



**Oneida Lake Association**  
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Greetings!

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### **GREETINGS FROM THE ONEIDA LAKE ASSOCIATION**

As we transition through the phases of Covid recovery, your Board of Directors continues to wish you a safe and pleasant summer on and around the lake. More than ever, we have come to appreciate just how precious our lake is to us. It provides a bounty of recreational activities that help us enjoy our time, even during this pandemic. And long before the virus, boaters, anglers, sailors, and bird watchers all practiced social distancing. We knew it as good etiquette. We kept our fishing lines well away from others, and we were careful to follow the right-of-way rules as we motored or sailed. Let's keep that up!

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#### **OLA Annual Meeting Canceled for 2020 – Look for Extra Celebration in 2021!**

We had huge plans to celebrate OLA's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary during the April 2020 Annual Meeting, which was to be held in April. Unfortunately, like all other mass gatherings, our meeting had to go on hold because of public health risks and the Governor's executive orders.

Based on guidance about public use of large gathering spaces, the OLA Board of Directors has decided we will not hold an annual meeting in 2020. New York State Not-For-Profit Law allows us to hold certain types of meetings virtually, including Board meetings, but membership meetings have to be in person – and we are not sure we will be allowed any place to have a large, in-person meeting this calendar year. So your directors will miss seeing you very much, and we look for opportunities to interact with and hear from OLA members any way we can in the meantime!

Looking ahead, watch for announcements of a special "75+1" celebration, which will be the theme of our 2021 annual meeting. We tentatively plan to hold it at Gillette Road Middle School the week before next year's walleye opener. If anything requires another change in plans, we'll let you know well in advance.

In the meantime, please visit our website. There you will find a number of recent articles celebrating our 75th anniversary!

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#### **Highlights of Cornell University Fisheries Report for 2020**

We know that for the avid anglers among our members, one of the highlights of our Annual Meeting is hearing from Cornell University's Dr. Randy Jackson about the state of the lake and its fish. Dr. Jackson and his team provided their report to the OLA

Board in April, and we recap the highlights here for our members who are interested:  
**Walleye:** The population of adult walleye is estimated at 1 million, which is the first time it has reached that amount since 1986! Angler catch rates of walleye in 2019 were the highest observed since regular creel surveys began in 2012. Good year classes are expected to contribute to robust walleye populations for the near future.

**Yellow perch:** The perch population, which had previously been decimated by cormorants and other changes to the lake, has doubled in the past three years.

**Bass:** Oneida Lake's populations of large mouth and small mouth bass have been up-and-down, and there were noted disease outbreaks in 2017 and 2018. However, the scientists at Cornell have not found any cause-and-effect link between the outbreaks and population change. Bass populations remain near the middle of their historical range, and Oneida Lake's bass tend to be larger at a given age than the mean size observed in other New York waters.

Look for a much more in-depth look at Cornell's report and details on the state of the lake in our Fall 2020 *Oneida Lake Bulletin*. We might not be able to address our members in person, but we can certainly provide some good reading material this fall!



*This young angler celebrates her first walleye, caught in May 2020.*

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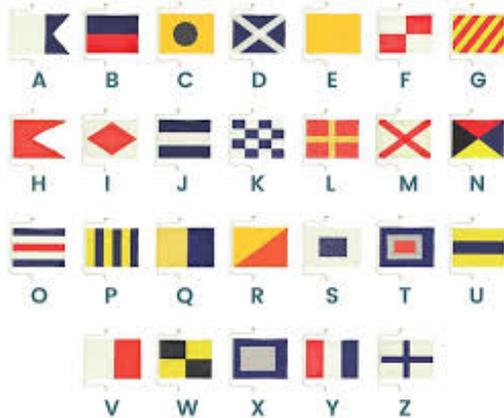
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## HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

For many OLA members and anglers Father's Day is very special. Over the years you really tap into those memories of the early years learning how to fish and boat safely on Oneida Lake and its tributaries with your father. Besides catching some fish, there were all those other important lessons about life and bonding that took place on those family leisure outings. Father's Day falls one day after the traditional opening day of bass season. Small mouth Bass were my father's favorite fish, and he loved drifting small pond crabs trying to catch them. We had some really good opening days on Oneida Lake, as well as many other good trips on the lake and Fish Creek, fishing for small mouths, walleye, and yellow perch. It was nothing fancy, just simple fun days on the water fishing. What great memories! I am sure many of you have your own great memories of spending time on Oneida Lake with your father. My dad, Chuck Girvan, passed away back in 1986, and every year on Father's Day I go fishing for small mouth bass the old-school way like my father did, using small pond crabs with a special appreciation of my dad who always made time to take me fishing at Oneida Lake and Fish Creek. This year on Father's Day, I hope you have an opportunity to take your dad

fishing or remember those early trips when he was able go with you.  
~Bill Girvan, OLA President

As part of OLA's 75th celebration we had this fillet knife emblazoned with the OLA anniversary logo. The Board authorized a price of \$20, or \$25 to also include an annual membership. We are pleased report that we have sold out all of our inventory. However, we still receive numerous requests for these knives. We plan to order another batch. You can help us decide on a number by contacting us and letting us know that you're interested. Once we order, we'll develop a plan to get the knives to you. **If you want one, reach out to us.**



**June 14th is Flag Day!** Although the holiday is designated to honor the American Flag, consider learning the code of nautical flags. You'll be amazed how often you'll get a chance to read this nautical alphabet.

### **Business Is Anything But Usual—But Your Association Marches On**

The Covid-19 shutdown meant that your all-volunteer Board of Directors was not able to meet for a brief time, and the loss of the Annual Meeting meant that we could not conduct our annual election of Directors in that venue.

OLA bylaws (adopted and amended in 2014) and New York State Not-for-Profit Law provide an alternative for board meetings and elections. On the evening of Monday, June 8, OLA made history with its first-ever virtual board meeting, conducted by Zoom video conference call. Seventeen Directors met online and accomplished two key pieces of business:

Directors Ryan Asmus, Michael Barretta, Gina Duggleby, Dr. Edward Mills, George Reck, and Bruce Schantz were re-elected to three -ear terms expiring April 2023.

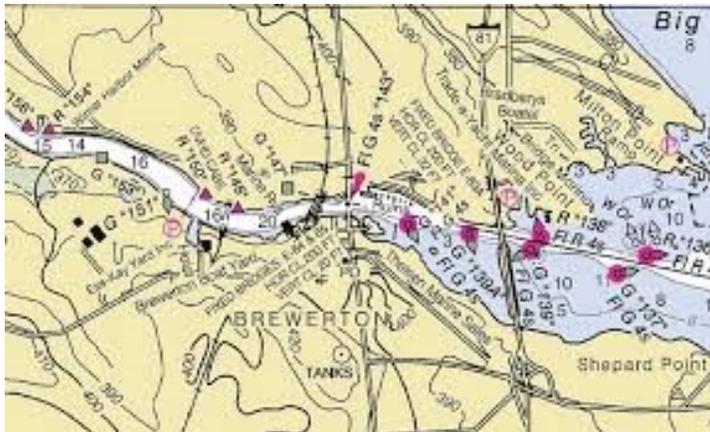
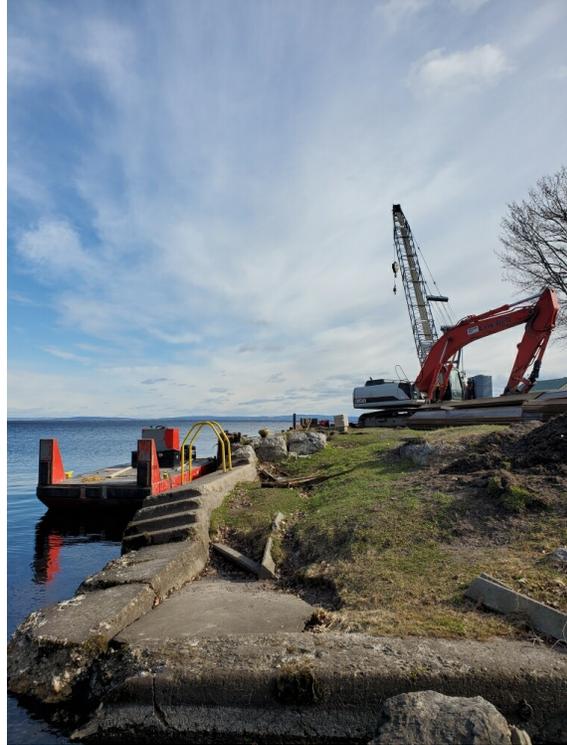
The following directors were re-elected as Officers of the Board: William Girvan, President; Warren Darby, Vice President; John Harmon, Vice President; Lance Vella, Treasurer; and Ryan Asmus, Secretary.

Neither the OLA nor New York State could have imagined the Covid-19 shutdown, but now that it has happened, NYS law and our bylaws have served us well to keep your Association running at full strength.

### **CLEVELAND PIER**

North Shore OLA Director Patricia Cerro-Reehill reports that "[Progress continues and is impressive on the restructure and renovation of the](#)

Cleveland Pier. Here are some photos to illustrate the progress."



*The area around Brewerton has numerous shoals and obstructions, and the familiar Canal Corp. channel markers aren't in the water as of this writing—extra-cautious navigation is a must!*

OLA members have reported unusually high boat traffic on the lake this spring, and anglers are reporting lots of angling effort and abundant catches (and dinners) of healthy fish. It is wonderful to see that in this time of so much difficulty and tragedy, more people from all walks of life are turning to our lake for safe, peaceful, and high-quality recreation. The sense of community on the water is stronger than ever!

That said, extra traffic makes it extra important for boaters and anglers to be careful and attentive. Some relatively inexperienced boaters and old salts alike have had problems with shallow water and heavy weather; and an abundance of fish tends to invite attention from poachers.

There are ways you can help. Your first responsibility as a boater and angler is to take

care of yourself—let someone know where you are going, practice safe and courteous navigation, know your surroundings, keep your boat and equipment rigged safely, and fish within New York State regulations for Oneida Lake. You should also carry a cell phone on the water and know who to call if you see a problem: 911, if you see a boat accident or any other emergency or potential danger; and 844-DEC-ECOS (844-332-3267) if you witness a suspected violation of conservation law.

### **OLA Thanks Canal Corp. for Restoring Buoys**

On the topic of safe navigation, there are ways your OLA has been helping, too. An area of particular concern was that the New York State Canal Corporation encountered delays in placing its channel marker buoys this spring. The area between the bridges in Brewerton was especially troublesome without the markers, because there are shoals just outside the channel that are otherwise unmarked. Numerous groundings and responses by law enforcement have been reported. OLA communicated with the Canal Corp. about the issue and respectfully asked that Oneida Lake be prioritized in their reopening plan. We appreciate that the Canal Corp. was forthcoming about their challenges, and that their crews have been working hard to get things back to normal.

It hasn't been easy, because numerous repair jobs were underway on the locks when Covid-19 shutdown orders were handed down by New York State. Locks couldn't re-open until the agency returned to full strength and repairs were completed. With the locks closed, the Canal Corp. couldn't move its own boats through to Oneida Lake; and with no boats, they had no way to transport and place the buoys. The Canal Corp. announced a July 4 target date for reopening the Canal, and we asked them to do whatever they could to get markers on Oneida Lake as soon as possible.

The agency has found a way to help. As of this writing, the morning of Friday, June 12, a Canal Corp. tug and barge were steaming eastbound out of Brewerton with a full load of buoys. Working in a stiff west wind, Canal workers are starting the task of restoring the full complement of navigation markers to Oneida Lake. A little later than usual—but understandable and much appreciated, given this spring's unprecedented challenges.

OLA thanks the Canal Corp. for finding a way to overcome Covid-19 and logistical hurdles to restore the navigation infrastructure on Oneida Lake, and we wish all of the agency's workers good health. As always, we remind Oneida Lake boaters to be careful, be aware of their surroundings, and not assume safe navigable depths.

*Below: Canal Corporation workers haul the lake's channel markers to their usual summer locations. Photo and text by OLA Director Matt Snyder.*



**Would you like to Help the Oneida Lake Association?**

**We are looking for dedicated volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors for the Oneida Lake Association. If you'd like to help us carry on the mission of the Oneida Lake Association and help us Preserve and Protect our beautiful lake, this is the time to**

think seriously about stepping up.

The BOD currently has three Director vacancies. We need individuals who have people skills and an interest with interaction with the academic and government professionals. Good writing and technology skills are a bonus.

Directors serve 2-year terms, meet once a month, and may spend 3-6 hours a 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.

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

Write out your avocational resume, personal interests, and a professional background summary. Send them by snail or email to any OLA Director, or to [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)

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### Member's **FISHING TIPS.**

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

Here are classic tips from H.G. Tapply writing in *Field and Stream*.  
<https://www.fieldandstream.com/32-vintage-fishing-tips/>

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### MEMBER QUESTIONS?

Sent your questions and opinions to [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)

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**ONEIDA LAKE SIGNS.** There are 20 signs around the lake bearing advertising support for the OLA's mission. At this time there is about a dozen firms of these advertisers who are no longer in business. If your company has interest in adopting one of these signs, and promoting both your business and OLA at a nominal expense, please contact an OLA Director or email [President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org](mailto:President@OneidaLakeAssociation.org)

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

**\$8 annually**

**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.



Memorial remembrance\$ take the edge off some of our expenses.



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

OLA is a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organization.

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 John Harmon  
and Matt Snyder*

*Send us your notes and articles for use in future ENews!*