



# AsRA News

Newsletter of the Ausable River Association | Summer 2009

## Water, Water Everywhere, Why Conserve Water in the Adirondacks?

After experiencing the summer of 2009, it's hard to believe there could ever be a shortage of clean water in the Adirondacks! Why conserve water here in the Adirondacks? Because, water conservation helps keep water clean!



Over 1 billion people in the world today do not have access to safe, clean water. Furthermore, the World Bank forecasts that by 2035, a third of the world's population will experience severe shortages of clean water<sup>1</sup>. Consider the value of clear blue Adirondack water as we approach the year 2035.

Not only do humans and aquatic life depend upon clean water for drinking and living in, homeowners depend upon clean water. Home prices have been shown to decline by 10% when water quality is compromised. (WATERKEEPER Alliance, 2006). Nobody wants to boat or swim in a green algae clogged lake. Green lakes are the result of excess nutrients washing into the lake and streams such as

fertilizers from lawns or failed or failing septic leach fields.

Water conservation in your home plays a key role in keeping water clean.

### How you can help:

- 🌿 Conserve water used in daily household tasks. This puts less water into the septic tank, thus extending the life of the entire system (and saving you big bucks in the long run!).

Examples of how to save water around the house:

- ◆ Do fewer loads of laundry
- ◆ Install low-flow plumbing fixtures such as faucet restrictors and low-flow toilets
- ◆ Repair leaky toilet fixtures
- 🌿 Install a rain barrel to capture rain water that comes off the roof. Thereby keeping it from washing down the road, picking up dirt and grime, and dumping it into the nearest water body. A quarter inch of rain on a typical roof will yield 200 gallons of water! For instructions on how to build a rain barrel collection system watch You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/watchv=MGFDlkJOdaM>
- 🌿 Landscape with native plants that require less watering and do not require the use of harmful chemicals to protect them from insects.

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**ASRA**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Jeanne Ashworth, Town of Wilmington
- Dirk Bryant - TNC
- Anita Deming—CCE
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- John Eldridge, Town of North Elba
- Brad Knapp, Keeseville
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- John Monroe, Town of Keene
- Joe Moore, Mill Pond
- Mary Lou Moore - TU

**STAFF**

Carol Treadwell,  
Executive Director

ASRA Board Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month, 6:30 PM, at the Mirror Lake Beach House. Members are invited. Please call the ASRA office or email [info@ausableriver.org](mailto:info@ausableriver.org) to confirm dates and location.

## Don't Flush Your Drugs! Keep Pharmaceuticals out of our Rivers!

Rivers nationwide are facing a serious threat from the flushing of unused prescription drugs. Households and institutions are the largest source of this contamination. Typical wastewater treatment is not designed to remove pharmaceuticals and is only partly effective at doing so. Low doses of drugs, hormones, steroids, and other human substances have been found in rivers across the nation. Even Lake Champlain water has been shown to be “slightly caffeinated” but not contaminated with pharmaceuticals.

Scientists have discovered affected aquatic life in 139 streams nationwide. Effects to aquatic life include irregular development, decreased reproductive rates, and extra appendages. There is concern about the risk to humans through drinking water, but the long-term effects are unknown. Possible concerns are endocrine disruption and increases in anti-biotic resistant bacteria.

So for your health and the health of your neighbors: Don't Flush your Drugs!

### Proper Disposal of Household Prescriptions and Over the Counter Drugs

- ⊙ Take your medications to a local collection site such as a pharmacy or a municipal household hazardous waste collection event.
- ⊙ Before placing drugs in the trash, mix them with water (do not crush into powder, however). Then mix with salt, ashes, dirt, cat litter, or coffee grounds. This will keep rodents from consuming them.
- ⊙ Seal drugs in rodent proof containers.
- ⊙ Do not dispose of drugs in the same trash bag with food; they may get scavenged by wildlife.

For more information see [www.dontflushyourdrugs.net](http://www.dontflushyourdrugs.net)

## Cash for Septic Pump-outs (cont.)

**How the Ausable River Association can help you:**

The Ausable River Association is helping landowners along the river by offering to pay half the cost of pumping a septic tank on properties adjacent to the West Branch of the Ausable River or one of its tributaries. This program is funded by a grant from the Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York (CWICNY) and is part of a program to reduce Phosphorus levels in Lake Champlain.

***Cash for Septic Pump-outs!***

Riverfront homeowners can receive up to \$118 towards

the cost of pumping a septic tank on their property. AsRA is able to pass along savings to homeowners by arranging two or more pumps in a day. The program also includes a water conservation kit containing plumbing fixtures that reduce household water usage.

To sign-up for this program call the ASRA office: 873-3752. Pump-outs take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays through mid-October, 2009. Any Ausable Watershed homeowner can receive the water conservation kit by making a \$20 donation to AsRA.

<sup>1</sup>World Business Council for Sustainable Development, United Nations World Water Development.

# Champlain Quadricentennial Celebrated by ASRA

## Historic Rambles of the Ausable Watershed

Not only did Samuel de Champlain name a big lake after himself, he and his fellow explorers were responsible for naming the Ausable River. “River au Sable” or ‘river which flows to the sands,’ after the wide sandy delta at the river’s mouth.

In commemoration of this event, the Ausable River Association held two Quadricentennial events titled “*Historic Rambles of the Ausable Watershed.*” These outings highlighted the power of the Ausable River and its role in shaping the history of the valley.

Without the Ausable River, early settlers would not

have had a roof over their heads or a piece of bread in their mouths. Early settlers cleared and farmed the flatland adjacent to the river. They used the river to power gristmills and sawmills. Numerous blast furnaces and forges were set on the banks of the river so that water would be readily available for cooling and dousing fires. The river was also used to transport logs downstream to sawmills and paper mills.

A brochure of rambles containing cartoon maps by Steven Kellogg can be obtained by contacting the ASRA office. Excerpts are shown below:

### “Newman”

#### The Town that was Never on the Map



In July 1609, Samuel de Champlain, on an exploratory mission of the Lake Champlain region wrote “towards the south I saw very high mountains...” He would have noticed Mt. Marcy and Algonquin – the headwaters of the Ausable River. It was not for another 200 years, however, that Europeans would first settle in the upper Ausable Watershed. The Ausable River and its tributaries were to play an important role in the early development and industry of the region. Early settlers harnessed the power of the Chubb River by building a dam to form Mill Pond. Sawmills powered by water falling over the dam supplied the lumber used to build the early village of Lake Placid. The river also powered the short lived “Elba Iron Works.” Eventually the dam was converted to generate electricity by Paul Smith and powered the 1932 Winter Olympics. The Mill Pond area was once referred to as Newman, after Anna Newman, a prominent resident. It served as a center for commerce hosting a general store, butcher shop, hardware store, hotels, opera house, and postal station. The name Newman faded into history after the postal station closed in 1937.

**Mill Pond Canoe Route:** Canoes and Kayaks can be launched from the shores of Jewtraw Park on Station Street in the village of Lake Placid.

### A “Crows Eye” View of Historic Keene



Sitting on top of Big Crow Mountain and peering down into the valley of the East Branch of the Ausable River it is easy to imagine how the river and its flood plane served as the center of the community of Keene from its earliest settlement. The first settlers were farmers who tilled the floodplain soils and build the first sawmills, and gristmills. During the age of iron (1820’s – 1880) the river supplied water to forges in the hamlet of Keene. After the center of iron mining moved to the Mid-west the river and its tributaries were used to chute and float logs to sawmills (1890’s – 1900’s). The river is also the center of another valuable industry – tourism. Artists from the Hudson River school came to paint the valley’s craggy cliffs and stunning mountain scenery (1850’s). The Golden Age of tourism (1870 – 1920’s) brought city weary travelers here to relax, hike, and fish in the refreshing mountain air. It is hard to imagine that the valley slopes were once denuded of trees. Today the forests hide the remnants of these past visitors and industries.

**Crow Mountain Trailhead:** In Keene take Hurricane Road uphill for 1.9 miles; the trailhead for Little Crow is on the left. Or continue to O’Toole Road and drive to the top for parking at the Big Crow trailhead.

# AsRA Accomplishments 2009

## Tree Planting 2009

On May 7 2009, eleven Ausable River Association volunteers planted 1500 trees along the banks of the East Branch of the Ausable River in the Town of Jay. AsRA gave away an additional 500 trees to riverfront owners.

Tree planting is a win-win situation. Landowners benefit because trees help stabilize the streambank. The river and its inhabitants benefit from the shade that keeps the water cool.



## AsRA Still Working to Stop Rock Snot

In the wee hours of May 20, 2009 AsRA Director, Carol Treadwell, arrived at the “Two Fly Contest” in Wilmington. As fishermen arrived to check-in and don their gear, Carol jovially asked everyone if they had “dipped.” “If you’ve fished in the Batten Kill, Delaware, Esopus, White, Connecticut, or Mad Rivers then you must dip before you fish!” These rivers are infected with *Didymosphenia geminata*, an invasive algae that covers river rocks with unsightly beige mats and makes fishing difficult. Several fishermen at the contest had seen Didymo in the West Delaware River and confirmed the stories about these ugly mats. “This is no fishermen’s tale; this is truly a bad thing for rivers,” said one experienced angler.

AsRA has been educating anglers on this topic since Didymo first appeared in the White River of Vermont.

**The Ausable is still Didymo free! Please help us to keep it that way!**



Above: Two-fly contestant dipping in 5% salt solution in order to kill Didymo cells.

Photograph by Flycaster Photography.



## A Beetle Success Storey

AsRA’s effort to combat purple loosestrife using Galerucella beetles has been extensively reported on in the local newspapers and in the Winter 2009 newsletter. Many citizens are asking how the beetles are doing. We are glad to report that the beetles are hard at work eating only purple loosestrife around Mill and Power Ponds. AsRA and MLWA staff and volunteers examined the plants in August and found loosestrife leaves riddled with holes, and the flowers were not even blooming!

AsRA and MLWA will continue to monitor the beetles yearly for another nine years. It will be important to check on our beetle buddies in the future because they may not survive the harsh Adirondack winters. Beetle applicators on Prince Edward Island have reported that the beetles do not over winter well in that climate.



Left: Purple Loosestrife plant on Mill Pond showing severely chewed leaves and flowers.

## AsRA Volunteers 2009

Thank you to all of the Awesome Ausable Volunteers. The work of a river association cannot be carried out by one person and AsRaA depends upon its many volunteers to accomplish its mission and many of its river improvement projects.

Au Sable Valley School—

Earth Science Class

Dan Boothby

Ted Cornell

Susan Earley

Rachael Finn

Dorris Marie Firsching

Brendan Garrity

Wendy Hall

Sharron Hewston

Andrew Johnson

Joe Kahn

Madeline Killeen

Marion Klauck

Ken Klauck

Brad Knapp

Wes Kreiweck

Bethany Kreiweck

John Lafferty

John Monroe

Mary Lou Moore

Bob Peters

Dave Reckahn

Leonard Reed

Mike Schaefer

Mary Werner

Susan Pulitzer

Nick Walker

**Thank You!**

## Green Cleaning Products

Follow the recipes below to make your own environmentally friendly household cleaners. These are safe for people and pets in your home and are easier on your septic tank!

### All-Purpose Cleaner<sup>1</sup>

Use this solution on hard surfaces such as countertops and kitchen floors, windows and mirrors.

2 cups white distilled vinegar

2 cups water

20-30 drops of essential oil (optional)

*Tip:* Warming the solution in a microwave until luke warm will boost the cleaning power for tough jobs. Only use a microwave safe glass container.

### Creamy Soft Scrub<sup>1</sup>

Use this scrub on kitchen counters, stove tops, bathroom sinks, etc.

2 cups baking soda

1/2 cup liquid castile soap\*

4 teaspoons vegetable glycerin (acts a preservative)

5 drops antibacterial essential oil such as lavender, tea tree, rosemary or any scent you prefer (optional)

Mix together and store in a sealed glass jar. This has a shelf life of 2 years.

*Tips:* For exceptionally tough jobs spray with vinegar first—full strength or diluted, scented—let sit and follow with scrub.

Dry soft scrubs can be had with baking soda or salt (or a combination of both) with 10 to 15 drops of essential oil to scent.

\*WVE recommends using a liquid castile soap that does not contain sodium lauryl (laureth) sulfate (SLS) or Diethanolamine (DEA), which may have harmful side effects.

### Toilet Bowl Cleaner<sup>1</sup>

Sprinkle toilet bowl with baking soda, drizzle with vinegar, let soak for at least 30 minutes and scrub with toilet brush.

*Tip:* Let ingredients soak for a while to make for easy scrubbing, especially on persistent stains like toilet bowl rings

### Tub and Tile Cleaner<sup>2</sup>

1/3 cup baking soda

1/3 cup Borax

1 teaspoon vegetable oil based liquid soap

Mix all three ingredients and add enough water to make a paste. Spread onto tile or tub surface, scrub, and rinse well after.

<sup>1</sup> From:  
[www.womenanenvironment.org](http://www.womenanenvironment.org)

<sup>2</sup> From: The Association of Vermont Recyclers

# The Honey Wagon

It's not sexy and it doesn't fill seats at the theater but properly maintaining an On-site Waste Water Treatment System (Septic System) is essential to maintaining clean water locally. I've traveled around the watershed this summer assisting home owners with the septic pump-out assistance fund (see page 2 for details). The most frequent comment I've heard is "they should just build a Waste Water Treatment Plant here!"

Unfortunately, economics are not favorable for small communities. Traditional waste water treatment plants are expensive to build; most communities in the Adirondacks do not have the tax base to fund and maintain this type of infrastructure. Lake Placid village spent \$15 million in 2004 to construct a new tertiary treatment plant. Calling the "honey wagon" every three years is much less expensive.

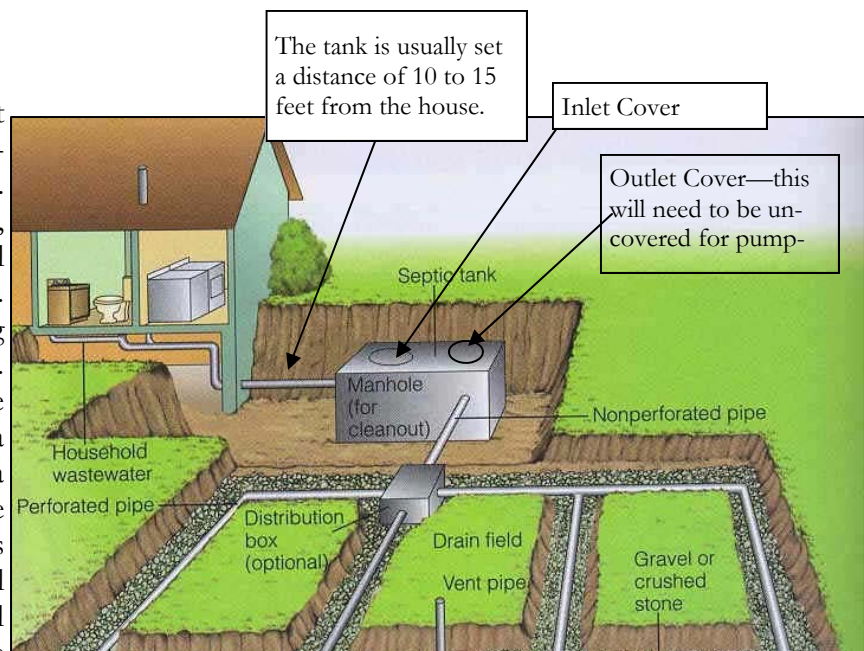
Below are a few tips that homeowners can follow to reduce their septic tank up-keep expenses and prolong the life of their system.



- Have your septic system pumped and the tank inspected every 2 to 3 years. This will keep the tank working efficiently and prevent costly repairs.
  - Flush only toilet paper. Other items such as food, or grease from sink disposals, paper towels, diapers, cigarette butts etc. fill the tank faster and thus requiring more frequent pumps!
  - Minimize the disposal of toxic materials washed down the sink or toilet. Disinfectants, bleach, drain cleaner, and other chemicals reduce the effectiveness of the bacteria in the septic tank. See page 6 for recipes for "Green Cleaning Products."
- Conserve Water! (see page 1). For a \$20 donation to AsRA you can receive a Water Conservation Kit. The kit contains a messaging shower head, a kitchen faucet head, two bathroom faucet heads (all restrict flow but increase the pressure of water coming out of the faucet). Also in the kit are leak detectors and a bag to convert a toilet to low-flow.

## How to find your septic tank and manhole cover

To locate your septic tank: go into the basement or crawl space and find where and in what direction the sewer pipe goes out through the wall. (All of the plumbing pipes from sinks, washer, toilets will feed into ONE big pipe and that will exit the house and go toward the septic tank). Once you locate the direction the pipe is leaving the house, go out into the yard to this location. In this area of your yard look for an area where the grass grows very green and lush or an area where it does not grow well at all, OR look for a slightly depressed or mounded area. Probe the likely site with a metal rod. When the rod hits cement or metal, uncover the area with a shovel until you find a cement manhole cover or a metal tank cover (it will have a metal loop in the center).



# AsRA Events 2009

## Trail Run 2009, a Beetlicious Success

Once again the staff at the Mountaineer have pulled off another fun trail run through the hills and dales of East Keene, New York.

Proceeds from this event go to support river improvement projects for the Ausable and Boquet Rivers. The Mountaineer manages the Trail Run and ASRA and BRASS feed the hungry racers. ASRA also provides activities for the non-runners.



This year's activities were a beetlicious success. Kids participated in "Good Bug, Bad Bug Mask Making and Bug Parade." Adults

followed up with a bug dance. The kids transformed themselves into arthropods such as Emerald Ash Borer, Wooly Adelgid, and Asian Long Horned Beetle.

These bugs threaten native trees in the Adirondacks and commonly arrive on firewood brought in by campers from outside the area.

"Good Bugs" combat garden

pests and invasives. Examples are: Gallerucella, the purple loosestrife eater, and Lady Bug, the aphid eater. Lady Bugs were by far the most popular bug among kids, but Emerald Ash Borer by far dominated the beetle scene for adult interest. The most asked question of the summer is "What are those purple things hanging from trees?"

Thanks to the Mountaineer AsRA was able to raise \$356 to support river improvement projects; in addition, Patagonia donated \$250 to each watershed association.



**Thank you!**

## Wine Tasting Benefit Hosted by the Great Range

Elly and Jason, proprietors of the Great Range in Keene Valley were the gracious hosts of a wine tasting to benefit the Ausable River Association on August 13, 2009. Ron Cook and Brad Hurlbert of the Route 73 Back Porch Society also supported the event by playing lively rock tunes to a packed house until late into the night.

The benefit brought in \$900 to go toward Ausable River improvement projects.

Thank you to The Great Range, the band, and all who came to donate and drink wine!

**WINE TASTING**  
6:30pm  
Aug 13<sup>th</sup>

**GreatRange**  
Reservations call: 518-576-9069

Inspirational food complemented by an extensive wine list  
1799 NY-89 Route 73 • Keene Valley, NY

Elly Pratico  
Jason Pratico  
Owners

**LIVE MUSIC**  
RUSS COOK  
BRAD HURLBERT  
ROUTE 73  
BACK PORCH SOCIETY  
2009 Aug 13<sup>th</sup>

## Environmental Benefits Program Donation

The Ausable River Association was the recipient of monies from the Environmental Benefits Program. Indian Pass Ranch, LLC paid \$22,500 to AsRA as part of a settlement to the lawsuit brought by the NYS DEC after an unknown quantity of sediment was released into the Ausable River from a dam on that property. The funds are to be used for "conservation and maintenance" project(s) on the West Branch Ausable. AsRA was chosen to receive these funds because of its ten years of experience on conducting river improvement projects and for having a "shovel ready" project to apply the funds to. The project proposed to receive this funding is a stream bank stabilization in the River Road Section of the West Branch.

# Creel Survey Results

If you are a fisherman, you may have participated in the AsRA Creel Survey over the past four years. This spring AsRA was able to report that data thanks to a grant from the Ellen Lea Paine Memorial Nature Fund

administered by the Essex County Adirondack Garden Club. AsRA maintains seven boxes along the West Branch where fish catch surveys are collected. The results were published in the brochure shown below.



## What's the Catch?

**Thank you for participating in the Ausable River Association Creel Survey\* Here's what we've found so far!**

### Brown Trout



The most abundant catch is Brown Trout (71%). They range in size from 8 to 18". Native to European streams, hatchery raised Browns have been shown to reproduce in the Ausable. The largest number of Browns are caught in reach 5.

### Rainbow Trout



Rainbow Trout are the second most abundant catch, making up 15% of reported catches. They are stocked by Essex County at 9" and 13" and come out of the river between 10" and 16". Rainbows are caught in reaches 5 and 3.

### Brook Trout



Native to the Ausable, "Brookies" make up 11% of reported catches. They range in size from 6 to 12" with an average size of 9.75". Most commonly they are caught in reaches 5 and 4.

### Smallmouth Bass



Occasionally a Smallmouth Bass shows up on the end of someone's line. Bass on the mighty Ausable? You betcha! Smallmouth Bass are commonly reported in reaches 3 and 4.

\*From 2005 to 2008 anglers filled out 400 to 550 survey cards annually, reporting 1100 to 1500 catches per year.

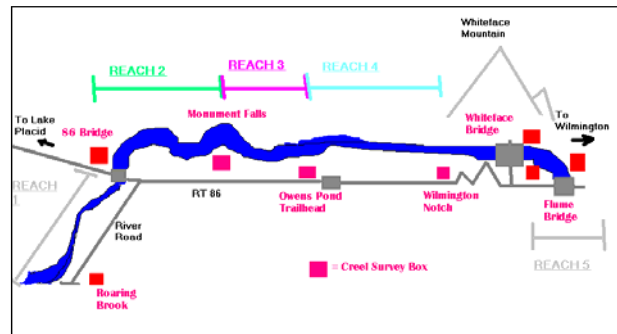
## More Survey Facts

- The average fishing trip was 2 hours and 45 minutes long.
- On average, anglers caught one fish for every 1 hour and 20 minutes of fishing effort. In June however, fish were caught after fifty minutes of effort!
- Reach 5 had the most catches reported (highest traffic).



*Looking for a quiet spot on the river?*

- Reach 1 had the lowest reported fishing effort. And remember to practice the angler's code of ethics... "Don't double up in pools!"



### Grab a Survey Card

**Tell us what you're Catching!** Report even if you don't catch anything. Please fill out cards completely; every piece of information is important!

For more detailed results visit:

**AusableRiver.org**  
or call 518-873-3752



This publication was funded by the Ellen Lea Paine Memorial Nature Fund from the Essex County Adirondack Garden Club.

# 2008/2009 Members

Thank you for Supporting the Ausable River Association!

Anonymous (1)	Rachel Finn	Ruth Kuhfahl	Seymore Preston
Diane Althans	Mr & Mrs J.G. Fritzinger, Jr.	Joan & Miles Kulukundis	Edward Prince
Mary Ashmead	Dick & Susan Gaffney	Wes & Bethany Krawiec	Vic & Vickie Putman
Jeanne Ashworth	Mark Gallogly	John Lafferty	Ralas Timber, Inc.
Austen's Tri-Lakes Tree and Landscape	Dr. & Mrs. Nelson Gelfman	Charles Larson	Karen Rappaport
Joseph Barile	Tony Goodwin	Phillip Lobo	Debora Rice
Mary Barric	William J. Grempe	William Trigg Long	Riverside Lanes
Terry Blank	Louise Gregg	Roland & Pam Machold	Rich Rogers
Robert Bradbury, Jr.	Leita & William Hamill	Paul Martin	Carol Rupprecht
Dirk Bryant	John Hopkinson	David Mason	John Ryan
Joan R. Burchenal	Brett Heineman	Marilyn McDonald	Arthur V. Savage
Mr. & Mrs. H.K. Canner III	Thomas Hinman	Christopher McGill	Sara Schoetz
Philip Conway	Hungry Trout Resort	Constance Miller	Mimi & Skip Shinkle
Linda B. Cooley	Hungry Trout Fly Shop	John W. Mills	Judson W. Smith
Robert & Nancy Cressey	Audry & Christopher Hyson	Sarah & Robert Moench	John Spissingier
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Jennifer Deming	William J. Johnson	Megan Murphy	Richard Suttmeier
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Lorraine Duvall	Georgia Jones	Jim and Rosemary Olmsted	Eric Teed
Melissa & Dominic Eisinger	Joseph Kahn	David Page	Jeanne Warner
John Eldridge	Susan Katz	Kara Page	William Wellman
Nathan Farb	Town of Keene	Patagonia, Inc.	Kathleen Wiley
Stephen Farrelly	Heidi & David Kerko	Mr & Mrs Robert Peters	Whiteface Mountain Ski Area
Yvonne Farmer	Edward & Beverly Kerr	Charles Phares	Whiteface Regional Visitors Bureau
M. Patterson Field	Warren Kries	Placid Boatworks	

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please complete this form and return to:  
**Ausable River Association**  
**P.O. Box 217**  
**Elizabethtown, NY 12932**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eagle (\$1,000+)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Brook Trout (\$250-499) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tiger Trout (\$500- \$999) | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Trout (\$50-99)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow Trout (\$100-249)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Member (\$30)           |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

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**NEWSLETTER OF THE  
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ASSOCIATION |**

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Fax: 518-873-3751

E-mail: [info@ausableriver.org](mailto:info@ausableriver.org)

**Working to protect and  
enhance the cultural and  
natural resources of the  
Ausable River Watershed.**

## **AUSABLE RIVER ASSOCIATION SUMMER 2009 NEWSLETTER**

### **Volunteer to be a Water Quality Monitor!**

The Ausable River Association is currently looking for volunteers to assist with water sampling.

This is a fun task that takes only half a day once a month and involves a little walking. Every bridge crossing and major tributary is visited. The volunteer collects one bottle of water from each site and a trained technician runs the instrument for instant results!

If you are curious about the quality of water passing through your Town, hamlet, or village, call to get involved. Sampling takes place on the second Sunday and Monday of each month.

Call 873-3752 and talk to Carol if you wish to volunteer to help take water samples.

Photograph of  
Brandon Garrity  
taking a water  
sample off of a  
bridge in Keeseville.  
Nice flip flops  
Brandon!

