

2019 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

F C L A

A Publication of The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association, Inc.

PO Box 564 • Old Forge, New York 13420
www.FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Greetings to all of our Fulton Chain of Lakes members, supporters and friends. Hopefully you are settling in with our annual newsletter on a warm spring/summer day next to the beautiful waters and woodlands of the Fulton Chain of Lakes. I would like to take a moment to welcome you back either physically or emotionally to the central tier of our wonderful Adirondack Park area. We are truly blessed to have over 6 million acres of one of America's great parks, literally in our back yard. In this, our annual newsletter, your FCLA board members hope to bring our members and stakeholders current on the efforts to fulfill the associations mission to "Preserve and Protect" the waters and surrounding watershed of the Fulton Chain region.

We have continued to be active in monitoring and testing programs (C-Slap and CEC) that assure the quality of the waters of "the Chain." Our lakes continue to be one of the purest actively used lake regions in the ADK park. We have extended our focus to the program presence of invasive aquatic plants and animals that continue to encroach into the Park's area. Working closely with the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) based at Paul Smith College we have increased our support of the inspection coverage at the boat launches at 4th and 7th Lake and the sanitation station in the Eagle Bay-Inlet area. These stations both add assurance of invasive species free boats entering our lakes and increase the awareness to our local and visiting boaters of the effects/dangers of these uninvited guests.

Your Association continues to actively promote boating safety on our lakes by working with Herkimer and Hamilton County Sheriffs in promoting water patrols, contributing to emergency rescue barges and assisting/supporting local marinas and businesses with our very popular lake area map and boating safety pamphlet.

We have increased efforts and investments to help educate our area stakeholders on important issues and "happenings" of interest around the Fulton Chain with a stronger web presence at FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org as well as Facebook and Instagram pages.

Your board puts significant, year-round time and energy into the Association but we need your help. Attend our board meetings, volunteer for committee work, spread the word to your neighbors and friends about the benefits of supporting and joining the Association. Finally, if your membership has lapsed please renew, we would be very appreciative. As climate change accelerates and the recreational use of our lakes expands so do the challenges to ecosystems. We must closely monitor both the changes we are currently aware of and be vigilantly watchful for those we cannot yet see.

Many, many thanks for your continued support.

John Jeffery - President

WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

Tom Vawter

CSLAP Results

The Citizens' Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP), supported by the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) and the New York Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) trains citizen volunteers to collect data on water quality on over 400 New York State lakes. The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association (FCLA) enrolled Second Lake of the Fulton Chain in the program from 1986-1990 and 1995-2012. Sampling of Second Lake was suspended between 2013 and 2017, but FCLA re-enrolled the lake in 2018.

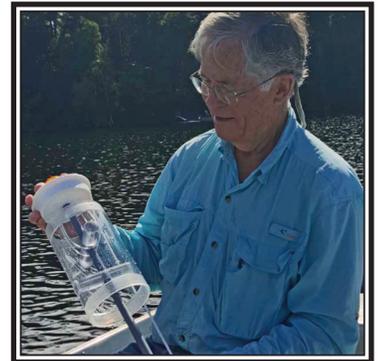
In 2018, FCLA board members, John Jeffery and Tom Vawter sampled water quality on the lake at roughly 2-week intervals between June and September. They measured some parameters on-site and collected a series of water samples to be sent to the lab at Upstate Freshwater Institute for detailed chemical analysis. The detailed results of this analysis will be posted on the FCLA website. Although invasive Eurasian and Variable-leaf Milfoil remain present in the Fulton Chain, they have been well controlled, especially in the lower lakes, and no invasive animal species (e.g., Zebra and Quagga Mussels) have been detected.

New York State, like many other lake districts globally, has recognized an alarming increase in the occurrence of what are called "Harmful Algae Blooms" (HABs), which are actually blooms of Cyanobacteria, often mislabeled "blue-green algae." Not only are such blooms unsightly, they can release toxins into the water that pose a number of serious threats to human and animal health. Such blooms were recorded in September 2017 in Seventh and Eighth Lakes in the Fulton Chain, but not in 2018. The reasons for these outbreaks are not very clear, and the chemistry of Second Lake indicates that the chances of such blooms are low. Nonetheless, the fact that they have occurred in similar nearby lakes and are increasing in frequency throughout the state gives reason for watchfulness, and it is important to prevent pollution of the lake with phosphorus, a chemical that promotes HABs. The DEC posts notification of current and recent blooms at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/83310.html> and keeps an archival record of such blooms at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/83332.html>.

Chemicals of Emerging Concern

In association with scientists from Syracuse University, Upstate Freshwater Institute (UFI), and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, FCLA volunteers John Jeffery and Tom Vawter ran test strips for preliminary analysis and submitted water samples to UFI for

analysis of Chemicals of Emerging Concern. That is, potentially harmful chemicals that occur in relatively low quantities but which may pose a threat to the environment or human health. Our tests concentrated on microcystin, a highly toxic chemical produced by the blue-green algae discussed above, and atrazine, a common agricultural herbicide. The water samples were also tested for other chemicals of emerging concern: certain pharmaceuticals, pesticides and household chemicals.



Tom Vawter collecting a water sample.

For Second Lake of the Fulton Chain, the levels of chlorophyll-a, a pigment that occurs only in blue-green algae, were low, indicating that the lake contained very few blue-green algae. So, the specific tests for microcystin, the toxin the blue-green algae may produce, were not done. Likewise, the amount of the agricultural chemical atrazine in Second Lake was below any level of detection in the water samples. Of the other contaminants the scientists screened for, all were in very low concentrations and some were below any level of detection by the standard methods employed.

All in all, the health of the Fulton Chain of Lakes remains good, although certain threats must be carefully monitored, namely the introduction of harmful invasive species, water pollution from failing septic systems, and the conditions that promote harmful algal blooms.

Lake Steward Report

Throughout the Adirondack Park, the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program located in Paul Smiths, NY, maintains a system of inspection and decontamination stations, protecting Adirondack lakes from invasive aquatic organisms. Park wide, the Stewardship Program conducted 98,216 inspections and 3,455 decontaminations and intercepted 4,617 invasive aquatic organisms, mostly Eurasian watermilfoil. Their full report for 2018 can be found at https://www.adkwatershed.org/sites/default/files/awi_stewardship_program_annual_report_2018.pdf.

The nearest of these stations to the Fulton Chain is a decontamination station near the state boat launch on Fourth Lake, sponsored in partnership with the FCLA. Personnel

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from the Fourth Lake station conducted inspections on 127 days in Inlet and 10 days at the Alger Island launch site on Fourth Lake from May to November. They inspected 4,155 vessels and intercepted 69 carrying aquatic invasive species, again mostly Eurasian watermilfoil, but also variable leaf milfoil and zebra mussels.

Owners of all types of vessels, including kayaks, canoes and paddleboards, should be mindful of the spread of aquatic invasive species and drain, wash and dry their vessel before moving to a new water body. There is a move by the Adirondack Council to make boat washing mandatory whenever a vessel is moved from one water body to another.

Dye Testing Report

The Town of Webb Code Office conducts routine dye tests and superficial inspection of septic systems

around the Fulton Chain and some other nearby lakes. During the summer of 2018, approximately 200 dye tests were done.

- No catastrophic failures were discovered.
- Several locations are suspect, which will be monitored and re-tested this year.
- 37 new, replaced or repaired septic systems were permitted and completed.
- Dye tester Peg Carroll will not be returning for the summer of 2019.
- Doug Green has been appointed and will begin by the end of May.
- Approximately 250 tests are scheduled for 2019.

DAM REMEDIATION

Ray Letterman

The FCLA is Monitoring the Rehabilitation of the Old Forge and Sixth Lake Dams

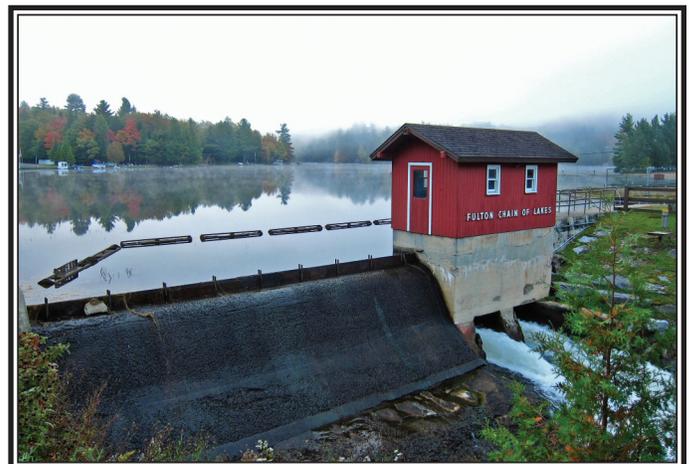
The water levels in the Fulton Chain of Lakes are regulated by dams at Old Forge and Sixth Lake on the middle branch of the Moose River. The dams are used to help control downstream flooding on the Moose and Black Rivers. Gates at the dams are opened in late fall to make room for snowmelt and gradually closed in the spring until the lakes have filled to summer levels. During severe drought the gates may be opened to augment downstream flow.

The dams are owned and operated by a public benefit corporation, the Hudson River Black River Regulating District (HRBRRD). The HRBRRD is responsible for maintaining the dams and ensuring that they are safe. Its funding comes mostly from assessing downstream beneficiaries of flood control and generators of hydroelectricity.

A critical safety concern for dam owners is intense rainfall events like those caused by hurricanes that reach New York. The dams must be able to withstand very high flows that could cause them to fail with loss of lives and significant property damage. The Old Forge and Sixth Lake dams have recently been analyzed by several engineering firms and found to need improvements, primarily larger emergency spillways and more stable construction, to make them safer.

In 2017, the HRBRRD hired the engineering firm Arcadis of New York in Syracuse to design and supervise the construction of these needed changes. Arcadis will soon present the HRBRRD Board with design alternatives and their costs for each dam. The FCLA Board plans to review these alternatives from the perspective of stakeholders who live on or near the lakes and we will offer our thoughts and opinions to HRBRRD and our members.

We will also monitor conditions in the Lakes as construction on the dams proceed, probably next year, and will communicate any concerns to HRBRRD. At this time we are optimistic that the negative impact of these important improvements will be negligible.



NAVIGATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Mark Steigerwald

Talk about “natural resource wonders” we certainly have one to enjoy with our Fulton Chain of Lakes and the endless ways with which we can enjoy them. The summer months of course represent the busiest period of water navigation related activities and with that in mind let us all remember to keep safety foremost in our minds – it never hurts to remind our loved ones to “Be Careful Out There.”

Swimming, Fishing and Boating are all activities that can be enjoyed for a lifetime so find time and create a cherished memory for a young child, grandchild or neighbor by introducing and teaching them the skills needed for one of these activities. Boating in particular whether it’s a kayak, runabout, or sunfish; what a great way to get them away from those digital devices and instill independence and responsibility. Youths 10 years of age are eligible for enrolment in the NYS Boating Certification course and it might be helpful to be an accompanying adult. As you know all operators of

Personal Water Crafts “Wave Runners” regardless of age are required to have a NYS Boaters Certificate.

Speaking of our youth, whether on the water or near the water keep a watchful eye on them – sadly drownings happen silently. In New York State all children under 12 must be wearing a lifejacket while on board a boat. For peace of mind swim lessons are available in nearly every community, refer the Red Cross website below for courses near you.

Let’s not forget fishing, dry fly or earth worms, catch and release or hold for the frying pan, these lakes are bountiful! If you are 15 years old or younger, no fishing license is required – great fun even on a rainy day!

Speed, noise, hours of operation, rules of the road and general regulations, be mindful of the laws and always respectful of others. In doing so we will all find greater enjoyment of this “natural resource wonder,” The Fulton Chain of Lakes.

Here are some links to those helpful resources referred to above...

- For a NYS Boaters Certification Course near you: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/boating/safety-courses.aspx>
- For the NYS Boaters Certification On-Line Course: <https://www.boatus.org/newyork/>
- For an all-encompassing NYS handbook on boating covering: registration, operation and general information regarding safe and prudent boating: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/boating/documents/NYSBoatersGuide.pdf>
- For Swimming Courses near you: <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/swimming>
- For a copy of the FCLA Navigation Brochure that you can print or forward to someone: http://FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org/pdf/fcola_brochure_2017.pdf

MIKE SCHREPPPEL RECEIVES FCLA’S OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

At the Fulton Chain of Lakes Association Annual Meeting conducted in August, Mike Schreppel, outgoing President was awarded The Outstanding Service Award. Only about a dozen of these Awards have been presented by the Association over its 50 year history and Mike was very worthy.

Over his years as a Director he was the leader in invasive weed removal. He was hands on in removing weeds himself as a diver (former U.S. Navy Seal) as well as managing the removal projects especially in the 5th,

6th and 7th Lakes. He continued to remove, manage and inspect weeding progress over all the Fulton Chain of Lakes even while serving as the President of our Association.

Congratulations to Mike for this well-deserved honor and what was said in the presentation of the Award to him couldn’t be truer: “Mike successfully lead the FCLA from the President’s Desk and from under the waves!”

ANNUAL MEETING AND 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Tom McCabe

On August 11, 2018 the FCLA conducted its Annual Meeting on board the *Clearwater* and at the same time celebrated its 50th Anniversary.

Fifty-three years ago, the Fulton Chain of Lakes was becoming very contaminated to the point that NYS threatened to close the public beaches at Inlet and Old Forge. There was concern on behalf of many in the communities and two couples, Tom and Rita McCabe, and Hubert and Emily Jones, neighbors on the south shore of 4th Lake took action. They discovered the main reason for the problem was ineffective septic systems and encouraged others to get involved, as well as, our various governments.

The FCLA began with close cooperation of the two towns, the counties and state resulting in the signing of the FCLA By-Laws in 1968, 50 years ago.

The Annual Meeting and the 50th Celebration was

attended by 110 FCLA Members and various government officials representing the close cooperation the organization has had with our public officials. After the Annual meeting a cruise on the *Clearwater* through the clear waters of the Fulton Chain was truly enjoyed by all along with food prepared by the Seventh Lake House.

Five government officials made remarks paying tribute to the FCLA and presenting various testimonial documents: Robert Moore, TOW Supervisor; John Frey, Inlet Town Supervisor; NYS DEC Deputy Commissioner, Ken Lynch; Marc Butler, State Assemblyman; and Elise Stefanik, US Congresswoman.

It was a grand celebration of the FCLA and special thanks was given to all the faithful members of the organization without whom the organization and its successes would not have been possible.

Again, thanks to you all for your ongoing support!

NOMINATING AND BOARD MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Tom McCabe

The FCLA is very pleased to welcome two new directors to its board effective 2018: Butch Hartsig and Ray Letterman. Both have long histories in the Adirondacks and the Fulton Chain.

Butch Hartsig and his wife Anne have owned on Fourth Lake from the early eighties and have thoroughly enjoyed and appreciate the lakes for all that they offer. In 2014, they became permanent lake residents relocating from the Rochester, NY area where Butch spent 45 years there in the financial services industry. Butch has been a FCLA Member for over 30 years and has always been favorably impressed with the workings and successes of the organization and now he wants to contribute as a Director. He says: "Clean lake water is the life blood of our communities and as a Director I will ensure that we continue to keep our lakes clean and safe for all to enjoy!"

Ray Letterman and his wife live in Fayetteville, NY. They have spent the last eleven summers in their camp on Fourth Lake and they have been members of the FCLA since then also. Ray was an academic in Civil and Environmental Engineering for 40 years teaching and conducting research on water quality, hydrology and water treatment. He first came to the Adirondacks thirty years ago to conduct research on drinking water treatment. As a new Director he will focus on understanding the planned remediation of the Old Forge and Sixth Lake dams by the Hudson River-Black River Regulating District and how this may affect the water levels of our lakes. He says: "The role of the FCLA will grow in the future regarding the Regulating District's possible changes in their operating priorities of the dams. The FCLA must be present to make sure all stakeholders are heard."

Welcome to Butch and Ray! And we also welcome others who may want to be on our Board or any of our Committees to continue the good work of our Association. If you are interested please let me know at: tmccabe862@aol.com.

HISTORY OF FLCA

Phil Sanzone, Historian

The Changing Focus of the FCLA Through the Years

The FCLA was originally formed in 1968 to address and remedy the pollution of the water in the Fulton Chain. At that time, there was visible pollution in the lakes. The FCLA partnered with the Town of Webb to hire a summer employee to conduct septic system inspections, including dye tests of septic systems. At that time, untreated sewage was the main source of any pollution, as there were no farms or factories contributing polluting substances. In the beginning, many septic systems were close to the lake and waste water was going directly into the water, as the dye tests proved. Boathouse toilets were also found being flushed directly into the lake also. In 1974, a typical year for the time, 235 septic systems were dye tested, and 55 violations were found. Today, 200 to 300 systems are tested, and only 1 or 2 violations are found.

The improvement in the water quality tests has been dramatic. Fecal coliform (from the feces of warm-blooded animals) counts were routinely elevated, some above the 2,500/100 ml deemed unsafe for swimming. For instance, a reading in Third Lake in 1984 was 9,212.9/100 ml. Today, readings are sometimes in the single digits, and rarely are over 100. We have tested for coliform in the Inlet channel after the Inlet sewage plant went on line, and those readings are some of the lowest in the entire Fulton Chain. The Town Code Enforcement office now runs the dye testing program, and has expanded it to other lakes in the Town of Webb. FCLA continues to sample the water. In 1983, we also sampled the water for heavy metals with results so low as to be not detectable. The chemist recommended no further testing for heavy metals.

FCLA has also addressed other issues as they arise. When concerns were raised about aerial spraying for black flies using Dibrom in a petroleum base liquid, FCLA researched the use of Bti to control black flies and shared this with both towns. The Towns of Webb and Inlet soon adopted Bti programs, and this has proved to be more effective and much safer than aerial spraying. If only one of many hatches is missed are black flies bothersome.

This brings us up to the present time. Without a doubt, the biggest threat to the water quality of the Fulton Chain today comes from any introduction of invasive species (plants and animals) into the water. If you have friends with a camp on another lake that has been infested by an invasive species, they can tell you how it adversely affects their enjoyment of the lake. This is now the main focus of the FCLA as it relates to water quality.

To address this, we have identified where there are any invasive species in the Fulton Chain. We have paid \$4,000 for a professor from Paul Smith's College to map the location of all invasive plants in the Fulton Chain. This was done in cooperation with the Towns of Webb and Inlet, with each Town contributing \$1,000 to the cost of the survey. Several small patches were found in Fourth and Second Lakes. The FCLA sent in a diver to remove these patches, and we have monitored them since to prevent regrowth.

The worst infestations were found in Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Lakes. Again, in cooperation with both Towns, we obtained two grants totaling over \$200,000 to pay for divers to collect and remove the invasive plants from the water. Fifth and Sixth Lakes are now under control but not completely eliminated. We continue to monitor and pull plants there. The far end of Seventh Lake by the Eighth Lake campground was totally infested with Eurasian Milfoil, and the divers were unable to completely harvest there due to the nature of the lake bottom.

Other Organizations are helping out in a big way. Paul Smith's College has formed the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI). Through various funding sources, most notably the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation, the AWI has provided a watershed Stewardship Program to provide boat inspectors at various launch sites to inspect boats for invasive species and remove them as needed. In 2018, their funding only covered 5 days of coverage. The FCLA provided them with the additional funding needed to provide 7-day coverage. They have provided a decontamination station in the Rocky Mountain parking area. In the summer of 2018, 216 boats were decontaminated. At the Fourth Lake launch site, 4,155 inspections were made, with 69 invasive species found and removed. Removed invasive species included curly-leaf pondweed, Eurasian watermilfoil, variable leaf milfoil, water chestnut, and zebra mussel.

The second biggest threat today to water quality comes from lakefront owners who insist on having lush lawns on their property. The soils of the Adirondacks are usually thin and lack sufficient nutrients for rich plant growth. Any lawn that

PUBLICITY

Paul Willsey

The Fulton Chain of Lakes Association was founded in 1968 with a mission of protecting the waters of the Fulton Chain of Lakes in New York's Central Adirondacks. We celebrated our 50th Anniversary last summer and look forward to continuing our mission of protecting the lakes in the years to come. The Publicity Committee's goal is to make residents and visitors aware of issues that affect the quality of our water and to promote safe boating on the lakes.

Watch for articles in the *Adirondack Express* related to preserving and improving the quality of our water. During the summer months we run ads in the local papers to remind people of actions they should take to protect our waters.

Our website <http://FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org/index.html> was updated last year. On the website you will find useful information about our organization and how you can help us with our mission of preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Fulton Chain of Lakes. There is information on steps you can take to prevent introduction of pollutants and invasive species into our lakes so that the current excellent water quality is maintained. There are links to other organizations that are facing a variety of threats to their water quality and steps they are taking to protect their water. In addition to water quality, safe boating is important to all of us. The website has information on how to make your boating experience safer and it includes information on New York state and local boating laws.



Instagram

INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK

Danielle Kiefer



Starting last summer the Fulton Chain of Lakes Association increased efforts to expand our social media presence by creating an Instagram account in addition to the Facebook account we previously created. Using these accounts we have been able to update our followers on efforts of the Association, as well as being able to share pictures of our beautiful lakes. We have seen positive engagement and visitations from these communities on our posts regarding our efforts to "preserve and protect" our Fulton Chain of Lakes.

We hope to use our social media accounts to continue to reach out to the public, both younger and older, to educate them about the FCLA, but also endeavor to reach people that are not familiar with the Association and use these platforms to increase awareness of and membership to the FCLA. In the upcoming months, we hope to increase activity on these sites and our following on social media, and to engage more stakeholder in the healthy environment and beauty of the Fulton Chain with our content. We welcome participation in our efforts, and please feel free to share pictures and information related to the FCLA on our Facebook page, or tag us on Instagram. If you do not already follow us on these platforms, you can find our accounts using these handles: Instagram - @fcl_assoc and Facebook - @fultonchainoflakesassociation.org.

FCLA ESTABLISHES ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP

Don Kelly

The Board of Directors recently established a scholarship for Town of Webb Schools graduates engaged in studies in environmental fields. We hope that the scholarship will be granted annually and is open to current graduates and alumni of the Town of Webb Schools. This will support students going into or actively engaging in study in fields such as water quality, water use, water-related land use and climate

change. Applicants will be evaluated based on their proposed fields of study, their academic records, and their records of community service. By supporting students studying in environmental fields, FCLA is furthering its missions of educating the community about the importance of water and water quality to our quality of life.

FCLA Officers & Directors – 2019

President John Jeffery
1st VP Mark F. Steigerwald
2nd VP
Sec/Treasurer Phyllis Sanzone

Directors:

Butch Hartsig Jim Riedel
Don Kelly Phil Sanzone
Danielle Kiefer Connie Schreppel
Bill Landmesser Michael Schreppel
Ray Letterman Ron Smith
Tom McCabe Jr Tom Vawter
Jodelle Pross Paul Willsey

Directors Emeriti:

Janet Blakeman Amy Sauer
Jack DeBevoise Ed Stafford
Richard Knight Heather Stafford
Jim Murphy Bob Wheeler

Honorary Directors:

John Frey Robert A. Moore

Ex-Officio: Lowell McBurney

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looks “good” requires the use of fertilizer. You don’t see it happen, but this fertilizer is eventually washed into the lake. In essence, this fertilizes the plant growth (weeds and algae) in the lake. You may have noticed the increase in lake weeds near the fertilized lawns. You may have noticed the green tint to the lake water near the end of the summer as the algae have grown. Even though New York state has banned the use of laundry detergents and lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus (the one plant nutrient that is in short supply in nature, and thus it’s absence can limit plant growth), lawn fertilizer still promotes weed and algae growth. Please limit your use of lawn fertilizer. We offer free a booklet for homeowners that shows how you can limit the runoff of nutrients from your property. Ask for a free copy. Our email address is on our website at <http://FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org/>.

The FCLA will continue to be vigilant in identifying and resolving threats to the water quality of the Fulton Chain. We will continue to fund divers as needed, as well as, other solutions that become available. Your continuing support makes all this possible.

To become a member, fill out the application below and either give it to an FCLA representative or mail it with your check to FCLA, PO Box 564, Old Forge, NY 13420.

**Membership Application
Fulton Chain of Lakes Association**

www.FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org • Email: info@FultonChainofLakesAssociation.org

Please print

Name _____ Spouse _____

Home Address _____

Email _____

Fulton Chain 911 Address _____

Summer Mailing Address (if applicable) _____

Local Telephone _____

Annual Membership dues are: \$10 Basic \$25 Family \$35 Sponsor \$50 Friend of the Lakes \$100 Patron

Date _____, 20____ Signature _____