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DEC Officer Graduation

On December 20, I had the great honor to be an invited guest at the graduation ceremony for the 24th Basic School of Uniformed Officers of the NYS Department of Conservation. This grand affair was kicked off with an entrance by the DEC Honor Guard accompanied by their own Bagpipe and Drum Brigade.



The newly-minted Environmental Conservation Officers heard addresses from the Commissioner of the DEC as well as remarks from Karen Przyklek, Director of Law Enforcement. In her remarks she listed the many coming duties of the officers, including a reminder that "wildlife is protected against poachers." We, at the Oneida Lake Association, count on that agency to keep this promise.

She also outlined the 29 weeks of grueling training that saw 44 candidates winnow down to 26 superbly trained, well-conditioned men and women. Segments of their training included captaining boats, firearms, self-defense, driving a variety of land vehicles, wildlife identification, survival training, and a compete knowledge and understanding of DEC law.

Przyklek accurately warned the graduates that there is sometimes an unfounded "public anger toward law enforcement." " Nevertheless," she added, "The law is clear. It is based on decades of experience, no matter how it may be perceived by politics. We do not discriminate against or favor any one group." Again, we hope that DEC leaderships maintains that noble ideal in their practice.

Officer Joseph Grispin, President of this year's class of graduates, stated that the only way the they made it through Basic Training is by "working together."

The OLA congratulates the achievements of these men and women, and we support them in their role of enforcing the law on and around Oneida Lake.

One graduate in particular hails from nearby Liverpool. EnCon Officer Thomas Griffin explained to me why he chose to complete this training. "I grew up hunting and fishing, so it was a natural progression to make the application for this important position." Officer Griffin was surrounded by his supportive family and friends following the ceremony. We wish him and all of the rest of the officers the best of luck in their mission.

~John Harmon, OLA Vice-President

EnCon Officer Thomas Griffin, from Liverpool



Ice Fishing Access at Sylvan Beach

Today marks the first time I have seen ice cover the entire lake, or as much of the lake as I can see here in Lower South Bay. Right now it's thick enough to support about an inch of snow, but that's about it. Soon (but not yet!!) many of you will be eager to get out there for your winter activities.

Last winter there was some concern and confusion about the parking access for ice anglers at Sylvan Beach. We tried to clear that up with a meeting with the Mayor of the Village and his Village Administrator. We reported on our positive meeting in our latest *OLA Bulletin*.

Here is an excerpt:

Late last spring, two representatives for the OLA met with administrators from Sylvan Beach to discuss the issue. OLA President John Harmon and Director Bill Girvan met with Mayor Richard Sullivan the mayor and the

Village Administrator Michael Sayles to outline our concerns and to find some solutions. Administrator Sayles stated: "This is the 4th season we have segregated parking in the parking lot. We absolutely allow parking for fisherman and snowmobiles with trailers on the south side of the parking lot. Two-thirds of the lot is available to them. We don't allow parking trailers by the fire lane and the lake house as we keep it clear for pedestrians, the Lake House customers, and Park Avenue residents. In addition, the people with trucks and trailers used to haphazardly park however they pleased and would end up jammed in the narrowest part of the lot and causing traffic flow problems and fire lane violations; all of which have ended since we split the lot.

We also now plow the entire lot which we did not do in the past so there is actually significantly more parking available for all. Lastly, we eliminated a one-way street that was in the lot and so keeping the traffic and fire lanes clear is critical."

Just recently Administrator Sayles sent me a copy of the newly developed signs for the parking area. We believe that these signs will help to make matters clearer this coming winter. (see below).

Good luck, and stay safe!





Oneida Lake Water Levels

As reported in the last edition of our enews, The Canal Corporation has begun the process of drawing down the lake to its winter levels. Some members of the OLA took alarm to that announcement because they were concerned that late season boaters (duck hunters and anglers) could have problems. OLA President Matt Snyder contacted the Canal Corporation with these concerns. We are pleased that they listened to us and slowed the progress of the draw down.

Just this morning, I spoke to our contact at Canals, and she explained that the Caughdenoy Dam is now lifted and removed, as they do each December. She reminded me that "water levels until spring are all Mother Nature's doing until we replace the dam."

Of course, the recent skim of ice cover has now ended the boating season!

We appreciate the cooperation and the updates from the Canal Corporation.

Mickey's Bait and Tackle Shop

Generations of Oneida Lake anglers have come to know and love Mickey's Bait and Tackle Shop in North Syracuse. The shop has been around since the early 1950s. Owners since the mid-1980s, brothers James, Albert, and Francis Daher have provided anglers young and old with a "luring" stock of gear, as well as several varieties of live bait.

Just recently, Mickey's got a facelift. The brothers completely renovated their front edifice, providing enhanced curb appeal. Francis Daher reported that "More changes are in the works for the inside of the store, as well. We

look forward to becoming the 'go to' bait shop in Central New York."

We wish Mickey's, and all of our favorite local bait shops, continued success.



Wetlands Issue

The Board of Directors of the OLA continues its fight against DEC's attempt to designate Oneida Lake as a "wetland." This designation would bring several layers of regulations to any property within 100 feet of the lake.

We continue to support NYS Senate Bill 9799 which exempts lakes over 150 acres from this designation. Unfortunately, that bill has expired with the current recess of the state legislature. We will push to have it re-introduced in the new session in January. We thank State Senator Joe Griffio for being one of the co-sponsors of the bill.

You can assist the OLA (and every landowner living adjacent to the lake) by contacting your state representatives and urging them to support 9799.

We wish you a wonderful Holiday Season!



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.

Pay your dues, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!

\$8 annually

Recruit your neighbors and friends TO JOIN US!

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Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.

OLA is a 501(c)4 organization serving and protecting the Oneida Lake environment.



OLA Website

OLA is a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organization.

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/>.

Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and the management of Oneida Lake and its tributaries.

Report environmental violations.

1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

Edited by John Harmon

Send us your notes and articles for use in future ENews!

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