

Activities/Boating Course/Lake Patrol/Issues – Chapter #37

The Country Tourism Guide had a full page featuring Silver Lake. Copies were distributed to the board members. Rich Elias attended a meeting of the County Comprehensive Plan which did not have a SLA member or resident on the steering committee. The SLA Board was asked what position they would take to promote recreation at Silver Lake. The example was; by expanding the state launch, but then a concern was that many obnoxious boaters who did not have a vested interest would be attracted to use Silver Lake. The SLA would also use the opportunity of these talks to push for automatic lake measuring equipment and for local (development) control.

It was reported at the May 2002 meeting that Jeff Jackson closed his dock-installation business. Carol Brakenbury checked with every marina and learned that Honeoye Fire Department did it as a fund raiser. Jane Bellamy would check with Perry and other local fire departments to see if there was any interest.

Guest Speakers at the July 2000 annual meeting was Marine Patrolman Jim Prince and County Emergency Services Coordinator Jim Reger. Prince stated that by the year 2004, all operators of personal watercrafts must take a state certified boater safety course. Because most of these classes often occur in the spring before the local lake residents return for the season, SLA Board member Bill Soules would become a certified instructor so that future classes could be held on the lake during the summer. Education was a key to safe boating and the SLA had two certified instructors on its board. Vice President Bill Soules of Fairview South Tract and Dan Fix of Old Orchard Beach North Tract taught 2 two-day courses at Camp Asbury. The SLA would sponsor the course so it would be free to students. Adults who had passed the course had to pay the state a \$10 processing fee. Individuals ages 10 – 18 were required to complete the course in order to operate a boat or personal watercraft. By the year 2004, all individuals, child and adult, must pass the course to operate a personal watercraft. Boating classes with Bill Soules and Dan Fix were scheduled for April 20 & 27 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and held at Koinonia Inn. Approximately 60 overhead slides that cost \$120 - \$125 were needed for the course. John Pachuta motioned that the board cover that cost, Colleen Calmes seconded it all voted aye to pass the motion.

Bill Soules alerted the membership of errors in the vacation guide (directory) regarding PWC operations, which were sunrise to sunset, not a half-hour before or after as in the past. Jim Coles spoke in regards to the Boat Safety Course. The Coastguard had put up fliers locally and talked to the newspapers. The SLA was not responsible for advertising costs. SLA did pay for rental of space where the course was held. They would like to do the course in May rather than April and on an annual basis. Bob Frosino moved to sponsor the Boating Course for the next 5 years. It would be good Public Relations and advertising for the SLA. It was suggested paying Lorraine to advertise and properly promote the course. Dick Swanson asked if all were in favor of sponsoring the course. All agreed to sponsor the course, the motion passed.

Marine Patrolman Jim Prince mentioned that the marine patrol had ticketed boat and watercraft drivers for operating at excessive speeds to close to shore or objects and operating past dark. Patrols have stopped drivers on the lake to educate them about safety equipment and safe operation. Late night swimmers were advised that a boat must accompany them. Members inquired about swim docks with propane tanks on them. They were told that propane tanks were illegal. Members were still having issues with the state launch. Suggestions were made to follow other state launches by placing a donation box there to raise revenues.

SLA updated the 50 members that attended the 2001 annual meeting on what the SLA was doing on behalf of its members. The Wyoming County Sheriff Ron Ely and Marine Patrolman Jim Prince explained to the membership what work was being done to keep Silver Lake community safe; boat patrols were on the lake 7 days a week; and officers had responded to several calls regarding reckless operation of boats and jet skis. It was noted that many of the new boaters were entering through the new state launch at the south end of the lake.

Officer Jim Prince of the Marine Patrol said patrol hours were cut back from 7 days a week to Friday, Saturday, Sundays and on call. He stated that personal watercraft operators 27 years old (born after January 1, 1975) and younger needed to have a boater certification on them. NYS was getting stricter about this due to the number of jet ski accidents. Members noted various violations observed on the lake, from after-hours operations of jet skis to people riding on the bows of party boats. Laws were posted at the state launch and in the SLA Directory.

At an August 2003 meeting potential safety issues on Silver Lake were discussed. It was asked if the Lake Patrol should just give violators warnings or tickets. The SLA would pursue the new Sheriff after the election with these issues. The SLA wanted to petition towns (which had the jurisdiction) that no windbreaks/huts be allowed on the ice as on Conesus Lake. Wood left behind was a hazard to boaters and the dam. Mick Griffin motioned to have SLA appeal by letter with a copy to the DEC that towns establish local laws banning wood structures on the ice. The board all voted aye. A guest speaker at the October 2003 meeting was Supervisor Joe Gozelski. He noted his efforts about ice huts and no wake requests from the SLA letters. It was said that on page 7 of the NYS Hunting Guide, it stipulated ice hut regulations. The state did not prevent towns from adopting local laws outlawing huts. The SLA decided to follow the state laws. The DEC said it was questionable whether or not boaters could be ticketed for causing wakes during flood conditions. Bill Soules found 3 sections of the state law that established precedent(s) for speed limits and buoys. The Perry town supervisor felt that a declaration of a "State of Emergency" allowed local government to impose one. The state police would like such a law to go through the county. Because the Village of Perry controlled the dam, it would set the time and level to declare the emergency. The DEC sent a letter to SLA on ice hut regulations with a contact number to call after March 16th. The SLA decided to go that route before lobbying for a law to ban them.

At the July 2005 Annual meeting Jim Prince, in his 9th year of the Sheriff's Marine Patrol, announced he had two new men, Tom Cunningham and Don Parker. He then stated a new state law that would be in effect in the year of 2009 mandated that only 14 year-olds and up could operate a personal watercraft (even if they were licensed at 10 years of age). A couple of concerns that were expressed by the Silver Lake Association members were the lengthy response time and the lack of hours patrolling. Henry Gabryszak motioned Tract Directors to circulate petitions for the SLA to send to State legislators calling for more funding for the patrol.

Marine Patrolman Jim Prince gave a brief report to the membership at the July 2006 Annual meeting. The department had a new boat that was better designed to respond to marine emergencies and the state reimbursed 75 percent of the cost. The marine patrol responded to 3 boat accidents and the biggest complaint was people riding on the front deck of party boats. Gabi Lischer asked if there were regulations for the inflatable water toys. There were none to the patrol's knowledge.

The September 2000 meeting had Francis Foulkrod ask if the SLA wanted to include Jet Ski regulations in the dock and mooring law. Rich preferred to handle this issue on a complaint basis. Lorraine said the county, which enforced the marine law here, would likely be the legislative body, not the towns. The Sheriff Patrol had said it was not needed. Bill recommended keeping the issues (jet skis, docks) separate. Dick said watercrafts were too reckless. The patrol needed to ticket drivers and set an example of more enforcement. The SLA would work on the education aspect. The board directed Lorraine to write a letter to Sheriff Ron Ely to take the next step from warning to tickets for all careless operators.

In a September 2003 meeting a letter was read by Bill Soules thanking the Sheriff's Department for patrols and offered the SLA assistance. It showed that SLA paid attention and hopefully it would increase the number of marine patrols. There was no law on the books that banned wakes during floods or that pronounced the lake being closed. Bill drafted guidelines that he would bring before area officials. Ruth Lavin motioned and upon contingent of board approval the SLA would pursue the matter including the purchase of notice equipment (flags, buoys).

An updated report on the no wake law was given at the May 2004 meeting. The county had a disaster provision that would take affect during floods to officially close the lake and the state launch and authorize the Sheriff Patrol to

ticket violators. Alerts would be sent out by radio stations. Betty Nasca would check if the flags could be attached to the inflatable buoys the Yacht Club would let the SLA use to close the lake.

Mayor Vergason addressed the sale of Lake LeRoy reservoir and its transmission line to Silver Lake and its pump house/property in Shearman Tract to Phil McBride (owns Page Auctions). He said two farms wanted to draw raw water from the main. It was not known if they could do so through an agricultural exemption (NYS has Right to Farm Law). According to Watershed Commission Chairman Stan Klein, only municipalities could pump lake water. SLA tried to get answers to all the unprecedented questions. At the April 2005 meeting the concerns remained on the LeRoy's sale of its pump house and pipeline to Phil McBride who was selling it to Emerling Farms (estimated use: 25,000 gpd). The DEC provided the permits to the municipalities, but if there was no law about non-government drawers, it could not act. Other than a permit requirement, there was no law regulating draw. No law, no enforcement. If there were a NYS Law in place, the DEC could control the amount of water leaving the lake. Any 100,000 gallon per day user must register with the DEC because Silver Lake was a tributary of Lake Ontario. The SLA could request a new law on amounts taken out. This issue was discussed at the county meeting and consensus was not to deprive farms unless truck farming started up.