



Oneida Lake Association
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Members and Friends,

Please bear with the Board as we continue our nascent email experiment! With the 2016-17 membership enrollments starting, our email and membership lists exist on two separate and dynamic lists! It may be another month or so before all member records are properly recorded and transcription errors minimized.

Occasionally we get a complaint that *"I never got my Bulletin, but I paid my dues last year!?!"* You are reading this newsletter because your membership card information was legible and complete!

With longer daylight, paired mallards and geese getting ready for Valentine's Day. Spring is approaching and there is only about a month's ice left! As I write these words, the ice near shore has thinned above the 'warm' water provided by the recent rains. Stay away from creek mouths and culvert entries. Mid-lake ice is but 6", and there are many openings and cracks, especially near shore. But this is also the smoothest the lake has been in years. Sheltered bays will provide fine ice skating and wind-skiing opportunities. Take the kids outside! Ice fishermen should be able to start using ATV's and snowmobiles after the cold snap preceding President's Day and school break. Another sign of Spring!

MISCELLANEOUS: In 1966, boaters could buy a new mid-sized cruiser for about \$7,000, outboard engines had just surpassed 100 horsepower, gas was \$0.33 a gallon, the Clean Water Act did not yet exist, Oneida's walleye limit was 10 fish over 12 inches, and recreational boating was growing on a large scale across America. It was also in '66 that the nation's largest recreational boating group, Boat Owners Association of The United States got its start. This year BoatUS (owned by Geico) celebrates its 50th anniversary – **Oneida Lake Association its 71st!!!**

The OLA is a dues-paying member of the New York State Conservation Council and the NYS Federation of Lakes.

Readers may be interested in reviewing *The Oneida Lake Watershed Management Plan*. <http://www.cnyrpdb.org/oneidalake/facts.asp> from 2004. It provided for the long-term protection and improvement of surface and groundwater resources. This project involved data collection and analysis, identification of priority issues, pooled funding and staff resources, education programs, and restoration projects for improved fisheries, recreational opportunities, and overall water quality.

INVASIVE SPECIES THREATS: Quoting Carol Bradford January 11, 2015, "New

York has a unique responsibility because the state has major ports that handle cargo from all over the world. The St. Lawrence Seaway is a straight shot to the center of the continent via the Great Lakes, the largest fresh water supply on Earth. The gates need to be slammed shut, because we've been letting indamaging invasive species for 400 years."

While the Seaway has been open a mere 60 years, and has indeed enabled passage of some of our most commercially, economically, and environmentally damaging invaders, the Erie Canal is more problematic locally. Since about 1825, despite its wonderful contribution to a developing nation, the passage from the Hudson valley to Lake Erie enabled nearly every major tributary to provide a medium for unwanted plants, animals, and insects.

Water chestnut that migrated westward from its Schenectady origin (this side of its European origin) and purple loosestrife and the common reeds followed a path that enabled migration of lamprey. Both the Seaway and Canal enabled – and still do – passage of noxious, alien and invasive species (NAIS) into and through Oneida Lake. Beyond ships and swimmers, other sources such as pet stores, internet purchases of aquarium stocks, 'bait bucket biology', and even birds, enable other infestations.

Members have an obligation to be mindful of their inadvertent opportunities to introduce or encourage NAIS. **NYSDEC will soon be regulating watercraft launching and floating dock installations across the state. As proposed, it will be illegal under new ECL Part 576 to put a boat of any type, any time, into a stream, pond, lake, or river if the trailer or hull or bilge have entrained aquatic plants and animals other than legal bait.**

As part of our responsibility, OLA is supporting groups that will put informed educators at various launch sites around the lake. These 'launch stewards' will help teach about invasive species, and boat 'good housekeeping'. At some locations special cleaning stations will be available.

Following its discovery in 1999 by a past Director, years ago the OLA and Cornell Cooperative Extension distributed to stores and restaurants around the lake grocery bags and restaurant placemats emblazoned with depictions of water chestnut and its threat descriptions. Boaters were encouraged to keep a bag in their boat, and if a stray water chestnut was found, to pick it, place it in the bag, and once ashore to place the bag in the trash. In years since, OLA and other partners in the NAIS battle have scheduled days for volunteers to attack locations in the northwest corner of the lake and remove water chestnut plants before its nuts can mature. This way we can, over time, control expansion of the weed. If you are interested in helping, our **"Bill Schriever Weed Pull"** will take place **July 29**.

A new threat to the lake is **fanwort**, discovered in Kaosag Lake, a tributary to Fish Creek. OLA will participate in a conference call and webinar dedicated to planning means to prevent this NAIS from getting into Oneida Lake. More on this next month. It makes eminent economic sense to prevent something before it becomes a long term management issue. So we need your support. Just think of how hard it would be to put toothpaste back INTO the tube! Prevention is key; reaction is wasteful.

Finally, **"Thankyou"** to friends who have made donations to the OLA on behalf of departed members, and to other members who have written checks for more than their \$5 dues.

[Donate](#)

Have you ever considered being a Director on the Oneida Lake Association's Board of Directors? We are looking for people who are passionate about Oneida Lake and are willing to work to preserve and protect it for the future. If you have an interest in becoming a member of our Board, send us a letter telling us why you would like to be a member of the Board and of your qualifications and organizational skills. Send a letter to the Secretary of The Oneida Lake Association, P.O. Box 3536, Syracuse, NY 13220.

Help us with Membership Challenge 2016

Board members will beat the **Turning Stone sports show April 1-3**. As did many members who attended last month's sports shows, come out to enjoy the camaraderie and wares of this show in Verona. You can renew your 2016 OLA membership while the kids participate in the casting pool that we co-sponsored.

[featured](#)

When you receive your 're-up' letter in a few weeks, take a spare card to a neighbor or boating buddy! If you miss the Turning Stone sports show, and elect not to do a PayPal renewal from the OLA webpage, perhaps you will attend and renew at the **Annual Meeting**. Pencil in **April 27 at 7-9 PM** to join us at **Cicero-North Syracuse High School** on Route 31, a half mile east of I-81. Agenda will be announced in March. Door prizes! Bring your youngsters! Bring a friend!



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