



## VISION OF WHITE LAKE PAST

A curl of smoke drifted upward from the lone teepee amid the tall pines, a forlorn call of a loon the only sound that broke the silence of the dawn. With the mist rising, faint movements in the distance signaled the dipping of the paddles as the canoes of birch approached from all directions. Strong braves carried their leaders to the sacred island where every tribe was heard and thoughtful silence gave the elders time to reflect and find the way to peace and tranquility. The Great Spirit had blessed their people with an abundance of fish and game. The fruits of the Earth had provided sustenance, and life was good.

## FUTURE

As the sleek 100-mile per hour Adirondack Express approaches from the North, excited passengers strain to get first glimpses of the pristine preserve. Completing the New York City - Lake Placid - White Lake Monorail Loop, the Express glides silently into White Lake Station, where hundreds of travelers hope to see firsthand the preserved Adirondack White Lake wilderness area, one of the few that had survived the crush of population and land development. The Camp Russell Hotel towers over the local landscape, rising from the granite boulders of the ancient quarry. The modern monorail station showcases artifacts of the historic struggle of Indian times, logging days and the years of boating, fishing, waterskiing and socializing that privileged land owners had experienced so long ago. From the observation deck high above the tree line, one can see Russell Island, where the first inhabitants met and where Scouts still come to celebrate their history and to renew their dedication to peace and tranquility. In the quiet stillness of a misty morning, one visitor is heard to say,

"I wish I had been fortunate enough to have lived in this beautiful place like my great-great grandparents did."

- Nick Ide, President-





## INTRODUCTION

This summer we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of an important milestone and the occasion on which a group of Lake Shore residents gathered in Second Lake at the dock to the Episcopal Church Girls Camp. At that time, events had unfolded that would forever threaten the peace and serenity of White Lake. Discussions that followed plotted a course of action that would derail the threat, unite the group and signal the beginning of the formal organization of the **Adirondack White Lake Association (AWLA)**. The year was 1981 and in the two weeks that followed, 91 camp owners contributed \$10 each and agreed to join forces to fight for this worthwhile cause. The next meeting took place on August 31 in the Dining Hall of Camp Russell and concluded with a newly formed Association and a slate of officers in place ready to vigorously oppose the attempt by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) to purchase lakefront property from the William J. Day estate and convert it into a public boat-launching facility.

This booklet was assembled as a special project by the AWLA Anniversary Committee to commemorate this important event and provide a history of how and why the Association was formed. As you browse through it, you will find articles about some of the people who played important roles in the formation of the Association, along with information on what its various committees have accomplished since.

To tell the story of our Association, many people were contacted and interviewed, with dozens of e-mails sent back and forth and numerous conversations held in coffee shops. One e-mail in particular contained a story I would like to share. It originally was forwarded to me by Dick Chwazik and again in a message from Neil Rothfuss. The original author is unknown and editorial liberties were taken to change a few words to make it appropriate for us to think about as we celebrate this important anniversary. Hope you enjoy.

Jay Dwyer, Chairman  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee

### ~ WHITE LAKE ~

A man from Topeka, KS, decided to write a book about churches around the country. He started by flying to San Francisco and working east from there. Going to a very large church, he began taking photographs and making notes. He spotted a golden telephone on the vestibule wall and was intrigued with a sign that read "\$10,000 a minute." Seeking out the pastor, he asked about the phone. The pastor answered that the golden phone was, in fact, a direct line to Heaven, and, if he paid the price, he could talk directly to God. The man thanked the pastor and resumed his journey.

As he continued to visit churches in Seattle, Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo and all around the United States, he found more phones, with the same sign, and got the same answer from each of the pastors.

Finally, he arrived in White Lake, NY, in the foothills of the Adirondacks, and, upon entering a nearby church, he saw the usual golden telephone; but this time, the sign read "25 cents a minute." Fascinated, he sought out the pastor. "Reverend," he said, "I have been all across the country and in each church, I have found this golden telephone and have been told it is a direct line to Heaven and that I could talk to God, but, in the other churches, the cost was \$10,000 a minute. Your sign reads 25 cents a minute. Why is that?" The pastor, smiling, replied,

"Son, you're in White Lake now. This is God's country...it's a local call."





**Dominick A. Paternoster**  
President 1982—1983

**W**e all know him as Dick, and he is often referred to as the Mayor of White Lake, a title he earned by spending hours going around the Lake from dock to dock chatting with fellow camp owners and discussing concerns regarding the Lake. Dick and his wife Connie were always easy to recognize, busy at work in the kitchen at Camp Russell during the annual Labor Day spaghetti dinner. Dick would be cooking and testing the spaghetti, and Connie would be busily stirring her famous sauce. Over the years, Dick has been one of the biggest supporters of the Pancake Breakfast and Annual Picnic. He was always there to assist in whatever needed to be done, and he was one of our chefs preparing the Adirondack breakfast fest that we all have enjoyed so much over the years. Regardless of how busy Dick was, he always took the time to welcome you with a warm handshake and a friendly smile.

Dick became acquainted with White Lake in 1951, while doing renovations for the owner of the camp his daughter Rachel now owns. He spent many summers enjoying the lake with his family throughout the '50s, and in 1963 he and Connie purchased Camp Edgewood.

Dick always held an interest in improving the quality of the Lake, and in the summer of 1981 was a member of the small Ad Hoc Committee that organized to campaign and rally support to prevent the State of New York from purchasing lakefront property to construct a public boat launch and picnic area. He felt very strongly that providing public access to White Lake was not in the best interest of property owners. This Committee became the foundation for the formal organization of the AWLA, and in August of 1981, Dick was elected Vice President of the new Association.

During the following winter, Dick attended numerous meetings with President Tom Watkins, learning every detail of the state's plan and plotting a course of action the Association could take to defeat it. As noted previously, Dick and Tom successfully negotiated with the Day Estate for the Association to purchase the property and personally signed a note at the bank for the money used to make the initial payment on a three-year mortgage. Dick then aggressively promoted the White Lake Subvention Certificate Program, encouraging members to invest in this worthwhile cause and promising a 13-percent return on their investment.

In August of 1982, Dick was elected President of the Association,

and, with its recent purchase of the Block 10 property and the state's plan defeated, he directed his attention to subdividing the property into individual lots. He personally plotted and laid out the lot lines, arranged to have the property surveyed and actively sought buyers for the individual lots. The Association retained ownership of one lot, and the remaining lots were subsequently sold. He not only fulfilled his promise to pay back investors but netted the Association an impressive profit that was used to establish the "Special Fund" that as of August 2005 had grown to nearly \$65,000. He then quickly organized a team of volunteers to develop the remaining lot into a private boat launch and picnic area, again stepping up to the plate to donate supplies, equipment and labor to improve the lot and overseeing the project to completion. The boat launch is still in use today and provides a pleasant venue for members to gather once a year to celebrate the Fourth of July and enjoy a wonderful picnic and an afternoon of fun and games.

Dick is a neighbor to all of us on White Lake and the kind of neighbor everyone would like to have living next door. He has always been the first to offer a helpful hand and friendly expert advice. He is one of White Lake's biggest assets and a credit to our Association. We are deeply grateful to have Dick and his family as members of the AWLA, and we appreciate the many contributions he has made to its growth.

If you happen to be on the water this summer and see Dick in the blue-and-white Maul seaplane circling the lake searching for a place to land, give him a big wave. You just might see him tipping his wings to wave back.





**Thomas P. Watkins**  
President 1981 - 1982

In 1974, Tom and his wife Shirley fell in love with a "picture perfect," eight-room cottage along the South West shoreline of White Lake. The cottage made the ideal family retreat, and the large L-shaped dock was perfectly suited for the party boat Tom later commissioned that became known around the lake for the many "Captain's Hour" parties he hosted aboard it. Tom recently recalled the many happy years he and his family spent enjoying their camp on White Lake.

When Tom was asked to provide some history regarding the early days of the AWLA, it was evident that one of his proudest moments came on August 30, 1981, when he was elected president of our newly formed Association. He knew the first year would be a challenge, and he accepted it with the same energy and confidence that brought him success in the business world. As he looked back, he referred to it as a very "fun" and "rewarding" experience. With his keen business knowledge--having headed his own corporation--and the experience he gained helping organize and establish the Maynard Fire

Department, he knew he had the *skills to guide the AWLA through* its first year. He also knew he couldn't do it alone and quickly credited the many dedicated people whom he felt honored to have worked with in those early years.

With Vice President Dick Paternoster, Secretary Ham Graziadei, Assistant Secretary Dave Bauer, Treasurer Harriet Vorhis and Attorney Norf Puleo at his side, Tom was armed and ready to counter an attempt by the New York State DEC to purchase prime lakefront property, in order to construct a public launch and provide public access to White Lake. During the next 12 months, Tom held 37 meetings with the Executive Board that produced amazing results. He also had numerous meetings with politicians, bureaucrats at all levels, bankers, lawyers and anyone else he felt could help achieve the goals of the new Association.

On one occasion, he and Dick were meeting with Norf when told the Association would have to act fast to negotiate a purchase offer for the 500 ft. of property from the Day Estate known as Block 10 before the State finalized its plan. Tom and Dick walked across the street to the Oneida National Bank, signed a personal note for \$10,000 and, with the money in hand, negotiated a sale price of \$30,000. Tom then convinced the membership to vote in favor of purchasing the property, and a closing date in August 1982 was arranged. Additional funds needed to be raised, and, under Tom's leadership, the White Lake Subvention Certificate Promotion was launched. In an ensuing three-week period, 66 individuals pledged \$40,375. Each investor was promised to be paid back in full for the principal amount plus 13 percent

interest, and, by closing, \$18,875 in cash had been raised.

Throughout his term, Tom endeavored to align the Association with the community. He appointed liaisons to work with other community organizations, including the Woodgate Fire Department, White Otter Fish and Game Club, White Lake Shores Association and the Boy Scouts of America. He also established important committees to promote Cooperation, Safety, Fiscal Accountability and Recreation; to create by-laws; to implement a Fish Stocking Program, and to oversee the environmental protection of our most valuable asset. Much more is said about these important committees elsewhere in this booklet, along with tributes to the many dedicated members of our Association who have worked on them throughout the years. These committees represent the foundation and principles on which our Association was built. As a result of their continued existence for the past 25 years, a significant and valuable contribution has been made to the betterment of White Lake and the surrounding community.

The Adirondack White Lake Association is deeply appreciative of the many memories Tom has shared with us, some of which are recorded in this booklet and all of which he has documented in two volumes of AWLA history compiled from letters, notes, minutes of meetings, newsletters, photographs, etc., that he so kindly donated to Woodgate Free Library for us all to enjoy. As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, we proudly honor Tom Watkins for his dedication and his many contributions in making this organization the success it is today. Most importantly, though, we honor him for the wonderful legacy he has provided us to celebrate.



# AWLA

## Distinguished Service Recognition

As with any organization, there are always people working behind the scenes making sure i's are dotted and t's are crossed and that everything planned has a plan. AWLA is no exception. Over the years, there are many individuals who have volunteered their services in helping to make our Association the success it is. Two of our members are noticeable standouts in terms of service longevity, having served as Officers and Board Members for a combined total of 39 years keeping the Association's gears oiled and engine running.

### We begin with Cheryl

Everyone knows Cheryl. It doesn't matter whether it was a General Meeting, Board Meeting, the Fourth of July picnic or any of the dinner functions you may have attended over the years, you always saw Cheryl at a table taking notes, greeting people as they arrived or scurrying around getting things organized and making sure everyone was served and having a good time. She is an **icon** of the Association and the person everyone depends on as the first point of contact when planning an activity or looking for answers regarding past events. Cheryl has worked hard to make AWLA the best it can be -- not for herself, but for the entire membership.

Cheryl first took up permanent residence on White Lake when she and her husband Ted purchased a lot from the Association and built their home in 1983. She became involved with the Association from the start by attending meetings and filling an important void as Secretary when the position became vacant in 1984. She immediately won the respect and admiration of the Executive Board with her expert attention to detail in taking notes and recording the minutes of the meetings. Compiling information



**Cheryl Entwistle**  
21 Years of Service

contained in this commemorative anniversary publication would not have been possible without Cheryl. Relying on memories to recall events that happened 25 years ago was not an option. Relying on Cheryl's recorded minutes of meetings was the only way to go and a true testament to her meticulous record keeping and intimate knowledge of Lake information.

Cheryl has been Secretary during 15 administrations, serving

with eight Presidents. These past Presidents will be the first to tell you how much easier their jobs were due to Cheryl's knowledge and support. Activity Chairmen know firsthand the challenge that comes with finding volunteers, ordering food and supplies, and deciding what works and doesn't work. But after consulting Cheryl for advice, anxieties are reduced to a pleasurable experience. She is always the first to volunteer, the first to arrive and the last to leave, making sure things are properly set up and properly cleaned up.

Cheryl served as Secretary of our Association for 15 years (1984 - 1999) and then went on to serve a two-year term as Vice President, a two-year term as President and currently is serving a three-year term on the Board of Directors. This impressive record of 21 years of outstanding continuous service speaks highly of Cheryl's dedication to our Association.

On this 25th anniversary, we proudly honor and congratulate Cheryl for her distinguished record and all the support she has given and contributions she has made to keeping the AWLA running smoothly.



# AWLA

## Distinguished Service Recognition



**Harriet Vorhis**  
18 Years of Service

It is difficult to attend an AWLA event such as the July Fourth picnic, spaghetti dinner or pancake breakfast and not see Harriet Vorhis in attendance, collecting entrance fees and selling sweatshirts. At member meetings, she is asking questions and offering suggestions and is undaunted in expressing her views on some of the more troubling issues brought before the Board. Accordingly, it is of no surprise that if you want to learn anything about the early history of the AWLA, Harriet is the person you want to talk with.

It was a pleasurable experience to sit on the front porch of her camp with its magnificent view overlooking White Lake as she shared with sharpest detail her memories of those early years of her involvement in the Association. She is proud of the many programs and events the Association has sponsored, especially the work of Alan Woodruff's Environmental

Committee in monitoring the water quality of the Lake and the work Joe Turczyn does with fish stocking of the lake. Her fondest memories are watching her grandchildren participating and winning trophies at the July Fourth games and seeing her dachshund, Gretel, win the "Girls 12 and Under" category in the water-ski competition for completing a full run on a surfboard without wiping out.

*"The AWLA has meant a lot to me over the years. I have met so many people, and White Lake is a real community to me. The boat launch and picnic facilities have facilitated many wonderful picnics and opportunities for people to get together."*

Harriet was introduced to the Lake in the late 1940s when she and her husband Fred would visit her brother, Dr. Robert Cross, a long-time camp owner on the Lake. For years Harriet and her family would travel from Ohio to spend a vacation enjoying the peace and quiet of White Lake while renting Camp Utley. It wasn't until 1968 that Harriet and Fred purchased property on the Lake, becoming proud owners and caretakers of Camp Idlewhile in Dominie Bay, the oldest camp on the lake. They later purchased the adjacent Camp Shamrock property, reuniting the parcel originally owned by Samuel Russell.

Harriet is an astute, articulate woman who never backs down from a challenge. She became involved with the Association at the first meeting held on August 30, 1981, in the Dining Hall of Camp Russell, when Marilyn Thomas nominated her to be the first Treasurer of the organization. Shortly afterward, the Subvention Certificate Program was launched to raise money for the

purchase of the "Block 10 Property." Sixty-six individuals participated in the program, with an average investment of \$500 - \$1000 each. As the newly elected Treasurer, Harriet was responsible for accepting the funds and issuing the Certificates. For the next four years, Harriet issued interest checks on the annual date of receipt of money at an interest rate of up to 13 percent. Money to pay the interest came from membership dues and from the eventual sale of a lot to the White Lake Shores Association. Upon the sale of the remaining properties, all Subvention Certificates were paid off, remaining money was invested and Harriet became keeper of "The Fund."

As Treasurer, Harriet also managed the Fish Fund money, arranged for dinner locations for the Annual Meeting dinners, collected dues, paid bills and managed the finances of the Association. Harriet was the first keeper of the "Store," housing and selling t-shirts, sweatshirts and the limited-edition 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary White Lake mugs. After serving as Treasurer for 10 years, she continued to be an active Board member for an additional eight.

At age 87, Harriet spends her summers at Camp Idlewhile, spring and fall in Rochester and winters in Arizona. She continues her income tax business, plays bridge at every opportunity and remains actively involved in the Association. The AWLA proudly salutes Harriet for her 18 years of combined service with the Association as Treasurer and Board Member, her many accomplishments and the vital contributions she has made to keeping the Association up and running for the past 25 years



## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Every year, Alan Woodruff, known to most of us as Spike, submits his annual report to the Board of Directors regarding the water quality of White Lake. In June of 1983, Spike was appointed Chairman of the Environmental Committee and by September submitted his first detailed report informing the Board that his committee had dye tested the septic systems of 130 camps. Only three camps refused to participate in the volunteer program, and no color was observed in the lake from any of the tests conducted. Recently Spike was asked to provide information regarding projects the Environmental Committee has undertaken during the past 25 years, and he shared the following:

During our first couple of years, Marion Cross, Bob Seager, Marilyn Thomas and Harriet Vorhis worked with me putting dye tablets down toilets and sinks. There were three locations where access was denied, but the remainder tested favorably. Our next endeavor was purchasing a pH meter to check the acidity/alkalinity of White Lake, as well as that of nearby bodies of water. Being largely spring-fed, White Lake has always tested favorably here with the lowest (most acidic) reading coming from the small feeder stream at the north end. Lisa Druke has taken the lead in these checks in recent years.

Bacteria tests of chilled samples at a laboratory are done from two different Lake locations annually, usually during the week following Labor Day. These results are favorable enough to rate White Lake water as Class A (with AA being the cleanest). Please note that the Oneida County Health Department recommends using an approved treatment method on any lake water to be consumed. This is probably as high a rating as can be expected in a lake with considerable human contact.

In 2001, we enrolled in a water-testing program with the Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks. Analysis is done at the Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's College on samples collected on three dates about a month apart by AWLA volunteers. Areas such as pH, transparency, dissolved oxygen, chlorides, conductivity and algae present are checked.

Each year, White Lake has been listed as "oligotrophic," the cleanest of three possible ratings. Our two below-average results are in chlorides and conductivity, both probably caused by road salt use on Route 28 during the winter. Copies of our complete reports since 2001 are at the Woodgate Free Library.

Working with me on our present environmental committee are Jean Carley and Lisa Druke, with Liz Niemetz serving as our boat chauffeur, as needed. Claude Smith and Charlie Graff also have transported lake sample checkers in the past. From time to time, I will be contacted regarding situations that are suspected as being a threat to the cleanliness of White Lake water. Sunken boats, proposed septic systems in questionable locations, requests for a dye test, the use of soap in the lake, etc., are examples. If the question is something the Committee and I cannot handle, the proper authorities are contacted.

— Alan Woodruff

Spike is still Chairman of the Environmental Committee, and on this 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary it's a great comfort to the members of the AWLA to know that he and his Committee are keeping a vigilant eye over White Lake and constantly checking for pollutants and hazards that could upset its ecological balance. We extend our thanks and deepest appreciation for the dedicated service of its members and the contributions the Environmental Committee has made in helping to preserve the water quality of White Lake.



## THE FIRST WHITE LAKE REGATTA

*The following is an account of the first White Lake Regatta compiled from a recent interview with Tom Watkins.*

**I**n February 1982, President Tom Watkins and his wife Shirley met with Dan and Connie Lyman for dinner in Syracuse to begin planning the First White Lake Regatta. The event was being planned for the July Fourth weekend of the following year. Dan and Connie were excited to serve as Chairs of the event and began to jot down a list of fun activities the whole family could enjoy.



The weekend started Saturday morning at 11 with the "Blessing of the Fleet" at the docks of Camp Russell. Tom Watkins had borrowed a loud speaker and had it mounted to the bow of his boat. A local priest was on hand to give a short sermon, offer a prayer for a safe summer and bless a fleet of 85 boats gathered offshore. Tom then led the boats as they proceeded around the Lake in single file for White Lake's first Boat Parade. Horns were blowing and music was playing, and the boats were all decorated in red, white and blue ribbons to represent the Fourth of July and colorful Christmas decorations to represent a "Christmas in July" theme. This was the beginning of a tradition that would continue for the next 25 years.

The parade ended in Purgatory Bay, where the White Lake Shores Association graciously volunteered the use of Beach "A" to accommodate the gathering. Members of the White Lake Shores Association were invited, and one of the largest crowds ever turned out for a good old-fashioned Fourth of July family picnic. There were "all you could eat" hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, soda and draft beer, and all for only \$1 per person. There is no official count on record as to the number of people that were present; however, Harriet Vorhis's Treasurer's Report dated August 21, 1982, shows the Regatta Receipts came to \$517, indicating as many as 500 people could have attended. There were events for the younger children, including the famous peanut hunt, pie-eating contest, balloon-stomping contest, and ending with the ever-popular egg-throwing contest in which young and old alike competed for the trophy. While all this was going on, swim races were being held and a waterskiing competition was taking place in Second Lake, providing an afternoon of fun and excitement for the many participants and the spectators watching from shore and from boats anchored in the water.



After the picnic, families returned to their camps to decorate for the after-dark shoreline flare lighting and camp-decorating contest promoting a "Christmas in July" theme. It was a sight to see when at 9 p.m. the 39 camps that participated lighted the flares and turned on the lights to their docks and camp displays. The events continued into the next day with canoe races and sailboat races at Camp Russell in the morning and ending with an awards ceremony at the docks in the late afternoon. Everyone chipped in to help out, and Dan and Connie Lyman did a superb job as Chairs. "We sure knew how to throw a party and have a good time," Dan said.



# FISH COMMITTEE

## ARE THERE FISH IN WHITE LAKE

"The good news is there are plenty of fish in White Lake," says Joe Turczyn in his annual report to the AWLA Board of Directors. He should know, having been involved with the Association's Fish Stocking Program for the past 25 years and Chairman of the Fish Stocking Committee since 1989. On a good day, if you ask Joe how many fish are in the Lake, he'll jovially respond with a pause, lick his finger and impishly point it to the air and authoritatively tell you the exact number. On a *really* good day, he'll even give you the names of all the legendary lakers. What he won't tell you, however, is where they all are, unless of course you happen to be working on his Committee and see where they're stocked each year. Thanks to Joe and his predecessors, Charles Gaetano and Romaine Gallo, the AWLA Fish Stocking Program is one of our Association's most successful activities. What makes the program even more impressive is that it's almost entirely financed by the many fund-raising activities held by the Association throughout the year and from private donations.

Prior to 1981 the NYS DEC would periodically stock the lake, but it curtailed the program with the controversy surrounding the lack of public access to its waters. On August 30, 1981, President Tom Watkins appointed Charles Gaetano to serve as the first Chairman of the Fish Committee and less than four weeks later, 6,000 5- to 7-inch rainbow trout were placed in the lake and another 1,000 the following May. This was made possible through the fund-raising efforts of the Fish Committee that resulted in pledges from 35 individuals amounting to \$2,745. In August of 1982, Romaine Gallo took over as Chairman and recommended to the Executive Board that the Association refrain from any further fish stocking until he could establish a program that would be most beneficial to the Lake. He enlisted the help of Dr. Webster, Director of Fish Management at Cornell University, to seek advice concerning a Fish Management Plan for White Lake. He was hoping that White Lake could be included in a Federally sponsored study that would involve an extensive biological survey of the lake to qualify



Joe and Cheryl  
Selling raffle tickets for Fish Fund

it for a Federal grant to stock it. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, preliminary testing of the lake revealed a pH level of 6.9, indicating the waters are neutral and most desirable for fish. The Federal study was to include lakes that were already acidified. The Executive Board eventually decided to implement a program that would introduce approximately 1,000 fish a year into the lake at a size of 9 inches or larger, which would increase

the chance of survivability and provide excellent angling.

The Association resumed fish stocking in the spring of 1985 with 1000 rainbow trout and has continued at this rate every year since. In the 25 years of its existence, the Fish Committee has been responsible for stocking White Lake with nearly 28,000 rainbow trout at a cost of \$34,000, with most of this money raised by the Committee. The figures are impressive and, thanks to the dedicated work of the Fish Committee, this flagship program has greatly enhanced the ecological balance and recreational use of White Lake that we all so much enjoy.

Joe is often kidded that the new rainbows his Committee introduces to the lake each year provide tasty hors d'oeuvres for the big lakers to feed on, but he quickly responds by stating the new fish are too large and smart. Not so. Just ask T.J. Entwistle what he found when he netted a laker in distress floundering near the surface of the water several years back.

*So Joe, how many fish are in the lake today?*

*"153,235 and they're mostly the Stealth variety with lure-evading radar systems...the high-tech strain. There are also plenty of lunkers in the Lake, with Loc Ness Laker still reigning as king, along with his sidekick Rainbow Reilly. Also don't forget Billy Bass, Bullhead Bob, Bluegill Betty and the ever-popular schools of Piko Perch."*

*"Oops! Make that 153,234. Old Scar Face Laker just ate slowpoke Al Basso."*



## LAKE LEVEL COMMITTEE



**Dick Paternoster and his team of "Beaver Men"**

Jim Fisher, far left back, Bob Lobbett, right side, Bob Olney, operator, Ted Entwistle and Dick Paternoster foreground and several others unidentified. Dan Lyman is taking the picture.

**T**he Lake Level Committee was established in the spring of 1982 in response to complaints by property owners that the fluctuating water level of White Lake was creating problems in maneuvering boats into docks and boathouses. Dick Paternoster was appointed Chairman of the Committee, and over the next several months he met with officials at DEC and engineers at the New York State Canal Department. He spent hours reviewing old maps and canal records dating back to 1895, trying to establish a water elevation that would be acceptable to everyone. He reported his findings to the Executive Board and included a recommendation that the existing beaver dam be demolished and the old steel beam serving as a makeshift dam be removed. He also recommended that a new dam be constructed to an elevation that would be determined based on historic data provided by the New York State Canal Department. The Board granted approval and Dan Lyman obtained the necessary permits from DEC allowing Dick and his team of "Beaver Men," as they become known, to remove the beaver dam and open up the outlet channel. Little did he realize that this would be the beginning of a five-year battle against Mother Nature, vandals and the bureaucratic nightmare of DEC.

Throughout the following winter, Dick continued to study old records. He eventually found a survey notebook with an entry dated May 25, 1880, recording the water surface elevation of White Lake and another 1924 entry showing it to be three inches lower. Dick chose the latter as the elevation for the new dam. During the first week of May 1983, Dick and his team installed wood stakes at several locations around the lake and near the outlet to mark and monitor the water elevation. They discovered three weeks later that the water level was eight inches lower, further confirming

the need for a new dam. Temporary measures were undertaken to restore the water level to the 1924 elevation and Dick consulted Dr. Webster, Director of the Fish Management Program at Cornell University, for advice and recommendations for a permanent solution that not only would regulate the water level but provide a barrier preventing the newly stocked fish from migrating down the outlet channel.

It was discovered in June of 1983 that the temporary dam installed the previous summer had been tampered with, and Dick arranged to meet with DEC, several times in an attempt to arrive at a solution. DEC, still smarting from their defeat over the boat launch issue, offered little in the way of help. In the ensuing five years, meetings and negotiations with DEC continued, hearings were held, petitions presented, vandals dealt with, beaver dams removed and summonses issued by DEC to four of our members for performing unauthorized work at the dam. In the end, DEC finally agreed to drop all charges against our members, accepted Dick's simple plan for a new dam and issued a permit for its construction. On October 3, 1987, a very cold team of Beaver Men consisting of Dick, Bob and Glen Wilkerson, Bill Gaetano, Bob Olney, Gary Roseboom, Charlie Wellar Jr., John Kraeger, Ted Entwistle, Carl Cuccaro, Joe Kinville, Neal Rothfuss, and Mike LaGrange completed the installation of granite slabs across the outlet. Thanks to Dick, common sense eventually prevailed and Dick not only won the battle but the respect and admiration of his fellow Beaver Men and the entire Association membership.

To the comfort of lakeshore owners, Dick is still the Chairman of the Lake Level Committee, and his team of Beaver Men continue to maintain a watchful eye on the dam, keeping a constant lookout for beaver activity and vandals.

### FIRST FISH STOCKING



In September, 1981, 6,000, 5"-7" Rainbow Trout where placed in White Lake by the Fish Committee.

**Tom Watkins and Dick Paternoster** shown placing the first bucket.

Another 1,000 fish were planned for the following spring to complete the first fish-stocking project.



## Camp Russell has been Serving Scouting Youth Since 1918

By Alan Woodruff

Samuel T. Russell, a Herkimer County industrialist and a pioneer property owner on White Lake, was in Boston on business around 1915 and having a problem finding his destination due to foggy weather. Russell was approached by a boy offering help who took him there and then refused a tip because he was a Boy Scout doing a daily good turn.

This incident caused Mr. Russell to investigate the Scouting movement, which had started in the United States in 1910. In 1917, he invited about a dozen Boy Scouts from Ilion to camp for a week on his White Lake property. Their enthusiasm at the experience inspired Russell to create a Boy Scout camp on the lake, which started in 1918 with the donation of 15 acres. Several land donations followed, and the Camp Russell of today comprises approximately 45 acres adjacent to White Lake, the largest island on the lake, and more than 300 acres on the other side of Route 28.

Camp Russell is currently administered by the Revolutionary Trails Boy Scout Council, which serves youth in Herkimer, Madison and Oneida counties, as well as many units from farther away that attend the camp each summer. In addition to the in-camp experience, participants are sent on canoeing, backpacking and high-peak treks each week as Camp Russell conducts a six-week summer season. During the winter, the grounds and some of the buildings are utilized by Scout units for weekend and vacation outings under their own leadership.

In recent years, a "Learning for Life" program has resulted in elementary students from many area schools coming to Camp Russell for a day in the spring or fall and participating in a number of stations designed to encourage problem-solving and/or provide an outdoor experience. This program has had as many participants as the summer camp weeks have had.

A 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary **Commemorative Program and History Book**, printed in 1993 and giving a more detailed history of Camp Russell, is available for study at the Woodgate Free Library



**Early Waterfront 1924**  
An early waterfront scene at Camp Russell. Notice the wooden boats and the icehouse across the lake.



# AWLA 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION

### **John Ferguson**

16 Years of Service

Board of Directors	1990 - 1993
Treasurer	1993 - 2006

### **Howard Turner**

11 Years of Service

Corresponding Secretary	1990 - 1991
President	1994 - 1996
Board of Directors	1996 - 2002
Vice President	2003 - 2005

### **Ted Entwistle**

11 Years of Service

President	1990 - 1992
Board of Directors	1992 - 1995
Corresponding Secretary	1995 - 2001

One of the near-impossible tasks encountered in compiling information for this booklet was attempting to list and give individual recognition to the many volunteers who have done so much to make the picnics, breakfasts, dinners and other social events so much fun to attend and be a part of. This includes the many organizers, cooks, food preparers, clean-up crews and, of course, the many children who have helped over the years serving pancakes and running errands. It quickly becomes apparent that the list would be long and – worse yet – someone would inadvertently be left out. When you browse through newsletters, bulletins and meeting minutes we have on file thanks to Cheryl, you discover that written recognition was often given in terms of a “Thanks to the many volunteers that helped make the event a success.” The size of the volunteer network we are fortunate to have is what has made the AWLA successful for 25 years. In addition to the many Officers who have served, the long list of volunteers, the committee Chairmen previously mentioned and the many people who have worked on those committees, the following people have made especially significant contributions to our Association. The Anniversary Committee extends our deepest apologies to those who may have been inadvertently omitted and gives our heartfelt thanks to:

**Dan Zaglaniczny** for providing the hundreds of trophies awarded over the years to the winners of the competitions at the Fourth of July Games. **Jack Dimpleby** for the many years of providing docking facilities for the Sheriff's Patrol Boat. **Cheryl Entwistle** and **Barbara Rothfuss** for compiling the Membership Directory and keeping it updated. **Spike Woodruff** for the many picnics he spent standing on the dock with his bull-horn running the swim and canoe races. **Alice Smith** and **Harriet Vorhis** for managing the store. The **Evans Family** for supplying the refrigeration unit and beer cooler for the picnic over the years. **Jo Clark** at the Stumble Inn for assisting with the purchase and storage of food and beverages. **Carl Cuccaro** for his many years of being the gate keeper at the boat launch. **Ted Entwistle** for the many years spent putting in and taking out the buoys. **Rick Volp** for running the Fishing Derby each year. **Gregory** and **Danielle Mazuy** at White Lake Lodges for donating the sausage to the annual Pancake Breakfast. **Dan Lyman** for running the Sail Boat Races we used to have. **John Ferguson** and **Howard Turner** for building the picnic tables and getting the boat launch site ready for the picnics. **Jim Fisher** and **Bob Thomas** for the water ski competitions that we all enjoyed. **Dick Chwazik**, **Dick Paternoster**, **Dan Lyman**, **Ted Entwistle** and **Bob Wilkerson** for the initial site work at the boat launch and for the many repairs made to the dock. **Joe Turczyn** for keeping the map of White Lake updated and bringing us into the new millennium with his newest “High Tech” version.

Thanks also to the Woodgate Free Library, Woodgate Volunteer Fire Department, Woodgate Community Hall, White Otter Fish and Game Club and Camp Russell for being so gracious and providing us with great facilities for our meetings and gatherings.