

Lentz assumes role of OCCA president; Clarvoe continues as project manager

Summer 2011
Vol. 43, Issue 2

*Moving forward by
working together*
☞ page 2

*Membership dollars
put to good use*
☞ page 4

*Emerald ash borer
awareness initiative*
☞ page 5

*A Look Back at
'The Lookout'*
☞ page 6

*OCCA hands-on in
your community*
☞ page 7

*Water testing for
legal purposes*
☞ page 8

*Bike to Work Day
recap, results*
☞ page 9

*Lake Appreciation
Day is August 13*
☞ page 11

Effective June 1, after three years, Martha Clarvoe has stepped down as president of the Otsego County Conservation Association Board of Directors and has transferred the leadership role to previous Board Secretary Vicky Lentz.



VICKY M. LENTZ



MARTHA B. CLARVOE

Following careful consideration Clarvoe, whose term was to expire in January 2012, decided to relinquish her duties as president in order to dedicate more time toward special projects for OCCA and to the building that she and her husband, Paul, are renovating. The Clarvoes are refurbishing an 1840s storefront on County Route 11, Hartwick to encourage main street development in their home town.

"I have really enjoyed my time as president," said Clarvoe. "OCCA is a wonderful organization which offers many ways for its members to get involved with community conservation programs. I look forward to continuing on the Board and concentrating my efforts on energy conservation projects and to promoting alternative energy options for our county."

"The OCCA Board of Directors is dedicated to protecting, preserving and improving the environment of Otsego County and we will continue on that path," she said.

Clarvoe replaced Win McIntyre as OCCA president in 2008 and is well known in the environmental community for her efforts in the areas of recycling and energy conservation. Under Clarvoe's direction, OCCA continued the Otsego Lake Challenge Campaign – picking up where McIntyre left off – which has funded more than \$300,000 in major Otsego Lake and Upper Susquehanna Watershed initiatives. Other highlights of Clarvoe's tenure are the Otsego County "Natural Gas Well Locations and Leased Properties" map, establishment of The Willard N. Harman OCCA Biological Field Station Internship Endowment Fund, and finalization of OCCA's alternative energy position statement.

Serving as OCCA secretary since 2008, Lentz is also chair of the Nominating Committee and a member of the Executive, Audit, and Natural Gas committees. She has been instrumental in setting organizational policy, including the position statement on gas drilling, Board member job

descriptions and Board member nominating procedures. Most recently, Lentz assisted in an OCCA-funded riparian buffer rehabilitation project on the Butternut Creek.

"Not only does OCCA find the funding for projects like this, we also provide the opportunity for interested people to lend a hand with the work," Lentz said. "This project was a collaborative effort between OCCA, Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District, the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, and the Butternut Valley Alliance. It was fabulous to see the community come together to help stabilize the creek bank. I will enjoy watching the trees grow as I drive by every day on my way to work."

A biologist specializing in the immunology of the large-mouth bass and a tenured professor at SUNY-Oneonta, Lentz joined the OCCA Board in January of 2007. As president, Lentz would

"While we are faced with issues that require our immediate attention, OCCA should not lose sight of long-term environmental concerns in the region."

– Vicky Lentz, OCCA president

like to see OCCA continue to expand its role countywide. Her particular areas of interest and concern are natural gas drilling, preservation of natural areas, and sustainable farming practices.

"I am very excited about this opportunity to expand my role with OCCA," said Lentz. "I think that, while we are faced with issues that require our immediate attention, OCCA should not lose sight of long-term environmental concerns in the region. We also need to continue our ongoing conservation efforts throughout the county, and I look forward to serving as president of the Board."

Lentz is originally from southern Indiana. With her husband, Edward, she lived in the Philadelphia area for 25 years. As an undergraduate, she attended Indiana State University, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Delaware, and did graduate work in plant bio-

Continued on Page 9



Photo provided

This recently planted riparian buffer zone, funded in part by OCCA, is a 50/50 deciduous-conifer mix comprised of Norway spruce, white spruce, red maple and sugar maple.

President's Message

Moving forward by working together

by Vicky M. Lentz

One of my first official duties as president of OCCA is to write this column for the newsletter.

First, let me say that I think Martha Clarvoe did a wonderful job during her tenure as president and I hope that I can do as well. I am proud to be a member of OCCA and honored to lead the Board, and I will work to ensure that the organization carries out its mission as best I can.

We face many challenges in the coming months. The first that comes to mind is the threat to our environment that will follow in the wake of high volume horizontal hydrofracking for natural gas. This is something that OCCA is actively working to avoid. However, at the same time, we must not lose sight of the ongoing conservation work that OCCA has been doing for the last 40-plus years.

Summer is beginning and OCCA has many environmental projects scheduled throughout the county. We are working to protect air and water quality, trying to curb the spread of invasive species, encouraging

recycling, and educating the people of the county in what they can do to help.

This summer there will be several opportunities for volunteers to participate in OCCA's programming. We'll be hand-pulling water chestnut on Goodyear Lake, cleaning up the Basswood Pond Trail and even paddling the Susquehanna to locate and map aquatic invasive species. I encourage you, if possible, to volunteer your time to assist with one or more of these initiatives.

I recently participated in a riparian buffer project, helping to plant more than 200 trees along the bank of the Butternut Creek in New Lisbon. This planting was undertaken as a collaborative effort between OCCA, Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District, the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, NYSDEC, and the Butternut Valley Alliance. About a dozen volunteers spent three hours getting the small trees into place. These trees will help maintain the integrity of the waterway, reduce pollution, and provide food, habitat, and thermal protection for fish and wildlife. It's a location that I drive by every day on

Continued on Page 10

Riparian buffers an effective tool in water quality protection

A riparian forest buffer is an area of trees and shrubs located adjacent to streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands.

Riparian forest buffers of sufficient width intercept sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other materials in surface runoff and reduce nutrients and other pollutants in shallow subsurface water flow. Woody vegetation in buffers provides food and cover for wildlife, helps lower water temperatures by shading waterbodies, and slows out-of-bank flood flows.

In addition, the vegetation closest to the stream or waterbody provides litter fall and large woody debris important to aquatic organisms. Also, the woody roots increase the resistance of streambanks and shorelines to erosion caused by high water flows or waves. Some species

Continued on Page 10

OCCA in the news

Links on our website's "Home" page (www.occainfo.org) and "News" page (www.occainfo.org/news), allow you to catch up on or revisit news items generated from our press releases.

Invasive species

Volunteers needed for water chestnut hand-harvesting: Since 2006, OCCA and the Goodyear Lake Association have been vigorously battling the invasive water chestnut as it spreads throughout the northern part of Goodyear Lake. It



has been estimated that without this initiative, the northern portion of the lake (the stump lot) would be completely covered by water chestnut in less than five years. This season, OCCA and GLA are organizing five hand-harvesting sessions: June 17-18, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; July 15-16, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; August 19-20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and September 16-17, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Anyone interested in volunteering for this effort should call and leave contact information with Bruce Shultis of the GLA, 432-8698, or with OCCA's Tavis Austin, 547-4488. Volunteers will meet at the Route 28 pull-off in Portlandville, just south of Canoe & Kayak Rentals and Sales. Gloves are suggested and canoes and johnboats are available. Those in need of a boat are asked to call in advance and lake area residents are welcome to boat over and lend a hand.

Natural resource appreciation

Nature Walk Series continues: OCCA's 2011 Nature Walk Series to date has included hikes of Hooker Mountain State Forest, Lordsland Preserve, The Robert V. Riddell State Park and a bike/hike event on Oneonta's New Island. Upcoming dates, venues and hike leaders for this year are: August 6, Milford State Forest, Dave Kiehm; August 13, Sleeping Lion Trail at Glimmerglass State Park, Ryan Hudyncia; September 10, Betty and Wilbur Davis State Park, Joe Ritton; October 23, The Robert V. Riddell State Park, Trish and Steve Kent; and January 15, 2012, The Robert V. Riddell State Park, snowshoe hike with the Kents. For a complete hike schedule, details and directions, visit the OCCA home page, www.occainfo.org and click on the link in the "In the News" column on the right.

OCCA's website features sections focusing on environmental issues facing our region plus details on current programming, how to donate and ways to contribute.



Sleeping Lion Trail,
Springfield



Betty & Wilbur Davis State Park,
Westford



Bear Swamp,
Roseboom

Our Environment. Our Home. Our Challenge.

WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT INEVITABLE CHANGE IS CAREFULLY PLANNED AND WILL NOT DESTROY THIS AREA THAT WE HAVE COME TO LOVE. OCCA IS WORKING HARD TO EDUCATE, AND TO GUIDE AND LEAD THAT PROCESS, SO THAT THESE TREASURES WILL NOT ONE DAY BE LOST.

Our effectiveness is directly linked to the degree to which our members support us. Among other initiatives, with your help we can:

- SAFEGUARD AGAINST THREATS TO **OUR ENVIRONMENT** IN GENERAL, AND WATER QUALITY, THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR MISSION, IN PARTICULAR.
- WORK WITH AREA MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS, OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO PROTECT THE PLACE WE ALL CALL **OUR HOME**.
- MEET **OUR CHALLENGE** – NATURAL GAS DRILLING AND OTHER FORMS OF HIGH IMPACT DEVELOPMENT – WITH SOUND REGIONAL LAND-USE PLANNING AND REVIEWS.



Betty & Wilbur
Davis State Park

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

YES, I would like to renew my OCCA membership.

Friends of OCCA (under \$200) The Contributors' Circle (\$200-\$499) The Sponsors' Circle (\$500-\$999)

The Stewards' Circle (\$1,000-\$4,999) The Benefactors' Circle (\$5,000-\$9,999) The Trustees' Circle (\$10,000+)

Name _____

E-mail _____

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Clip and mail to: Otsego County Conservation Association, PO Box 931, Cooperstown, NY 13326

www.occainfo.org

Photos by S. Tier French

Executive Report

We're putting membership dollars to good use: Here's how

The Otsego County Conservation Association is dedicated to the protection, appreciation, and sustainable use of the natural resources within Otsego County and throughout the region.



DARLA M. YOUNGS

Recently, our Board of Directors and staff participated in a visioning session led by Susan Weinrich of the New York Council of Nonprofits. The goal of this meeting was to determine how the organization wants to move forward over the next three to five years – then use that vision to establish multi-year goals and objectives which describe what OCCA wishes to accomplish, and develop programs, tasks, and timelines for achieving them.

As we look to the future, the Board's vision is that – building on 43 years of expertise and experience, and working closely with the community – OCCA will be a recognized resource and partner countywide for information, education, advocacy, and support on issues affecting the protection and conservation of Otsego County's natural resources.

As we have for more than four decades, OCCA will continue to address the broad array of environmental concerns that affect our quality of life here. And while we currently look to reinforce Otsego Lake and Upper Susquehanna Watershed initiatives through a second Lake Challenge Campaign, we also prepare to move forward in the implementation of increased programming throughout the county.

Among the tools we employ to advance our mission and this vision are:

- technical assistance and planning, which includes working with municipal officials, citizenry and other organizations to develop well-crafted guidance documents and regulations, and providing hands-on project leadership
- education and outreach via newsletters, eco-bulletins, our website and public events
- stewardship to manage irreplaceable water and land resources
- funding and oversight of projects and research to better understand both positive and negative impacts
- advocacy through community organizing and mobilizing of public opinion against threats to the region

And, of course, your membership dollars.

Without strong support from the community, our work would simply not be possible.

Moving into the summer months, OCCA enters one of its busiest stretches of the year. We are putting your donations to good, practical purpose, countywide, and I'm pleased to report on some of our specific activities in water quality, land protection and livable communities.

Water chestnut eradication on the Upper Susquehanna, including Goodyear Lake and the Oneonta swamp began in June and continues throughout the summer months. OCCA is also leading an invasives survey of the Susquehanna River between Otsego Lake and Sidney to observe and map aquatic and terrestrial invasive species.

We are funding the hydroseeding of roadside ditches located within the Upper Susquehanna Watershed and several agricultural water quality improvement projects, including riparian buffer planting on Shadow Brook and a fencing and watering facility in New Lisbon.

Through our new Circuit Rider Planner Program we have contracted specific services with the towns of Hartwick and New Lisbon and are providing municipal and environmental planning services to other municipalities, and we are performing preliminary environmental assessments of properties for the Otsego Rural Housing Authority.

Work is being completed on a web-based map outlining municipal actions and positions related to natural gas drilling and exploration, with links to town-specific data, and we are just getting underway with a natural resources survey mapping document which will serve as a planning tool for one municipality – helping to protect that town's important environmental and historic resources – and as a sample teaching tool for other municipalities.

OCCA is assisting the Village of Cooperstown with recycling on Main Street, revising our "Recycling: Above and Beyond" brochure to reflect changes in recyclables collection and options countywide, and we are active in Otsego County's Recycling Agricultural Plastics Project efforts and the Small Business Energy Efficiency Program through NYSEG with EnerPath.

We are also funding a baseline groundwater study in the Butternut Valley and twice-monthly surface water monitoring of 52 sites countywide, and we are coordinating with local, state, and federal agencies on a protocol to compile data with which to characterize the water quality of Otsego County.

Our nature walk series, which began on

June 4 with a National Trails Day® event at Glimmerglass State Park, encompasses 10 excursions including an evening hike/bike event to Oneonta's New Island, led by Board members Donna Vogler and Mark Davies. We are spearheading a rehabilitation project at the Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary to restore the badly deteriorated boardwalk, working with the Goodyear Lake Association and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation officials to create a deck/dock system with educational component and boat launch, and taking next steps in the development of a multi-use Susquehanna River Trail extending from Cooperstown to the Oneonta Susquehanna Greenway.

And we're getting ready for Lake Appreciation Day, to be held Saturday, August 13 at Glimmerglass State Park. This event, co-sponsored by Friends of Glimmerglass, will include the "Glimmerglass Market" craft and vendor fair, educational displays, a barbecue and a hike of the Sleeping Lion Trail.

OCCA is Otsego County's oldest environmental advocate. We are proud of our science-based approach to conservation, and our annual budget directly reflects the organization's values and guiding beliefs through bottom-line measures. Your membership dollars are spent on concrete deliverables with tangible results, whether we're hands-on in the field or funding the work of one of our many partners – Otsego County Soil & Water

Continued on Page 11

Project funding

In addition to ongoing programmatic efforts, OCCA has recently awarded the following funds:

- riparian buffer plantings on Otego Creek and Butternut Creek: \$1,100
- Otsego Lake Septic System Management Program: \$15,000
- Otsego Lake zebra mussel veliger study: \$2,500
- stocking of walleye fingerlings in Otsego Lake: \$6,000
- water quality testing through SWCD: \$2,500
- interns to perform Upper Susquehanna Watershed research at the SUNY-Oneonta BFS: \$7,500
- hydroseeding in the Upper Susquehanna Watershed: \$2,300
- Butternut Valley baseline water quality study: \$2,000
- water chestnut pulling on Goodyear Lake by Headwaters Youth CC: \$1,200

OCCA assists with emerald ash borer awareness efforts

On Thursday, May 26, the Otsego County Conservation Association teamed up with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation staff and educators from The Catskill Center for Conservation and Development to identify and “tag” ash trees within Oneonta’s Neahwa and Wilber parks.

The tagging is part of a local awareness initiative related to a larger, statewide effort to monitor and curtail the advance of the emerald ash borer, an invasive wood-boring beetle. Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week was held May 22-28 to encourage state residents and visitors to become better educated about the emerald ash borer and the destruction it causes to trees. Tens of millions of ash trees have been killed in the United States by the EAB and all of the ash trees in New York are currently at risk.

According to New York State Forester Robert Davies, “The only way to effectively slow the spread of this pest is by raising awareness. By encouraging people to not transport firewood, and to look for signs and symptoms of the EAB, DEC will be able to find infestations early and prevent them from rapidly spreading.”

Symptoms of EAB infestation include dieback of the upper and outer crown, sprouting at the base and/or main stem of the tree, vertical splits in the bark, and woodpecker feeding in the upper regions of the tree.

In addition to posting signs and tying ribbons around approximately 3,000 ash trees along streets and in parks statewide, the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service is currently overseeing the placement of purple panel traps throughout New York State to help locate new EAB infestations. According to DEC staff, the purple color and an attractant (hexanol, naturally occurring in ash bark) lure EAB into the box, from which they cannot escape.

DEC is conducting surveys to find and cut infested trees and then chipping them to destroy the beetles inside, according to a recent press release. These crews are also preparing special trap trees in the infested areas so the beetles are enticed to stay nearby, where they can be easily destroyed next year. This technique is said to dramatically reduce the rate of spread of the infestation and keep it in a location where the trees with beetles in them can be targeted.

The identification tags in Neahwa and Wilber parks, hung with purple ribbons, remained through the month of June in order to draw attention to the EAB program and the trees themselves.

New York State’s firewood regulations restrict the movement of untreated firewood to 50 miles. To help slow the spread of EAB, DEC asks all citizens to not move firewood and to look for and report signs of the beetle on ash trees. For further information on EAB programs and quarantines within the state, contact OCCA Environmental Planner Tavis Austin at (607) 547-4488, Meredith Taylor at The Catskill Center, (845) 586-2611, or visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/44008.html>

Tavis Austin, OCCA environmental planner, tags an ash tree in Oneonta’s Neahwa Park (photo top right). The emerald ash borer with wings spread (photo right).



UGA2100048



UNWANTED

Other invasive species to be on the lookout for in Otsego County include, from left: starry stonewort, didymo (rock snot), knotweed and purple loosestrife.



A Look Back at 'The Lookout'

Our roots in advocacy, alternative energy, stewardship

Vol. 6, No. 1
MARCH 1978

Influencing Your Government

The final step needed to attain OCCA's goals in many areas is to influence legislation concerning environmental concerns. Aside from the contacts often made by your officers, individuals can contribute considerably by writing personal letters to their representatives.

Letters to members of Congress and other government agencies do have an effect. Your letters help shape any future stand our government representatives may take on an issue. These people need to know that their position is justified by the sentiment of constituents. Very often, they want to do what is right environmentally but do not hear from environmentally concerned constituents. Thus, they cannot justify their stand as representative of a public attitude.

What can you do to be sure that yours is one of the letters heeded in Washington or at the state capital?

1. Sign your name over your typed signature.
2. Put your return address on the letter, not just on the envelope.
3. Identify the subject clearly, including the number of the bill involved, if you know it.
4. Write while the bill is newly introduced, and before the committee holds hearings, if possible.
5. Briefly state a) what you are writing about; b) what you want your representative to do; c) why you want him/her to do it.
6. Do not use standardized phrases which will identify the letter as part of an organized campaign ... use your own experience as evidence of your position and tell how the legislation will affect you, your community, and the local environment.
7. Be reasonable in the request for action; your representative cannot do the impossible.
8. Be accurate. One misstated fact could discredit your entire letter.
9. Be brief. One side of a typewritten page is all you should ever write.
10. Establish your credentials for being concerned about the subject.
11. If possible, suggest an alternative to any course of action you may oppose.
12. Show an understanding of how an action would affect things other than the environment – local jobs, for example.
13. Never threaten. A representative is not impressed by threats that you will not vote for him or her.
14. Ask your representative to state his/her position on the issue so that you may inform those in your community where he or she stands.
15. Thank your representative for his or her stand on past issues.

Vol. 8, No. 1
JANUARY 1980

Environmental Update by John New

Solar Energy: Last summer our family completed a solar greenhouse which we have been monitoring ever since. A solar greenhouse is different from a regular greenhouse because it has no auxiliary

heat, is well insulated, has large thermal mass, heat storage in the form of rock and/or water, and has double glazing. Many homes in Otsego County could be modified to use a solar greenhouse or similar approach with south facing porches. Our solar greenhouse generates heat which is passed into the house, thus reducing the amount of fuel it takes to heat our home.

Any time the sun is out the greenhouse temperature rises to 85 degrees F or hotter. To date the temperature has not fallen below 48 degrees F and we have not yet installed all the water storage we expect to add and we have no curtain to prevent heat loss at night.

I recently toured Advanced Cooler, Inc. and the Half Moon Town Hall north of Albany. Both buildings have no furnace, are heated and cooled by solar power, and have no auxiliary heating. Solar can and does work effectively in northern areas. Start thinking about how you might add a solar component to your home. No new homes or buildings should be built in New York State without including passive solar design.

Vol. 13, No. 2
AUGUST 1986

Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary

In 1982, Mrs. Bradley Goodyear gave approximately five acres of wetland adjacent to Otsego Lake to the SUNY-Oneonta Foundation Corporation for the research and educational uses of the Biology Department's Biological Field Station at Cooperstown. During the summers of 1983 and 1984, the F.H.V. Mecklenburg Conservation Fellowship recipients and college students employed at the Biological Field Station constructed trails and walkways under the direction of Dr. Willard Harman.

A guide to the sanctuary was developed that explains this unique wetland environment. Plants, soil, insects, fishes, animals, and reptiles are described and illustrated in the guide book.

Access to the area is from the lake and in the future from the site of the Glimmerglass Opera Theater grounds. Make plans to explore and enjoy this nature facility.

Vol. 14
SUMMER 1987

Special Project Approved

An application for funding for the development of a land use plan to maintain the environmental quality of the watershed of Otsego Lake was submitted to OCCA this spring by Dr. Willard Harman. The application requested \$8,000 for the years 1987 and 1988, all of which would be for planning consultant services. In 1989, a full assessment of the nutritional balance of the lake is proposed, using graduate students to collect field data. Support for the second and third years of the project would be contingent on updating of the proposal after the first year. Advice on the organization of the planning would be obtained from a committee assembled by Dr. Harman of all concerned local planning officials of the three townships in the watershed, the Village of Cooperstown and Otsego County.

The plan was approved for implementation and funding of \$8,000 by the OCCA Scientific Advisory Board, the Financial Advisory Committee and the OCCA Board of Directors.

OCCA: Working Hands-on in Your Community



Happy Trails

On Saturday, June 4, Friends of Glimmerglass State Park hosted a number of activities in celebration of the American Hiking Society's 19th annual National Trails Day®. This event, co-hosted by the Otsego County Conservation Association, was held at Glimmerglass State Park from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The program began at the park's Nature Center with instruction by Ryan Hudyncia on the basic tenets of the national "Leave No Trace" program: plan ahead and prepare, be prepared for surprises, respect the land, dispose of waste properly, minimize campfire impacts, respect wildlife, and be considerate of other visitors. Hudyncia then led participants along the park's Beaver Pond Trail for observations and clean-up, after which they returned to the Nature Center for instruction on how to make a safe campfire and to cook hot dogs. Above photo, Glimmerglass State Park staff and National Trails Day® event participants – including a local troop of American Heritage Girls – clear a fallen tree from the trail.



'Green' Information Highway

OCCA social media intern Kristen Abrey greets visitors at the SUNY-Oneonta Earth Day Expo on April 27. Sponsored by the SUNY College at Oneonta Sustainability Task Force, this event provided a venue for students, faculty and staff to learn about environmental issues and "green" products.



Earth Festival Fun

A crowd of about 800 people enjoyed Earth Festival 2011, held on Saturday, April 9 at Milford Central School. This year, OCCA sponsored the Otsego County debut of the ChicoBag™ Bag Monster®. The costume was used to educate Earth Festival attendees about the impact single-use plastic bags have on our environment. Made with 500 plastic bags (the average amount an American uses in one year), the costume was worn by OCCA Board member S. Tier French (photo at top). Other highlights of the event were: a recycled art installation featuring the works of Tony Murray, co-sponsored by OCCA and the Cooperstown Art Association; collections for recycling of electronics, sneakers and shoes, Styrofoam, and other items; the EcoArt/Trendy Trash contest; and the "Go Green" Fashion show held by the Milford Central School Education Foundation, Inc. Above photo, OCCA volunteer John Darcy Youngs explains the significance of "Wally" the walleye in controlling Otsego Lake's invasive alewife population to Rich McCaffrey.

Protocol, chain of custody integral in water testing for legal purposes

by Marianne Metzger

When testing water, one must consider the intended use of the results, before determining what type of tests need to be done. When testing for legal purposes, either to meet regulatory requirement or for results to be used in litigation, there are many things to consider. This article will focus on the legality of testing water and of what you should be informed before beginning.

Publicly regulated water supplies undergo a variety of testing based upon federal regulation under U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). These regulations are often carried out by the state; however, the state may also impose additional testing requirements and stricter, enforceable contaminant levels. For example, the national maximum contaminant level (MCL) of nitrate is 10 mg/L; many states enforce a stricter standard of five mg/L. Public water supplies are regulated based upon size of population served. Transient water supplies, like campgrounds, restaurants and hotels that serve different people on a regular basis, are not as highly tested as larger urban areas, like New York City or Chicago, which serve the same population on a regular basis. Public water supplies are also regulated based upon the source of the water supply; the Surface Treatment Rule is associated with surface water, and the Ground Water Rule is associated with groundwater. These different rules are aimed at addressing problems specific to each type of water source.

Private water wells primarily remain unregulated. When purchasing a home, there may be state or local requirements for water testing when the home's water is supplied by a private well. These regulations are meant to protect the buyer's investment in a new home that is supplied by well water. Examples of state and locally regulated programs include the New Jersey Private Well Testing Act and the Rockland County, NY testing requirements. Additionally, there may be further local requirements by townships and county governments.

Testing requirements can vary greatly by

Testing water can become complex when considering the results may be used to meet regulatory requirements, or for litigation, or simply to determine what is in the water. It's important to cover certification, proper sampling and maintain a chain of custody for any water supplies that are tested for possible litigation purposes.

geographic location. For example, New Jersey has different testing requirements for each county, based upon which contaminants are likely to occur, past testing data and geological studies. Township requirements may be as simple as a bacteria test to determine if there is any immediate threat of illness. Responsible homebuyers may include additional testing in the real estate agreement to determine further safety criteria, such as for lead, arsenic or radiological contaminants. Homeowners may be concerned about their water supply being at risk due to activities including drilling for gas or oil, other mining activities, frequent pesticide spraying and other land-use projects that can affect the local environment. In the case of gas and oil drilling, testing prior to any drilling activity would provide the best legal baseline of the water quality.

What to test for?

Federal, state and local regulations will primarily dictate testing requirements for home sales and public water supplies. Occasionally, some local testing requirements can be vague and open to interpretation. For example, many local townships will require what they refer to as a potability test, usually a limited analysis including testing for bacteria and sometimes nitrate levels.

The term potable can be defined differently. For example, the Water Quality Association defines potable drinking water as, "a water supply which meets U.S. EPA and/or state water quality standards and that is considered safe and fit for human consumption." The U.S. EPA regulation encompasses more than 100 different contaminants for different water supplies.

When testing to establish a legal baseline of water quality, there are a few factors that need to be taken into consideration. Gather as much background information on the water supply source as possible. This should include depth of well, water level, flowrates,

any prior testing results, installed water treatment equipment, and proximity to likely sources of water contamination, including roadways, parking lots, and heavy-duty mining equipment. Test for things already known to be in the source, which may include iron, manganese or hardness, that make themselves known in very obvious ways with staining, taste and odor. Other common water quality parameters to consider include testing for bacteria, nitrates, TDS or conductivity, as well as common indicators of the typical fracking fluid, such as chlorides, barium and sodium. These levels may change when drilling activities occur, as they may disturb the aquifer and geological formations.

'Fracking' contaminants

In the case of gas drilling, hydro fracturing (commonly referred to as fracking) is used, which denotes a mixture of various chemicals, and a proppant (suspended particulate) that forms a slurry mixture. Proppants are commonly made up of natural sand particles or artificial ceramic used to hold open fracture openings in geologic formations for gas or oil to flow through to the surface. These fractures can now potentially carry any chemicals used in the mixture, as well as the natural gas itself (and commonly, methane or ethane), into the aquifer, depending on a variety of factors.

Gas drilling companies are subject to various regulations and are required to test private water supplies within a certain vicinity of the gas well drill site. These distances can range from 300 to over 1,000 feet (91.4 to 304.8 meters), depending on the state. Homeowners may want to protect the quality of their private well water, so testing may be considered, even if the well is located beyond the distance required by law. They may also want an independent analysis done in addition to what the gas company may be

Continued on Page 10



OTSEGO COUNTY HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DAY COLLECTION is set for Saturday, September 17. Residents and businesses of Otsego County only may pre-register September 1-14 by calling the county at (607) 547-4228. Those interested in volunteering their services should call Martha Clarvoe at OCCA, (607) 547-4020, for scheduling details.

Third Annual Bike to Work Day enjoys continued success

by Martha Clarvoe

May's Bike to Work Day was another success! Three hundred forty-four people are to be commended for riding or walking, in spite of threatening weather predictions for the afternoon commute home – 165 bicyclists, 127 walkers, and one young girl on a scooter rode or walked to their place of work or school. This is 10 more participants than last year.

The aim of Bike to Work Day is to encourage people to choose an alternative "green" mode of transportation – biking, walking or even skateboarding – to get to work or school, to run errands, or just for fun on the day of the event in particular and as a lifestyle choice in general.

There were also extra incentives for registrants. Among the prizes were 50 water bottles and two bicycle watches with handlebar mounts from SportTech of Oneonta; a massage from Robert Fiorentino of Leatherstocking Massage; and free mini-golf coupons from Marcy Birch of Barnyard Swing. Many thanks to these local businesses for their generous donations and support.

Even though Bike to Work organizers didn't increase numbers by a lot in 2011 over the previous year, we received many encouraging comments, including, "I always ride, just couldn't ride today," and, "This is the day I start my riding every year."

Seven students from the Town of Hartwick – J.P. Gertz, Kenny Stahl, Wade Stahl, Ryan VanDeusen, Ryan McGuire, Chad Carr and Conner Fay – braved the nine-mile ride and celebrated with hot chocolate at the Stewart's Shop in Cooperstown.

Official business sponsors of the 2011 Bike to Work Day were Cooperstown PreSchool, Paceline Sports Cycling Team, Custom Electronics, Inc. and New York



Photo provided

Bike to Work Day, with 26 check-in locations countywide, was held on May 20.

Pizzeria. With their donations, we were able to purchase a large banner which helps to advertise the event.

Thanks to Ted Lamb, and despite the threat of serious wind the week prior to the event, our banner was displayed across Main Street in Cooperstown and later mounted outside the Cooperstown Middle/High School. Some of you may have seen it on my bike from Cooperstown to OCCA member Deb Dalton's house, where it hitched a ride to the Oneonta High School fence.

This year, we added several more check-in locations with the help of ORCA volunteers. Check-in sites in 2011 included:

Bassett Medical Center, John Saphier and Diane Wells; Bugbee Hall, Bob Thomas; Clark Sports Center, Jean and John Finch and

Dion Wade; Cooperstown Elementary School, Dottie Hudson and Jessie Ravage, Terry Gorman and Debbie Mack; Cooperstown Middle/High School, Dennis Savoie and Molly Pearlman; Edmeston Central School, Joann Salo; A.O. Fox Hospital, Neil Turcotte; FoxCare Center, Neil Turcotte; Greater Plains Elementary, Julie McKee; Hartwick College, Mark Davies; Hartwick Seminary Specialty Services, Melanie Ray; Laurens Central School, Danny Martin; Kim Muller Plaza, Sandra Moxley; Milford Central School, Michael Miller; New York State Historical Association, William Walker; Oneonta Middle & High School, Todd Scanlon; Opportunities for Otsego, Dan Maskin and Melissa Bissell; Pathfinder Village, Bonnie Laugen; Prolifiq Sign Studio, Jared Miller; Prudential Fox Properties, Maria Adeline Graham; Richfield Springs Central School, Bill Stevens and Nancy Potter; Sidney Federal Credit Union, Patricia Kenik; Springbrook Campus, Jake Anderson; SUNY-Oneonta, Melissa Nicosia; and Valley View Elementary School, Nan Moxley.

Bike to Work Day is organized by Otsego Regional Cycling Advocates, a committee of the Otsego County Conservation Association. ORCA's mission is to promote bicycling and walking in the Otsego County region as an enjoyable, healthy, safe, and environmentally friendly activity for people of all ages and abilities. For more information, visit www.occainfo.org/ORCA.htm.

To join OCCA and/or ORCA, or to obtain more information about Bike to Work Day, contact Martha Clarvoe at (607) 547-4020 or by e-mail, martha.clarvoe@gmail.com, or e-mail William Walker, willwalk78@yahoo.com.

Martha Clarvoe is OCCA's special projects manager and secretary of ORCA.

President

continued from page 1

geography at Rutgers University in Camden, later obtaining a PhD in immunology from the University of Pennsylvania. Lentz and her husband are the owners of Fox Falls Farm and CSA in New Lisbon, specializing in meats, eggs, sheep, wool, grains, and whole wheat flour.

A resident of Hartwick, Clarvoe was elected to the OCCA Board in 2000. She has a long history of involvement in environmental concerns and, since joining the Board, spends 20 hours or more weekly as an OCCA volunteer. Clarvoe has played a key role in OCCA program areas including recy-

cling, alternative energy, light pollution and energy conservation. As special projects manager, Clarvoe encouraged the Village of Cooperstown to create its Sustainability Committee and to sign on to the ICLEI-Cities for Climate Protection Campaign; is a member of the Bassett Green Team; has been a key figure in the continuation of the Recycling Agricultural Plastics Program; is a founding member of Otsego Regional Cycling Advocates, a subcommittee of OCCA; and, most recently, has promoted the Small Business Energy Efficiency Program with EnerPath and NYSEG.

For Clarvoe it will be OCCA business as usual. She will continue as the organization's special projects manager – focusing on energy conservation and recycling efforts – and

will assume the duties of secretary on the OCCA Executive Board, in the position vacated by Lentz.

"I believe Vicky's four years of service on the Board have proven her to be a dedicated conservationist, and her interest in alternative energies and locally-produced foods will help guide OCCA in its future educational programs," Clarvoe said. "An organization's goals must change with the times. I believe OCCA will be adding new focus items to its strategic plan, and Vicky is the person with hands-on experience to direct us in these new areas."

Under the OCCA bylaws, the president can appoint a replacement to serve out an unexpired term. Official Board appointments are voted upon and confirmed each year by OCCA members at the Annual Dinner.

Water testing

continued from page 8

providing. The baseline water quality testing can get expensive because of sampling requirements and chain-of-custody costs, so there are a variety of options based upon the most common indicators of contamination due to gas or oil drilling activities.

Homeowners may opt to test for the basics, but there are extenuating circumstances to consider in addition to drilling activity, such as truck traffic, which could result in chemical spills or fuel tank leaks. Testing for volatile organics or total petroleum hydrocarbons prior to the drilling activity with no detections can help provide the basis that the drilling company may be responsible for the contamination. A laboratory familiar with the regulations and water quality issues can help determine which test may be appropriate for each situation.

Finding the right lab

When testing for legal purposes, a certified laboratory must be used. There are a couple of different ways in which laboratories are certified. There is direct state certification, wherein a laboratory must apply directly to the state in which they seek certification. Sometimes states will allow reciprocal certification, which means they will accept another state's certification. This is where it can get tricky, as not all states regulate all contaminants. Certification can only be gained for the contaminants the lab is certified for in the original state in which your reciprocal certification is based. There is also the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP)—an attempt at a unified laboratory certification program—so laboratories are meeting one certification criterion instead of 50 different state criteria. There are currently 14 states that have adopted NELAP for environmental laboratory certification programs. These include: California, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Virginia. When checking laboratory certification, make sure the laboratory is certified to run the necessary analysis. Labs are certified by the type of analysis they run; for example, drinking water labs run testing methods based upon the Safe Drinking Water Act, while wastewater labs run methods based upon Clean Water Act testing requirements.

Sample collection

When samples for analysis have legal implications, an independent third-party should collect them. There may be additional state requirements depending on the type of

samples being collected. For example, in order to meet SDWA requirements in various states (including Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York, to name a few), any samples being collected for a public water supply must be accomplished by a state-licensed operator. There are other states that have entirely separate sample-collection requirements and certifications. Some state certification programs for laboratories include sample collection.

Those collecting samples should maintain a field-sampling notebook. This book should contain information such as date and time sampled, sample location, and any persons present while sampling is being done. For outside sampling, one should note weather conditions, as rain and wind can affect sample results. Any water treatment equipment present should also be recorded, as well as whether the sample was collected prior to any equipment or after. When determining a legal baseline of water quality, one should collect samples prior to any treatment equipment to determine the raw water quality. In addition to the field notebook, there is also the chain-of-custody form, a legal document that accompanies the sample from time of collection all the way to the laboratory, and throughout the laboratory's processes to the final report. Samples must be sent to the lab in such a way that they arrive within proper holding times and temperature requirements.

Reporting data

Results can be reported in a variety of units of measure, the most common being milligrams per liter (mg/L) or micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$). Milligrams per liter is also referred to as parts per million, and micrograms per liter as parts per billion. Reports will contain the laboratory's certification for the state identification on the report, along with all the sample collection information. They will have a column for the method detection level (MDL), which is the lowest level at which the laboratory can detect that contaminant.

Some laboratories will also report against standards such as the SDWA or the CWA. Additionally, there may be data qualifiers, which can be a result of matrix interference, meaning some part of the laboratory quality control falls outside the acceptable criteria. This could be due to the presence of other contaminants such as sodium, chloride or sulfur compounds that can interfere with certain water analysis and may require a qualifier on the data describing the failure. In some cases, these interfering compounds can cause the laboratory to dilute a sample, which can also raise the method's detection levels. In many cases, re-collecting a sample may end with the same results with data being qualified. Additional analysis can be accom-

plished to determine the cause of failure. Laboratories running certified analysis are required to maintain records (for more than 10 years in some cases) to maintain chain of custody of the results.

Testing water can become complex when considering the results may be used to meet regulatory requirements, or for litigation, or simply to determine what is in the water. It's important to cover certification, proper sampling and maintain a chain of custody for any water supplies that are tested for possible litigation purposes.

Marianne Metzger has spent 14 years working in the water quality industry, with 12 years at National Testing Laboratories where she is currently general products manager. Reprinted from "Water Conditioning & Purification" magazine, with permission from the author.

Moving forward

continued from page 2

my way to work, and it is a great feeling knowing that I helped.

In addition to volunteering, I urge you to continue to donate funds to OCCA. Your donations allow OCCA to carry out its mission: to promote the appreciation and sustainable use of Otsego County's natural resources through education, advocacy, resource management, research, and planning. No gift is too small.

As I begin my term as president, I pledge to do my best to keep the organization moving forward on the issues that our members have deemed important and to take on any new challenges that we may face. I look forward to working for the environment – and with you.

Riparian buffers

continued from page 2

established or managed in a riparian buffer can be managed to provide timber, wood fiber and horticulture products.

Buffers are located by permanent or intermittent streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and seeps. Many of these areas have year-round or seasonal beneficial moisture, which allows woody species to establish quickly. A new riparian forest buffer can rapidly benefit a variety of settings, such as cropland, rangeland, forest land and urban areas.

From the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service Riparian Forest Buffer Conservation Practice Job Sheet, April 1997.

OCCA preparing for Invasives Paddle

The Otsego County Conservation Association will be leading a team of canoeists down the Susquehanna River from July 25-29 during the organization's first ever Susquehanna Invasives Paddle. This multi-day trip is designed to survey and map invasive species found along the 52-mile stretch of the river between Otsego Lake and Sidney.

Each of OCCA's six-hour day trips, all part of the greater Susquehanna Invasives Paddle, will begin at 9 a.m. sharp at scheduled locations along the route. Participants—up to 12 individuals per day—will look for invasive plant species within the river proper. OCCA staff and assistants will aid participants in gathering GPS points for observed invasives or populations. This data will be used as part of a larger project, funded by Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership, to document the locations via iMap Invasives, an online tool used for the geotracking of invasive exotic species (www.imapinvasives.org).

Early portions of the paddle, particularly at the Goodyear Dam south of Goodyear Lake, are mildly strenuous and will require portaging. Water and light refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact OCCA Environmental Planner Tavis Austin at planner@occainfo.org or by phone, (607) 547-4488.

Since 2006, OCCA has organized water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) eradication efforts focusing on the shallow "stump lot" area at the north end of Goodyear Lake. The Susquehanna Invasives Paddle is an extension of this five-year-long program and has been designed to: 1) map invasives species; 2) investigate areas above and below the stump lot that may have contributed to the increased water chestnut population or are being affected by the stump lot water chestnut population, respectively.

Program makes lighting upgrades affordable

Sal's Pizzeria, The Town of Springfield, The Farmers' Museum, Tin Bin Alley, The Smithy-Pioneer Gallery, Shortcuts, and Willis Monie Books have all signed up for lighting retrofit improvements to reduce energy use and save on electricity bills.

The Small Business Energy Efficiency Program, administered locally by EnerPath, is being offered by the New York State Electric and Gas Corporation to business customers under 100 kWh usage for a limited time. OCCA Special Projects Manager Martha Clarvoe has been sharing information



Photo by S. Tier French

Perennial Beauty

Jacob's ladder was among the plant life enjoyed by hikers at Lordsland Preserve on Saturday, July 2. The OCCA-sponsored nature walk was led by botanist Connie Tedesco and former OCCA Board member Richard deRosa. Next up in the OCCA 2011 Nature Walk Series is a hike of Milford State Forest to be led by Dave Kiehm.

with area businesses and municipalities about how they can receive free energy assessments and 70 percent of the cost of recommended energy efficient lighting upgrades through this program.

These upgrades could include replacement of existing fluorescent bulbs with higher efficiency lamps and ballasts; changing incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent lights (CFLs); and upgrading exit signs to light emitting diode (LED) technology. A new addition to the program are LED lights, which use even less energy than CFLs and produce just as much light per fixture.

When Ian Porto of Tin Bin Alley was asked why he signed up, he said, "It makes good sense – payback is in 7.8 months and my costs are under \$800 of a \$2,400 bill to upgrade light fixtures and ballasts. The lighting will be brighter and more energy efficient. These improvements should reduce my light energy bill by 40 percent."

Over 2,500 business customers are benefiting through NYSEG's Small Business Energy Efficiency Program. Together, they are saving more than 19 million kilowatt-hours of electricity and more than \$2,375,000.

For further details, contact Clarvoe at 547-4020 or Lorraine Keckeisen of EnerPath at 281-5637 or toll free, (877) 359-9814.

Lake Appreciation Day is Saturday, August 13

OCCA and Friends of Glimmerglass State Park are among the groups to host a Lake Appreciation Day on Saturday, August 13 at Glimmerglass State Park.

This event is intended to bring members of OCCA and other area environmental and lake organizations, their families, and friends together for a day of fellowship and recreation on the shores of Otsego Lake.

A hike, a picnic lunch, swimming and kids' activities will be among the highlights, and lake-focused groups are welcome to exhibit in the closed pavilion. The schedule to date includes:

- a hike of the Sleeping Lion Trail led by Ryan Hudyncia
- "Glimmerglass Marketplace" vendors selling crafts, retail merchandise and flea market items
- flip-flop decorating contest
- "show and tell" session on aquatic life in Otsego Lake and the Beaver Pond with biologist Tom Hughes

Those planning to attend Lake Appreciation Day are asked to call OCCA at (607) 547-4488 to pre-register. There is no charge to attend this event, but regular park admission fees will apply.

For more information, visit www.occainfo.org or www.friendsofglimmerglass.com

Good use

continued from page 4

Conservation District, USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Services, the Otsego County Watershed Supervisory Committee, SUNY-Oneonta and the Biological Field Station, the Otsego County Water Quality Coordinating Committee, Hartwick College ... the list goes on.

Your role is as integral in protecting and preserving Otsego County's natural resources as ours. Moving forward, OCCA will use your membership dollars to forge new partnerships to advance the mission, addressing concerns as they arise, and we will continue to deliver.

It is important to us that you, our donors and members, are very familiar with this organization and know just how and where your dollars are being put to use. OCCA is not just a black hole, swallowing up funds and never returning to your communities. Our goals are carefully thought out, transparent, measurable and effective.

To view OCCA's specific activities for the current year in water and air quality, land protection and livable communities, visit <http://occainfo.org/documents/OCCA2011-Program.pdf>



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Our Environment. Our Home. Our Challenge.

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We try to conserve precious resources at OCCA by printing on recycled paper and using soy-based inks when feasible. If you would like to help us do even better, consider being put on our electronic distribution list and receive future newsletters and general correspondence via e-mail.

OCCA assists with Zoning Commission

Through its Circuit Rider Planner Program, OCCA has contracted with the Town of Hartwick to aid in the formation of a Zoning Commission and to facilitate meetings of that group.

OCCA Environmental Planner Tavis Austin, working with Hartwick Town Supervisor Pat Ryan and Town Board member Juli Sharratt, has helped to identify priorities and tasks for the new Zoning Commission as well as time and committee member requirements.

Hartwick's Zoning Commission will review all existing local laws as they relate to the town's current Comprehensive Plan and will address directives from the Town Board with regard to possible revision of some of these laws.

Zoning Commission members will also consider the creation of new laws and regulations as deemed appropriate to better carry out the goals, policies, and initiatives of the Comprehensive Plan.

Saving Energy and Money in Your Small Business Is Now Easier for NYSEG Customers

The utility is offering the Small Business Energy Efficiency Program to businesses with an average demand of less than 100 kW. Eligible businesses receive free energy assessments and 70 percent of the cost of recommended energy efficient lighting upgrades. To learn more about the program or request your free energy assessment, please call 1 (877) 358-9814 or log onto www.nyseg.com.



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