



**Oneida Lake Association**  
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Greetings!

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**Annual Meeting**  
**April 27, 2022**  
**Save the Date**



The OLA Board of Board of Directors is once again pleased to invite you to our Annual Membership Meeting. We have carried on this tradition for 76 years, despite the many challenges we have faced, including the covid pandemic. You will recall that last year we developed an on-line Zoom meeting that actually worked very well. We received many compliments on the meeting, especially how it made the gathering accessible to everyone. That meeting included a variety of informative reports from the many agencies who share stewardship of our lake.

We are planning a similar format this year. We are now in the process of contacting our featured speakers. We will publish that list soon. One commitment that we already have is Steve Hurst, DEC's Chief of the Bureau of Fisheries. He will discuss, among other topics, the new fishing regulations that have been **proposed** to take place just before the spring walleye season opens. You don't want to miss that one!

We are also exploring the possibility of having an actual in-person meeting. Although our county covid numbers are going down, we need to secure a venue that is willing to host us in these challenging times We will let you know as soon as that decision is made.

Either way . . . **It's April 27!** It's going to be a Bigger and Better Meeting, hosted by our esteemed Director, Captain Tony Buffa!

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# **OLA Thanks Waterfowl Hunters for their Input!**

In e-News #63, and in many conversations with OLA members who hunt ducks and geese, the waterfowl committee of OLA's Board of Directors recently asked members about recent hunting experiences on Oneida Lake.

We want to thank everyone who took the time to respond. For the most part, everyone's comments and suggestions expressed three main themes: 1. For the past five to ten years, duck and goose seasons have been increasingly poor on Oneida Lake and its surrounding wetlands; 2. Hunters would like more opportunity to hunt in cold weather and later migration dates; and 3. Some hunters report confusion or dissatisfaction with how season dates are set.

The DEC plans to convene its season-setting task forces in March, and the OLA representatives will be taking your feedback to those meetings. We'll keep you posted on our progress. We also welcome further suggestions.

Thank you for your input!  
OLA Director Matt Snyder

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## **DEC Fishing Regulations**

During our recent February meeting of the OLA Board of Directors, we welcomed, as a special guest, Steve Hurst, Chief of the Bureau of Fisheries for the DEC. We asked him to speak to us about the new fishing regulations that DEC is prepared to rollout this spring. Chief Hurst began by explaining the thinking behind these changes. He stated that he wanted to make the fishing experience as simple as possible for anglers. He related that he often hears of the confusion about starting dates for a number of game fish seasons. For example, trout season starts on a hard date, April 1. Yet walleye and bass season start on certain Saturdays in May or June. DEC plans to transition to a hard date for each of the fishing seasons. He also reported that DEC received over 19,000 responses from their call for input on these changes. A large majority of these responses indicated approval of these proposed changes.

Next, these changes get passed up the ladder for final approval. Hurst anticipates approval in time for the April 1 trout opener. DEC will then release news announcements, videos, and website updates in order to alert the public that these regs are now live.

Once again, come to our Annual Meeting on April 27 to hear about these changes directly from Bureau Chief Steve Hurst.

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**Tony Van de Valk**



The OLA Board is pleased to announce that Tony Van de Valk has taken a new position at the Cornell University Field Station on Shackelton Point, Oneida Lake. Tony is now the Coordinator for the Oneida Lake Fisheries Program. Senior Research Professor, Lars Rudstam, states that "I am very pleased that he accepted the position which comes with more responsibilities." The Directors are also very pleased, as Tony has been a long-time friend of the OLA, as well as a former

Director.

**Congratulations, Tony!**

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### **Help us Make OLA Bigger and Better! Watch for our New Membership Campaign**

Although we are pleased that OLA now boasts more than 2400 members, we are always looking for ways to boost our membership. Quite simply, the more members we have, the better we can protect the lake that so many thousands of us enjoy. For example, most recently, OLA stood in opposition to a state senate bill that could have jeopardized our long-standing support of a ban on the sale of walleyes from Oneida Lake. We sent a letter to the Governor urging her to veto this bill. In our letter we explained that we represent 2400 voters and their families. We are pleased to say that Governor Hochul did indeed veto this bill. We believe that our collective clout played at least some role in this positive outcome.

Therefore, we would like to double--at the very least!--our membership in the easiest, least expensive way possible. Soon you will be getting a mailing asking for your continued renewal in our organization. We always appreciate your yearly support. Included in that letter will be some extra membership cards. We ask you to sign up a friend, a relative, a neighbor, or anyone who cares about our lake. These gift memberships will be free!! It's a Buy One/Get One program that benefits us all.

Watch your mail for details!

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### **Free Fishing Days Presidents' Day Weekend**

February 19-20 are [free fishing days](#) in New York, so it's the perfect opportunity to introduce someone new to ice fishing.

Visit DEC's [Ice Fishing webpages](#) for places to go, regulations, and more. As a reminder, **all other fishing regulations remain in effect.**



## Updates on Boat Launches

We continue to receive inquiries about the status of the Cove Road Boat Launch, scheduled for construction in the Sylvan Beach area. DEC representative Jana Lantry tells me that "I do have good news for the Cove Road boat launch. We have needed permits in-hand, and I anticipate the project will go out to bid in the near future. I will let you know of any other updates."

Also, work has begun on the re-construction of the boat ramps at Oneida Shores.

Fingers crossed on both ends of the lake!

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### In memoriam

The Oneida Lake Association has recently received several donations "in memory of" friends or family members who valued our lake and its premier steward, the OLA. Of course, we are most grateful whenever someone thinks of us, even in their time of sorrow.

If you choose to include us in your bereavement planning, please take an extra minute to contact me at [president@oneidalakeassociation.org](mailto:president@oneidalakeassociation.org). I would be pleased to pay tribute to your loved one in a brief announcement in our newsletter.

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

**\$8 annually**

**Recruit your neighbors and friends TO JOIN US!**



Donate

Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.

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



Website Who We Are What We Do How to Help

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 and Matt Snyder*

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