FALL NEWSLETTER

Fall 2026 *Protecting Lake Placid Water Quality Since 1893*



Photo provided by Fred Jubitz

SOA PRESIDENT'S LETTER -Roger Smith

Dear SOA Members,

The Lake gets noticeably quieter after Labor Day. While the foliage builds toward its peak in late September and early October, many camps are still active, and it's common to see smoke rising from chimneys on cold days. By mid-October, most of the leaves have fallen, and boat traffic is largely limited to contractors and caretakers. The 2026 Lake season is over.

This seems like a good moment to take stock of where we are, what we have accomplished, and where we need to improve.

One measure of our success is membership. At our August Board meeting, Treasurer Cristina Lussi reported that we had reached 190 members for the first time. This is a terrific achievement, reflecting many years of effort by Cristina and Membership Chair Julianne Bertagna. We are both retaining longtime members and attracting new ones.

There is also good news on the water quality front. In 2022, 648 invasive plants were found and removed from the Lake. In 2026, that number dropped to just 15. This is remarkable progress. On the septic front, we have made headway with tighter regulations, better enforcement, and increased cooperation from our members. We also have an engaged Board whose members contribute considerable time and energy to the SOA. There is much to be pleased about.

These accomplishments reflect the commitment and generosity of our members. As we look ahead to 2027, I encourage you to join me in making a tax deductible gift to the SOA Lake Placid Clean Water Fund through the Adirondack Community Foundation. Your contributions help us protect the Lake, strengthen our community, and sustain the work that has produced such encouraging results. You will find information on how to contribute on page 4 of this newsletter.

Despite this progress, there is still much work to do. We can learn from the governance practices of other lake associations, including Upper Saranac and Lake George. Some septic systems are still not being regularly pumped or inspected. We continue to see boats operating at night with inadequate or no navigation lights. These are reminders that protecting the Lake and the interests of our community requires sustained attention. We should celebrate our progress without losing sight of the challenges ahead.

One final topic. I have always been fascinated by the history of the Lake. As a boy, I would read our collection of historic SOA guidebooks. I recently discovered that four boxes of SOA materials are housed in the rare book library at Columbia University. They are part of the papers of E. R. A. Seligman, a distinguished Columbia professor, influential tax policy expert, and, remarkably, President of the SOA for 36 years! He died at his Lake Placid camp in 1939.

A few others in the SOA have known about this potential treasure trove of our history, but, as far as I can tell, nobody has ever examined these boxes. That is about to change. In November, I plan to visit Columbia, enter the special collections reading room, and spend four hours exploring their contents. Who knows what I might discover?

Stay tuned for the next installment of this story!

Warm regards,
Roger

SOA Committee Chairs

Water Quality & Lake Health	Kip Testwuide
Waterfowl & Fish Health	Deanna Donnelly
Membership	Julianne Bertagna
Communications	Fred Jubitz
Nominating	Nancy Begier
Social Events	Roger Smith
Boat Safety	Liz Wolford
Navigation	Liz Wolford
Dam & Property Management	Keith Olsen
Septic Pump out	Lendy Barnard
Finance	Cristina Lussi
Development	Roger Smith
Government & External Relations	Roby Politi
Legal	Janet Bliss
Administration	Deanna Donnelly
Benchmarking & Lake Assoc Rep	Jeff Shanahan



Photo provided by Fred Jubitz



Mark your Calendars!

Lake Trout Stocking in May 2027!



As announced at the SOA Annual Meeting on August 8, we are excited to launch a new program to participate in the annual Lake Placid lake trout stocking!

With the support of the NYSDEC Fisheries and Wildlife Division and Zach Horrocks, local fishing guide and lake expert, we are developing a program to help distribute trout to some of Lake Placid's healthiest habitats.

Traditionally, trout have been released at the NYS boat launch, a practice dating back to the 1940s. Our goal is to enhance this effort by transporting the trout to designated locations throughout the lake, hopefully improving their habitat, health, and longevity.

Stocking typically takes place on or around May 15, with approximately two weeks' notice of the date. On stocking day, volunteers will meet the tanker at the launch and use barges, guide boats, and private boats to transport the trout in 5- and 30-gallon barrels to designated locations.

We already have 16 volunteers, two barges, guide boats, and private pontoon boats, but there's room for more!

You can volunteer with your own boat or join another volunteer's boat. If you'll be in town in mid-to-late May and would like to help, please contact Ashleah, the SOA Administrator, at soalakeplacid@gmail.com.

Many thanks!
Deanna Donnelly

OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

OFFICERS

Roger Smith
President
Kip Testwuide
Vice President
Cristina Lussi
Treasurer
Lendy Barnard
Secretary

TRUSTEES

Nancy Begier
Julianne Bertagna
Kevin Bette
Janet Bliss
Deanna Donnelly
Fred Jubitz
Ashley Kasperzak
Jaideep Khanna
Keith Olsen
Roby Politi
Jeffrey Shanahan
Tom Walden IV
Elizabeth Wolford

HONORARY TRUSTEES

Georgia Jones

ADMINISTRATION

Ashleah Mayberry

www.lpsoa.org

WELCOME

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

This year we welcomed the following new shore owners to membership in the SOA:

Nate Bette, #279 Camp Blue Heron
Carol & Robert Feldmeier, #103 Woodlands II on the Lake
Katherine Hunt, #273 Nearcliff
Chris McKown, #234 Camp Theanogran
Charlie & Deb Muller, #12 Antler Ridge
Catherine & Michael Petrosino, #96 Camp Balsam
Sarah & Oliver Smith, #240 Camp Black Hawk

Membership Report

Members by Year

Dues 2022 Final	160
Dues 2023 Final	154
Dues 2024 Final	184
Dues 2025 Final	180
Dues 2026 YTD	190

As of today, 190 individuals have submitted their SOA membership dues. Thank you for your continued support! Membership dues directly support the administration of the SOA's mission to protect the ecology, water quality, and scenic beauty of Lake Placid.

Membership numbers naturally fluctuate from year to year due to property sales, the passing of members, newly developed lots, and changes in contact information. Julianne Bertagna, our Membership Chair, is up for the challenge of growing our membership and welcoming new members.

If you would like to renew your membership, rejoin the SOA, or know of a potential membership opportunity, please contact Ashleah, SOA Administrator, at soalakeplacid@gmail.com.

Background Photo provided by A. Mayberry



Photo provided by Fred Jubitz

Remember our Lake in your Year End Giving

Ongoing support of many years has helped us preserve and maintain the quality of the Lake Placid. Programs such as the Invasive Species provide for lake stewards who monitor incoming boats and educate boaters as well as financing the divers who remove milfoil. In addition, the lake is monitored for clarity and bacteria on an annual basis. We have also successfully worked with the Town of North Elba to provide increased mandatory inspections of all septic systems before any transfer of property is possible. Our efforts to ensure clean drinking water is a high priority. So we provide septic pump out via complimentary use of the barge each summer available to all lake homeowners. Our programs also cover the maintenance of the Dam which has recently undergone a major rehabilitation. All of this is possible given your past support.

We encourage you to make Lake Placid part of your annual year end giving practice. Thank you in advance for your annual donations which are tax deductible through the Adirondack Foundation

Donations may be made in a variety of ways: Online, by Mail or by the QR code below

1. Click “Donate” button on the SOA Website: www.lpsoa.org,

2. Mail a check payable to:

Adirondack Community Foundation
Memo: SOA Lake Placid Clean Water Fund
PO Box 288
Lake Placid, NY 12946

3. Scan the QR code To Donate

Donations to the Fund are also eligible for Employee Matching Gift Programs.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to protecting the lake we all cherish.

Water Quality & Lake Health Report 2026 Update

Protecting Lake Placid's exceptional water quality remains the SOA's highest priority. Our programs focus on controlling aquatic invasive species, preventing new introductions, encouraging responsible septic system maintenance, and monitoring the overall health of the lake.

A Remarkable Success Story in Invasive Species Control

Our efforts to control variable-leaf milfoil have produced extraordinary results. In 2022, divers removed 648 invasive plants from Lake Placid. By 2026, that number had fallen to just 15 plants — a reduction of nearly 98%.

Even more impressive, the total weight of plants removed has declined from nearly 1,800 pounds in 2019 to just 3 pounds in 2026.

In August, the Upper Saranac Foundation conducted a comprehensive survey of the entire lake's nearshore areas. No invasive plants were found outside Paradox Bay, where the infestation has remained contained.

These achievements reflect five years of sustained investment by the SOA in partnership with the Upper Saranac Foundation's Aquatic Invasive Dive Team. The program is also becoming more efficient, requiring fewer diver hours as the infestation declines.

While our ultimate goal is eradication, we are not there yet. Continued monitoring and targeted removal will be essential to prevent the infestation from returning.

Preventing New Invasive Species

The Lake Steward Program, operated by the Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's College, continues to protect Lake Placid through boat inspections and boater education at both public launches.

-Kip Testwuide, Water Quality Committee Chair

In 2025, more than 4,000 boats were inspected, with aquatic invasive species found on 21 boats. Activity in 2026 remained similar, and stewards reported significant improvements in boater awareness and cooperation.

This program provides an important first line of defense against new invasive species entering the lake.

Septic Systems and Water Quality Monitoring

The SOA continues to support responsible septic system maintenance, including regular pump-outs, and works with local officials to strengthen septic regulations and enforcement.

Going forward we need to be aware that the runoff of nutrients from cleared shorelines combined with greater boat-caused disruption of the lake bed can amplify the risk that harmful algal blooms could occur, even in our relatively deep lake. The SOA is exploring ways to provide education on how this risk arises and what shore owners and boaters can do to help mitigate it.

The SOA is working together with the New York DEC and the Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation to monitor the lake's fish and wildlife populations. Specifically, native lake trout and loons serve as important indicator species for the quality of water as well as the overall local biosphere.

We also continue our involvement in the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP), water testing. Together, these efforts support our understanding of the lake's health and help identify emerging concerns.

Update: Town of North Elba Septic System Inspection Laws

-Rick Preston, NE Town Supervisor

At the SOA Annual Meeting North Elba Town Supervisor Rick Preston provided an update on recent amendments to local laws governing septic tank enforcement. The purpose of the amendments was not to create an entirely new inspection program, but to clarify existing requirements, strengthen the Town's ability to conduct inspection, establish additional procedures for property transfers, clarify the responsibilities of property owners and provide the Code Enforcement Office with additional tools.

In the past year, the Town made the decision to retain an independent engineering firm Suozzo, Doty and Associates. The firm's responsibilities include review of proposed septic system installations, review of septic system repairs, providing engineering expertise during septic system inspections and advising the Code Enforcement Office when technical expertise is necessary.

The 2025 amendments reinforce requirements that were already contained in the law. Routine Inspections for seasonal properties are required every five years and year-round residences: Every three years. An inspection may be required when there is reason to believe a septic system is not functioning properly. New requirements include an inspection prior to closing on the transfer of property.

A property transfer may proceed without an immediate inspection under certain circumstances, such as when the time of year is not conducive to conducting an inspection, a qualified engineer is unavailable, or other circumstances make a pre-closing inspection impractical.

However, the buyer and seller must enter into a written, legally binding agreement prior to closing. The agreement must require the new owner to apply for and arrange the inspection within a timeframe specified by the Code Enforcement Office, ensure that any deficiencies identified during the inspection are corrected, and establish that both the buyer and seller are jointly and severally liable for satisfactory performance of the agreement.

The amended law also provides greater clarity regarding what may be required as part of an inspection. The inspector, in consultation with the engineer, may require septic tank pump-out, dye testing or both. These procedures may be prescribed and are the responsibility of the owner before the inspection, during the inspection, or after the inspector/engineer has been on site.

The amendments recognize the authority of Code Enforcement personnel, and the Town's engineer to enter property for purposes of conducting a required septic inspection; or investigating a septic system where there is reasonable cause to believe the system may not be functioning properly.

Supervisor Preston requested residents, property owners, realtors, attorneys, contractors and other members of the community can help identify potential violations. He encouraged everyone to report suspected septic problems, report potential land-use violations and contact Code Enforcement when they observe activity that appears to be out of compliance.



Photo provided by Roger Smith

Memorial Tribute:

Bradford Lees Divine

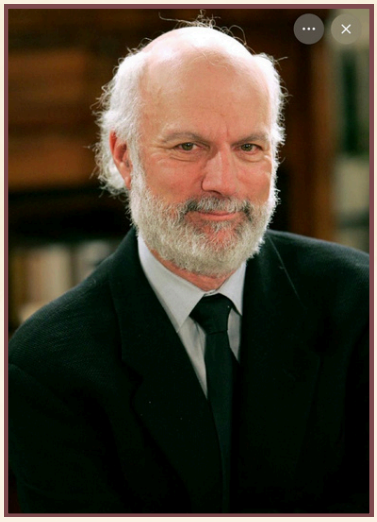


Bradford Lees Divine passed away on October 16, 2026, at his home in Barneveld, NY. Lees was born in Utica, New York and graduated from New Hartford High School in 1955 and graduated from Union College where he met his wife of 66 years Susan "Susie" Walden. Lees also served the US Army as a cryptographer with the 11th Airborne Division in Augsburg, Germany.

Lees began his career with Divine Brothers Company in 1961. He became President of Divine Brothers and Munson Machinery in 1970 where he continued to expand his family's business until retirement. He was the third generation of the Divine family in the business and now his children are carrying on his life's legacy. Active in community affairs, he was a member of the Young Presidents' Club and served as President of the Industrial Association of the Mohawk Valley, President of the YMCA Board of Directors, Vice President of SABA (School and Business Alliance), and President of the Shore Owners' Association of Lake Placid. Lees also served as Village Clerk of Barneveld and was a founding member of Indian Hill Ski Club and the Kuyahoora Yacht Club.

Lees's passion was Camp St Armand on the west shore of Lake Placid, where he spent his summers since 1947 enjoying his boats, water skiing, hiking, and all that the Adirondacks had to offer. He loved sharing the camp and the beauty of Lake Placid with his family, friends, his own dogs, and his friends' dogs. His love for the camp and the Adirondacks has been passed down to all his grandchildren. In the winter, Lees enjoyed skiing and spending time at his and Susie's home in Naples FL.

Memorial Tribute:



Jim Burrows

Jimmy Burrows passed away on June 19, 2026. A legendary figure in television sitcoms, Jimmy created *Cheers* and directed more than 1,000 episodes of that series, along with numerous television classics, including *Frasier, Friends, The Big Bang Theory, The Bob Newhart Show, Will & Grace, Taxi,* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show.*

Jimmy grew up immersed in the world of Manhattan theater as the son of Broadway playwright and director Abe Burrows. He attended New York's High School of Music and Art, Oberlin College, and the Yale School of Drama. After graduating, he began his career as an assistant stage manager for Breakfast at Tiffany's, a short-lived 1966 musical featuring Mary Tyler Moore. Following several years directing at dinner theaters, Jimmy recognized that television sitcoms—with their roots in live stage performance—could be the perfect outlet for his talents.

In 1974, he wrote to Mary Tyler Moore asking for an opportunity to work at her production company, MTM, which produced her hit television show. That opportunity helped launch an extraordinary career that would shape American television comedy for decades.

Jimmy and his wife, Debbie, first came to Lake Placid in the summers to watch their daughter compete in the Lake Placid Horse Shows. They fell in love with the area and eventually purchased a home on Lake Placid. Known for his quick wit and wonderful sense of humor, Jimmy was always generous in sharing a laugh with his friends and neighbors on the Lake.

Jimmy is survived by his wife, Debbie; four daughters, Kat, Ellie, Maggie, and Paris; and seven grandchildren.

May his memory be a blessing.

Memorial Tribute:

Charles "Chuck" Damp III



Charles E "Chuck" Damp III passed away on June 13, 2026. Chuck graduated from Northwood School in 1975 where he became class president and captain of the football team. After a brief stint in college, Chuck went to work in the family insurance office and eventually became owner of The Wilkins Agency which he and his wife Ruth ran together for more than 30 years. Over the years he was active in the PIA (Professional Insurance Agents) and was awarded Professional Insurance Agent of the year 1992.

Chuck and Ruth renovated an old school house and turned it into a home where they raised their son Chase. He was a devoted father and grandfather to Sutton and Sawyer. Chuck lived his life by the quote "Sail fast, live slow." Every summer for many years, he sailed his father's old blue boat at the family camp Loch Hame. It was his favorite place on earth to be.

He loved to cook, plan parties and was known to be an incredible dancer. He was active in the community serving as North Elba Town Councilman where he helped to develop the lacrosse fields near the airport. He also was part of the team that won Saranac Lake the designation of All American City. For over twenty years, Chuck was a strong advocate for the rail trail, working with state and local individuals to bring that to life. He also volunteered with Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, helping elders to age in place with friendship and love. Both he and Ruth were active at the Methodist Church where he trimmed trees or assisted Ruth with church events and the food bank.

Memorial Tribute:

William R. Berkley



William R. Berkley passed on June 9, 2026 in Greenwich CT. Bill was the middle of three brothers and lost his father in an airplane crash at age 11. After losing his father he became determined to be self-sufficient, selling biscuits door to door, working in a local supermarket, and running a paper route. These early experiences instilled the work ethic, entrepreneurial drive, and perseverance that defined his life and career.

A determined student, Mr. Berkley attended New York University on a full-tuition scholarship graduating in just three years. While earning his MBA at Harvard Business School, he founded his first investment advisory firm, managing $10 million in assets by the time he graduated. He later established W. R. Berkley Corporation, taking the company public in 1973 and building it into a Fortune 500 Company and one of the nation's leading commercial insurance organizations, with more than 50 successful insurance businesses.

While working at Berkley he met his wife Marjorie. Together they raised daughters Lisa Berkley, Lauren Berkley Saunders and son William "Rob" Berkley Jr. Bill and his family enjoyed Lake Placid and his Camp Kahuna. He often could be seen sitting on his front porch summer evenings enjoying the lake. He and Marjorie supported many local organizations including the Lake Placid Horse Shows and the SOA Lake Placid Clean Water Fund.

Bill and Marjorie established the Berkley Family Foundation, which supports initiatives in education, healthcare, and the environment. Bill was also deeply involved with NYU, serving as Chairman of the University's Board of Trustees and holding leadership positions with NYU Stern, NYU Langone Health, and the President's Global Council.

His philanthropic contributions included the Berkley Achievement Scholarships, providing tuition-free education for NYU Stern students; the NYU Promise, which eliminated tuition for students from families earning less than $100,000; and the Berkley Institute for Civil Discourse and Civic Solutions.

His philanthropy also included a landmark $25 million gift to Georgetown University's School of Nursing.

Memorial Tribute:

Marjorie Rehm Nohowel



Marjorie Rehm Nohowel passed away surrounded by family at her home on May 5, 2026, at the age of 98. Marjorie was born on August 23, 1927, in Minneapolis to William and Ella Rehm. Being the daughter of a U.S. Army Officer, she was educated in 16 different schools in this country and Europe. She graduated first in her class with an Associate Arts degree from Mt. Vernon College, Washington, DC.

Marjorie was married to Oscar D. Nohowel in Berlin, Germany, until his passing in 1987. She later married Vincent T. Wasilewski in 1992, and they remained together until his passing in 1999. Marjorie will forever be remembered as a great hostess with her husband, Oscar as they welcomed guests in their homes for special celebrations and delicious meals. Whether it be her residence in Bethesda, MD, Lake Placid, NY or Vero Beach. FL - her dinner table was endlessly expandable, and the room was always filled with warmth, laughter and great stories.

She had a great love of Lake Placid. First, she and Oscar lived on Victor Herbert Road before moving to their Camp - Dear Crossing. She owned Hocus Pocus, a high-end gift shop in Lake Placid and Bethesda, MD for many years. She was an active and faithful member of St. Eustace, the Lake Placid Garden Club and was the Chairman of the first benefit for the Lake Placid Sinfonietta. And she was a great supporter of the SOA, as a tireless promoter of mail delivery on the Lake and serving for many many years as the Chair of the SOA Membership Committee.

Marjorie demonstrated boundless energy and intelligence, spearheading many great charity events. She organized the Metropolitan Committee for Project Hope, served as Chairman of the Board of Mt. Vernon College and was a founding member and trustee of the National Museum of Women in the Arts. She was Chairman of the Scholarship Committee for the Washington Fashion Group from 1984-1986.