



Oneida Lake Association
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Greetings!

Get the boats and trailers ready! The last of the ice is drifting west again this April 9 morning, and should all be gone by this weekend. Bill Evans and the crew at the hatchery are getting the nets ready to deploy. So think about taking the kids up to see the stripping operation next weekend.

WHAT'S UP?

The OLA 2019 **Annual Meeting** will be held at the North Syracuse Gillette Road Middle School on **May 1**.
Doors open at 6PM.

The meeting starts at 7PM.
6150 South Bay Road, Cicero - about 2 miles south of Rt 31
and a mile north of Driver's Village off 481

AGENDA

- 7:20 Oneida Fish Cultural Station Update
Bill Evans Oneida Fish Cultural Station Manager
- 7:35 Oneida Fisheries Report
Dr. Randy Jackson Cornell Senior Research Associate
- 7:55 Lake Cormorant hazing and diet study
Dave Lemon Fisheries Manager NYSDEC Region 7
- 8:10 Digital Selective Calling for automated distress hailing
with VHF Marine Radio
Rick Kunz Coast Guard Auxillary
- 8:25 Conservationist of the Year Award Matt Snyder

The OLA Board's survey to members, asking for their thoughts....

HERE ARE SOME OF THE COMMENTS RECEIVED IN MARCH

- There is too much stress and pressure on the fishery by allowing nearly year round taking of pike and yellow perch. The season needs to be shorter by eliminating ice fishing. We also need to keep the fish raised in the hatchery in Oneida Lake itself and stop shipping them off to other locations.
- I believe that over fishing can be detrimental to the health of the fishery. Research has shown the negative impact of arbitrarily high daily fish limits along with extensive angling presence. Removing too many fish, especially large breeders, can reduce the quantity of the breeding stock, reducing not only the abundance of a particular species but also the size of successive breeders.
- I would seriously consider a smaller daily limit, especially for panfish. I simply cannot imagine why anyone would have to keep 50 bluegills or 50 perch. Multiply this by the number of people fishing every day and negative results have to occur.
- Noise control, there has to be a reasonable decibel limit. Especially on the west end!!!!
- Meetings are very educational Maybe start earlier for the young kids or have it on Saturday? Start out with a few prize giveaways and then meeting agenda and end with the giveaways.
- Allow for multi-year membership; and offer a lifetime membership. I am sure members are lost every year, due to forgetting to renew. If a lifetime membership was offered, I would buy / gift 4 of them myself.
- Is OLA asking legislators (NYS & DC) to assist in funding completion of sewers around the lake?

Bring your additional thoughts to the meeting on May 1.

THE PROGRESSION OF 2019 ICE-OUT



Breakup started this year March 25 (top photo, viewing west to Dutchman's). On April 4 strong west winds piled ice up on Shack's Point, Bouy 125, Champan Park Pier (pix three), and Sylvan Beach (pix two). The next day east winds pushed the deteriorating cover back toward western shores.

Thanks to Tom



Brooking we can provide this link to anyone searching for satellite coverage of the Lake Ontario and Oneida Lake region. Compare there the online images for 3/27, 4/4 and 4/6/19. Oneida Lake is in the lower right.
<https://coastwatch.glerl.noaa.gov/modis/modis.php?region=o&page=1>



Consider this as segue into volunteering this summer in a water chestnut weed pull.

World Wildlife Foundation (2018) opines that the cost of nature – the loss thereof – exceeds \$175 Trillion annually. Further estimating that the equivalent of 6-7 soccer fields of forests are lost to agriculture daily. Small farms are no longer economical but for subdivision. Massive landscape conversion takes place at an accelerating rate. World Wildlife Foundation reports that in but a decade there has been an 85% reduction in the biomass of tropical insect species. Smithsonian offers that there are about 1.2 million described insect species that collectively make up the majority of the planet's land-animal biomass. Floyd W. Shockley, entomology collections manager of the National Museum of Natural History says that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the earth's flowering plants and $\frac{1}{3}$ of crop plants depend on animal pollinators, most of which are insects. Organic waste would build up without insects to help it decompose. Insects are foundational members of the food chain for reptiles, fishes, birds and mammals. However, human migration patterns altered the ecology wherever 'we' went.



For example, the tiny mid-Atlantic island of St. Helena (where Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled and died) was of brief transoceanic importance around for 100 years either side of 1800, but was made obsolete once the Suez Canal opened. The island's Jamestown was destroyed by termites released in ship-breaking. Of the 1,400 insect species on the island, only 30 percent are endemic. The other introduced species have contributed to the demise of native plants and animals while introduced plants have, as typical, have upset the ecosystem that evolved absent non-native species.

So what has this to do with Oneida Lake?

In but one example we can look at another aspect of the watershed landscape change. Aside from the erosion and sediment issue, we can look at our CNY forest. The chestnut, elm, butternut are gone. Now the ashes that gave our ancestors baskets, furniture, heat, seeds, and street names are heading to extinction. In but two decades the emerald ash borer (from Asia) has moved across the nation. In but 5 years it has greatly infected our local clay soil bottomlands. The adjacent March 2019 photo of bark exfoliation and shows larval tracks from the 2018 infestation of this tree. Tens of thousands of trees around the lake are similarly dead or dying this season. As the forest dies back – ash may be 3 in 10 stems – other non-native plants will find sunlight. Their domination will influence soils, the insects living within it, what feeds (on not) on what sprouts from it, and runoff from it.

And, like land cover conversions, our waterways are comparably susceptible to arrivals of other non-native species. We can only predict that international commerce and travel – as agents of unintentional alien translocation - will further alter the lands, waters, and foods on which we rely. A ‘solution’ evades us, but observation, awareness, and knowledge makes us more aware, and perhaps enables our children with better means to cope with their children's changing political, cultural, virtual and real landscapes.

Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District Director Mark Burger reports that in 2018, in the Oneida Lake Watershed:

- Approximately 2,500 ash trees were cut
- 875 non-ash trees were planted
- Approximately 245 ash trees were injected (that provide high functions and values in near-shore area for stormwater management, erosion & sediment control, and shade/aesthetics for park patrons)

His office is also spearheading the effort to put together a 2018 Annual Report of Activity for the 6 SWCDs with land in the Oneida Lake Watershed.

Members and other volunteers are invited to contact Director George Reck if they are available and willing to spend 2-3 hours **Friday morning April 26**. George and other Directors will again be conducting OLA's **Spring Cleanup** of the I-18 Bartel Road interchange and sprucing up the angler's access trail beneath the bridge over the Oneida River.

If you can help, please drop George a note at gkger3474@yahoo.com

Dates for the mid-to-late July **water chestnut pulls** have not yet been set, but volunteers will be needed at Lewis Point and Big Bay. Thanks again to Directors Carl Ford and Patricia Cerro-Reyhill for coordinating these exercises. If you are interested in a play day with your kayak, we'll provide information in next month's ENews.

ARE YOU GETTING READY TO PREPARE YOUR BOAT?

No doubt you have a checklist that you are already thinking about. Of course, up-to-date flares are on your list, and so is a reliable battery. And, hopefully, you've given your fire extinguisher some thought.

Federal regulations require a working fire extinguisher on all powered vessels. Let's take a minute to review some of the specifics. If your boat is up to 26 feet (that's most of us), then you must have at least one *Class B-I* extinguisher. (Look closely at the label). *Class A* is for paper and wood. That's not too helpful unless you use your boat to burn trash. *Class B* is for flammable liquids, including gasoline, diesel, oil, and grease. *Class C* is for electrical fires.

You can clearly see why *Class B* is required (by the way, *Class BC* meets the regulations, and provides even more coverage). Extinguishers labeled *B-I* are the smaller hand held type, able to spray 1.75 gallons of foam. *Class B-II* units are somewhat bigger, spraying 2.5 gallons of foam. Furthermore, the regulations state the extinguishers should be securely mounted in a bracket, preventing it from jumping around while you're boating. Try to choose a mounting position where the extinguisher is handy and away from possible fire sources, such as the engine compartment.

If your boat is over 26 feet, then you must have two B-I's or one B-II.

Keep in mind there is also a current recall on extinguishers. According to Boat US, "40 million Kidde brand fire extinguishers . . . manufactured between January 1, 1973 and August 15, 2017 . . . have been recalled." (If you're carrying around an extinguisher made in 1973, then you're probably not even reading this article!) But for the rest of us, take a minute to check the brand and date of your extinguisher. Visit kidde.com for more info.

Let's hope you never have to use it, but give that extinguisher a thorough check before shoving out the first time this season.

Do you know a former OLA Director?

The current BOD is planning the 2020 Annual meeting - the 75th of this organization - to commemorate its history, accomplishments, and folks who have contributed to us reaching this milestone. We are collecting names and contact information for any living Directors and Officers. We hope to invite those who could reasonably be expected to attend our meeting, and be recognized. So if you know a name from the last century, send information (name, address, email, etc) to info@oneidalakeassociation.org



ALSO OF INTEREST

In attending a very informative conference March 30 hosted by the Friends of Fort Ontario, I heard a very interesting quote: "Were it not for *Oswego*, there would be no *Oneida Carrying Place*; were it not for the *Oneida Carrying Place*, there would be no *Oswego*!"

Oneida Lake is right in the middle of the passage, 22 [original] miles from Rome

via the route that helped build America. Since before the French and Indian Wars, our water heritage has been instrumental in not only local, but national and international 'developments'.

This conference introduced me to knowledge of pre-colonial fortifications and battles, witnessed by Oneida Lake, from Fort Dusquene, to Fort Fontinac, to Fort Brewerton, to German Flats and points beyond the Atlantic.

We hope to learn more, in future ENews guest articles, from some of the speakers

and attendees.



AN OPINION

Cities worldwide have the political clout. By 2050 the world's population is expected to reach 9.8 billion, with 70% of them living in cities. But cities get their resources, and find much of their recreation outside the city limits. How does this affect Oneida Lake? Syracuse and metro Onondaga County is justifiably no slouch in protecting Skaneateles Lake as its water source. Indeed, many of the Oneida Lake communities are served by OCWA. Oneida Lake is not a drinking water source.

Oneida Lake's continuous monitoring program of its fishery and limnology has taken place since 1975 (fisheries since 1956)...probably one of the best monitored freshwater inland lakes in the North America. Cornell University, NYSDEC, and the Federal governments have invested millions in the monitoring of Oneida Lake...a claim that cannot be made for Skaneateles Lake. The Oneida Lake fishery has been estimated to add \$12-15M annually to the GNP and CNY economy. Its other recreational values add even more.

Yet we struggle to get Albany's support for issues like completion of sewerage, sedimentation, and watershed protection. Albany's apparent focus is on Skaneateles and its sister Finger Lakes, for drinking water protections. Albany's grant programs are so narrowly focused as to diminish many non-urban values that are important to Upstate.

OLA needs its members to be aware of our concerns, to enlist other new members, to enable the BOD to speak more authoritatively with our State and Federal representatives.

-- Scott Shupe

FISHING TIPS

Tony Buffa offers that, given the amount of current ice cover still manifest on Oneida Lake, he assumes a later than normal egg collection/spawning. So this has Implications for May 4:

1. Tributary fishing will be good to excellent. Bucktail jigs tipped with a nightcrawler, casting stick and crankbaits.
2. Near shore 6-15 FOW particularly close to tributaries would be early morning best bets lakeside. Bladebaits, jigs, swimbaits, sticks, crankbaits.
3. Mid to late morning move out to 20-30 FOW fish the bottom using slow jigging and bladebaiting techniques.

"Tight Lines!"

REMEMBER: female sturgeon can be put off their spawn if harrassed. Quickly release any inadvertently hooked. Moreover, if you see someone playing or targeting sturgeon, give them heck! **NYSDEC's tip line** is at the bottom of this newsletter. Put it in your cellphones.

Every now and then an old beer can pop-top shows up on the beach. Now 50 years old, these 'keyhole' cans and tops meet one National Register criterion for being listed as a genuine historical artifact!

Please explore the OLA's website. Within it you will find not only back issues of ENews, but also many older Bulletins, lists of launch sites and marinas, fishing and navigation aids, and a variety of information for visitors and lake users.

Pay your \$8 dues, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!

ARE YOU INTERESTED TO BECOME A DIRECTOR?

The OLA- BOD currently has one vacancy. Consider submitting your 'avocational resume' to us for consideration. It is anticipated that at least one additional vacancy will occur in the next 12 months, so we would like to have a pool of interested and qualified volunteers to consider for 2-year terms as they open.

We are especially interested in candidates with backgrounds and abilities that lend themselves to serving our our Fisheries, Government Relations, and Natural Resources Committees. Education and Outreach are a major function of OLA, so we also seek teachers and writers who can, for instance, help produce future ENews!

Should you have an inclination, now or in the future, drop a note to info@oneidalakeassociation.org or contact a Director (see website).

Pay your dues, recruit your non-member neighbors and friends, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!



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](#)

OLA is a 401(c)(4) not-for-profit organization. Implicit in the preceding text is OLA's status – and its reliance on government agencies to effect some desired change when lobbied to act. Issues affecting the lake, users, the environment, and regulations of all the aforementioned often obligate the BOD to call on one or more government representatives to fund or correct something perceived by the BOD as detrimental to our mission for Oneida Lake protection. It is one of the nation's most studied lakes, in several scientific areas. The knowledge base acquired by Cornell University, other CNY colleges, and NYSDEC is not always seen by decision makers.

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!*