



The Oquaga Lake Improvement Association Inc.

June 2017

Dear Fellow Oquaga Lakers,

It was a long, strange winter. This ice was slow to set in, went out, followed by the Lake freezing over again. Now with the spring comes the explosion of pollen. Bring on the summer!

NEWS

We were saddened with the news of the recent passing of Chris McDonald and Ferris Akel. Chris and Ferris were long term friends of the Lake and will be greatly missed. Ferris, a multi term Director of the OLIA, greatly supported the Oquaga Lake mission. Obituaries for Chris and Ferris have been posted on the website. Please visit www.oquaga.com and click on News for the latest news, announcements, event schedule, and links to the Town Zoning Code.

TOWN OF SANFORD

The Town recently mailed a notice to all property owners in the Lake Protection Overlay Zone and we have posted the same on our website. Please carefully review the information distributed by the Town if you have plans to do improvements on your property. Docks, decks, building additions, fences, sheds, etc require building permits and, in many circumstances, Site Plan Approval by the Planning Board is required. Also, remember that shore line work may require DEC and Army Corps of Engineers permits.

SEWERS

The Town requested that the Board remind property owners in the Oquaga Lake Sewer District that the Town has permanent easements on every property in the District. These easements are for the installation, maintenance and repair of the sewer tanks, and for pipes installed on the lot. It is imperative that the property owner not build or pave within the sewer easement. If you do so, it is at your risk and expense. The Town must be able to access the tanks for maintenance, pump replacement and removal of solids. The Town is also responsible to replace tanks that have failed or are leaking beyond repair.

The homeowner is responsible for the pipes in the house and the pipe from the house to the sewer tank. The Town is responsible for everything else. If it is necessary to dig up the existing system to replace the tanks or Town owned pipes, the Town is responsible only to backfill and grade and seed. The Town will not replace decks, gardens, pavement or anything else inappropriately installed in the permanent easement.

Bottom line: **DO NOT BUILD IN THE EASEMENT.**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

For the Association to function we need your help. We need support with running events and fulfilling the mission of the Association. Our Mission as stated in the By Laws is:

"To preserve, improve and protect Oquaga Lake and the lands adjoining the same and bordering thereon, all located in the Town of Sanford, Broome County, New York; to develop and promote the said territory as a summer resort; to prevent the contamination of the waters thereof; to further and advance the social and general welfare of the said territory and the owners and occupants thereof and the members of this Association; to do any and all acts necessary to carry into effect the foregoing objectives, including acquiring and holding title and property rights in and to the said Oquaga Lake, adjoining lands and springs and water courses in the vicinity".

Fulfilling this mission requires a persistent, ongoing effort, more than the Board can handle by itself. Attached is volunteer signup sheet. Please consider helping fulfill our Mission. A list of standing Committees is on the website. Call any Board Member to become involved. Board member list enclosed.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Enclosed is the Schedule of Events for the 2017 season. Over the last couple years we tried introducing several new activities such as the Boat Parade, Ice Cream Social and Talent Show. We are hoping to continue, provided there is interest. We would like your feedback in this regard. Please provide comments to Barbara@oquaga.com

An opening reception will be held Friday evening, June 30th at Scott's Lakeside Room.

Since the Fourth of July falls on a Tuesday this year and because people may need to go home early to work the next day, we will be celebrating on July 3rd. It will be a busy day with the J Elmer Crowley Fishing Tournament in the morning, followed by the Ice Cream Social in the afternoon. This year, the Boat Parade will be around dusk, just prior to the Ring of Fire.

The Annual Family Day will be held on Saturday August 5th (always the first Saturday in August) with the field events in the morning and the water sports after lunch. The Family Picnic at the Cookout Lookout will start at 5:30. Coming back this year: the Talent Show. Polish off your act!

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the Annual membership meeting on Friday, August 25th (always the last Friday in August).

See the enclosed Event Calendar for details. More information will follow in mailed and e-mailed reminders

LAKE CLEANUP DAY

Last year's Lake cleanup netted quite a haul. This year's Cleanup Day is July 8th. We will be meeting at Gieskes' (48 Hanson Road) for a walk around the Lake to pick up litter and trash from along the road. Please meet at Koen's house at 10:00. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. We need your help to keep the Lake clean. Afterwards, Koen will be buying ice cream for all participants at Scotts.

Let's get the children out this year to Give Something Back to Mother Earth and Oquaga Lake.

LAUNCHING YOUR BOAT

Scott's continues to allow Lake Association members and their guests access to the Lake through their boat launch area. The Scott's have requested that we follow a few simple rules

1. Please pay the launch fee using the enclosed form, pick up the key to the launch and bring your boat registration form (Copy available on the News page at Oquaga.com.)
2. Bring your boat and trailer to the launch by going along Playhouse Road and backing into the launch.
3. The gate must be locked when you finish launching your boat.
4. Exit the launch area by driving by the farm house to the main road.
5. Please stay off the grass on either side of the launch access.
6. Do not leave your trailer in the launch area.
7. Return the key when done.

INVASIVE SPECIES

If your boat has been on another water body it is extremely important that the boat and trailer be cleaned and free of any vegetation, zebra mussels, etc., before launching. This includes cleaning the bilge. Remember, it only takes one person failing to properly clean their boat to introduce an invasive species to the Lake.

LAKE MONITORING

The 2016 water quality monitoring program is approved for funding under the Citizen's Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP). Oquaga Lake has participated in this program since the early 1990s. A special thanks to Heather and Ben Hanson for agreeing to take over the annual monitoring program. See Heather, Ben or myself if you are interested in participating in the sampling program.

Water Quality Reports are available on the OLIA website; click on the Documents section.

BOAT STICKERS

Don't forget to place your orange stickers on all your watercraft for identification. If you need new stickers contact Barbara Marko at [467-1897](tel:467-1897) and she will assist you. We will also have stickers available at all official Lake events.

BOAT SAFETY

We continue to see very unsafe boating on the Lake including water skiing and tubing with no spotter in the boat, speeding after dark, speeding near shore and tubers not wearing PFDs, to mention a few. Boaters also need to be courteous of others using the Lake. Please be mindful of your wake. There have been instances of swamped boats due to large wakes. Under NYS Navigation Law a boat operator is responsible for damage caused by their wake. Small boats sailboats and canoes always have the right of way over power boats. Large wakes create an unsafe condition for small boats. Please be courteous and avoid tubing and putting out large wakes near small craft. Also, if the Lake is glass and skiers are starting out please consider holding off tubing until skiers finish. Negotiating large waves is unsafe for skiers.

A boat safety sheet is enclosed as a reminder.

STAR GAZING

The night sky is awesome. The stars really pop especially on moonless nights. However, over recent years there has been an increase in excessive outdoor lighting around the Lake including flood lighting of docks and shore. Outdoor lighting makes star gazing difficult, if not impossible. Please consider minimizing outdoor lights at bedtime. The night sky never disappoints. Turning off the lights also lowers your NYSEG bill, a win/win. Free apps for smart devices provide real time information and maps showing the position of stars, constellations, planets and even passing satellites. Be sure to check out the Persied Meteor Shower on August 12 and 13.

TICKS

Please carefully check children and pets. All reports are predicting this will be the worst season in years. The New York State Department of Health website is a good source of information about how to protect your family from ticks and Lyme disease.

<http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme/>.

Another interesting and informative article, a lovely picture of the little critter, can be found at <http://www.blueridgeoutdoors.com/newswire/east-coast-will-lyme-disease-war-zone-year/>.

BEARS

Please recognize that we live in bear habitat. Bears are attracted to food and garbage so please keep all food and garbage indoors and secured. Clean up outdoor eating areas and barbeques. And be particularly attentive to any small children and pets. A copy of the ***There Are Bears*** annual mailing is enclosed. Laminated copies, suitable for posting, are available from Barbara and at any official event.

FRIDAY NIGHTS

Scotts' will be operating on a limited schedule (Scott's Lite). The Friday night tradition of gathering for a social hour of fun and frivolity continues at Scott's or River Run or Koo Koose or A Tavolo or wherever else they'll have us, at 5pm until whenever. There will be a message on Barbara's answering machine (467-1897) with this week's venue, and you can find it at the top of the NEWS page on the website: Oquaga.com. Come and join with your Lake Friends and Neighbors for an hour or two of fun.

DUES

At the 2016 Membership meeting the Board proposed increasing the dues for the first time in (I have this date somewhere ...) years. While the Board proposed increasing the annual dues to \$95, the Membership in attendance voted to round it off to an even \$100. Enclosed with this letter is the invoice for your Lake Association dues. Your prompt attention to this invoice will help to control expenses and insure our financial security. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

The Oquaga Lake Improvement Association is a Not-For-Profit corporation, made up of property owners, businesses and interested individuals, to promote the interests of the entire Lake community. The Association needs full participation from the Lake community.

Your dues allow the Association to focus on protecting the Lake environment, preserving water quality and assuring our continued enjoyment of the Lake. The organization is concerned with much more than parties and picnics.

Accomplishments of the OLIA include:

- Promoting safe boating.
- Working with the Town to implement zoning and creation of the Lake Overlay Zone.
- Protecting water quality through implementation of the sewer project.
- Performing annual monitoring of Lake water quality.
- Maintaining and repair of the outlet structure.
- Arranging for trapping and removal of beaver.
- Assisting the Town in overseeing the sewer district operations and expenses.
- Conducting annual fish stocking.

These efforts help maintain your property values and hold down the expense of the sewer system.

Everyone benefits, everyone needs to pay their dues.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

For the Board of Directors
Mark Millspaugh
President