

### Swim Program 2023

Our planned start date of July 1 was delayed due to an early season algae bloom, but we began on Monday, July 3 and no additional HABs were documented for the remainder of the season.

We hired four lifeguards and two subs, all of whom were new to the program. There was a bit of a learning curve, but with Janet Murphy and Carolyn Connors' help and experience, they acclimated to the daily tasks needed to provide a safe, welcoming environment for people to come and swim.

We averaged around 15 people per day for the season with a high of 65 when the Bon-Ton cyclists spent an evening on campus, and a few days where no one came due to poor weather conditions. Most of the regular visitors came from in and around Ledyard, Genoa, and Scipio. Three lifeguards were on duty, which is the number mandated by the Cayuga County Health Department if swimmers are on the raft. Due to a couple scheduling conflicts, there was limited swimming on July 29 with only two lifeguards and no lifeguards on July 21, so the dock was closed that day.

A couple times, when the weather was bad, the lifeguards helped with office tasks. They stuffed envelopes for the water/sewer billing and stamped the postcards for the DRI/NY Forward public meeting announcement. They also assisted the DPW when it was discovered that someone(s) flipped the raft over one night.

Everything ran smoothly with the dock until the last day of swimming lessons. On Friday, August 11 at 2:15 p.m., Kendra Knapp from the Cayuga County Health Department came by to do an inspection; Ms. Knapp is the health department representative who issued the operating permit. The lifeguards were still at the Wells College pool for swim lessons and a sign was posted at the boathouse that they would return to the dock at 3:00.

When Ms. Knapp arrived, there were swimmers in the water, the boathouse was open, and a few people were accessing kayaks within the boathouse. Ms. Knapp explained that swimmers were not allowed in the water when there were no lifeguards on duty, and one of them told her that they "were swimming at their own risk".

Ms. Knapp called and informed me that she was issuing a violation notice to the village. Despite the sign posting that the dock was closed from 1-3, the open boathouse and people in the water gave the appearance that the dock was open for swimming. She reiterated that the liability lies solely with the village during the swim program under the terms of the operating permit. I told Ms. Knapp that I would talk with the lifeguards and with Tim Ryan, facilities manager at Wells.

The lifeguards assured me that they had removed the "OPEN" flags, closed the boathouse, and posted the sign that the dock would open at 3:00 before going to the pool. They informed me that a group that was staying on campus had access to the boathouse and were there frequently all week, including the day that Ms. Knapp came to inspect.

I followed up with Ms. Knapp and she understood that the lifeguards did nothing wrong. However, she said that she still had to issue a letter (attached) but following a conversation with her supervisor, and consideration given to our reputation, decided against a violation notice. Ms. Knapp scheduled a follow-up inspection for August 18, and Mr. Ryan and I met with her afterwards.

We discussed that while Wells is the owner of the property, the village assumes the liability for the duration of the program during hours of operation (1-5 every day except Friday, 1-7). Mr. Ryan and I agreed that better communication is needed between the village and Wells so there is a clear understanding of each entity's responsibility. Ideally, we would have enough lifeguards for the pool and the dock on swim lessons weeks, but that was not feasible this summer.

I appreciate your confidence in allowing me to supervise the program this year. However, I think that the program will be better served by someone who is working at the dock. In 2021, Dalton Elser was the supervisor and head lifeguard. His experience was invaluable to the new guards, and he had a closer, day to day relationship with them. I have already spoken to Aidan Hulsebosch who is a senior in college this year and asked him to think about it for next summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Balloni  
2023 Program Supervisor