water quality protection. Each small piece of habitat restored or conserved collectively adds up to more abundant wildlife, healthier ecosystems and cleaner waters! Lastly, our lands manager, preserve stewards and volunteers are working hard to improve and care for our preserves for your enjoyment!

On behalf of the board and staff, I thank all of you who are members of this important team. If you are not yet a donor or volunteer, I hope you will join us in maintaining the Chautauqua region as a refuge for fish and wildlife and a refuge for you and your family, now and throughout our lifetimes! Please come out to meet and join our team at one of our upcoming events and visit our/your preserves!



## Happy Retirement Dick Johnson!



*Dick Johnson fishing the  
West Fork Bitterroot River in MT*

joyous retirement filled with family, friends and fun! And, of course, lots of time for his favorite pastime – fishing!

CWC would like to extend its very best wishes and congratulations to Richard (“Dick”) Johnson on his recent retirement!

Dick, owner of Software Solutions in Jamestown, NY, served as an accounting consultant for CWC for the past 13 years, providing the organization with bookkeeping services and assistance with payroll, grant tracking and yearly audits among other financial duties.

Dick will be greatly missed, but from all of us at CWC, we wish him the best of luck and a long and

## Welcome Caitlin Gustafson!

Caitlin Gustafson has joined the CWC team as our new business manager!

Caitlin grew up in Westfield, NY, where she enjoyed hiking in the Chautauqua gorge and going to Barcelona beach. Currently living in West Ellicott, Caitlin still enjoys the beauty of Lake Erie but is a more frequent visitor of Chautauqua Lake. She enjoys watching the sunsets in Celeron and walking her dog, Cleo, around the lake.



*Caitlin Gustafson  
with her dog Cleo*

Caitlin received her B.S. in Public Accountancy from SUNY Fredonia and later acquired her professional license as a certified public accountant. Before coming to the CWC, she worked in the public accounting field performing audit and review engagements and preparing tax returns for many individuals and organizations in and around the Chautauqua County area. Having a passion for environmental conservation all her life, Caitlin could not pass up the opportunity to become CWC’s business manager, which is a perfecting pairing of her accounting skills and love for nature. Caitlin looks forward to helping the CWC keep accurate financial records and providing insight so that CWC can make the most efficient use of its devoted members’ contributions.

## Septic System Replacement Grant for Chautauqua & Findley Lakes

The Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services recently received a grant to help lakeshore property owners partially fund septic sewer replacement on parts of Chautauqua Lake (from Midway State Park to Point Chautauqua) and all of Findley Lake. The new grant program is funded by New York State to reimburse property owners up to 50% of the cost of an eligible septic system project, up to a maximum of \$7,500.

Property owners who are interested in the program should submit an application to the Health Department who will then evaluate the system to determine if it may be affecting lake water quality. If so, the property owner will be notified that they have been approved for a grant and that they can proceed with the design and installation of a new system under Health Department guidance. Per County Public Health Director Christine Schuyler, “the focus is on those systems that are located within 250 feet of the lakeshore because those are the ones with the greatest potential impact.” More information about this program and an online application can be found at [healthyhq.com](http://healthyhq.com) or by calling 716-753-4481.

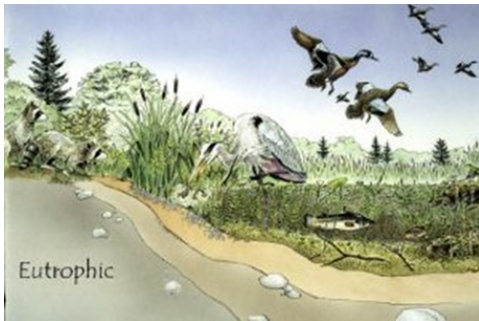


*Photo by Chautauqua County*

**Gifts of appreciated stock, mutual funds, and other securities given to CWC may empower you to boost your conservation impact while enjoying substantial income tax benefits! Please call Whitney Gleason at 716-664-2166 x 1006 for specific instructions to make such contributions.**

## Growing Old Gracefully

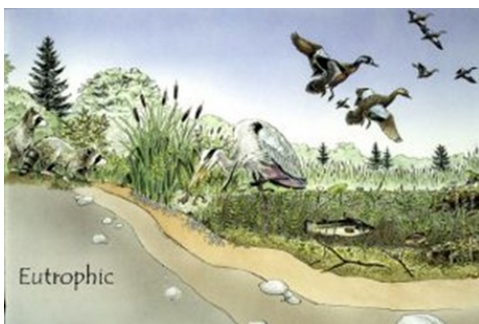
Formed during a glacial retreat at the end of the Ice Age approximately 10,000-12,000 years ago, our beautiful Chautauqua Lake has seen its fair share of changes over the centuries and decades. Permanent modern times settlement began in 1811 when James Prendergast founded an English settlement in Jamestown. From this point forward, lumbering was one of the area's first industries, and due to deforestation, led to land being made available for farming and agriculture. In the last 100 years, the lake has become a significant recreational area. The lake has seen her fair share of history and is growing older with each given year. Not only have the activities surrounding her changed, but her water chemistry and biological characteristics have been forced to change as well.



*A young, infertile lake*



*A middle-aged, moderately fertile lake*



*An old, very fertile lake*

Freshwater lakes are living entities, and they follow a normal, predictable pattern of creation, age and death. This process of aging is called lake succession and is mainly driven by the input of nutrients and sediment into a lake system. As a lake fills up, it will eventually lose water and fill in. So, just as we humans are born, live and die, lakes follow a very similar pattern. A lake's age or successional category is determined by measuring biological activity as it relates to chlorophyll levels (aquatic plant and life abundance), phosphorus content (nutrients) and water clarity (sediment) and can be classified as either oligotrophic (few), mesotrophic (middle) or eutrophic (aged). The Finger Lakes are great examples of oligotrophic lakes or "young" lakes with few nutrients, algae growth and clearer waters. Chautauqua Lake, on the other hand, is an "older" lake with murkier water and higher plant and algae productivity and nutrients. The glaciers created Lake Chautauqua in the form of two basins. The northern basin of Chautauqua Lake (Mayville to Bemus Point) is deeper and is classified as mesotrophic, which means middle-aged, having medium productivity and some submerged plant life but can also be considered eutrophic or an old, aged lake depending on temperature, time of year and climatic events. The southern basin of Chautauqua Lake (Bemus Point to Jamestown) is shallower and eutrophic and has been an old, aged lake for many years now, meaning that it is high in nutrients and home to abundant plant life and algae growth.

These lake successional stages, like our own aging, are not reversible. But while we cannot reverse the natural aging process of Chautauqua Lake, we can slow it down. As we age, we are told that we can delay our aging process by eating right, exercising and avoiding toxins like smoking and excess alcohol consumption. We can actually say the same for our lake. What are we feeding her? The continual addition and runoff of excess nutrients from lawns, driveways, streets and storm drains, as well as pollutants and excess nitrogen from lawn fertilizers, dog poop and failing septic systems are toxic and unhealthy. Sediment flowing off the land and eroding from our stream banks is slowing and clogging up the clean, fresh water we need to flow and regenerate our lake system. The excess nutrients, sediment and toxins we are feeding the lake is speeding up the process of lake succession, aging our lake faster and will continue to lead to more aquatic plant life and increased algae growth.

To slow down and minimize Chautauqua Lake's premature aging process, the single, most important thing we can do is to look at how we manage our yard. To minimize the unhealthy "food" we are feeding the lake, keep your grass mowed at 3" or higher and mulch your grass clippings back into your lawn rather than bag them. Or, better yet, naturalize a small part of your yard and just stop mowing this area all together! You can even plant some native wildflowers directly into the grass to create an instant meadow! By doing this, you create stronger root growth and healthier grass – not to mention habitat for our local insects, butterflies and birds too! Creating a lakefront or streamside buffer and/or raingarden can help absorb runoff from roofs or paved areas and trap excess nutrients and toxins from reaching the lake. Eliminating the use of fertilizers and pesticides on your lawn is another simple and easy way to reduce the amount of nutrients and toxins entering the lake.

Chautauqua Lake is not getting any younger. Let's allow her to grow old gracefully so we can continue to enjoy the abundance of life she gives to us! Email our conservationist at [Carol@chautauquawatershed.org](mailto:Carol@chautauquawatershed.org) to schedule a LakeScapes visit for advice on implementing these practices in your yard today!

*(Image Credits – Lake George Assn.)*



## Continuing Trail Improvements



CWC has been busy improving some of our featured trail locations and creating some new trails and extensions of trails. As part of our Gateways to Nature program (funded by a grant from the Cummins Foundation), these trails help connect our donors and the public to our mission and help people understand how important both forests and wetlands of our region are to water quality and supply.

Our first trail change is the extension of the trail at our Dobbins Woods Preserve on Bly Hill Road in Asheville. The trail has been dedicated in memory of Jean Reycroft Summerville. The existing trail got additional bog bridges and parking capacity last year and this year, thanks to a lot of labor and careful evaluation. An extension has been added that brings the total trail length to just about 2 miles and follows part of an older trail and then circles back and connects to the old trail. The new loop crosses a small creek before heading off into the rest of the Dobbins Woods site. The trail is marked with blue trail tags and can be followed in either direction.

A new trail has been created at our Salomon Family Preserve on Morris Road in the Town of Chautauqua in memory of Steve Hirschberg. The trail is about 1.3 miles long and forms a loop which connects back to itself at one point. Look for the signs to help you figure out which way to go. The trail is moderately rugged and follows the edges of ravines and leads you to an area where trees have been re-oriented, so many small trees appear to grow from older trunks laying nearly horizontal. The trail twists and winds quite a bit in this area, so it can be challenging to stay on the trail, though blue trail markers help quite a bit.

The Pamela Westrom Wildflower Trail at our Bentley Preserve also had a small adjustment to the parking area to allow visitors to park and access the trail more easily. This trail is just about one mile long and features a wandering trail through a wetland forest with numerous bog bridges.

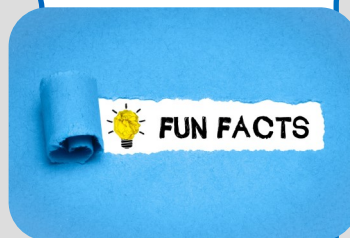
Our featured trails also include hiking opportunities at the Brown's Creek Preserve on Walker Road in Bemus Point, the David and Margaret Naetzker Preserve on Route 474 just outside of Asheville and our Cassadaga Lakes Nature Park located off Route 60 just outside of Cassadaga. The CLNP is also the site of a welcome pavilion and a bird observation blind. Another featured trail exists at our Oxbow Preserve on Lyons Road in Sherman that presents a short but very challenging trail down to the stream at the bottom of the gorge, which is also a public access point for fishing.



As part of our efforts to create and maintain these featured trails, we have placed trail head sign-in boxes that help us collect some basic information about trail visitors. Since their introduction last year, the sign in boxes have recorded thousands of visits!

If you frequently visit but rarely use the sign-in box, please take a moment to let us know you were there each time and jot down your visit on the sign-in sheet. Also please remember to leave no trace of your passing, take nothing but pictures and keep dogs on a leash and clean up after them to help make the experience pleasant for the next folks who come along for a bit of a walk in the woods.

- More than 5,000 people have signed in while visiting CWC nature preserves since January 2020!
- 3,500 persons have signed in at our eight improved nature preserves just so far in 2021!



**CWC has undertaken 112 LakeScaping consultations in 2021 to date! That means many good things including:**

- More wildflowers for more pollinating butterflies and bees
- Less sediment and nutrients reaching lakes from yards
- Less erosion of the lake shoreline
- More habitat supporting more dragonflies, frogs, turtles, snakes, birds, fish and other animals comprising a healthy lake and lakeshore food web!

## Back In Full Swing



After a one-year hiatus, the “Score One for the Lake” Charity Pro-Am Golf Tournament was back in full swing in 2021! Held on June 28<sup>th</sup> at the Chautauqua Golf Club, 30 WNYPGA Professionals and 90 amateur golfers played to raise money and awareness for CWC’s land conservation and watershed education programs. This year marked the 9th year that CWC has partnered with the Chautauqua Golf Club on the fundraiser and the 3rd year that **Snug Harbor Marina was the presenting sponsor for the event.** In all, sponsors, in-kind donors, players and volunteers helped to bring in more than \$43,000 (gross) for CWC!

*Pictured at left is the 2021 Charity Pro-Am winning foursome (from left): PGA Professional Dwayne Randall of Bartlett Country Club and amateur golfers Eric Scolton, Bob Furman and Chris Gibbons. (photo by WNYPGA)*



## Thank You to our 2021 Pro-Am Charity Golf Tournament Sponsors!

### Presenting Sponsor

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### Special Thanks

Chautauqua Golf Club  
-Troy Moss, PGA Professional  
-Kirk Stauffer, Director of Golf  
Chautauqua Institution  
Snug Harbor Marina & Service  
Center, Lakewood & Celoron



## Our First Summer SAILstice!

This year, CWC held its first annual Chautauqua Lake Sailing Rallye! With 33 sponsors, 43 registered boats and 83 total registrants, the event raised \$14,428 for CWC!

The goal of the rallye was to get as many boats on the water as possible, anytime between 10 AM and 4 PM on June 19th, the weekend of the summer solstice. All sizes and shapes of sailboats, as well as powerboats and hand-powered crafts, were invited to participate and to support CWC. The event also included prize drawings, a fun photo scavenger hunt and a trivia contest! Special thanks go out to CWC board director Greg Swan and Ready About Sailing for their work on this event!



Photo by Keith Rogers

### Thank You 2021 Sailing Rallye Sponsors!

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(photos, from left to right, by Brett Swan, Dan Abram & Emily Yeager)

### Additional thanks to all who participated and the following event supporters and organizers:

**Chautauqua Yacht Club**  
At Chautauqua Institution

**Chautauqua Lake Yacht Club**  
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**Chautauqua Lake Community Sailing Foundation**  
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## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**August 21st / 10AM to 2PM**

Native Plant Buffer Bonanza  
Chautauqua Marina, Mayville, NY

**September 18th / 6:30 to 8:00 PM**

Moonlight Paddles Across Cassadaga Lakes  
Cassadaga Beach, Cassadaga, NY

**October 9th / 2:00 to 3:30 PM**

Fall Foliage Walk  
Salomon Family Nature Preserve, Sherman, NY

*~ Visit [www.chautauquawatershed.org](http://www.chautauquawatershed.org) for more details! ~*



This newsletter contains  
information worth sharing!

When you're done reading it, **Pass It On!**