



# Ballston Lake Improvement Association Newsletter: October, 2015

## Sewer Project Information Update

On October 14<sup>th</sup> there will be referendums in the Towns of Ballston and Clifton Park where residents will determine the future of Ballston Lake. After several years of hard work by many people, the fate of this lake is in our hands. The accompanying article by Dave Pierce summarizes the scientific data accumulated over many years, making the case that phosphorus pollution is poisoning the lake. This was certified in 2012 when New York State ENCON declared Ballston Lake an “Impaired Lake” under the Federal Clean Water Act. The state will be required to do a study and develop a plan in conjunction with the Towns to reduce the incoming phosphorus load on the lake to a level that will correct the situation. We firmly believe that failing septic systems are the primary source the phosphorus problems, and that sewers are the only practical solution. We also believe that it is in all of our best interests to take action now. This project is not inexpensive. However, we are in line for significantly reduced funding and interest rates are at an all-time low, with the Fed signaling that rates may increase soon. There will not be a better time to do this. If we wait until action is dictated, the costs will surely be higher. The problems that we see may be getting worse, but they are not new. Some folks remember the proposed sewer project being voted down years ago. If that project had been undertaken, the lake would be healthy and the debt would have been paid off by now. I’ve heard people declare “how foolish those residents were to turn the project down with all the funding it had”. Let’s not repeat the mistakes of the past and have our children make that same statement about us!

Native Americans were the first to wander the shores of this beautiful lake, as long as 2,000 years ago. The future of the lake now rests in our hands. As a Native American proverb states: “We don’t own this land. We just borrow it from our children”. It is up to us. It is up to you. Please vote “yes”.

Drew Hamelink, Chairman Town of Ballston Sewer Committee



Why Vote yes for the Sewer Referendum

1. In 2012, DEC placed Ballston Lake on the 303-D List of Impaired Water bodies requiring the town to develop a plan to lower phosphorous levels in Ballston Lake. DEC stated that the high phosphorous levels come from:
  - A. Failing septic systems in the watershed.
  - B. Sedimentation from streams and shoreline erosion
  - C. Urbanization
2. Most soils in the watershed are shale- a poor soil for septic leach fields to operate efficiently.
3. Most properties in the proposed sewer district have old, poorly functioning septic leach fields.
4. Water from leach fields in the Main Street-Buell Heights area flows in open streams on its way to the lake.
5. Testing for the last 3 years shows fecal coliform levels in these streams to be as high as 8,100 colonies/100 ml after a 1 inch rainfall. This is 40 times the acceptable level stated by NYDOH.
6. Recent lake testing indicates high levels of septic leakage into the lake from shoreline properties.
7. Water from septic leach fields adds significant phosphorous levels to the lake.
8. CSLAP data indicated that the phosphorous levels in the lake have risen from 20ppB in 2000 to 42ppB in 2014.
9. In 2012 BLIA conducted a stream study that revealed phosphorous entering the lake at 80- 140 ppB is 3 times higher than the mean lake value of 40ppB. Some values exceeded 250ppB.
10. Phosphorous levels over 22ppB lead to increased algae blooms, increased chlorophyll, increased turbidity and a greener looking water.
11. One specific algae species in Ballston Lake is microcystis which contains a neurotoxin. Reducing phosphorous reduces the presence of this algae.
12. Union College studies in 1984 and 1986 recommended that replacing septic systems in the watershed will decrease phosphorous levels in the lake.
13. In 2001 a Watershed Management Plan written by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission recommended that a sewer system be developed for the Ballston Lake Watershed to lower phosphorous levels in the lake.
14. Saratoga Lake experienced a lowering of phosphorus levels after the sewer system replaced the septic systems in its watershed.
15. In order to improve water quality in the lake, bacteria and phosphorous must be decreased. Ballston Lake is the drinking water source for 10% of its lakeside properties.
16. For any phosphorous binding chemicals or methods to be successful, the source of the phosphorous must be eliminated first.
17. BLIA has been advocating for lowering phosphorous for 10 years. We must all join together in this effort since we as individuals can not do this alone.
18. BLIA stands for IMPROVEMENT. Building a sewer system to decrease phosphorous and bacteria is the improvement the lake needs.

Thank you for your help.

David Pierce BLIA Water Quality Committee



What a fantastic summer we had! Too bad our July 4<sup>th</sup> Patriotic Boat Parade was rained out- but no summer can be perfect!

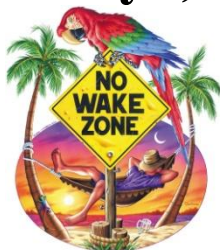
Thanks to all our new and continuing members- numbering 198 this year. This is a record high for our organization.

We have had a productive year working on community projects as well as offering social events. We look forward to a positive response to the sewer referendum. Remember, it is data gathered over many years by BLIA that has propelled this initiative. All we do is possible because of your financial support and we are most grateful.

Watch for renewal information to appear in the mail (and via email) during January of 2016. The "I LOVE THE LAKE" Ballston Lake Fly-Over will be offered again in 2016. To be eligible, renew by Valentine's Day next year! Happy fall, Suzanne Bishop

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**Ballston Lake Improvement Association's  
BLIA Members- Not Yet Members- and Their Guests  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
"Hello Snow...Bye, Bye Birdies"**



**Some of us are staying...Some of us are leaving...All of us are partying!  
Let's get together before the snow flies!**

Menu-

Appetizers: Fresh chips and salsa , Bacon wrapped pineapple

Main Course: Jamaican grilled chicken kabobs, Caribbean fish taco bar, Apple cider pulled pork sliders

Sides: Mango Cole slaw, Watermelon BBQ baked beans, Island fried rice with shrimp, Roasted garlic green beans

Dessert: Assorted delights

**\$15 BLIA Members / \$25 Not-Yet-Members & Guests – Cash Bar  
Monday, October 19, 2015  
6-8PM**

**Carney's Tavern**

17 Main Street, Ballston Lake

Free Drawings Include a "Ballston Lake Fly Over" for two in a private Cessna. Winner to book flight for the spring of 2016. The prize is transferable. Certain restrictions apply.

*Not yet a member? Join BLIA by contacting Suzanne Bishop 469-6062 kwenebishop@gmail.com*

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\*PLEASE RESERVE BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 12<sup>th</sup>\*

Please Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Reservations @ \$15 Per Person. \_\_\_\_\_ Reservations @ \$25 Per Person

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please detach and send reservation form and check to: BLIA, Box 1015, Ballston Lake, NY 12019

**Notes on The Castle Tour**  
**By Gini Whetten**

Over a hundred visitors from all over...neighbors, friends (some we hadn't seen in years), an art teacher, a town council member and curious strangers who had seen Bill Buell's article in the Gazette turned out on September 20<sup>th</sup> for great community open house at the Castle on East Side Drive, Ballston Lake.

The two town historians (Town of Ballston and Town of Clifton Park) were amazing, talented story tellers, and one came in costume assuming the character of William Bliss Baker's father, Colonel Baker - a story in itself.

The docents (Joanne Devoe, Sue Bishop and Susan and Bill Van Slyck, Pauline Boehm, Bill Koebbelman, Terry Harlow, and Mary Anderson) had adsorbed our stories about the kitchen area, the second floor master bedroom and the third floor studio - the history, the art, our tall tales - and told them well. Everyone had such enthusiasm!

Other BLIA members who helped out included Judy Brodeur, Roger Brodeur, John Gill, LJ and Joe Vanderwerker, Wes DeVoe, and Bob Benson. Rey Whetten told geology stories about the stone floors in the house and passed out Fossil Hunt handouts for the children with photos of the fossils to find. Rey and I printed identifying tags for all of the art work in the house...over 50 pieces in all.

In the garden room, The Victorian Ladies were truly elegant in their beautiful period dresses, hats and gloves, and the Victorian tea with all the delicious and elegant "finger" sandwiches (from LakeSide) and lemonade and iced tea (from Stewart's) was a tremendous hit. There were even mini PB&J sandwiches for the children.) The table looked just gorgeous...white lace table cloth over green damask and crystal bowls and silver platters. One of the punch bowls had belonged to Rey's parents who used it for UConn faculty parties.

On the lower level, by the lake, some of the Lake Association guys built a campfire and told stories about "how the Castle found the Whettens". People came by bicycle, by car and by boat and most of the East Side Drive neighbors walked.

We had an "after party" around the fire pit for folks who had given up a beautiful Sunday afternoon to help out. It was so relaxing and so much fun to share even more stories about the afternoon. It was an afternoon to remember for a long, long time.



Victorian Ladies Claudia Pesino, Jo-Ellen Unger, and Cathy Kaminsky flank Clifton Park Historian, John Scherer.

**Facebook**

The BLIA Face Book page is up to 322 "friends." We're using it to promote events, share community happenings, show great photos from the lake area, announce lost and found items, sell boats and share what's going on in the local business community. Find us and like us on FB!



President's Message- Peter Herman

Ballston Lake..... What a wonderful summer to have spent on the Lake. We are certainly blessed to have this privilege. Beginning in late July, the Lake became much clearer than usual for that time of year. The great news is that this has certainly continued into September. This is very unusual and most likely due in part to lack of rain thus reducing the flow of nutrients and phosphorus into the lake. Hopefully when we have sewers, this will be a permanent and regular happening.

Speaking of sewer's, while there is a lull in the action before the upcoming vote on the sewer district, please know that Drew Hamelink and Bill Goslin have been hard at work to resolve a large number of details to make this next step happen. We are so fortunate to have these two very active and dedicated men working hard on this project.

Another note on this summer was the large amount of activity on the Lake at certain times. I personally like to see people using and enjoying this wonderful resource. I was very impressed by the way boaters conducted themselves, most of the time, by obeying the boating regulations.

Our very busy and active group including Joanne Devoe, Sue Bishop, Judy Brodeur have given the BLIA a very definite social uplift with all their super event ideas, and all of their hard work to make them happen. They have brought us into the modern age with their use of social media. Thank you ladies for all of your ideas.

BLIA is now a 501 C -3

What does 501(c) 3 status mean to me, a BLIA member

While you may not see any differences in the Ballston Lake Improvement Association (BLIA) since we achieved 501(c)3 status earlier this year, there is one change that may impact our members and contributors - and that is that your dues and donations are tax deductible. At the end of this year, we will be mailing annual statements to everyone who has contributed \$75 or greater. Statements for lesser amounts will be provided upon request. Any questions or statement requests should be directed to Judy Brodeur, BLIA Treasurer, at 518.878.2065 or [jbrodeur@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jbrodeur@nycap.rr.com).

We are also working on GE (and other) matching fund opportunities, but we are new to this and don't know how long it will take to establish ourselves with these organizations. Wes DeVoe has graciously offered to take the lead on this. We will keep you updated.

Flood Insurance

BLIA member, Frank Shipp, told his personal story about flood insurance and his home at a recent Board meeting. His lender told him his home was in a "flood plain" and flood insurance would be required. This began a time consuming and costly journey to have his home removed from the "flood plain."

Just like public sewers, not having to pay National Flood Insurance Premiums may increase the marketability and buyer pool for your home. This is important regardless of whether you plan to sell or not. It protects your home value for the future.

If you are thinking about selling your home in the Spring, refinancing or obtaining a home equity line of credit, be sure to plan ahead. Flood plain and insurance issues will take some time to address.

Learn more here: [https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/about/nfip\\_overview.jsp](https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/about/nfip_overview.jsp)



**Peter Herman, president of the Ballston Lake Improvement Association, with the support of the BLIA Board is urging all residents to vote YES in the upcoming referendum for the sewer project in Ballston Lake. This edition of the BLIA Newsletter outlines specific reasons why this project is necessary for the public health of the community and the long term health of Ballston Lake. Please exercise your right to vote and support this project.**

**Date: October 14<sup>th</sup>.**

**Time: Noon until 8:00 pm.**

**Location: Town of Clifton Park at the  
Ballston Lake Firehouse  
Town of Ballston at  
Town of Ballston Town Hall**



**Ballston Lake Improvement Association  
BLIA  
P.O. Box 1015  
Ballston Lake, NY**

