

Jim Ninos



The Indian River Lakes have been a very special place as far back as I can remember. When we were kids, my Mom and Dad would bring us up to one of three lakes, Muskellunge Lake, Grass Lake or Black Lake. Every once in a while we would come up for short trips with my Dad and Uncle but, around the middle of August we would spend a whole week fishing, swimming and jumping off the cliffs. In 1993 my wife, Karrie, and I bought the Grass Lake cottage where I spent my summers as a kid. That's where my family, sons Kolby and Trevor and granddaughter Illiana, has spent the summers since.

The lake has been a passion of mine and I have spent a great deal of time working to preserve its beauty and environmental quality. In 2012, I was introduced to the Indian River Lakes Conservancy when they helped our lake with a management plan. I was elected to the board of directors in 2014. This has provided me with a wider perspective of the area and the environmental impacts on each of the 18 lakes. Each has its own unique character and challenges.

From 2006 to 2010 I was the president of Grass Lake Association and I still serve on several committees. I'm also a member of the New York State Federation of Lakes Association. At home in Alfred, New York, I have been elected to two different School Boards, Andover Central School and Alfred Almond Central School. I have been a long time member of the Allegany County Planning Board where I currently chair the staff development committee. In 2014 I retired from teaching after 32 years.

My education back ground is in fine arts with a BFA from the University of Colorado and an MFA in photography from the Rochester Institute of Technology. In the late 1990s, I received a CAS Degree from SUNY Cortland in School Administration. As an educator, I taught at the public school level at Jasper-Troupsburg and Andover Central Schools; and at the college level at Alfred State College and Alfred University as an assistant professor.

One of my greatest passions today is water quality. I have spent years learning about the lake environmental issues. From invasive species, blue green algae, phosphorous and nitrogen over loads in lakes, and the effects they have on the dissolved oxygen in the lake. I am part of the Grass Lake CSLAP (Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program) team. Every two weeks, from June to October, we take water samples from the lake and send them to the DEC for analysis. Each year we receive a report on the state of the lake. On Grass Lake I am the website creator and keeper and communicator.

I also love to fish, a passion that is so well known that I have become the person to watch on our lake to see where to go fishing. This, of course, is not a blessing.

I came to love the IRLC because of their dedication to all the lakes along the Indian River. I feel that we are the strength that will help maintain and improve the water quality of our region. As individual lakes, we have little power to make the changes needed to keep our waters pristine. We know that some of our lakes have experienced blue green algae blooms in the past several years, we don't know the full extent of the problem because many Indian River Lakes are not regularly monitoring their water quality. I am excited about working to help other lake residents develop their own Lake Associations so that we can work effectively together to improve water quality throughout the Indian River Lakes region.