



Oneida Lake Association
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Greetings, OLA members!

The OLA wishes you and your family a wonderful holiday season.

We invite you to review the information below which outlines our accomplishments from the past year. We are pleased to announce our progress, while we also look forward to next year's work. Take a look!

(And as the early ice beckons, please be mindful of your safety and the safety of others!)

Have a prosperous New Year!

from
Your OLA Board of Directors

We are pleased to outline our list of accomplishments for the year, and we look forward to serving in the year to come.

Initiated Newsletter

The OLA sends this electronic newsletter to all members and friends of OLA who provided us with a legible, valid email address. We get about a 50% open response, better than most organizations! Dozens of members have favorably commented on our effort. Members are invited to submit story ideas or anecdotes of their time on the lake.

Email Message traffic increased dramatically this year

International interest in walleye stocking, manganese pancakes, and requests for fisheries assistance, donations, angler queries, complaints, historical interviews for Sylvan Beach, Cleveland and Sylvan Beach Piers, compliments on the newsletters, and general lake questions were received and answered. For example, *"Would anyone be interested in two hand-written notebooks of weather data from June, 1956 to February, 1982? My grandfather lived in Sylvan Beach, NY and kept a daily*

record.” (Lars said he wanted them with Cornell records.) And “I am crossing the country doing research on amusement parks, including the rides at Sylvan Beach; whom can I contact for information?”

We do our best to respond to each of these inquiries.

Outreach and Education

Board members assisted the North Syracuse School District 5th grade field trip to Oneida Shores on May 12 supporting lessons at several stations. The Committee continues working on ideas to develop lesson plan modules that area teachers can use when incorporating Oneida Lake as a teaching instrument and a real or virtual classroom. NYSDEC, SUNY ESF, SUNY Morrisville, SUNY Oswego, Cornell, and Hamilton College have expressed interest in assisting. Member-teachers are asked to contact Directors Duggleby or Asmus if they have ideas.

NYSDEC ECO Captains Barber and Steele attended the July Board meeting and reviewed a broad spectrum of lake-community related issues and approaches to problems. Similarly, new Regional Director Matt Marco attended the November meeting. CNYRPB's Ann Saltman also attended to outline new stormwater management and EPA Part 9 programs.

The Board identified a need for a public workshop on nuisance Canada geese, with agency assistance. OLA has scheduled a meeting for March 25, 2017 at the Central Square High School.

The Board is also supporting an initiative for the production of a professional, high quality video promoting Oneida Lake.

The OLA Board completed repurposing a bulletin board at Oneida Shores Boat Launch into a lake-centric educational kiosk. Periodically OLA will change out materials to keep the launch users informed about current events and safety matters relevant to their time on the water.

Networking Meeting with area agency, town, and legislative representatives.

The annual August networking meeting with friends of Oneida Lake was a success. OLA hosted DEC personnel, government officials, area business owners, law enforcement personnel, and many others who came together at a picnic at Oneida Shores to discuss our common interests in preserving and supporting Oneida Lake. One highlight of the meeting was a fly-in by Onondaga County's Air-1 helicopter that performed several lake rescues and operations over the last year.

Membership

Although our membership numbers have remained stable, we are still committed to our challenge goal of 5,000 members. It appears that most lakefront property owners *are not* members. Directors conducted membership drives at three springtime sport shows, at the Annual Meeting, and at other venues throughout the year. Please visit our website for information on becoming a member.

Sadly, we lost one vital member with the death of former President William Schriever.

Newly elected Directors are Gregory Keener and John Harmon.

Water Chestnut Harvests

OLA members and volunteers from other organizations pulled about half a ton of this invasive weed in each of two locations; Big Bay on July 29 and east of Lewis Point on August 27. Additionally, the OLA supported Kasoag Lake and The Nature Conservancy in the effort to stop or retard the invasive plant fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) from moving out of this upstream lake via Fish Creek. Several reports of invasive hydrilla were investigated and determined to be native *Elodea*. Volunteers will again be requested to help in 2017. A new identification guide prepared by aquatic plant specialist Bob Johnson has been added to the OLA website.

Part 576 Rulemaking

OLA provided comments to NYSDEC generally supporting its efforts to curtail the spread of invasive plants and animals that could harm the native ecologies of Oneida Lake and other water bodies, but objected to the poor wordsmithing of the regulation that will confuse and conflict lake users. This rule makes it illegal to launch or remove for transport any watercraft or dock from the lake if any vegetation (native or invasive alien) or similar threat is attached or contained in bilge or livewell waters.

Double Crested Cormorant Hazing OLA continues to support agency efforts to use all effective management tools in the tool box to haze and otherwise curtail this bird's numbers from the established NYSDEC target limit of 100 birds on the lake and no successful nesting. Such measures were hampered nationwide in 2016 due to a lawsuit against the permit-issuing agency US Fish and Wildlife Service by a public employee's environmental group that alleged that the agency's 5-year term renewal issuance of depredation permits subsequent to its Environmental Assessment was insufficient, and that a full Environmental Impact Statement was once again required. This matter has not been resolved and threatens cormorant management in the 2017 spring migration.

Mute Swan Legislation OLA opined to Governor Cuomo that NYSDEC, not the legislature, has the scientific and in-field expertise to manage the day-to-day responses of potentially harmful species, and should be allowed to do so. We are disappointed that the management and control tools available to professional biologists have been so restricted.

Snowmobile Registration

OLA continues to support a reduced registration fee for machines not used on trails, but only for activities such as ice fishing. The NYS Conservation Council (OLA is a member) reports that none of the bills regarding non-trail snowmobile registration for snowmobiles which shall be used solely for the purpose of gaining access to hunting and fishing areas advanced in the last legislative session.

Bartel Road I-81 Cleanup

Directors conducted a Spring trash pickup on our adopted DOT right-of-way and the angler access beneath the Brewerton Bridge. The Fall pickup was usurped by highway construction and volunteer safety concerns. Volunteers will be solicited next year.

Fish Culture Station

OLA's Fisheries Committee reviewed last season's troubles at the hatchery and are reasonably sure that physical and staffing changes will prevent the reduced "eye-up" potential, enabling the hatchery to take and raise all targets to traditional levels. A new OLA poster for display at the hatchery is being prepared for 2017.

Fisheries

We investigated and reviewed needs and justifications for lampricide treatments in Fish Creek and are satisfied that the program should be sustained. A few lamprey-scarred fish were reported this year. Dr. Chris Pennuto of Buffalo State presented a program on the round goby infestation at our 2016 annual meeting, and suggests that it will get worse in the next five-six years.

Awards

Frank Flack, Fisheries Manager for Region 6, was named Conservationist of the Year. Frank is a friend of Oneida Lake and continues to support OLA's quest for a new east end boat launch and other fisheries matters.

New Oneida Lake Book

Oneida Lake: Long-term Dynamics of a Managed Ecosystem and its Fishery By L. G. Rudstam, E.L. Mills, J. R. Jackson, and D. J. Stewart (Editors) Published by the American Fisheries Society (www.fisheries.org) Studies on the fish populations, fisheries, and limnology of Oneida Lake, NY started in the end of the 1950s by Dr. John Forney and colleagues at the Cornell University Biological Field Station. Early research concentrated on Walleye, Yellow Perch, and their interactions; this research soon expanded to include interactions with the lake ecosystem, an early example of the ecosystem approach. Explorations of Oneida Lake have continued for 60

years, and the resulting data series is one of the best available that couples fish ecology and limnology anywhere. In this book, collaborators from across the world have contributed insights into the functioning of the lake's ecology and fishery, and by extension to similar freshwater lakes elsewhere. The book is divided into three sections. The first set of chapters provide a historical and landscape context to the studies, the second set analyzes the long-term data, and the third set uses these data in models. The book is dedicated to Dr. John Forney, the first on-site Director of the Field Station, and a continuing contributor to the studies of Oneida Lake.

Boat Steward Program at Oneida Shores Marina

A Partnership of Onondaga Environmental Institute, Onondaga Earth Corps, the Oneida Lake Association, the Finger Lakes Institute and Onondaga County Parks

Those of you who launched a boat from the Oneida Shores Marina this past summer may have encountered a boat steward. Owen Hennigan, ESF undergrad and the grandson of Bob Hennigan, was hired by the Onondaga Earth Corps to fill one of their boat steward AmeriCorps positions. His job was to talk to boaters about stopping the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) by following the, "Clean, Drain, Dry" rule and by inspecting boats for AIS. The popular launch kept Owen busy throughout July and August. Seventy-five percent of the 903 boats encountered were inspected and cleaned by a boat steward. During peak times, it was just not possible to reach all the boats or boaters. With that in mind, we are looking for individuals who would like to be volunteer boat stewards or assistant boat stewards. Assistant boat stewards can be adults, high school students or middle school students who participate with a parent or scout leader. A training is tentatively scheduled for the morning of June 10th. Please contact Amy Samuels of Onondaga Environmental Institute for more information; 472-2150 x13 or asamuels@oei2.org.

Queries

Remember the old Genesee Fishing Contest? We were contacted by an individual who wishes to locate a copy of the old records book, with an eye toward resurrecting the contest. If you have an old copy or know the location of the old program, please contact us or neilsingslead@nycap.rr.com with the information.

Do you Have information on past OLA Activities? Since the 1940s, the Oneida Lake Association has recognized the lake as the heartbeat of the region. The OLA has played a pivotal role in key issues from banning commercial fisheries to managing cormorants. I am part of a team of researchers from Cornell University, University of Wisconsin, and Virginia Tech seeking to understand how lake organizations, like OLA, support lake management and protection activities. To do so, we need your help in collecting historical information about OLA. Based on my conversations with OLA President Scott Shupe and past President Ed Mills, there is not a central archive of OLA activities that goes further back than the newsletters on the website. If you happen to have information on past OLA activities and please let us know. Materials we are looking for include:

- Old newsletters
- Meeting minutes and notes
- Letters to legislatures and agencies
- OLA resolutions
- Participation roles for volunteer activities
- Newspaper articles
- OLA produced brochures
- Any other citizen-initiated materials to enhance management and protection of the lake

I plan to visit Oneida Lake next summer or fall to attend an OLA meeting and meet with people interested in lake management and protection efforts. During that time, I would like to digitally scan any documents you may have and would like to share with our research team. This will help me do archival research into how OLA has changed over time. If you'd like to contribute to this effort, please contact Scott Shupe at President@oneidalakeassociation.org Learn more about our project: www.cnhlakes.frec.vt.edu Please contact me if you have any questions contact Mike Sorice at: msorice@vt.edu

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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)**

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