



THE BELL TOWER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OCEAN PARK ASSOCIATION

From the Board, by Linda Lauritano, OPA President

Thanks to our many volunteers and dedicated staff who made our 146th Season a success! While the summer is over, the Board of Directors and Committees and the office staff are busy year round. Program Planning and coordination is already in progress and our new Program Council is meeting in October.

The Program Council is a new OPA initiative designed to bring together people from across our many program areas to strengthen coordination, communication, and shared planning. For the first time, we will have a forum where we can step back from our individual program areas and look together at the full Ocean Park program experience—what we offer, whom we serve, how our programs complement one another, and where there may be opportunities to make an even greater impact.

2026 Coffee & Conversations Recap

Thanks to all those who attended **"Coffee and Conversations with the ED and President"** this summer. About 46 people attended over the course of the summer, attendance ranging from 1- 13 on any given Thursday. We shared ideas and discussed many varied topics including:

- Environment and Natural Resources Committee projects
- Where does Worship fit into our Strategic Plan?
- Worship Music and favorite preachers
- Should we resurrect Beach Vespers,
- The Writer's Conference- the experience for attendees
- Advertising- who is our audience?
- How do property owners perceive OPA is helping them
- Programming is light for the last 2-3 weeks of the season - why?

Many folks expressed that they felt we need a better voice in OOB to give attention to Ocean Park needs including:

- Requests for more benches on specific streets as well as more bike racks
- Culvert on Clover and Winona needs cleaning
- ADA handicapped beach access

As a note, Fran meets regularly with the OOB Town Manager and shares OPA concerns with him. But it might also be a good idea to send a group of concerned OPA members to a Council meeting to speak to our concerns directly or get OPA folks to get involved in OOB town government.

It was fun to get to know some of you better this summer and to hear about your concerns and your joys. We are always open to hearing your input and working to improve this special place.

Linda Lauritano, OPA President



Environment & Natural Resources Committee News

It was a busy summer for the Environment & Natural Resource Committee (ENRC) and volunteers. We continued to build upon our connections with the University of New England, as well as state & local agencies to better understand the threats and challenges facing Ocean Park's natural resources.

This summer the ENRC was pleased to host four educational programs focused on environmental issues impacting Ocean Park. The evening programs were well attended and in response to demand, we've posted all the slide decks on a new section of the Ocean Park web page. You can navigate to this content by clicking on Events on the top banner of the home page and then clicking on the heading Environmental Stewardship. The slide presentations are under the subheading Educational Programs.

We look forward to planning next year's educational programs and welcome any suggestions on topics to explore.

Mark Lauritano, on behalf of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee

Meet the Intern

My name is Julia Caissie, and I am an intern at Ocean Park Association for the Fall 2026 semester. I am currently a senior Business Administration major at the University of New England. After graduation, I hope to pursue a career in the sports industry.



At UNE, I have gained valuable leadership serving as Treasurer and now President of my Women's Club Hockey Team. Outside of school, I enjoy running and spending time with my friends and family. I am excited to gain new professional experience through my internship here at Ocean Park Association.

2027 Music Director

We are pleased to announce that Brian De Young has been selected as our new Music Director. Brian currently serves as Interim Director of Choral Leadership and Campus Ministry Musician at Augsburg University in Minneapolis. We look forward to welcoming Brian and his family back to Ocean Park in the summer of 2027. Thanks to our Search Committee for bringing us two amazing candidates for Music Director.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

2026 PROGRAM SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

44 responses through September 20, 2026

Thank you to everyone who shared feedback about OPA programs this season. Your responses help us understand what is working, what you would like to see more of, and how we can continue strengthening the Ocean Park experience.

The headline: participants are highly satisfied

82%

rated their experience Excellent

98%

rated it Excellent or Very Good

95%

rated the instructor Excellent or Very Good

98%

Likely or Very Likely to recommend



What else did we learn?

Arts & Music generated the strongest interest for additional programming, followed by Recreation & Wellness, Education, and History. Seven respondents asked for more Teen programming, reinforcing the value of continuing to explore opportunities for this age group. Among those answering the first-time participation question, 7 of 42 (17%) were attending an Ocean Park program for the first time.



WHO RESPONDED?

- 59% were OPA members(26of44).
- Respondents included seasonalvisitors, year-round residents, vacationers, and peoplefromneighboring towns.
- 43 of 44 answered the optionalage question, with participation across every age category-fromunder 18 through 70+.

How OPA will use the feedback

The results give OPA a strong 2026 baseline for future program evaluation. We will use the feedback to help preserve program quality, broaden participation, improve program coordination and promotion, and guide future offerings. Participant comments also highlighted practical opportunities such as reliable audio/video support, clear communication, and welcoming program experiences.

PLEASE KEEP SHARING YOUR IDEAS. Every response helps OPA plan programs that serve, connect, and enrich our community.

Source: OPA 2026 Program Survey, 44 responses through September 20, 2026. Multiple-response questions may total more than 44.S

Dear Members and Friends of Ocean Park,

I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the kindness you have shown me in my role as choral accompanist for the 146th season at Ocean Park.

It is a privilege to contribute to worship through music, and I deeply appreciate the trust you have placed in me. Many thanks to the members of the choir, handbell choir and brass ensemble for sharing your time and talent with enthusiasm and good cheer. I'm especially grateful for the friendship and support of my musical colleagues: Brian De Young, Ryan Rogers, Audrey Cabral, Dan Evans and Fred Scott. It's been an honor serving with you!

Thank you all for making me feel like a valued part of this community. I look forward to sharing in the joy of music and worship with you next year!

**With deepest gratitude,
Cathy Marker**



What did you think of the Temple worship services in summer 2026?

The Religious & Cultural Committee wants to know your thoughts!

Please complete this brief survey to share your reflections and suggest preachers for the future.

<https://tinyurl.com/OPtemple2026>

VOLUNTEER SURVEY

The Ocean Park Association is fortunate to have so many members who generously give their time and talents throughout the year! To help us better understand and celebrate the many ways our members support OPA, please take a few minutes to complete our [Volunteer Hours Survey](#) and document the time you have spent volunteering on behalf of OPA during this calendar year. This may include committee work, events, programs, landscaping and property projects, fundraising, meetings, or any other volunteer activities. Even an estimate is helpful! Your responses will give us a clearer picture of the incredible collective impact our volunteers have on the Ocean Park community. Thank you for all you do for OPA!

**Thank you,
Lizzie**



Love Ocean Park?

Have you enjoyed an OPA program, attended an event, admired the grounds, participated in recreation, or simply thought, "I'd love to get a little more involved"?

This might be your year!

The Leadership & Nominating Committee is beginning to plan for the 2027–2030 committee cycle, and we're looking for OPA members who are interested in sharing their time, talents, ideas — and maybe a few laughs along the way.



MEET
NEW PEOPLE



SHARE
YOUR TALENTS



BRING FRESH
IDEAS



HELP SHAPE
WHAT'S NEXT



There's probably a committee that could use exactly what you bring to the table.

★ Curious?
Have questions?
Know someone who would be great?



Reach out to **Lizzie Morrison**,
Chair of the Leadership & Nominating Committee,
to learn more about committee opportunities
and where you might be a great fit.

echawk83@yahoo.com

COME FOR THE COMMITTEE. STAY FOR THE PEOPLE.  OCEAN PARK ASSOCIATION

UPCOMING EVENTS

For a full list of upcoming events, please visit oceanpark.org for "This Week in Ocean Park" and our Booklet.

- Chair Yoga every Wednesday at 9 AM in Jakeman Hall
- Mahjong 1st, 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, 6:30 PM in Jakeman Hall
- Games TBD
- Naughty Needles TBD
- 10/3 - Fall Decorating at Noon and Appetizer Social at 5 PM in Jakeman Hall
- 10/5 - Reny's Commercial filming at the Bandstand 9:30-11AM
- 10/30 - Adult Halloween Social in Jakeman Hall, 5:30 PM time. Costumes and games.

THANK YOU KELLY!

Thank you to Kelly Ray for planting and maintaining the flowers around Town Square and Temple Complex this season!



OCEAN PARK TRIVIA

1. Mr. A.R. Leighton was the President of which society in 1903?



a. OPA Society b. Ocean Park & Friends c. The Young People's Social and Literary Guild

2. The Ocean Park Historical Society was founded in what year?

a. 1976 b. 1945 c. 1980 d. 1953

Last month's answers:

1. B 2. D 3. C 4. D 5. C

FOLLOW US ONLINE!





**For Sale in Ocean Park
17 Randall Ave**

Classic seasonal cottage on
spacious corner lot two blocks
from the beach.

4 bedrooms

1 bath

NEWLY PRICED! \$775,000



Winter Rentals Available:

- 2 bedroom mid-rise condo with ocean views available now. \$2000/month includes utilities.
- 2 bedroom one level condo -\$1985/month plus some utilities.
- 3 bedroom home sleeps 4- \$2000/month plus utilities.
- 4 bedroom 3 story home perfect for relocation/executive-\$3500/month plus some utilities.

Email Chris@Oceanparkrealty.com for a no-cost application.

A big thank you to our cleaners, handyman, plumbers and electricians this season, we could not have done it without you! We helped over 400 families enjoy a week or more in our gorgeous beach community. Thank you!