When Amberations decided to add brunch to our annual Spring Bike Ride and Open House on Mother’s Day, we found that our event grew in popularity. Registration for the 17 mile ride (or walk or run) around Otisco Lake begins at 8 am on May 14th.

At 9 am participants depart amidst a joyful medley of pace cars. Last year we were fortunate to have the Whine Country Coopers join our event and we are hoping to see them again this year.

Usually, our fastest rider comes in within the hour with our sightseeing riders bringing up the rear an hour or two later.

We offer prizes for a variety of skills including 1st place, last place, most colorful, oldest and youngest and we have gained the reputation of the most fun bike event around.

At 10:30 our brunch begins and we offer an outstanding menu. Quiches, fruits, oatmeal, breads, yogurts, juices, French toast, potatoes, sausage, tortes, pies, and an assortment of gluten free selections make this one of the most delicious meals in town... the only with REAL maple syrup.

For entertainment we have our Treasure Hunt, Duck Race, Face Painting, animals and crafts and there has not been an Amberations event yet that didn’t offer a bit of fine musicianship.

Be sure to show your support by joining us for this fun event.

Bike Registration: $30 (includes brunch) Brunch only: Adults $14, Kids $8, 5 and under free.
Nancy Lee, Amberations’ New Treasurer

Nancy and her husband, Bob, own Balsam Rose Soap Company in Spafford. The Lees fell in love with CNY and began spending every weekend in NY while working in NJ almost five years ago. They sold their soap every weekend at Farmers’ Markets and the business grew. Soon, they found a home in Otisco Valley. Nancy retired from teaching middle school Family and Consumer Science and now works full time making and marketing Balsam Rose Soap. Nancy has recently become a member of Cazenovia Artisans’ coop and her soap is available at the co-op seven days a week in addition to several farmers’ markets. Nancy is also a member of Auraca Herbarists based at Cornell Botanic Gardens and is studying “The Science and Art of Herbalism” through Rosemary Gladstar’s online course.

As a result of their adventures in CNY, Nancy and Bob have met many new friends. Last fall, a neighbor invited Nancy to the Amberations’ Fall Festival. Nancy was introduced to the caring and energetic folks of Amberations. The fall festival was such a celebration - with a marimba band, a duck race and a barn with animals to visit! Nancy, who believes that giving back to the community is one of our most important roles in life, joined Amberations right away. The treasurer position was available, and she accepted.

Nancy also helps each week to feed the barn animals: Big Joe the donkey along with his contingent of adult and baby goats, Shadow the barn cat and a Guinea hen that serves as the barn guard. What the Lees like best about Amberations is the openness and welcoming spirit of the people and the overall goal of the organization.

Developing a place that is open and welcoming to all people of all abilities is a wonderful inclusive mission that they are happy to be a part of. Nancy and Bob enjoy learning about and sharing resources with those who are also concerned about our health, the environment and building local economies. Amberations is built on similar principles and fully extends its welcome to others. Nancy loves to teach and give demonstrations. She has experience in teaching children and adults of all ages and all abilities.

Through Amberations’ workshops and informal gatherings Nancy will be sharing her knowledge of herbs and how to make your own skin care products. Amberations Herb Garden will be starting up on top of the hill this spring, where people can learn about growing and harvesting herbs as well. Check out our Amberations’ Facebook page for more dates and information for opportunities to volunteer and get involved in Amberations!

“...and all the angels pray for peace”

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Inclusivity Assessment

Zachary Ashbrook, a SUNY Cortland student majoring in Outdoor Recreation with a concentration in Environmental and Cultural Interpretation along with a minor in Studio Art, took a tour of Amberations at the end of March.

Zachary will be conducting an Inclusivity Assessment for Amberations. “The purpose of the Inclusivity Assessment Tool is to gather information about recreation opportunities in New York that is then shared on a searchable online recreation resource database.

The information collected with the tool is descriptive, functional, and detailed, so that users of recreation programs, areas, and facilities can make better plans for inclusive recreation.”

(http://colfax.cortland.edu/nysirrc/InclusivityAssessment-Tool.html)

Amberations had an assessment in 2008 and there have been changes and additions such as our pond and pastures.

This new assessment will help Amberations in its planning of the land use and programs. The online database helps to build awareness of places for all persons, especially those with disabilities, to visit and enjoy.

Herb Garden

The Amberations Herb Garden will be starting up during the month of May. We will be revitalizing the garden on the top of the hill at Amberations. We will be growing both medicinal and culinary herbs.

Every Wednesday morning we will be tending the garden regularly 8-11AM. We will be scheduling other working and demonstration days as we go through the summer.

Come out to lend your gardening expertise, just to lend a hand or stop by for a visit.

Over the course of the summer and fall we will be learning about the herbs and their uses, how to harvest and store herbs, and how to make your own herbal skin care products.

For more information contact Nancy Lee (315)256-8196 or balsamrosesoap@gmail.com

5th Annual EARTH DAY Event

Sponsored by the Otisco Lake Preservation Association and the Central NY Section of the American Chemical Society in association with Otisco Lake Community Association, Amberations, and Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency

When: Saturday, April 22, 2017 at 9:30am
Where: Meet at Otisco Lake Community Center, 2223 Amber Road, Amber, NY

• 9:30am: Welcome and Introduction.
• Roadside clean-up Otisco Valley Road and Causeway.
• 11:30am: Refreshments for participants.

Bring work gloves, work boots, and a desire to help make our community a better place.

For more information: Contact Bill Ayling, wayling@iscidesign.com

Otisco Lake Preservation Association

ACS Chemistry for Life®
Amberations’ Wish List

- Hay and/or straw
- Cat food
- Unopened shingles
- Rubber backed rugs
- A small shed
- Gravel or stone
- A good lawn mower
- A good weed wacker
- A small bridge
- Volunteers

Volunteer Opportunities

The main requirement for joining our team of supporters at Amberations is a willingness to enjoy life and have fun. We have many ways that anyone can help:

- Gardening
- Animal caretakers
- Camp registrar (tuition benefits)
- Carpentry (small or large jobs)
- Grounds keeping
- Networking
- Marketing
- Grant writing
- Outreach
- Data base oversight
- Event support
- New ideas

Yes, I would like to support Amberations

name ________________________________
address ________________________________
phone number ________________________________
email ________________________________

Adopt an Animal

I would like to adopt _____________________
(minimum - $120/yr or $10/mo)

Pledge

Pledge Amount_______ How often? ___ yearly ___ monthly

Business Card Size Advertisement $50

General Donation $20 Other________________

“Amberations is dedicated to supporting health through interaction with the natural environment for people of all abilities.”
Animal Update

I’d like everyone who visits our barn site to take note of the three solar panels on the front of our barn. They were designed by me and installed with help from John and Tristan Wiley on one of our warmer but snow covered days in December. We are using them for lighting both inside and out with plans to have a water heating system as well so we don’t have to deal with frozen water buckets.

Although the cost to have power run to the barn was estimated between eight and ten thousand dollars by NYSEG, I estimated I could do it for closer to $1000. We have kept fairly close to budget. Thank you to our board of directors for a vote of confidence to go ahead with the solar power solution.

I’d like to thank our animal care givers for the great work you have been doing with the animals at the barn. You have done something we’ve never had an opportunity to do before and that is to raise newborn baby goats. Maree & Matilda (Matty) were born December 22. How quickly they grow up, nice job everyone!

I’m also thrilled to have our new helpers Nancy, Laura and Sydney. Remember, we are always looking for more volunteers. As care givers we have grown into one big family who cover for each other in times of illness, family issues and weather related problems. Thanks for helping each other out!

– Jim Frary, Amberations’ Animal Caretaker

Open House
Duck Race
Animals
Live Music
Bike Ride
Fun for All!

Otisco Lake Community Center, 2223 Amber Road, Marietta.

May 14th
10:30-1:00

$14.00 adults & $8.00 children under 12
under 5 free!

Take Mom to Brunch!
Let us do the cooking and relax with Mom while enjoying a tasty, homemade brunch. Visit the animals next door and afterwards, take a guided tour of our many trails. Come early and participate in the annual Otisco Bike Ride and eat for free!

Menu

Quiches
French Toast
Potatoes
Sweet Treats
Sausages
Tortes
Fruit
Yogurts
Oatmeal
and more.

All proceeds go to support Amberations, a non-profit organization devoted to bringing people of all abilities and nature together.
Vicky Cummings,
Amberations’ New Secretary

Q: How did you become involved with Amberations?

A: I think all things happen for a reason. People that you are supposed to meet come into your life when you least expect it but when you need it the most. That is how I met Gloria Wiley, Amberations’ founder, and was introduced to Amberations...

About 3 years ago, my husband and I were making plans to relocate back to Central New York from Maryland. We took a leap of faith— we quit our jobs, sold our house and returned to CNY - an area we realized we truly missed and love.

We were having a difficult time finding a place to rent that would allow our big dogs, but we knew we couldn’t leave them behind. After a lot frustration with our search, my husband got a call from Gloria. She mentioned that she was looking for someone to rent a small house in Marietta, NY but that the tenant was required to assist with animal care duties at a barn. My husband and I love animals of all kinds and it seemed like an interesting opportunity. Luckily, the “Little Yellow House” was available when we returned to New York. We have been with Amberations ever since. Now I will be a volunteer and the Secretary of the Board.

Q: What do you like most about Amberations?

A: The group of volunteers is almost like a family. There is so much dedication and love given to all of the animals at the barn. We come together to get projects on the grounds done. We complete the lengthy task lists for pulling off our great events throughout the year. It’s inspiring that a small group of people care so much about what we can do for the community, what we can do to make people feel accepted, what we can do to provide a fun “nature experience” for people of all abilities. The thing I like the most about Amberations is not completely specific. I think it’s the “heart” behind the organization. I’ve become a happier person being involved. I also like that I know Amberations can benefit others too. If you told me 3 years ago that I would be living in Marietta, New York close to beautiful Otisco lake and spend quite a bit of time with goats and donkeys, I would not believe you.

I am grateful every day that my husband and I got that call from Gloria and that we were introduced to Amberations. My dogs are also happy (Isis-Greyhound, Bruno- Lab/Corgi, Buddy Rogers- Shih Tzu Mix). We found a great place to live, and we love spending time at the barn and upper fields!

Q: What are some fun things you’d like us to know about you?

A: I work for the Saint Marianne Cope Shrine and Museum in Syracuse, NY (www.saintmarianne.org). Mother Marianne was instrumental in opening two Hospitals in Central New York: St. Elizabeth in Utica and St. Joseph’s Hospital in Syracuse. In 1883, she and a group of six other Sisters of St. Francis bravely journeyed across the United States by train and took a ship to the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii) to care for individuals believed to have leprosy (now known as Hansen’s disease). She is known as the “Beloved Mother of Outcasts.” I am inspired every day by her courage and compassion to accept difficult challenges with diplomacy and grace. Please visit the shrine and museum to learn more about her! I love sharing the story and am grateful that I have this amazing opportunity to share the legacy of this Syracuse Saint.

I also volunteer with Kindred Spirits Greyhound Adoption Inc. (http://www.kindredspiritsgreyhoundadoption.com/). My dogs are very important to me so I am passionate about rescue. I laugh hysterically at “corny” jokes and puns. I collect items with Owls. I graduated from Syracuse University, and orange will always be one of my favorite colors. I’m happy to be a part of Amberations and look forward to all of the amazing things that are to come.

Pond

Rest assured our pond project will continue. Griff Williams worked very hard last summer to make this dream a reality. As with all projects of this scope, unforeseen circumstances threw some added challenges our way.

With help from John and Tim Wiley, Jim Frary, Marcellus United Methodist Church volunteers, Fred Fey and even the Town of Otisco Highway Department - we have a pond. The weather Gods also gifted us with a pasture full of saturated earth that will need to dry before we can proceed.

There is a lot of work ahead including further excavation, drainage, a bridge, fencing and general landscaping but we are sure it will all be worth the effort once finished. Things are a muddy mess but will only get better.

Did we mention we are always looking for volunteers?
What the Hay?

If you haven’t been up to the upper fields lately, now is the time to take the trek. Jamee Swope has teamed up with Amberations to bring her two horses to the upper field.

Jamee reached out to Gloria about the idea of sharing her horses with the public, giving everyone access to see and enjoy the animals in the most natural setting.

“My love for horses is something that I have never hidden, there isn’t one person who doesn’t know how much respect I have for those animals.

Knowing the endless benefits that horses can bring to humans, and then choosing to limit their access to the public, didn’t make sense to me anymore. Every time I have walked in the upper fields, I have always dreamt of how beautiful and serene it would be to have horses here. I’m so grateful that John and Gloria were able to open their minds and hearts, to work with me to make this dream come true.”

When you come to visit you will see two horses. The grey one is a gelding (boy), his name is “Q” and the brown/chestnut horse is a mare (female), her name is Chee Chee.

The horses are privately owned, and are no expense to the nonprofit. We hope, as the weather breaks that you come up to see and enjoy the horses. They can’t wait to meet you!

Welcome Kiosks

We will soon be seeing the completion of yet another of our dreams: Welcome Kiosks.

This Fall we were approached by Matthew Strempel, a Marcellus High School senior. Matthew has actively supported Amberations for years and wanted to do something to benefit our organization for his senior project.

After careful thought and consultation we decided Matthew would design, build and install Welcome Kiosks, one for our upper field area and one for our barn site.

The kiosks are to have an area for a map and signage, a donation box, a guest sign in and a trash receptacle. Additionally, the one in the upper fields will have biodegradable doggie waste bags.

The weekend Matthew hoped to erect the one in the upper fields there was two feet of snow on the ground but as this goes to print it is ready and waiting.

The kiosk for our barn area will be incorporated with the pond completion. Matthew presented an analysis of his project to his peers, teachers and administrators, another of the requirements for the senior project.

Thank you Matthew for choosing Amberations and for all the work that went into the research, design, documentation, expenses, building and placement.

We know this will be a great asset to our grounds and are so grateful to you for thinking of us.
Summer Odyssey 2017

Yes, summer camp is back for its third year at Amberations! Last year the camp was a huge success. Everyone involved enjoyed the camp immensely, so much so, we have decided to offer the camp again and hopefully expand this summer.

Amberations’ Summer Odyssey is an all inclusive outdoor experience welcoming any child ages 4th-7th grade. Last year, we featured activities including hiking, visiting with animals, fort building, terrariums, sand sculpting, arts and crafts.

These are only a few of the fantastic adventures campers will enjoy during our flexibly scheduled week of fun. Campers are encouraged to suggest ideas for fun that we will work into the activities of the day.

Each year campers work together to build a fort in the upper fields to play in during their time together.

The camp will be offered Monday through Thursday 10am-4pm, starting July 31st and, depending on enrollment, carry on through early August.

We provide experienced certified staff who love working with kids. Visit our grounds to see what Amberations has to offer for your child’s camp experience. Plan ahead, call now to reserve a slot.

Depending on interest Amberations may add a week for younger campers. Let us know if you have a school aged child interested in enjoying Amberations’ Summer Odyssey.

For registration information contact Marcellus Parks and Recreation Department at (315) 673-3269.