



The Bell Tower

Newsletter of the Ocean Park Association

Affirming our heritage through our summer assembly embracing and celebrating diversity and programs centered on religion, education, recreation and culture

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September 2024

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TRANSITIONS, by Cindy Benedict, OPA President

September is a month of transition. Summer turns into Fall and there is a change in the feel of our community. We bid goodbye to friends and family, all while making plans to reconnect next summer. Ocean Park is a community that loves its traditions and the Labor Day exodus is just another one of those traditions, enjoyed by some, and dreaded by others. It is only by change that we come to enjoy new experiences.

The Ocean Park Association is also experiencing change brought on by changes in our staff, including the resignation of Lori Gramlich as our Executive Director in August. The OPA Board of Directors and leadership team are using this time of change to evaluate our organizational structure and staffing needs. We want to ensure that we are positioning ourselves for a successful transition and future.

Please bear with us as we complete this transition and plan for a stronger, more resilient future. Your continued support of our organization is critical for us to be able to proceed.

OPA RECEIVES GRANT FROM THE STATE OF MAINE

The Association has been notified that it has qualified for a \$65,000 Business Recovery and Resilience Fund Grant made by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development to help us to remain viable and resilient against future weather-related events. The funds are to be used for 2024 storm recovery, rebuilding and investments in more resilient infrastructure, including infrastructure upgrades, improvements or installation of drainage systems, moving electrical or business equipment, relocating to a more protected location and investing in additional insurance. Thank you to Lori Gramlich for her work on the application for this grant.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH UPDATE

The OPA Executive Committee has been working hard to manage the office and duties of the Executive Director since our ED resigned in mid-August. At our Board meeting on September 14, we agreed to search for a professional Interim Executive Director to assist in running the organization, as well as lead us in examining our current and future needs. This interim position will enable us to take the time we need to examine our structure and move forward with clarity. In the meantime, your patience and understanding during this period are greatly appreciated.

SUPPORTING A FUTURE WHERE COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES THRIVE

by the Development Committee

In a world that often feels fast-paced and disconnected, the importance of connection with loved ones cannot be overstated. Our **Year End Appeal** is dedicated to fostering togetherness through a variety of programs that connect families through community and shared experiences. We need your support!

Ocean Park Association is dedicated to supporting you to create more connections by...

Creating Lasting Memories

Whether it's attending a dance, playing games at the Rec Hall, or participating in a shuffleboard tournament, opportunities abound for families to have fun, relax and connect. All time favorites like the July 4th Parade, the Sand Castle Competition and Illumination Night are special events families look forward to year after year and are events where special memories are created.

Growing through Education Programs

Our educational programs empower families to learn and grow together. From weekly educational programs like learning about oyster harvesting or meeting the author of the Story of Big Nate to story hour at the Library or a visit to our Historical Room, we provide opportunities to help families learn new things.

Celebrating Culture

Our cultural programs offer the chance to be acquainted with music and the arts. From Band Stand Concerts to the musical offerings of Wednesday Evenings at Jordan to Art Shows and Sketchbook classes, our programs offer families a chance to develop an appreciation of the arts.

Coming Together Through Worship

Our Sunday Worship services offer opportunities for families to explore their spiritual journeys together. Services provide thoughtful sermons from a variety of guest preachers, and inspiring music from the Temple Choir, Bell Choir and Temple Brass.

Maintaining our Buildings

Having buildings and spaces to gather for our programming is vital to our community. OPA owns the buildings that host our Post office, Soda Fountain, Grocery and Gift Shops- all places that make Ocean Park quaint and a walkable community. In order to have these spaces ready and available, we have a dedicated facilities staff and we support the costs of ongoing maintenance and repairs.

[Join Us by Making a Donation Today](#) and be a Part of Building a Stronger Community

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS, by JoEllen Clark, Development Committee

Did you know, you can use "Qualified Charitable Distributions" to manage your required minimum distributions from an IRA? A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) allows individuals who are 70½ years old or older to donate up to \$105,000 total to one or more charities directly from a taxable IRA instead of taking their required minimum distributions. Please consider the Ocean Park Association this year when planning your annual charitable giving.

END-OF-YEAR GIVING

As you know, OPA's books are audited every year. In accordance with our audit policy, **all deposits need to be recorded in the general ledger based upon the date of the deposit** as opposed to the date the check was written or received. You will receive credit for your contribution based on the date the check is deposited. To ensure your gift is booked for 2024, please make sure we receive your contributions by Monday, December 30th so they can be deposited by December 31st.

Thank you for your generous and ongoing support!

2024 SHUFFLEBOARD,

by Cameron Jackman, Manager

2024 was a great summer for the shuffleboard courts. It was so good to see our returning shuffleboarders as well as many new families and friends. Again, we had well over 3000 people come see us this summer. We made it through the flood of 2024 with the loss of some memorable trees. However, shuffleboard continues to be a wonderful place on the corner of Temple and West Grand. We are so thankful for the constant support and we look forward to opening Saturday, May 24th, 2025. See you then!



RECREATION COMMITTEE RECAP,

by Levon Akoghlanian, Chair

This past summer ran smoothly in all areas of the Rec Committee. Thanks to the Tennis Subcommittee, led by Todd Whitney, and tennis pro, Todd Sachs - along with the shuffleboard director, Cameron Jackman, and the Rec Hall Director, Cassie Mikel. We appreciate Zumba instructor Nancy Greenblatt, Yoga Instructor Eliza Pierce, and 5K Director/Organizer Scott Belanger. A sincere thank you goes to Debbie Sousa, who helped promote and bring awareness to all events.

And, as they say, last but not least, without my team of Rec Committee members who volunteered their time to make the events run smoothly and successfully - without their dedication, the above would not have happen. So thank you all!

Recreation Committee Members:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Pietro Abruzzo | Lyn Blouin |
| Catherine Giuliani | Sarah Hawk |
| Lisa Hurter | Jennifer Jameson |
| Linnea Koval | Carolyn Krahn |
| James MacDougall | Steven Rogers |
| Mary Taggart | |

2024 TENNIS,

by Todd Whitney, Tennis Subcommittee Chair

The Ocean Park 2024 Tennis season turned out to be one of our best seasons for many reasons. First as compared to a rainy 2023 season last year, we experienced only a few days where we could not play due to rain. There were over thirty rain days in the summer of 2023.

Next, Todd Sachs assembled a great crew in 2024 to help in kid's clinics and maintenance of the courts all summer. As some of you know, Todd Sachs is Thornton Academy's girl's coach. Most of our assistants attended Thornton. Three are off to college, Daniel Landry to Yale, Danny Menard to Villanova, and Arianna Cote to Northeastern, 1st semester in Dublin Ireland. The other two will be juniors this fall at Thornton and will be playing on their tennis team next spring.

As many of you know Todd Sachs is a teaching pro at the Apex Tennis club in Portland during the indoor season, where many of our OPA members play their winter tennis. Todd is looking forward to next season here in OP, and he and his fiancé Emma are planning a wedding for next August. Todd proposed to Emma on a tennis court while on vacation in Florida. Emma was a former OP tennis assistant.

Looking forward to a great 2025 season!



Tennis Subcommittee Members:

Todd Whitney, Chair
Bill Foster
Phyllis Hayes
David Keene
Nancy Kenney
Box Tkacik



EDUCATION COMMITTEE END OF SEASON UPDATE, by Linda Sulkala (Chair)

It's a common sentiment – where did the summer go? I can certainly tell you where The OPA Education Committee members went one day a week – to Tuesdays in the Park at Jordan Hall. I'm happy to report that 303 of you joined us. By far the favorite program was “Founding Women of Ocean Park” a delightful skit created & performed by members of the Educational Bureau. It was SRO! Many thanks to all the participants. We are already working on the 2025 season and am hopeful that even more of you will join us. Our speakers give up their time to educate & entertain us and we want to give them a big OPA welcome.

But the Education Committee is more than just Tuesday programming!

Our Library Sub-Committee also had many visitors, some for the first time. One visitor was so pleased to find books on her son's school summer reading list. Another found a book she had been waiting for from her home library. The library's 100th anniversary celebration was a big success and included a legislative sentiment and proclamation and games on the lawn. The librarian and committee appreciated that so many of you donated books lost in the flood from their Amazon wish list. (By the way, the list is still on Amazon).

Our History Preservation Sub-Committee provided an opportunity to explore the Ocean Park of the past at Porter Hall after Sunday Services. They are looking for new ways to make this special space accessible at other times to allow people to see just how this wonderful community has struggled & overcome many obstacles to become the place we all love.

Art-in-the-Park brought in six professional artists for a Plein Air experience. Artists scattered around town on a Sunday - Wednesday and encouraged observers & questions. A “wet” paint sale was then held on Wednesday evening. It was amazing to see the creativity in such a short period of time.

Did I say I didn't know where the summer went – I guess I do. **See you next season!**

REC HALL MEMORIES LIVE ON, by Cassie McKiel, Rec Hall Director

The 2024 Rec Hall season was filled with many fun and lifelong memories. There wasn't a dull moment from the beginning to the end of summer. Each weekday the Rec Hall was open from 2 -5 pm for kids aged 6-17. During that time, all the games and craft materials, such as foosball, pool, air hockey, bracelet making, and more, were available. We also commonly did different games and activities, from outdoor dodgeball each Friday to painting shells, creating spaghetti towers, egg drop challenges, bubble paint, Tie-dye, shuffleboard lessons, water balloons, pickleball, and so much more!

We held weekly events such as Tuesday movie nights and Friday night teen/Monday night Jr. Dances. Special events throughout the season included the bike decorating contest for the 4th of July parade, Kids and Family Game Nights, and participation in the Kids Fun Run 5K, Annual Sand building contest, and Illumination night.

As our thoughts turn to summer 2025, we reminisce about the fun that was had this past summer. We look forward to getting more sporting equipment and opportunities to connect with the community through tennis lessons, cookie decorating, and more plans for special events for the whole family to enjoy! Follow us on Facebook at @OceanParkRecHall for exciting updates as we get closer to summer 2025.





OPA NEEDS YOU!, by Lizzie Morrison,
Leadership & Nominating Committee

On behalf of the Leadership and Nominating Committee, we want to thank our dedicated volunteers for their continued commitment to the Ocean Park Association. We all know the proverb, “many hands make light work” and that is the truth!

We are already looking ahead to next year and seeking volunteers to get involved in a variety of ways. If you have been involved in the past, want to learn more about volunteer opportunities, or want to connect with other members, please join us on Wednesday, October 30th (via [Zoom](#)) at 7pm. During this time, our committee will welcome other committee chairs to give an overview of the work they do and answer any questions you may have about being involved in the OPA.

We currently have openings on the Leadership and Nominating Committee, the Religious and Cultural Committee, and the Development Committee for this year.

Please consider becoming more involved in the OPA, we need you! Reach out to Lizzie Morrison (echawk83@yahoo.com) with any questions. We hope to see many of you there (virtually).

IN MEMORIAM

The following is a list of those friends of Ocean Park whose passing has come to the attention of the Association since the printing of the June Bell Tower.

To notify the Ocean Park Association of the passing of a loved one, please contact the office at (207) 934-9068, ext. 1, or opa@oceanpark.org.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mark C. Stone | Auburn, MA | January 15, 2023 |
| James H. McMahon | Montreal, Quebec and Ocean Park, ME | April 26, 2023 |
| Reign G. Rix | Southwick, MA and Ocean Park, ME | August 17, 2023 |
| Dorothy Harvey | Stamford, CT and Ocean Park, ME | December 14, 2023 |
| Marion J. Geake | Davenport, FL and Ocean Park, ME | June 8, 2024 |
| Charles A. Davis | Stockton, NJ and Ocean Park, ME | June 14, 2024 |
| Barbara R. Stone | Newburyport, MA | June 23, 2024 |
| Thomas Tate | Ocean Park, ME | July 1, 2024 |
| Gerald R. Ireland | Norwich, VT | July 6, 2024 |
| Nancy Jack | Scarborough, ME and Ocean Park, ME | July 23, 2024 |

The following is a list of new Ocean Park Association members since the June Edition of the Bell Tower:

Regular Members:

Sandy Bauer
 Steven Berry
 Johanne Berry
 Jonathan T. Foster
 Lorraine C. Guyon
 Ronna Gower
 Gilbert Hager
 Richard Klein
 Melissa Moulton
 Tim Moulton
 Mark Mueller
 Eric J. Norris
 Amy O’Riley
 Kristen Pearson
 Kelly Cunningham Schroth
 Julie Sheehan
 Marc Silver
 George Traver

Life Members:

Isaiah R. Grace
 Jesse F. Grace



UPDATE FROM THE TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH, by Cindy Benedict, OP President

Old Orchard Beach is working on updating its comprehensive plan. Usually such plans are updated every ten years. It takes a great deal of work to update a plan such as this. So - just what is the “Comprehensive Plan”?

The Comprehensive Plan is the official document that describes and illustrates a vision for the future economic, social and physical characteristics of our town in the years ahead and outlines policies and guidelines to implement that vision.

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide for managing the change that a community undergoes. The Plan serves many functions. It is an expression of the community's vision of its future. It is also a guide to making the many public and private decisions that determine Old Orchard Beach's Future. It is a source of basic information about the natural resources and built environment of the community. Finally, it is the legal foundation of the Town's land use controls.

The Comprehensive Plan is not a zoning ordinance, nor is it a law of any kind. To the contrary, the plan is an advisory document setting out the community's goals for the future and policies and programs necessary to move the Town in the direction of its goals. In its broadest form, it is a road map that can be used by the Town's elected and appointed officials to steer the Town on an agreed-upon course. In its narrow form, it serves as the legal basis for any land use regulations adopted by the Town.

Town Planner Jeffrey Hinderliter is heading our Town's efforts. Ocean Park is well represented on the advisory committee with members Win Winch, Lou Valentine and Marc Guimont.

One of their first efforts was to create a survey. These surveys are now available. If you haven't seen the survey, they are available at the Town Planning office or online at

<https://www.oobmaine.com/department/planning-department/>

We hope to have a few paper copies available for you to pick up in the Association office if you are unable to fill out the online survey.

It is important for the Ocean Park community to express their views on our Town's direction.

GIFT IDEAS!

Before we know it, another season of giving will be upon us. An Ocean Park granite paver is a great way to honor or remember loved ones. The pavers continue to be installed in the walkway to the Memorial Library in Demerit Square, and the installation process will begin again in the spring of 2025. For only \$300.00 you can add to the history of Ocean Park and permanently celebrate someone special in your life.

If you would like to purchase a paver, you can:

- ◆ stop by the office
- ◆ call Sharon at the office at 207-934-9068, ext. 1
- ◆ email the office at opa@oceanpark.org; or
- ◆ go to the OPA website at www.oceanpark.org and fill out the form that can be found by clicking on Donate - then scroll down to the section on Memorial/Honorary Pavers; then click on the link that reads 2024 Paver Order Form.

Don't Forget - the Association has IN STOCK one-of-a-kind COASTERS (set of 4) for \$25.00 and a HOLIDAY ORNAMENT featuring the Bandstand for only \$15.00!



14 Temple Avenue | PO Box 7518
Ocean Park, ME 04063

SALES and RENTALS

"Vacation at the Beach"

Phone: (207) 937-5054

Website: oceanparkrealty.com

Email: chris@oceanparkrealty.com

jeff@oceanparkrealty.com



⇒ Ocean Park Realty just closed on 7 New Salt in Ocean Park! This stunning 4 bedroom home on a double lot has outstanding views of Goosefare Brook and most of Saco Bay. Congratulations to buyers and seller!



⇒ For sale is 6 Oceana. Recently reduced to \$995,000, this classic Ocean Park year round cottage is located in the beach block with ocean and island views. Amazing opportunity!

⇒ Under contract—6 Benoit Avenue, Old Orchard Beach. This remodeled 3 bedroom ranch is located off Temple Avenue close to Ocean Park with lots of upgrades. Representing buyer.

⇒ We are sending our 2025 owner contracts shortly. Please email Chris@oceanparkrealty.com if you would like to add your cottage to our rental inventory.

We have winter rental opportunities available right now!

Thank you, Ocean Park, for a wonderful 2024 rental season. We served over 400 families who came from all over the country to share in this piece of paradise.

HAPPY FALL!

*Photos by Laurie Blair Ernst -
thank you!*



Chris Whittaker
Designated Broker/Realtor
(207) 937-5054
Chris@oceanparkrealty.com

Ocean Park Realty

Ocean Park Realty, a subsidiary of the Ocean Park Association, is a full-service brokerage that can serve your real estate needs throughout Southern Maine. If you are looking to purchase or sell your cottage, home or condo, or if you are looking for a seasonal rental, call or stop by the office in Jakeman Hall at 14 Temple Avenue, or call (207) 937-5054. Jeff and Chris are always ready to help you!



Jeff Chute
Associate Broker/Realtor
(207) 937-5054
Jeff@oceanparkrealty.com



from Pamela Savage, Head Usher

The ushers and greeters who volunteer their time on Sunday mornings are very special people. You can find the greeters standing at the Temple doors on Sunday mornings welcoming everyone with a "good morning" before handing them a Temple Bulletin. Many times, they know you by name. You will see the ushers participating in the Temple worship service collecting the offering or assisting attendees. There are many other ways in which these individuals help to make your worship time enjoyable. They set up the altar table, make sure the candles are lit and fresh flowers are displayed, assist those who need the hearing impaired devices, pass out Temple bench cushions to make those benches just a little bit softer, count attendance then record it on the attendance board, distribute This Week in Ocean Park and watch out for your safety.

"Thank You" ushers and greeters for providing a warm welcome to everyone who came through the Temple doors for this 2024 season and helping to make it a special Ocean Park worship experience! Your dedication to the usher/greeter team is certainly appreciated by all.

Levon Akoghlanian
Peg Beck
Cindy Benedict
Joe Benedict
Patricia Campbell
Kim Christoforo
Bryan Christoforo
Nancy Drake
Rob Drake

Terry Gallagher
David Keene
Linda Kenniston
Cliff Kenney
Nancy Kenney
Beth Krueger
Linda Lauritano
Mark Lauritano
Jean Rogers

Debbie Sousa
Steve Sousa
Victoria Thieme
Tom Toohey
Kathy Wade
Ted Wade
Steven West
Susan West