



**Oneida Lake Association**  
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Greetings!

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## WHAT'S UP?

### OLA Annual Meeting

On May 1, your association held its Annual Meeting at Gillette Road Middle School. Our agenda featured several speakers, each of whom delivered interesting information on key topics related to the lake. Over two hundred people attended the two-hour long session. One of the highlights of the meeting was a discussion about member responses to our on-line survey. The OLA Board of Directors is grateful for the tremendous response we had to our survey. Comments from the audience helped to sharpen our perspective and to point us in the right direction regarding priorities. We'll report more on that as the Board discusses Action Steps that relate to the survey responses.

In the meantime, please enjoy a few summaries from the meeting:



**Bill Evans**, Director of the Oneida Fish Cultural Station (Fish Hatchery) gave us a presentation on this year's walleye spawn and harvest.

He began by reminding us that walleye fry raised in the hatchery are primarily stocked in Oneida lake, but some of these spawn are shared in other New York State waters. Furthermore, to dispel rumors

that the hatchery sells walleye fry to private owners, he explained that there is a very small program that provides fry to a few private owners. This sale accounts for one-half of one percent of all of the walleyes reared at the hatchery. The idea behind this sale is that NYS wants to keep the Oneida strain as the exclusive strain of walleyes in

New York waters. If the hatchery didn't sell these fry, we know that the owners would buy fry from some other strain out of state, which could have a harmful effect on our home grown walleye population.

This year, the hatchery collected over 16,000 walleye during a one-week run. Nearly 6,000 females (versus 4,500 from last year) provided eggs for the fertilization process. That translated into 324 million eggs that began their life in the hatchery. Of course, not every egg hatches successfully. Evans was confident that he will provide at least 153 million walleye fry directly into Oneida Lake!

Evans also reported on the continued development of the sturgeon population, as well as development of Oneida Lake cisco.

## **SAFE BOATING**

The Annual meeting also featured a presentation by US Coast Guard Auxiliary Commander Richard Kunz. He began by outlining the features of DSC, Digital Selective Calling.

This communication device is built into most modern VHF radios. When connected to a GPS, such as a chart plotter or an integrated GPS, it allows the Coast Guard to pinpoint your location during a distress call. In order to properly employ the DCS system, the boater must have an MMSI identifier number, available for free with a brief on-line application.

Kunz warned, however, that DSC coverage for Oneida Lake has limitations. For example, there is only one DSC enable radio tower in the lake's vicinity. That means that although they can fix your location along a line from that tower, they cannot precisely triangulate your location using signals from another tower.

Commander Kunz then recommended another alternative. He suggested that boaters download the US Coast Guard app on their smart phones. (Warning! There are some look-alike apps out there. Make sure that you download the app that says United States Coast Guard. It has a crossed anchors logo). This app has a variety of amazing features. Boaters can file a float plan, look up rules of the road, report a hazard or, and even communicate with a NOAA buoy off in a remote location of the ocean. Most importantly, it has an Emergency Assistance button. This feature connects you directly to the Coast Guard and also pinpoints your location using your phone's integrated GPS. Once you download the app, take a few minutes to set up your profile. And keep your phone safe and dry on your boat!

Kunz also reminded us that the Coast Guard monitors channel 16 on your VHF radio. Channels 21A and 22A are also Coastguard operating channels.

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## The Oneida Lake Association welcomes 43 North Marina

Boaters on Oneida Lake have long been familiar with Trade-A-Yacht Marina on the west end of the lake. That marina is now under new ownership and re-branded as **43 North Marina**. Kevin Walma, the new owner, wants to assure long-time patrons that they can continue to expect “all the same services that that they are used to.” There will still be dockage, used boat sales, winter storage (both outside and inside), repairs, fueling, and much more. Walma also plans to add services and amenities to his new business. For example, he will soon be expanding to build a new showroom where patrons can browse both new and used boats. The new owner also reminds us that 43 North is a large part of an even much larger boating experience on the western tip of the lake. His “campus” also includes Fast Forward Marine, a premier shop for fiberglass repair, and the newly minted South Bay Sails and Kayaks, a store within the marina focusing on Hobie products and other small boats. Rob Jerry, formerly of Boat Works in East Syracuse, will be operating that business. And across the street is Magee Canvas. Walma understands that if you need anything boating related, set your compass for 43 North!



In fact, Walma explained that he chose this name for his business because it highlights the location of our lake at 43 degrees north latitude. This latitude also celebrates the location of the Erie Canal, as well as a corridor that the Great Loopers travel during their east-west segment.

Walma, who comes to the marina with a business background in software, explained that it had been a life-long dream to own a marina. Living on the south shore of

Oneida Lake with his wife and four kids, his affinity for marine living came naturally. He explained that he wanted to transition from the software business into a “lifestyle business.”

With his new acquisition, he brings a vision of where he would like to take the marina in the coming years. For example, Walma envisions developing a “boat club” where members can sign out a variety of boats for recreational use. He wants patrons, both near and far, to think of 43 North Marina as the “premiere, one-stop boating experience.”

**The Oneida Lake Association wishes 43 North, and the many other business on our lake, a safe and bountiful boating season.**

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## Cleaning up the Lake

### OLA Weed Pulls – Volunteers are Needed!

Director Carl Ford ( [cford113@yahoo.com](mailto:cford113@yahoo.com) ) will organize the south shore pull on July 12. He believes that Lewis Point will need little or no effort based on the gains we saw last year. However, there will most likely be plenty to work on at the Southshore Marina.

Director Patricia Cerro-Reyhill ( [pcr@nywea.org](mailto:pcr@nywea.org) ) will organize the Friday, June 21 Big Bay pull. If you have time, boats, and an inclination to have fun while serving your Association, please contact these folks!

Amy Samuels, Education & Outreach Coordinator for the Onondaga Environmental Institute advises that OEI expects to be awarded the funds to continue the watercraft steward program at boat launches this summer. **If someone approaches you at a launch, please avail yourself of learning a bit about invasive species and your individual stewardship as you boat on our NYS waterways.**

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We have been advised by NYSDEC that the long-awaited **COVE ROAD BOAT LAUNCH**, that was to be built this season, has been delayed. Region 6 Fisheries Manager Jana Lantry reported that *Cove Road is the top priority for Region 6; however, a different build became a higher design priority and that build was moved ahead of Cove Road. We need the final design for Cove Rd. before that project can go forward. We anticipate the Cove Rd boat launch build to occur during 2020. I would be happy to provide an article on the build when/as it happens.*

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## OLA's Conservationist of the Year

At the recent OLA Annual Meeting, the Oneida Lake Association has honored longtime conservation leader **Kenneth Lynch** as its 2019 Conservationist of the Year. Lynch served more than twenty years in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, where he successfully advocated for initiatives that helped preserve and enhance Oneida Lake.

Lynch was recognized for the career-long, and positive impact he has had on Oneida Lake, most recently as executive deputy commissioner to the DEC, a position from which he retired this year. Prior to that, Lynch was the director of DEC Region 7, the nine-county region of Upstate New York which encompasses much of Oneida Lake. Regions 6 and 7 have historically worked together to manage Oneida Lake natural resources, a partnership that Lynch strengthened considerably during his

directorship from 1997-2016.

Some of the key successes during Lynch's tenure included securing additional DEC law enforcement resources and equipment for Oneida Lake; protecting the lake from wastewater discharges and other environmental threats; and working closely with sportsmen and the OLA on issues of concern to waterfowlers, including season setting and hunter access.

Oneida Lake, the largest lake entirely within New York State, is economically and culturally vital to surrounding communities. Its watershed is home to more than a quarter million people, it supports a vibrant residential and tourist economy, offers world-class fishing, and hosts abundant recreational opportunities. The Conservationist of the Year award is OLA's highest honor for people involved in protecting these resources.

Ken Lynch's personal dedication meant that he used every resource of his office, and then some, to make sure that our lake is well taken care of by New York State and its partners," said Warren Darby, outgoing President of the OLA. "We commend him and thank him for his service."

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## Watercraft Stewards

The Onondaga Environmental Institute is looking to hire a head watercraft steward and 2 watercraft stewards. Stewards offer guidance in dealing with aquatic invasive species and the law requiring boats be clean of vegetation and drained bilges when leaving the boat launch. Most of the work will be based on the South shore of Oneida Lake, with some of it on Onondaga Lake. **If you know of any local college students looking for summer employment**, please forward this message. Have them contact Amy Samuels at 315-472-2150 x13 or [asamuels@oei2.org](mailto:asamuels@oei2.org).

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If you have an avocation and interest in serving OLA, please reach out to one of the Directors. Our contact info is at our website.

The BOD currently has one Director vacancy, and anticipates another in the next year. Directors meet once a month, and may spend just a few hours each month on OLA business. Each Director must serve on at least one standing committee, volunteer for special events, and anticipate advancement to an officer's position after serving for a few 2-year terms.

Write out your avocational resume and send it along with a brief note outlining your experience and interests to any OLA Director, or to [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)

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A member/reader suggested that ENews incorporate a segment of

## **FISHING TIPS.**

Feel free to offer up some of your short hints, tips, and tricks.

One of the other online (there are several) Oneida Lake sites had a question posted that related to bass fishing regulations and seasons. The most lucid reply was that of Mike Cusano saying:

*"I think the "complication" is terminology. Back in the day we had **Closed and Open seasons**. Starting in 2006 the statewide regulation was expanded to offer a **Catch and Release season (C&R)**. This is not a "closed" season. It is more like an "open" season without the livewells and fillet knives. Fish can be caught, photographed, weighed, and [must be] released.*

*If the season is closed and a fish is accidentally caught - no photo, no weighing; just [an] immediate release.*

*Lots of other waters have special seasons for bass - some of the more restrictive are St. Lawrence River and waters in Jefferson County. Season is CLOSED for bass (Dec. 1 thru 3rd Friday in June). NOT ALLOWED TO FISH FOR THEM.*

*Closed means not fishing for a species even if you are going to release.*

*C&R season means fishing for but have to release.*

*Open means fishing for, keeping is allowed size/number restrictions may apply depending on fish species"*

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## PLASTICS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF MODERN HUMAN CULTURE.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the first plastic was an organic form of cellulose used to replace elephant ivory billiard balls. *Bakelite* was the first synthetic plastic of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (think old radios and telephones), then came the WWII needs for nylon and other synthetics. Some researchers now estimate that 95% of the plastic ever produced – and used in everything – persists, chemically unaltered, in the environment as dryer lint, carpet dust, and most forms of trash. In Western nations clean air acts prohibit burning plastic. By molecular breakdown (ever smell your old Tupperware?) and mechanical abrasion, bottles, shirts and skirts, packing materials, and outdated electronics become degraded microplastics. Found in water (and probably soil), some particles are fragments from larger, discarded products, some as small as a large algae. We are what we eat.

Hawaiian oceanographers have been studying larval fish habitats in oceanic slicks. Slicks are accumulations of organic and inorganic forming by converging winds and currents. They can be seen by satellites as long irregular strings along coasts. In Oneida Lake we often see [Langmuir streaks](#), a form of slick.

Slicks are transient, breaking up in rough weather. They concentrate a variety of debris, vegetation, and can shelter larval fish. As cited in the May 2019 issue of National Geographic, microplastics in slicks outnumbered larval fish by more than seven to one. On average there is more than 130 times as much plastic inside slicks than outside.

Many species of larval fish are super small, without fully developed organs or motility. "For newborn fish, to eat is to live another day; if their first meal is plastic, they're not consuming the calories they need to sustain them until the second....The most critical moment is that first feeding....A single thread in the stomach of a larval fish is a potential killer."

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**Pay your dues, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!**

**Recruit your non-member neighbors and friends TO JOIN US!**

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**Donate**

**Help OLA function. Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.**

**OLA is a 501(c)4 organization**

serving protection of the Oneida  
Lake environment.



[Website](#) [Who We Are](#) [What We Do](#) [How to Help](#)

The Oneida Lake Association is a member of the New York State Conservation Council <http://www.nyscc.com/> and the New York State Federation of Lake Associations <http://www.nysfola.org/>.

**Report environmental violations.** Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and management of Oneida Lake and its drainage basin. Be civil. **1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267) or 1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332)**

*Edited by Scott Shupe and John Harmon.  
Send us your notes and articles for use in future ENews!*