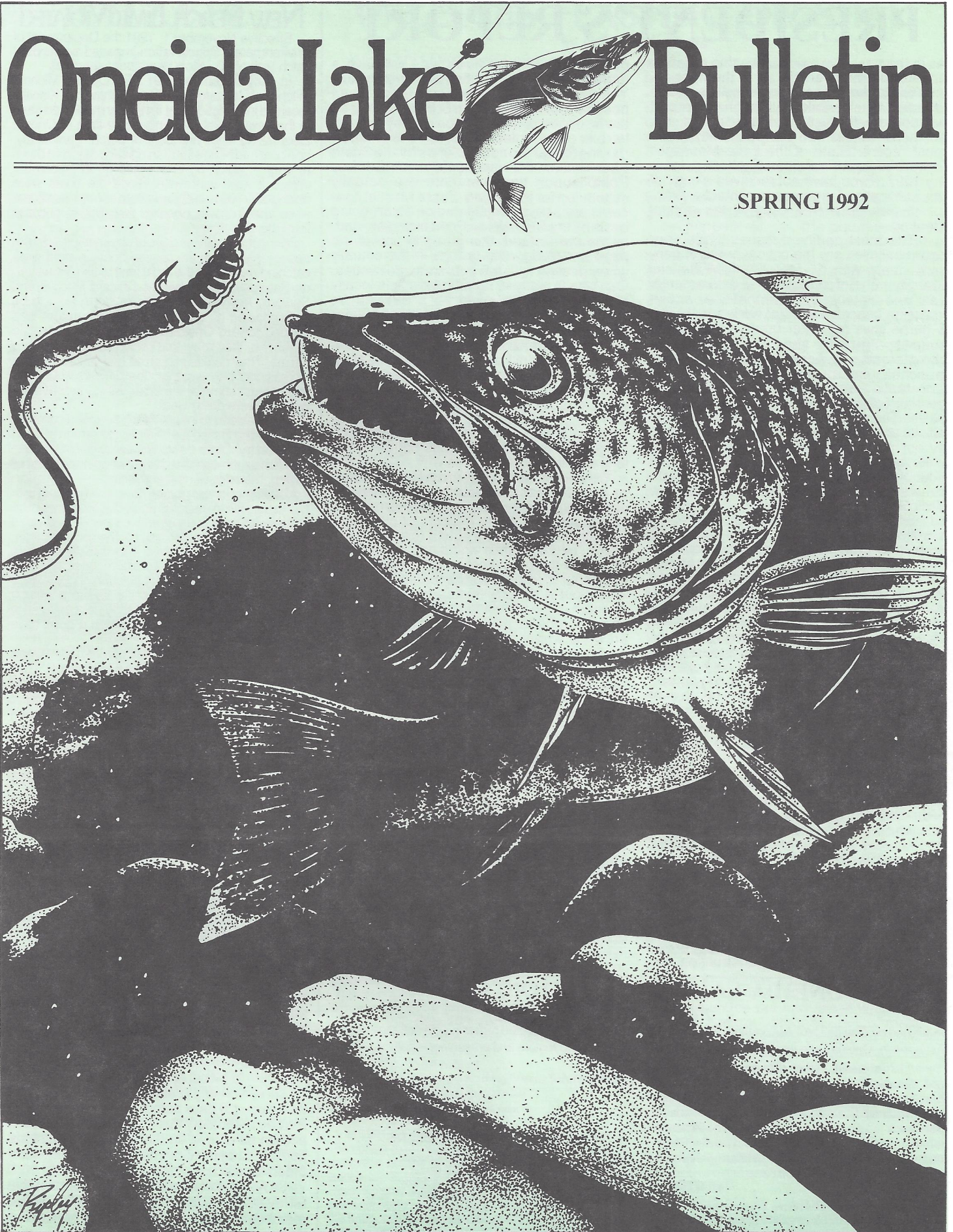


Oneida Lake Bulletin

SPRING 1992



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As in the past, I've tried to use this report to update the membership as to the happenings within the association as well as issues effecting Oneida Lake. Although this report will only briefly highlight these topics, the additional details can be found with in the most recent "State of the Lake Message" forwarded to our membership during January 1992. If you have not received a copy of this publication I urge you to contact a director or pick up a free copy at the annual meeting.

The most pertinent issues which your board believes are the critical areas of concern deals with 1) Membership/Financial Stability; 2) Enforcement - Environmental Law and Safety; 3) Environmental Action including concerns with (a) wetlands (b) fish & game laws (c) water quality (d) problem species - gizzard shad, zebra mussels, commorants; 3) Access Sites-piers, boat launches, canal, public beaches; and 4) Constantia Hatchery. It is these issues that your directors are dealing with on a daily basis. This is where our time, money and efforts are directed which require assistance by our membership as well as the local & state government to achieve the ultimate goal of sustaining Oneida Lakes long term virtues as a recreational wonder within New York State.

Our position on these issues are affected significantly by the views of our members. More now than ever before the OLA is requesting feedback from the membership. Currently, we have petitioned for response from our members in the form of questionnaires at the various sport shows, questions to be answered on the back of our membership cards, and invited responses to articles in the "State of the Lake Message" and the OLA bulletins. Quite frankly I'm pleased with the overall response on these issues and assure you that your views will not fall on deaf ears. However, I will state for the records that there certainly are varying levels of concern among our members when it comes to the specific areas of dealing with law enforcement. Although, our members responses seem to be more in harmony with each other on issues involving problem species, access sites and the hatchery. It is our intent to publish some of our results to the questions and surveys in the summer bulletin so you can better assess what your fellow members are thinking, which should help our general membership better understand the position of the OLA Board at times.

Certainly, our past and present position on key issues have resulted in positive progression. At this point in time, as many of you are aware, the hatchery construction has

begun. This is great news as it will have a dramatic effect on the fisheries within New York State. Concurrently, we have seen positive movement on the Brewerton pier by the issuance of construction money for partial pier replacement. Also, there is an effort moving forward to secure funds for the South Shore launch improvements which Godfrey Point launch improvements are actually scheduled for the spring. Zebra Mussel concerns are being investigated on an on-going basis by the Shackleton Point biologists and, as we understand, this group is one of the most knowledgeable groups in the country when dealing with the zebra mussel issues. Our lake is lucky to have the experts locally to deal with what could be a devastating problem. Progression in the area of water quality can be seen by the recent implementation of construction on the Cleveland Wastewater Treatment Facility as well as the state of the art treatment operation being built as part of the hatcheries design. Law enforcement improvements are now noticeable as can be determined by just the mere increased presence of both the conservation officers as well as the sheriffs patrolling the lake and its shoreline.

Obviously, as your board we are pleased to see the positive activity on the issues presented. We believe that they are in line with the wishes of the majority of our membership. Achieving this action requires dedication, perseverance and clout. Your directors have the perseverance and dedication, but its our membership that brings the clout. That clout is directly related to the size and strength of the association which is based on sheer number of members. This is definitely an area where your board can use your assistance.

So, with all of this going on we are headed into the most promising seasons. It will not be long before the ice is off the lake, the walleyes are spawning, the boats are in the water and the fishing and boating season is here. It is this time of the year that many of our OLA members get the most enjoyment from this great resource. As you're enjoying yourself on the lake keep in mind the need for an organization such as the OLA and OLA's need of your support. Finally, please remember that Oneida Lake is your lake and its up to all of us not only to enjoy it, but to protect and respect it. It is dealing with these issues and supporting these ideals and values that will assure the future of this valuable resource for many generations to come.

Patrick A. Leone, Jr.
President, OLA

New Perch Limit Violated

Effective November 1, 1991 the Department of Environmental Conservation imposed a new daily catch limit of 50 yellow perch per fisherman.

In early December 1991 DEC Officers Michael Mitchell of Canastota and Sam Servadio of Kirkville received information that fishermen had been seen in the Lewis Point-Messinger Bay area of Oneida Lake taking large numbers of perch. Particularly, one boat had been seen fishing each day from dawn to dark -- which no one would do in December unless it was worthwhile. Since the boats were fishing only 300 to 400 yards from shore, the officers were able to easily observe their fishing success from the shoreline.

During the first three days of observation it did not appear that any of the several boats in sight were catching more than the legal limit of fish. However, on Saturday, December 14 Officers Mitchell and Servadio learned that a severe storm front to be accompanied by a fast drop in temperature was headed toward Oneida Lake. Being experienced fishermen, they knew that could produce a feeding frenzie. They decided on an all-day watch. Despite increasingly bad weather, the Officers could see that at least some of the boats willing to brave the weather were doing well.

They decided to inspect each boat as it came off the lake. The first boat with three fishermen in it had 70 perch fry. Other boats were also within the law. One fisherman explained why he had no perch at all saying, "I am kinda new at this".

At 4:40 p.m. it was getting dark. The last boat with two fisherman in their 30s arrived at their dock. The Officers advised them of their presence and could see a knapsack, a burlap bag and two pails of perch. While the wind was rising and the temperature dropping, they counted out more than 100 fish, enough to violate the limit regulation. Tickets were issued. When they brought the fish to a nearby building to complete the count, they were amazed to find a total of 380 perch, more than a good days work.

The fisherman appeared before Town Court Judge Peter Smith of the Town of Lennox. They pleaded guilty to the violations and on the recommendation of the officers were each fined \$250.

Election of Officers

In accordance with By-Law Amendments passed at OLA's 1990 Annual Meeting, the Nominating Committee has nominated the following persons to serve as officers and directors.

President--Patrick A. Leone, Jr.
Vice President--Arnold Armani, Robert Chabot,
Joseph Joseph J. Mastriano
Treasurer--Edwin Olmstead
Secretary--Carl Preke
Asst. Secretary--William Schriever

Directors (Term of Office: April 1992-April 1995)--John Guilford, Dominick P. Maio, Marshall O. Naumann, Richard Percival, Parker J. Stone, John P. Wegerski.

Nominations for officers and directors will be held open until three (3) days prior to the Annual Meeting--that is, until April 19, 1992. A petition, that is to be signed by at least fifth (50) OLA members in good standing, may state the name of a member or members the petitioners wish to nominate as officer or director. The petition must be served on any present OLA officer no later than three (3) days before the annual meeting. It will be mandatory that the names on any such petition be placed on the list with the persons nominated by the Committee, all in alphabetical order, for election at the Annual Meeting.

OLA's Secretary will make the membership list available for inspection by an OLA active member on request.

ONEIDA LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC.

FOUNDED 1945

Published by Oneida Lake Association, Inc., that its members may be informed regarding the activities of the Association. Oneida Lake Association, Inc. was organized in 1945 to restore and preserve the natural.

President, Patrick A. Leone, Jr.

Vice President.....Arnold Armani
Vice President.....Robert Chabot
Vice President.....Joseph Mastriano
Treasurer.....Edwin Olmstead
Secretary.....Carl Peske
Asst. Secretary.....William Schriever

1992.....John Guilford, Richard Percival
Dominick P. Maio, Parker J. Stone,
John P. Wegerski, Marshall O. Naumann

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Ned Cookingham
Paul Cramer
Fred David
Irving Downing
Frank Gurenwald

James Heitzman
Anton Kreuzer
Herbert McElroy
William Nass
Roy Ploski
Millard Rogers
Anthony Sauer
Julian F. Stanczyk, Jr.

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Jr. Robert J. Gang, Walter Stewart, Earl Pearson, Kurt Snyder
1994.....George Angeloro, Richard Carello
Robert Cote, Anthony Buffa Robert Ripberger, James Scherzi

WALLEYE HATCHERY UPDATE

By Bob Ripberger

The new Walleye Hatchery at Constantia is now underway! The old building has been torn down and is gone. Work on the new pipeline to bring in water to the new structure will be started by the end of March. (This article is being written in early March).

The ground breaking ceremony and dedication was made at the old site on Jan. 24, 1992. It was well attended. Present were several D.E.C. representatives from Albany, including the Commissioner, Thomas Jorling, the Fisheries Bureau Chief, Bruce Shupp, and George Seeley, the D.E.C. man who has headed up this project, and been the key contact for the O.L.A. There were representatives from the Regional #7 D.E.C. Office, a number of local and State Legislators, including Assemblyman Bragman, who has been the key Legislator pushing this project for the Sportsmen.

The O.L.A. was represented, with our President one of the dedication speakers. There were interested sportsmen and the press, etc. All in all, a fine turnout on a rather blustery day. The current hatchery manager, Richard "Rip" Colesante and nationally recognized walleye specialist, (and O.L.A. Board member) did a fine job in arranging the program. As we finished observing the actual ground shoveling we realized that our seven year long project was started! Yes, it was Jan 15, 1985, when we first met with the D.E.C. Bureau Chief of Fisheries and told him we wanted a new walleye hatchery, and we were strong for the location to be at Constantia. He agreed, but said he would certainly need our help to promote such a capital project. We pledged our help, and have been "pushing" for seven years!

Bids for the actual building construction are due in by March 25, 1992. Scheduling calls for the work to start shortly after the bids are processed and the award is made. If there are not last minute hitches, or permit problems, the new building should be ready for egg taking in 1993. This would mean that the original goal of a one year egg take loss would have been met. And, lake conditions indicate that the timing is very good, because walleye conditions are favorable at the present time.

Plans for the fingerling pond reclamation work are about ready to go forward and will coincide with the hatchery construction.

The new building is not up, yet, but we sure are much closer to it than we were a year and a half ago, when we reported that the balloon had burst. You can be sure that when the new building is ready for its dedication we will be flying a big balloon in celebration of a victory!

WALLEYES FEASTING ON SHAD

by Capt. Tony Buffa

When NYSDEC personnel, and fisheries research biologists, at the Shackleton Point facility on Oneida Lake, told the angling community to expect "opportunistic walleye fishing" for the '91 season they weren't kidding! I couldn't decide if the weather or the walleyes should get the MVP award for the '91 opener. Walleyes made master anglers of us all; but that wouldn't last.

By mid-July reality and gizzard shad made adjustment to our fishing egos and our live wells. Limit catches were no longer the rule but rather the exception; and the most

willing of walleyes became as stubborn as mules.

A mega-hatch of gizzard shad, (baitfish) rivalling the 1987 year class in numbers, completely dominated the forage base and provided the biomass of walleyes with a 24 hr. per day banquet. Understand this! Walleyes are motivated by an empty stomach period. They prefer to feed nocturnally. If walleyes have a bad night, anglers have a good day and the equation is reversible.

This past winter, the equation stayed reversed. Hugh schools of shad were visible to ice fisherman looking down their holes, wondering where the walleyes went packing. Catching a walleye turned into a celebration rather than day to day event. So where does this leave us for the '92 opener on May 2?

Ordinarily, gizzard shad will collapse during the winter due to cold weather stress. Expect very little of that to occur. From a metaphysical point of view, I anticipate the walleyes to be a challenge, but catchable by mid to late May. From a sentimental point of view, I want them to be there for us on opening day.

There is no lack of adult walleye. Researchers pin the population at 500,000 plus, the bulk of which is 16 inches or greater. If by Spring, the mass of gizzard shad has suffered significant losses due to walleye predation and winter stress, then reverse the equation again and by all means put the walleye gear back to work.

As I see it, the optimum circumstances for catching walleyes occur when the wind and the barometer cooperate. A northwest wind, enhanced by a rising barometer, following a few days of extremely quiet conditions creates the very best of angling opportunities.

Remember this, Oneida is positioned on a NW, SE axis with a span of 22 miles by 6 miles. West wind can certainly exert a considerable influence on this expanse; and believe me it does! I like nothing better than to have a 10 to 15 knot wind, from the west, with a two foot chop highlighted by a lining of white water. This is when you'll experience Oneida at her finest. This is nature's walleye call. You're just three splitshots and a nightcrawler away from a limit of walleyes; usually plucked from the "pancakes" found in 30 feet of water, just south of buoy 119.

In the absence of wind, on those quiet days the walleyes lose to the jig, especially when it is worked within a foot and a half of bottom. Contact with the bottom is essential. I'm convinced that the walleyes close to bottom are the ones looking for food, whereas the suspended ones are in some form of tranquil indolence. I have always done quite well working the bottom, but not so well trying to entice the mid-range walleyes.

Dom Bello's Islander Lure Co. makes a 3/4 ounce jig which is perfect for the deep water jigging. The flat head model has a better swimming action than the round head. Color choices vary on a day to day basis. My preferences are black, brown, purple, and combinations of these colors. The jig size is important. A light jig in this deep environment doesn't keep you near to bottom as effectively as the heavier jig. More time on the bottom means more walleyes brought to the surface.

No doubt in my mind, Oneida is the quintessential walleye lake in NYS. If you like walleye fishing then spend some time on Oneida this spring and summer.

ACCESS SITES

Our Oneida Lake is the largest body of water totally within New York State. The residents of Central New York find it easily accessible via RTE #81, RTE #48, RTE #13, and RTE #31. There are about 40 commercial marinas situated around the lake in addition to the three New York State launch sites and parking areas (free). I would like to bring you up to date on the New York State sites.

Godfrey Point: Located two miles east of Cleveland, off RTE #49. In addition to the direct lake launch ramp, it has a 50'x50' protected bay with a narrow outlet to the lake. This allows boaters to safely launch and retrieve boats in rough weather. There is ample parking space for 30 cars with trailers and a nice shaded picnic area. This facility is seldom crowded.

The following projects are scheduled for completion this year:

1. New double-pitch concrete ramp 6' wide
2. Ramp extensions
3. Concrete transition slab
4. Concrete abutments
5. Sheet pile walls
6. Dredging protected bay and channel
7. Floating docks
8. Re-route stream bed

Proposed Future Improvements:

1. Construction of breakwater
2. Double size of protected bay
3. Pave parking lot
4. Dredge channel 100' wide
6. Rest room facilities
7. Concrete walks

Three Mile Bay: Located about three miles west of Constantia, off RTE #49. Room to park 20 cars/trailers. This area is shallow. Best suited for smaller boats. No improvements are planned at this time. South Shore: Located about four miles west of Lakeport on the east side of Shackleton Point. Well protected from west winds but completely exposed to secondary winds from the East and Northeast. It has a direct lake launch ramp and room to park 35 car/trailers. Come early--this is the busiest launch site on Oneida Lake. Over 8,000 boating trips were taken out of this facility in 1991.

Proposed future improvements:

1. Enlarge parking field to accommodate 100 cars/trailers.
2. Construction of a double ramp
3. Lighting
4. Rest rooms

Under consideration in future plans:

1. Double breakwater
2. Dredging
3. Pier

In 1991, DEC conducted a statewide boating survey. The survey made it clear to the DEC the need for more recreation access to Oneida Lake. The South Shore launch site is the third highest use facility in New York State. Additional sites are being explored and concept plans are being prepared. New York State is committed to the future construction and rehabilitation of Oneida Lake access facilities.

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OLA ANNUAL

by Tony Buffa

On Wednesday, April 22, the O.L.A. will hold its 47th annual meeting at the Nottingham High School auditorium. Doors will open at 6 P.M. Early attendance is encouraged so that you can enjoy our numerous exhibits.

This year's list of exhibitors will include Jack Henke, noted Oneida Lake historian. He will be on hand to collect data for his new book, so bring your Oneida lake memorabilia

for show and tell. Skipp Wells with Berkley products will be there, as will Capt. Gerry Bresadola and Tony Noce with Lowrance depth finding equipment. Ray Mansolino will bring his display of outdoor products and Jig A Whopper lures.

Joe Prince, of Prince Mastercraft will be on hand with his display of Super Ski planer boards and accessories. Dom Bello, founder of Islander Lures will have his product line on display, and since he is the regional director



Zebra Mussels Update

Those of you that have been following the zebra mussel "invasion" are well aware of the OLA's concerns regarding the potential impacts on Oneida Lake and the OLA's efforts at providing its members with up-to-date information. For the past couple of years, nearly every OLA Bulletin and State-Of-The-Lake Report have included information as to what was happening with the mussel populations and what the potential impacts could be. Specific concerns for Oneida Lake include the possibility that the lake's fishery could be affected due to increased competition at the lower end of the food chain. For example, one might ask whether the chances for survival among

juvenile yellow perch may be greatly decreased due to this competition for food. If so, will less yellow perch mean less walleye? Could the lake's fishery change substantially? Another specific concern is the direct impact of mussel infestation. What will happen to shoreline residents? Will the mussels cause damage by attaching to hoists and docks? Will the shells of dead mussels washing up on the beach create odors? Will these shells wash up in numbers that will pose problems for bare feet? The list of questions goes on and on.

Although there are a great number of unanswered questions, we do not advocate a "seige" mentality nor a state of public panic. One concern the OLA has is that well-intentioned efforts to control mussels could create more harm to the lake's ecology than the mussels themselves. Unrestricted and improper use of chemical agents or protective coatings could create localized lake problems or injury to the user. We urge you to use both caution and common sense in attempting any home remedies. Be sure you are informed as to the regulations and proper usage of cleaning materials and protective coatings. Use common sense to prevent problems by doing things such as putting your boat on a hoist or trailer each trip rather than leaving it in the water.

In spite of the unknowns and concerns regarding the future on Oneida Lake, there are some reasons to be hopeful that the impacts will not be devastating. There is evidence that the zebra mussels may reach a certain population level and then stabilize at that number rather than continue to multiply unchecked. Perhaps this suggests that the mussels may not overtake and devastate the lake. Maybe the mussel population will reach a level which makes them a fact-of-life inconvenience rather than an ecosystem-threatening invader. Another area researchers hope will provide some answers are the employment of biological controls. Mussel predation by other species and interference with the mussel's life cycle may provide help in some instances.

Your OLA directors will continue to monitor the status of this biological "invader" as well as other organisms considered foreign to our lake. We will continue to use the Bulletin and the State-Of-The-Lake Report to keep our members up to date on the latest information. In the meantime, we ask all our members to be sure they don't make a bad situation worse. Know what you're doing and think before you act.

ONEIDA LAKE ASSOCIATION 47TH ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 22, 1992 MEETING AGENDA

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 6:00p.m. Doors Open | Exhibits on display |
| 6:30p.m. Membership renewals | |
| 7:30p.m. Call to order | Tony Buffa |
| 7:35p.m. Business meeting | |
| Treasurer's Report | Ed Olmstead |
| Membership Report | Marsh Naumann |
| President's Report | Pat Leone |
| Election of (Officers and Directors) | George Angelero |
| Hatchery Report | Rip Colesante |
| 8:00p.m. "Walleye & Yellow Perch Update | Tom Chioti |
| 8:20p.m. "Biological Changes in Oneida Lake" | Dr. Ed Mills |
| 8:45p.m. Lions Club Fishing Derby | George Angelero |
| 8:55p.m. Conservationist Of The Year | Bob Ripberger |
| 9:05p.m. Drawing (five \$100.00 checks) | Earl Pearson |
| 9:10p.m. Drawing for door prizes | |
| | Bob Chabot |
| | Bill Schreiber |
| | Arnold Armani |
| | Walt Stewart |
- ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE
Tony Buffa, Chairman & Bob Ripberger

MEETING 1992

of Crappiethon U.S.A. he will also have information available on the local tournaments. Fredon Sports Ltd. of Syracuse will be on hand and provide you with an opportunity to buy at discount prices.

Bob Gang, recognized as the resident expert on "Purple Martins" will have an exhibit displaying the key waterfowl species which visit Oneida Lake. He will also provide general information on attracting and maintaining your own Purple Martin houses.

Take A Youngster Fishing Derby Discontinued by George Angeloro

It is with regret that I must announce the discontinuation of the Take A Youngster Fishing Derby. More than six years ago when I became president of the Oneida Lake Association I set out to reinstate the Take A Youngster Fishing Derby. I knew that the derby had been conducted for years and then discontinued and I could not understand why. Several of the Board Members who had been around at that time explained that it was mainly a problem with participa-



tion. I could not believe this and felt that if we did a good job of promoting it that we would easily attract hundreds of youngsters to our derby.

We began by setting up a committee and approving a budget that would allow them to develop a derby that the association could be proud of. And that they did. Major sponsors were solicited to donate prizes, trophies were purchased that made some adults envious. A media campaign was launched that included Television, Radio and Print. Posters were printed and placed all around

While at the meeting, you will be able to register for the annual Cicero Lions Club Walleye Derby, which for the first time will include extra money prizes for those derby winners who are also members of the O.L.A. Association membership renewals and signups will begin at 6:15. You need not be a member to attend, but only members will be eligible for the drawing of five \$100.00 checks.

This year's meeting will begin promptly at 7:30 P.M. and a short business meeting will ensue. Tom Chioti, senior aquatic biologist with NYSDEC will give the "state of the lake" address detailing the status of Oneida Lake Walleye and the concerns related to the Yellow Perch population. Dr. Ed Mills, a senior research biologist at the Shackleton Point field station will address the "Biological Changes" impacting our lake.

Our resident parliamentarian and septic tank specialist., "Bert Grampus" (Bill Merchant), will be our master of ceremonies. The Association will award its coveted "Conservationist of the Year" plaque to an outstanding supporter of local conservation. The meeting will then close with the drawing for the cash and distribution of door prizes.

This year's meeting should be both fun and informative; so bring your family and friends.

the lake. They even sponsored a Take-A-Youngster Fishing Derby Fishing Clinic prior to the derby to help youngsters and to get additional media exposure for the derby.

Were the derbies a success? Yes overwhelmingly. However the number of youngsters entering the derbies was small and it was this that finally led to the discontinuation of future derbies. Then how can I say they were a success? For those of us who had youngsters participate and shared the excitement, pride and anticipation there can be no doubt that they were a success. I will always have the memories of fishing those derbies with my children and the memories of the youngsters that came into register fish or participating the award presentations. They were definitely a success.

I would like to thank all the Board members who donated their time to develop and conduct these derbies. I would also like to thank Zebco, Islander Baits, Fredon Sports, Mulligan Sports, W.O. Zischang Co. for their generosity in supporting this program. A special thanks goes to Kirchners Fishing Camps and Ed Wisniewski who donated bonds to be awarded as an additional prize. I would especially like to thank the Youngsters and the Adults who fished with them. May you all remember the derbies as fondly as I will.

Author To Pen 3rd Book About Oneida Lake

Jack Henke is now working on this third book on Oneida Lake. This work, is collection of stories about life on and about the lake, is dependent on any and all persons who have material coming forward and talking with Jack. The author is interested in everything. Old family tales, personal experiences, dairies, scrapbooks, etc. are possible sources for the book. Nothing should be ignored. Henke would be happy to hear from any Association member at his address, Box 175, Brookfield, NY 13314. He will also have a booth at the April Associates meeting.

Henke has authored two books on Oneida. The first, *Sylvan Beach -- A History*, was published in 1975 and reissued in 1980. The second, *Oneida Lake -- Place Names and History*, was printed two years ago.

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OLA ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS FOR 1992

Environmental issues that could potentially effect the ecology of Oneida Lake seem to be on the increase. These issues are brought to the attention of the Oneida Lake Association board of directors and has grouped potential areas of concern into the following categories.

1. Wetland and habitat concerns would include water level control and fish and wildlife habitat.
2. Water quality concerns would include point and non-point sources of pollution, as well as construction run-off.
3. Problem species effecting Oneida Lake would

include zebra mussel, gizzard shad, cormorants and similar introductions.

4. Enforcement of fish, game and boating laws would include concerns about the need for new legislation, and more effective enforcement efforts.

The major goal of the environmental affairs committee remains one of maintenance and protection. We will work to limit environmental insults to the ecology of Oneida Lake, while maintaining its recreational status as one of the best lakes in New York State.

A second goal of the committee is to determine the

concerns of the members of the Oneida Lake Association. This is being done using a questionnaire being distributed at the sport and boating shows. In addition, members will be contacted at the annual meeting to be held at Nottingham High School. Once the members have been adequately surveyed, results will be examined and positions and priorities will be established for the committee.

A third goal of the committee involves the distribution of information to our membership. This will be done through the two Oneida Lake Bulletins and the President's state-of-the-lake message. In this issue, you will notice articles on the law enforcement issue and the zebra mussel. In the last bulletin, an article was submitted on cormorants. The author was not a member of the Association or the board of directors; this article reflected his opinion only, and was included to supply information to our readers. The environmental affairs committee will not take a position on an issue unless we are sure the concerns of our membership are known.

The members of the Oneida Lake Association have a board of directors committed to maintaining the excellence of Oneida Lake. You can be assured that all our efforts are directed to this end.

HOBIE CAT FLEET 204 PROMOTES OLA

Lower South Bay located at the south west end of Oneida Lake provides excellent water for Hobie Cat Fleet 204. Organized 17 years ago by locals Barb and Pat Caster (formerly SOUTH BAY SAILS) the fleet has grown to 80 members. We have a major effort to get every member to join and support the ONEIDA LAKE ASSOCIATION. Membership forms will be circulated at our monthly meetings along with discussions on issues regarding the conditions of Oneida Lake.

Hobie Cat sailing and racing is a universal sport. The United States is divided into divisions then into fleets. Central New York is part of Division 16 which also includes parts of Canada and Pa. The governing body for this International Association is located in California. Fleet 204 is very active and up to date with the rest of the country on issues that involve our inland waters. We strive to keep Oneida Lake environmentally safe for the boating pleasure of generations to come.

Fleet 204 hosts the MADCATTER Regatta on May 16 & 17 at Oneida Shores Park. This event brings over

200 participants to our lake. We are proud to have an excellent facility to provide one of the finest races in the NE. Oneida Shores Park has sponsored our regatta for 17 years and welcomes the public to take full advantage of this fun-filled event. The Madcatter Regatta is a points race which can earn top racers points toward National competition. Come on out and join us for an exciting weekend!

Hobie Cat sailing has been one of the most popular one-design sailing classes in history. Our Hobie Fleet 204 and access to Oneida Lake provides the learning and training grounds for all level sailors. We have practice races every Thursday evening in Lower South Bay. Participating boats come from Captains Cove and surrounding areas. We welcome any person with or without a boat to experience the thrill of Hobie sailing. Have a Hobie Day soon, see you on the lake.

For more information contact: BOATWORKS/SOUTH BAY SAILS AT 458-8523.

Prior Planning Prevents Boating Problems

Spring is in the air and as you see the ice melt on Oneida Lake thoughts of fishing, swimming, sailing or just relaxing on a leisurely cruise down the waterway don't forget a good time on the water is much easier with the proper preparation. It has been a while since you put your boat away last Fall and if you did your homework well everything should work well now.

A check list works well when fitting out any boat and each year that list could make the difference between a great first day on the water and a disaster. Your list may vary from the items I list depending on your boat and its options but here are some guidelines:

BOAT LIST--be sure to check:

- 1) All fittings such as cleats, bow eyes, light fixtures, seat mounts and generally anything that could have loosened up. Cruising at full throttle is not time to find out that a motor mount bolt has come out
- 2) All electrical circuits--That does mean that you have to go out and get an electrical tester but you should visually see that all lights work and any pumps, radios, wipers, depthfinders or other accessories have power (It is much easier to change a fuse or tighten a screw on shore than in a two foot chop on the lake)
- 3) The hull of your boat should be examined for its overall condition. It is still seaworthy? Each material that boats are made from have advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses. As a rule they are designed to last for many years with proper maintenance. A quick visual check may find an area in need of repairs that can save you a lot later on.

4) All gear and accessories, especially your safety equipment, should be gone over carefully. Are your flares current? Do you have enough PFD's (life vests) in good condition? And where's that boat hook, fender or dock line that you thought was in the forward locker last year?

5) For boats that are trailered don't forget the proper mechanical and electrical maintenance. Are the lights all working? Check the tires for proper inflation and condition and don't forget the bearings and lug nuts. It is also a good idea to inspect the winch and winch line and tie downs.

6) Also be sure that all current State and Federal regulations have been met. Are your boat and trailer currently and correctly registered? There is a new federal requirement called a Coast Guard Users Fee that you should be sure to check on. Depending on the size of your boat and the bodies of water you use it on, you may need an additional sticker on your boat.

I have listed several general areas that should be checked but every boat and every skipper are different and have different special circumstances relating to their own boating needs. The items that I have gone over above shouldn't take a lot of time but could save you time and money later in the boating season if done correctly now. If you do run into any problems seek help from one of the many "BOATING PROFESSIONALS" at your local marina, boat dealer or marine store. We looking forward to a great and safe Summer of boating fun,

Stephen Laffer, President
Boat Works, Ltd./South Bay Sails

Canal Amendment Passes

On Election Day 1991, NYS voters approved a Constitutional Amendment affecting the future of our historic State Canal System which includes the Erie, Champlain, Oswego and Cayuga-Seneca Canals. The Amendment removes a prohibition on the leasing of Canal lands, thereby allowing the State to sign long-term leases with businesses along the Canal right-of-way, such as waterside restaurants, marinas, and lodging places.

Prior to the passage of this Amendment, use and occupancy of State owned land along the Canals was limited to annual revocable permits, a deterrent to development. This change to our State's constitution will promote increased use of the Canals through development of privately operated clusters of services for boaters and land-based visitors while preserving the Canal's serene landscape and natural ecosystem under the direction of a land-use Master Plan, which has been mandated by the Legislature. It is also intended to foster Canal tourism and local job growth.

The Amendment also allows a fee to be charged to boaters who use the locks along the Canal System. Prior to the recent Amendment, boaters were not charged for using the locks for the simple reason that 109 years ago, when railroads were competing with the Canal for freight, the State adopted a Constitutional Amendment requiring that the Canal be free.

All revenue from the above leases/fees will go into a constitutionally mandated dedicated fund that will be used to help pay Canal expenses related to operations, maintenance, rehabilitation, promotion and development. This means that those who use the Canals will help pay for them.

In his State-Of-State address, the Governor stated he will recommend the establishment of the public entity to oversee development of the Erie Canal for tourism and recreational use. The Department looks forward to working with the governor and the legislature in pursuit of this goal as well as drafting the necessary enacting legislation which will establish an appropriate fee schedule, authorize the use of the New York State Barge Canal Fund, authorization to lease property, etc.

Maps, Charts of NYS Waterways

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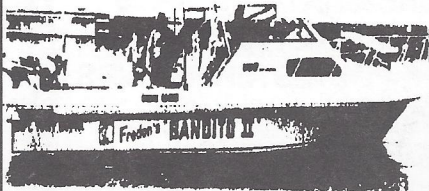


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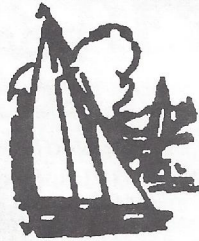
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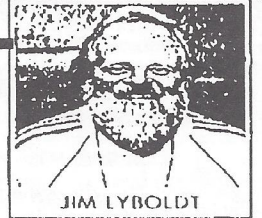
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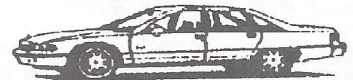
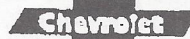
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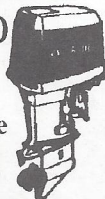
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