

The Oneida Lake Bulletin

Spring 2024

www.oneidalakeassociation.org

Oneida Lake's 9 Element Plan

By OLA President John Harmon

The Oneida Lake Association remains proud of its heritage as the foremost steward of the lake since the organization was established in 1945. That's nearly 80 years of stewardship! We also acknowledge that we couldn't fulfill this mission without our many continuing partners. First and foremost, of course, is our membership. We also thank the Cornell University Field Station at Shackleton Point for their continued research that allows us to make science-based decisions and recommendations.

Most recently, another agency has begun a study to guide the future quality of Oneida Lake. The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB) is a few years into their work, known as the **9 Element Plan**. This study, under the direction of Aaron McKeon, comprises nine phases—or elements—that signify industry standards when studying lake water quality. This agency was established in 1966 by Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties. They provide a range of services to Central New York. Members of the Board include Dave Matthews from the Upstate Freshwater Institute, Dr. Lars Rudstam (Director of the Cornell Field Station), and Kristen Holeck, a researcher at Shackleton, among others.

It is important to note that this study does not focus entirely on Oneida Lake. Rather, with an understanding that water quality is based on a variety of inputs, the **9 Element Plan** studies the entire Oneida Lake watershed. This watershed includes 69 municipalities, and six coun-

ties, stretching all the way north into Lewis County and even a small portion of Cortland County to the south. That's over 1,300 square miles, with approximately 850 miles of freshwater streams.

So what are the nine elements of this plan? The focus of the research is on water quality, especially the potential for the harmful effects of pollutants. The elements of the study include:

- Quantify pollutant sources
- Set pollutant reduction goals
- Identify Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- Schedule action
- Seek funding sources
- Measure progress
- Monitor outcomes
- Evaluation of the process
- Stakeholder input

Although many of the elements are science-based, often requiring considerable funding, Element Number 9 provides an opportunity for the members of OLA to get involved. **The 9 Element Plan** is committed to providing input from our OLA members, as well as anyone with an interest in the lake. The CNYRPDB has been holding public meetings since January 2023. Most recently, they held four public meetings at various points around the lake. The most recent meeting was March 7 at the West Monroe Town Hall. As President of the OLA, I attended this meeting, alongside Director Rip Colesante. We had the opportunity to offer insight and advice to the Planning Board as they moved forward with the Plan. For example, one focus area for the study is the level of phosphorous in



Oneida Lake. In fact, the level of Total Phosphorous has been a concern for the OLA for decades. Fortunately, we have had researchers at Shackleton Point assist us in our discussions. Working with the researchers, the OLA established a position paper regarding the level of phosphorus. We discovered that there is a delicate balance in these levels. We know that plants and animals need phosphorus to grow. Our goal, therefore, is not to eliminate phosphorus. We need to keep in mind, however, that excess phosphorus can have detrimental effects. Phosphorus flowing into the lakes from such sources as fertilizers and detergents can overload the natural ecosystems. The excessive

(Continued on page 3)

President's Message

MORE!

That's the theme that OLA Director Tony Buffa developed for our Annual Membership Meeting this year (see page 5). **More in 2024!** After all, who doesn't love **More**? More what? You may ask. Let's take a look at the year in review, and then we'll look ahead.

More involvement

This year saw more involvement of the OLA in events that impact the lake. For example, looking back, we see that the OLA Board of Directors had plenty of involvement in the 9 Element Plan that is researching the future of our lake. Our Board members have attended several of the public hearings. Directors Ed Mills and Matt Kazmierski have also served on the 9E Planning Committee (see page 1).

More scholarships

We are pleased to continue our scholarship program for students who are entering a field that supports the mission of the OLA. Once again, we plan to offer a scholarship to a high school student and another award to a current college student (\$500 each). In addition to our funding, OLA member Marcia Kadlubowski has graciously offered to fund another OLA Scholarship in memory of her father, Eugene Kadlubowski (\$1000). We thank Marcia for her extreme generosity. If you would like to support our scholarship program, you can make a donation at the OLA meeting or online through our PayPal account.

More research from Cornell

We always welcome the researchers at Cornell, as they provide us with the science-based foundations on which we build our decisions. Researcher Tony Van De Valk typically attends one or more of our meetings to give us an update on the state of the Oneida Fishery. You will hear from him during our Annual Membership meeting on April 24 (see page 4).

More Press coverage

We thank Steve Featherstone, outdoor writer for **Syracuse.com** for his continuing coverage of issues relating to our lake.

And looking ahead, what would we like to see?

More members!

Please join us in our mission to provide stewardship of the lake. Be sure to join up, and to encourage friends and neighbors to join, as well.

More sediment control

Sediment is a major issue for the lake. Each year streams and creeks send tons of sediment flowing into the lake. OLA is working with local agencies to provide stream bank stabilization to mitigate this problem (see page 3).

More vigilance

Following the poaching incident at the Hatchery during the spring of 2022, the OLA has remained keenly vigilant regarding any unlawful taking of walleyes during the spawning season. We thank our friends in law enforcement for their continued commitment to protecting our natural resources. We look forward to hearing more about their plans for enforcing the science-based regulations developed by the DEC.

More youth involvement

The Board of Directors encourages our youth to become actively involved in both the care and enjoyment of the lake. We would like to see them learn to swim, learn

to sail, practice safe boating operation, and learn to fish with a trusted adult. We look forward to establishing an OLA sponsored Youth Fishing Derby!

More ice!

We have experienced considerably more warmth in the atmosphere in the past year. That resulted in a warmer than normal summer, some extended dry spells, and an alarmingly short ice season this winter. Of course, the OLA doesn't have a Weather Committee to steer Mother Nature in a different direction, but we do listen carefully as the researchers at Cornell to keep us up-to-date on weather trends.

More lake access

We have heard from many of our members that they would like more access to

(Continued on page 8)

The Oneida Lake Association, Inc.

Founded in 1945

The Bulletin is published by the Oneida Lake Association, Inc., so that its members may be informed regarding the activities of the association. The Oneida Lake Association, Inc., was organized in 1945 to restore and preserve the natural resources of Oneida Lake and its environs.

Officers

President.....	John Harmon
Vice President	Matthew Snyder
Vice President	William Girvan
Treasurer	Robert Walczyk
Secretary	Matthew Snyder

Board of Directors

Terms Expiring April 30, 2025

Patricia Cerro-Reehil	Michael Scanlon
Warren Darby	Kurt Snyder
John Harmon	Matthew Snyder
William Lints, Jr.	Lance Vella

Terms Expiring April 30, 2026

William Alexander	Rowland Hrywnak
Ryan Asmus	Dr. Edward Mills
Mike Barretta	George Reck
Bruce Schantz	

Terms Expiring April 30, 2027

Anthony Buffa	Matt Kazmierski
Richard Colesante	Greg Keeneri
Robert Cote	Bob Walczyk
William Girvan	

Oneida Lake's 9 Element Plan

(Continued from page 1)

nutrients can promote an overabundance of algae that can, in turn, negatively impact the water quality and habitat for our thriving fishery. This excess algae reduces critical oxygen levels for fish while also providing an abundant nutrient source for Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs).

At the March 7th meeting, we reiterated our position on Phosphorus levels, urging the Planning Board to keep the levels in that "Goldilocks" range of neither too high nor too low.

We also had the opportunity to point out that phosphorous levels are only one of our concerns. We urged the study group to keep in mind that sedimentation remains a very real threat to the quality of our lake. We pointed out that stream bank management programs in the watershed could provide relief for the lake when it comes to literally tons of sediment getting carried into the lake by inlets such as Oneida Creek, Chittenango Creek, and others.

Maintaining proper water levels is also a concern. We recommended that the CNYRPDB work closely with the Upstate Flood Mitigation Task Force (funded by the Canal Corporation) to help keep our lake at or near that critical 371-foot level.

One strength of the 9E Plan is its reliance on computer modeling. This modeling allows the study groups to explore, and possibly answer, a variety of "What if..." questions. For example, questions include:

What if...?

We could replace septic tanks with sewers in 50% of the watershed?

We could implement stream stabilization projects on 10 miles of stream every year?

We add riparian buffers along all major tributaries?

We reduce fertilizer runoff from agricultural properties by 30%?

As the modeling provides answers and insights to these questions, the study group can then choose from a variety of Best Management Practices to have the greatest benefit for the available resources.

The public section of the meetings typically ends with questions for the stakeholders. These questions include: What do you see as the biggest threats to water quality in this category?

What are some opportunities for investing in projects to both improve water quality and support farmers?

What are some opportunities for investing in projects to both improve water quality and support wildlife habitat, vegetation, open space, etc.?

Are there specific subwatersheds that you feel are most vulnerable or in need of immediate attention?

Are there any cultural or historical aspects of the watershed that should be considered when discussing conservation and management strategies?

What do you see as the biggest threats to water quality from commercial/residential development?

What about opportunities?

What efforts have proven effective in controlling aquatic invasive species?

What control efforts are ongoing?

What are your thoughts on potential trade-offs or conflicts between economic development and watershed protection? Looking at the example BMPs: what ideas would you suggest investing in?

As representatives of the OLA, we responded to some of these questions. For example, although the 9E Plan is focusing on phosphorus as a possible pollutant, we reminded them that water levels, invasive species, sedimentation, and cormorant predation are all significant threats that must be balanced with the study of chemicals such as phosphorus.

One project that the OLA is seriously considering is to help fund streambank stabilization efforts to reduce sedimentation. We understand that such projects are expensive for farmers in our watershed. We would be willing to support those

efforts so that farmers can maintain their critical function while simultaneously keeping our lake free of excess bacteria and sedimentation.

When asked about specific subwatersheds, we pointed to the region on the southeastern quadrant of the lake. This region in the Madison/Oneida County area drains much of the area known as the mucklands. As we know, Oneida Creek has had a recent history of flooding, sending enormous sediment plumes into the lake's southeast corner. The mucklands are also heavily farmed, often with abundant fertilizer. This farmland was actually created from swamps back in the 1800s, as farmers channelized drainage ditches, sending water into the lake. Canaseraga Creek and Chittenango Creek helped to drain these wetlands. There is even one story about how a terrific down-pour that occurred during harvest season ended up floating thousands of onions down the creeks, sending them bobbing along the southeastern shore of the lake. Talk about an invasive species!

And when it came to the question about economic development, of course we pointed out the imminent development of the Micron plant!

Once the 9E Plan prepares its final report, it will come with recommendations for funding. The OLA hopes to leverage the critical findings so that we can seek funding from the proper sources in order to meet the recommendations of the Plan. We will certainly keep our membership in the loop as the Plan progresses.

As the **9 Element Plan** continues to chug along, the study group still welcomes public input. If you would like to add your thoughts, you can email them at oneida9e@cnyrpd.org.

To submit questions or comments about *The Bulletin*, contact editor John Harmon at jpharmon1@gmail.com



www.facebook.com/OneidaLakeAssociation

The Oneida Lake Walleye Telemetry Pilot Study

by Tony Van de Valk, Research Specialist at Shackleton Point

This past fall the Cornell Biological Field Station in conjunction with NYSDEC initiated a 3-year telemetry study focusing on the movements and habitat use of adult walleyes in Oneida Lake. Specific study objectives are: 1) identify walleye spawning sites that we are currently unaware of, 2) describe seasonal movement patterns, 3) describe habitat use throughout the year, and 4) determine post-spawning distributions of walleyes processed at the hatchery.



Acoustic receiver placed in lake.

This study utilizes an array of 64 acoustic receivers spaced throughout the lake and select tributaries to track 200 adult walleyes surgically implanted with acoustic transmitters (photo right.)

One hundred walleyes captured last fall were implanted with transmitters and an additional 100 (50 males and 50 females) caught during hatchery operations this spring will receive transmitters. Transmitters implanted in each fish's abdomen send out a unique signal every 4 minutes and receivers in the vicinity record the occurrence. The transmitters have a 3-year battery life so these walleyes will be tracked year-round over that period unless

they leave the system, die naturally, or are harvested. If you harvest a walleye that contains a transmitter, please use the contact information printed on the transmitter to facilitate its return to us. Data from receivers will be downloaded

annually beginning in the summer of 2024. This study is part of the GLATOS (Great Lakes Acoustic Telemetry Observation System) network which gives us access to state-of-the-art analysis tools and expertise as well as inform us on fish tagged in Oneida Lake that may leave the system and enter the Great Lakes. This new information on movements and habitat use of the Oneida Lake walleye population will help NYSDEC better manage this important and valuable resource. This is a Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration project supported by the purchase of fishing licenses, fishing equipment, and motorboat fuels.



Acoustic transmitter shown with quarter for size.

Madison County Sheriff's Office Rescue

The Madison County Sheriff's Office navigation unit is staffed with full and part-time deputies who are certified in New York State Marine Law Enforcement. This unit is overseen by a full-time Deputy Sheriff Sergeant who sets up the patrol schedule and activity calendar. During the warmer recreational season, the navigation unit is responsible for patrolling all lakes, ponds and reservoirs within the County of Madison. The navigation unit is equipped with two (2) patrol boats. One unit is stationed at Oneida Lake on a permanent basis. The other marine unit is utilized as roving patrols throughout the County's various waterways. This unit monitors the water safety and enforcement of marine laws and local codes. The Madison County Sheriff's Office provides education to county residents in the form instructional classes regarding safety, registration and rules of the water for navigation operations several times a year.



OLA Mission

The Mission of the Oneida Lake Association is to protect the fisheries, wildlife, and natural resources of Oneida Lake by promoting science-based conservation and management through education and outreach, in partnership with our members and local communities.

ANNUAL MEETING - MORE in 2024!

Join us at Millard Hawk Elementary School in Central Square

April 24 - 6 pm

The OLA Board of Directors is pleased to announce that we will host our in-person Annual Meeting on April 24. Doors open at 6 pm if you would like to see the exhibits. Check our website for details.

Agenda

7:00 pm	Welcome and flag salute	
7:05 pm	Business Meeting	
	Treasurer's report	Bob Walczyk
	Membership report	Bruce Schantz
	President's report	John Harmon
	Elections	Matt Snyder

Presentations

Questions will follow at the end of each presentation.

- 7:20 pm Oneida Fish Cultural Station Update
Manager, Bill Evans
- 7:35 pm Shackleton Point Field Station Fisheries Report
Coordinator of the Oneida Lake Fisheries Program, Tony Van De Valk
- 7:50 pm Law Enforcement on Oneida Lake
Expectations for 2024 and negotiations with American Native tribes
NYSDEC Division of Law Enforcement
Assistant Director Colonel Jim Boylan and Region 7 Captain Neil Stevens
- 8:05 pm NYSDEC Priorities for Oneida Lake
NYSDEC Region 7 Director Dereth Glance
- 8:20 pm Current Status of Cormorant Control Results from 2023
NYSDEC Bureau Wildlife Chief, Jim Farquhar
- 8:35 pm 9 Element Plan: Update - Aaron McKeon
- 8:50 pm OLA 79th Conservationist of the Year Award - Matt Snyder
- 9:00 pm **Drawings:** Take a Kid Fishing tackle kits, Onondaga County Soil and Water is giving a Bluebird House, Tow Boat US is giving four \$25 gift cards to Bass Pro. Gander Outdoors is giving a kayak and GoPro Action Camera.
Must be present to win!

By recommendation of the Oneida Lake Association Board of Directors Nominating Committee and unanimous vote of the full Board of Directors, the following Directors are nominated for re-election to terms expiring April 30, 2027: Anthony Buffa, Matt Kazmierski, Richard Colesante, Greg Keener, Robert Cote, Robert Walczyk, and William Girvan. In accordance with OLA by-laws, the election will be conducted by voice vote of members in good standing who are present at the Annual Membership Meeting.

Annual Meeting Committee

Tony Buffa MC, John Harmon, Rip Colesante, Ed Mills, Warren Darby, Matt Snyder, and Ryan Asmus

Update on Bass Tournaments

by John Harmon, OLA President

The Directors of the Oneida Lake Association have been increasingly concerned about the bass population in our lake. Although these concerns go back decades, most recently we developed a position statement regarding bass tournaments (see below). This position statement was formally adopted by the full Board in a unanimous vote at our meeting on December 11, 2023.

We are very fortunate that Steve Hurst, Chief of the Bureau of Fisheries for the NYS Department of Conservation, has responded to our request for increased study of this matter. Chief Hurst—a great friend of the OLA—recently attended one of our Board meetings to give us an up-to-date briefing. In that meeting he acknowledged our concerns and shared an important proposal he has been working on. He began by explaining that “New York State has never regulated fishing tournaments.” But he also said that the world of competitive fishing is changing rapidly. New York is now one of the highly sought-after fishing destinations, and bass tournaments on our lake have increased dramatically in the last few years.

“We can’t manage what we can’t measure,” he explained. Phase 1, therefore, is to understand the scope and scale of black bass tournaments across the state. How big are they? Are they State, Local, or National? What’s the duration? What is the measurement protocol? Hurst even posed the question to us: “What is a tournament? Is it five guys from the volunteer fire department fishing on a Wednesday evening with the best catch winning a free beer?”

“Once we learn we can make decisions,” he explained. A solution for better understanding, he believes, is a tournament registry and reporting system for the state. Such a system could provide multiple benefits, such as avoiding having two tournaments on the same lake at the same time, as well as gathering biologi-

cal data. The approval process for these tournaments could also result in imposing conditions on the event, which would be based on best practices. Hurst reminded us, however, that this discussion is currently a *proposal*, although he hinted that such a regulation proposal could possibly come this year. “This would be monumental for DEC. We have a tremendous amount of learning to do.” In fact, New York and Massachusetts are the only two states in the Northeast that do not yet have regulations for tournaments.

We thanked Chief Hurst for sharing this proposal with us. The OLA welcomes better insight into the issue as well as better regulation. In conclusion, OLA Director Rip Colesante reminded Hurst that for the past four decades the OLA has strenuously opposed pre-season bass tournaments on our lake.

We look forward to hearing more about these regulation changes. As soon as any news breaks, we will alert the membership through our e-newsletter.

Oneida Lake Association

Position Statement on Bass Fishing Regulations on Oneida Lake

The smallmouth bass population in Oneida Lake has become an issue of concern. Estimates by the Cornell University Fisheries Research Station at Shackelton Point on Oneida Lake show decreasing populations of Age 0 smallmouth since 2007 as well as decreasing adult smallmouth bass populations since circa 2015. During the last ten years, creel census data on targeted smallmouth bass harvest by anglers has changed from about 0.8 fish per hour in 2014 to about 0.5 fish per hour in 2022. According to the Research Station, these declines coincide with the establishment of round gobies in the Lake and more study is needed to determine actual causes of the decline.

The OLA believes that actions need to be taken to protect this declining population of smallmouth bass and requests the NYSDEC consider placing our recommendations into current regulations on Oneida Lake.

- 1. There should be no pre-season bass fishing, catch-and-release or otherwise.** Fishing for bass should be legal on June 15th and not before. Since this recommendation is similar to regulations in many waters of NYSDEC Region 6, we think Oneida Lake should be considered part of Region 6 as it relates to bass regulations. Round gobies prey on eggs and young bass when the adult fish guarding the nest is removed by angling, even if temporarily. Faced with declining populations of age 0 smallmouths, fishing when bass are on their nests should be prohibited.
- 2. There should be no bass tournaments of any type before June 15 on Oneida Lake.** In addition, tournaments occurring after June 15 should receive dedicated research studies to determine the effects of these tournaments on the adult population of bass. Areas of research should include: a. Immediate and post-release mortality of adult fish that are harvested and processed through tournament practices. b. Impacts of these tournaments on the success and enjoyment of recreational anglers for bass. c. Effect of tournaments on parking availability at launch sites and public access to Oneida Lake in general.

Adopted by unanimous vote of approval by the entire Board of Directors of the Oneida Lake Association at its regular meeting on 11 December 2023.

In Memoriam: John Forney, Oneida Lake's Greatest Scientist

By OLA Director Matt Snyder

On the morning of January 23, Dr. John L. Forney passed away in peace, at age 96. While Forney has departed this life, he leaves behind a forever legacy of scientific understanding and achievement that make Oneida Lake one of the greatest success stories in the history of the conservation movement.

Known to all as a humble, studious man, Forney was never one to seek notoriety for his scientific expertise—but others made his name well known, not least for more than 40 years of dedication to longitudinal studies of Oneida Lake's limnology and fisheries that continue to pay dividends for generations of lake enthusiasts.

Before coming to Cornell, Forney was born in Nebraska and grew up as an avid hunter and angler, starting early on a lifetime of sportsmanship. He attended Iowa State University and then served in the U.S. Army, deploying to Korea and then returning to the States to complete a bachelor's degree in forestry and master's degree in zoology.

Forney wasn't native to Oneida Lake, but he made it his professional home starting in 1956. That was when he began to study the lake's fishery while working toward his Cornell University Ph.D., which he was awarded in 1957. After a few years of commuting back and forth from Ithaca to Bridgeport, Forney made Oneida Lake his personal home as well, moving to Shackelton Point with his wife and three children. His work was critical to the founding of the Cornell Biological Field Station at Shackelton Point, and the University appointed Forney as the Field Station's founding Director in 1963. As the first Director, Forney was instrumental in transforming the facility from a hobby farm into a state-of-the-art research and learning laboratory.

Over the decades that followed, Forney trained and mentored innumerable students, hired researchers like Dr. Ed

Mills who had their own profound impacts on Oneida Lake, and launched an undergraduate intern program that inspired hundreds of young scholars. Collectively, the Field Station's work under Forney paved the way for deep understanding of Oneida Lake's fish populations, as well as emerging understanding of complex issues like invasive species and the impacts of a warming climate.

Cornell's seven-decade longitudinal study of Oneida Lake makes our lake one of the world's most intensively researched bodies of water, and Forney was the prime mover in initiating and continuing that unparalleled body of work. He and his colleagues pioneered best practices that still drive fisheries research today, especially the concept of studying the entire freshwater food web, not just the fish swimming within it.

While he was best known as the Field Station's Director, a position he held for 30 years, Forney also held the titles of Research Associate, Assistant Professor, Project Leader, and Senior Research Associate. As Director Emeritus, Forney remained active with the Field Station in his retirement, teaching, mentoring students, and collecting and studying field data. Forney continued to advise Cornell, the Oneida Lake Association, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation well into his 80s, and he was a valued resource to Field Station team members all the way to the end of his life.

Beyond Cornell, Forney also made significant contributions to fisheries science as a servant to professional organizations such as the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission and the American Fisheries Society. He was also active in the community, volunteering for the Bridgeport/Lakeport Civic Organization, the Great Swamp Conservancy, and the Sullivan Free Library.



John Forney, left, accepts Conversationist of the Year Award in 2020.

While Forney was never one to seek recognition, it followed him throughout his illustrious career, including the Most Significant Research Paper Award from the American Fisheries Society (1972), Northeastern Division Dwight A. Webster Memorial Award (1983), American Fisheries Society Honorary Membership (1993), Fisheries Management Section Hall of Excellence induction (1997), and New York State Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame induction (2020). The Oneida Lake Association recognized Forney twice for his careerlong dedication to Oneida Lake, first with its Conservationist of the Year Award in 1967, and then with its 75th Anniversary Commemorative Conservationist of the Year Award in 2020, thus making Forney the only two-time winner of OLA's most significant honor. OLA also nominated Forney for the NYS Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame, by unanimous vote of the Board of Directors.

Forney was predeceased by his wife and son-in-law; he is survived by his three children, grandchildren, and great-grandchild. The Forney family is planning a memorial celebration to be held this summer; details will be made available at www.schepfamily.com when finalized. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations be made to the Great Swamp Conservancy or Ducks Unlimited.

The OLA salutes the legacy of Dr. John Forney, and we join his family and colleagues in celebrating all that he accomplished in his long and illustrious life!

President's Message

(Continued from page 2)

the lake, especially during ice-fishing season. We hear you. Most recently Director Bill Girvan and I had a meeting with officials of the Village of Sylvan Beach to resolve issues of parking access for ice fisherman. We thank them for their cooperation.

More respect for the lake

We have also heard numerous complaints about the unnecessary amount of trash and debris left along the shores or on the ice by those few inconsiderate anglers. Please be sure to carry out all trash and debris.

More oversight of Bass Tournaments

It seems like Oneida Lake has played host to an increasingly number of bass tournaments in the past few years. As always, the OLA Board remains vigilant about the health of our fisheries, especially, perch, walleye, and bass. Statistics from the Cornell Field Station at Shackleton Point indicate that our population of black bass may be under increased pressure from these numerous tournaments. We have urged the NYS DEC to make this issue a study concern. (See page 6).

And, finally, one thing you won't have more of is me! After three years of serving as your president, I look forward to the presidency of Matt Snyder, who will take office in May. He is a terrific worker and an insightful thinker. I know you will support him as much as you have supported me.

Thank you for this honor.

John Harmon

John Harmon, President OLA
www.OneidaLakeAssociation.org
president@oneidalakeassociation.org

Introducing Dr. Zoe Almeida

Cornell University is pleased to introduce Dr. Zoe Almeida, a Senior Research Associate with the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. She is based at the Cornell Biological Field Station where she leads a research program focusing on warm water fisheries throughout New York state in partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Her research aims to address applied ecological questions by furthering understanding of basic ecological relationships which has allowed her to work closely with a variety of state and federal agencies tasked with managing and conserving aquatic natural resources.

Originally from Idaho, she spent her graduate career in the Midwest. She comes to us with a lot of fisheries experience and expertise in both large and small lakes as well as the ocean. She has a master's degree from Purdue working with perch and a PhD from Ohio State where she studied perch and walleye. As a postdoc at Oregon State her research included the effect of climate changes on Pacific cod. Almeida will lead an expanded warmwater research program with Tony VanDeValk as program coordinator for the Oneida Lake sampling. We are thrilled to have her with us.

Zoe tells us: "My first year at CBFS has been busy and very enjoyable. The staff and students welcomed me warmly and continue to teach me about the research and history of CBFS. I became familiar with Oneida Lake and CBFS during my master's degree at Purdue University when I learned about the impressive research program started by Dr. John Forney. My thesis focused on yellow perch, and the research conducted by Dr. Forney and following researchers at CBFS was instrumental in my education about yellow perch biology, ecology, and management. I continued to learn about CBFS and the incredible research program here during my PhD at Ohio State University when my research focused on walleye early life stages. It is a great privilege to now be part of CBFS and to continue the warmwater program here. I look forward to developing research projects that further our understanding of the fisheries and aquatic ecosystems here in Oneida Lake and throughout New York state."



Dr. Zoe Almeida

My First Fish!

As the new round of fishing seasons open up, we look forward to hearing about how you introduced the youth of our lake to this healthy, enjoyable pastime. Be sure to go to our website and download the full sized **My First Oneida Fish Award**. Send us a photo of the angler holding the award, and we'll get it in our newsletter!



Bridgeport Lakeport Civic Organization (BLCO)

by John Harmon, OLA President

“I’ve always been a busy guy.” That’s how Terry Manning describes his involvement with the Bridgeport Lakeport Civic Organization. Busy, indeed! Under Manning’s leadership, the BLCO serves the community with countless civic minded projects. For example, these projects regularly include Earth



Terry Manning

Day Roadside Cleanup, Project Pride, E-race, The Fall Festival, BLCO Community Christmas Party, and the Christmas Tree Lighting, to name only a few. One of my personal favorites is the Summer Concert Series at Chapman Park, bringing in top-rated bands who perform as the sun sets over Oneida Lake. In fact, the BLCO made a substantial contribution to the Pavilion and stage at Chapman Park. At each of these events, Manning is the organizer, cheerleader, and always a busy worker. Whenever there is work to be done, he can always count on at least one volunteer—himself.

The BLCO, founded over fifty years ago, comprises individuals who volunteer their time to make their community a better place. Taking on projects great and small, this organization certainly has an enviable record of success. Some of their major projects include the Bridgeport Area Sewer Project, Route 31 Comprehensive Zoning Plan, and the construction of Sheldon Park, along the banks of Chittenango Creek.

Although Manning has had a leadership role in many of these projects, he explained that one of his foremost goals is to bring people together. He stated that one of the greatest challenges for the BLCO is the inherent split personality of the town. After all, Bridgeport straddles the banks of Chittenango Creek, which,

in turn, forms the boundary between Onondaga and Madison Counties. Therefore, there is an Onondaga-Madison split. There is also a Town-Village distinction. And the Towns of Cicero and Sullivan both have claims to the jurisdiction. Manning stated that his role is to “unify the thinking, neighbor to neighbor.”

How does he accomplish such a challenge? Manning shared a personal insight. In his job before retirement, he was a broker for a large business. He sees his job in the BLCO as a broker, too. His goal is to bring people together. He tries to make frequent connections with the two town supervisors. And, in the past, he has worked with state legislators from both counties. Communication and negotiation count among Manning’s leadership skills.

When I asked him about the accomplishments he is most proud of, he quickly replied, “The Clock and the lights on the bridge.” Certainly, both of these artifacts figure strongly in the character and identity of Bridgeport. It is fitting symbolically, too, that he chose to single out the bridge. After all, Manning and the BLCO work as a bridge between a variety of diverse entities.

Manning was eager to point out, as well, that the successes of the BLCO are attributed to a team of great volunteers.

He stated, “We have a number of members who each contribute in their own unique fashions, but by far the most consistent and supportive is my wife Jackie. I couldn’t imagine trying to do what we do without her.”

Like any great organization, the BLCO has future dreams. On that short list there are bike and walking trails throughout the community. They would also like to see fishing and kayak access along Chittenango Creek.

Readers can follow the activities of the BLCO through their monthly newsletter. For up-to-the-minute information on the BLCO, check out their Facebook page. You can also email them at: BLCO-NY@twcny.rr.com.





SOUTH BAY SAIL & KAYAK

Located in

43 North Marina

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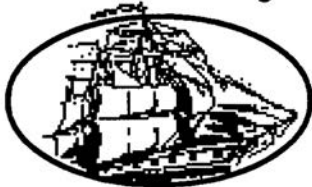
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