



# Lake George Association

*People Protecting the Lake Since 1885*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **For IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Over 125 people attend LGA's 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – Water Conservation Expert Ken Wagner Spoke**

Lake George, NY – September 3, 2010 – One-hundred-twenty-nine members and friends of the Lake George Association gathered at the Lake George Club on Friday, August 20 to reflect upon 125 years of lake protection and conservation, and to gain inspiration for the next 125 years.

#### **Dr. Ken Wagner – Keynote Speaker**

Dr. Ken Wagner, editor in chief of *Lake and Reservoir Management*, the international journal of the North American Lake Management Society, was the featured speaker. Ken emphasized how essential water is to fundamental survival, explaining how water underlies all modern industrial and agricultural processes. There exists no technological substitute or alternative for water, he said.

While logic would dictate that water conservation and protection deserve the public's most dedicated and serious attention, separation from real lake experiences can breed indifference or even misconception, Ken explained. Even though water crises around the world confront us on a weekly basis, we still don't get it as a society, he said. Most of us have little appreciation for the impact of water on our lives.

Dr. Wagner encouraged the audience to stay "connected" to the lake in a real way, and to focus on youth as key to the Lake's future. In today's world, he said, it is too easy to remain separated, to live in a virtual world, instead of a real one, and to rely on technological fixes to resource problems, rather than face our ultimate limitations. Also, because water is cheap in our society, its costs don't reflect its scarcity. Without real lake experiences, we cannot excite the passion we need to fuel great protection work, he said. Ken also asked the LGA audience to seek real solutions and to apply low impact development options such as buffers, rain barrels, and rain gardens. The use of phosphorus fertilizers on lawns is a growing problem, he warned, despite recent regulation prohibiting it, and it is one of the LGA's most important initiatives, he said.

#### **Executive Director Walter Lender – Highlights from History**

LGA Executive Director Walt Lender also spoke, highlighting interesting moments from the LGA's long 125-year history, such as:

- In 1885 each founding member donated \$10, and annual dues were set at \$2.
- In August of 1886 the LGA hired its first game constable, set legal limits for fish, and released 400,000 lake trout.

- In August of 1889 the LGA game constable was ordered to tour the lake and report any violations to “the law prohibiting the imparting of sewerage into the lake.”
- During the next few decades, the LGA enforced the fishing laws on Lake George and stocked many different kinds of fish. It also set and enforced the fishing seasons for the various species in the Lake.
- In August of 1907 the LGA Legislative Committee prevented the passage of a bill to legalize pollution of the lake.
- By 1908 the LGA had stopped ships from dumping ashes and kitchen waste into the lake, but septic waste was still being dumped. After the LGA discussed the issue with the steamship operators, boats were equipped with tanks to receive the waste.
- In 1909 the LGA hired the basin’s first health and sanitation inspector, a role later taken on by various state and local agencies and municipalities.
- In 1977 a steering committee formed to solve sedimentation problems for the first time, concentrating on the 18 or 20 major streams feeding the lake.
- In 1980 the first citizen science water quality monitoring programs began on Lake George using LGA volunteers to take samples and track water quality indicators.
- Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the LGA supported the establishment of the Warren County Sewer District to provide municipal sewage collection for the entire south basin of the lake.

### **LGA Staff Reports**

During the meeting, LGA staff reported on the status of educational and lake saving projects around the Lake.

Randy Rath, the LGA project manager, provided summaries on the LGA’s other lake saving projects. Design work for the English Brook sediment basin is complete he said. Hague and Finkle Brook delta removal plans are complete and applications for all necessary permits have been submitted. The sediment basin at Indian Brook was cleaned out and native shrub plantings were installed, and a stormwater planning process will begin for three lakefront areas in the town of Putnam.

Education Director Emily DeBolt and Watershed Educator Kristen Rohne gave updates on education, lake quality, and lake awareness programs. In 2009, 60 floating classroom programs served 1,264 participants. So far in 2010, 56 programs have served 1,285 participants. In addition, stream monitoring field trips served 940 students. Volunteer monitors continued to provide data for the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program, now in its seventh year, and for the LGA’s Turtle Monitoring Project and the Drop-a-Brick on Zebra Mussels Program. So far in 2010, Emily reported, the LGA’s Lake George stewards have inspected 1696 boats and removed 39 invasive species samples.

The LGA is a non-profit membership organization of people interested in working together to protect, conserve, and improve the beauty and quality of the Lake George Basin. It is the nation’s oldest lake association. For more information, contact the LGA at (518) 668-3558 or visit the LGA website at [www.lakegeorgeassociation.org](http://www.lakegeorgeassociation.org).

Photo 1 caption: Dr. Ken Wagner at the LGA 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, explaining how essential water conservation is to our fundamental survival. He urged attendees to stay connected to the Lake, and described how separation from real lake experiences can breed indifference and lead to misconceptions.

Photo 2 & 3 caption: A large crowd attended the Lake George Association's historic 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, held August 20 at the Lake George Club.

Photo 4 caption: Attendees listen to keynote speaker Dr. Ken Wagner at the LGA's 125<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. Pictured from left: Bob de Buys, Holly de Buys, Mary Ashby, Bruce Ashby, Victor Hershaft, Yvette Hershaft and Mike Dier.

Photo 5 caption: A lunch celebrating 125 years of conservation success was held on the veranda after the meeting.