



Newsletter

"Listen to the Lake"

March 2023

*R.J.P. Dennis Carlson*

*Dennis served on the KLA Board since 2008, starting as Wayne representative, then V.P. (2012-2016) and next as president, 2016-2020. His most recent time as Past-president, e-officio. Dennis was always there to advise the Board and contribute his support, knowledge and leadership, continually demonstrating his love for Keuka Lake and its surrounding communities. We will miss you.*



## Eye-Spy Spring Ephemerals

*Lexie Davis, Natural Resources Educator, CCE Yates*

**Spring is here! With the warming weather, it is a perfect time to get outside and spot a special crop of wildflowers that can be spotted only for a limited window! Spring ephemerals are the first plants to pop up in spring and the first to flower. See if you can find all of these early risers!**

### Northern Spicebush

*Lindera benzoin*

**Northern spicebush is a shrub in the laurel family, native to eastern North America. This shrub displays beautiful yellow-green flowers in the spring before the leaves appear. Many caterpillars of the swallowtail butterfly family use this species for food!**



### Skunk Cabbage

*Symplocarpus foetidus*

**Skunk cabbage is one of the earliest wildflowers to bloom in the spring. It got its name due to the unpleasant smell given off by all of its plant tissues. This plant can produce its own heat and attracts flies and other insects. This plant has been used to treat epilepsy and swelling.**

*Continued on page 2*

## ***May-apple***

*Podophyllum peltatum*

May-apple is a perennial herb that has a single white flower that grows between two large umbrella-like leaves. The plant produces large, yellow fruit that is edible and relished by the eastern box turtle. However, eating any other part of the plant is toxic! Some compounds in the root have shown to have anti-tumor properties and are used to treat some cancers!



## **Yellow Trout Lily**

*Erythronium americanum*

Yellow Trout Lilies are perennial herbs that hold a single drooping yellow flower. The two leaves at the base of the plant are mottled with brown and resemble the markings of a trout. Each plant can take 4-7 years to flower and only ever produces one! They grow in large groups with others and can be found in other colors as well.

**Happy Spring 2023**

## KLA President's Message—Maria Hudson



As days lengthen, the sap rises in trees, birds flock home and the bluff turns green. We welcome and celebrate a new season on the lake, anticipating all the fun on the water, family reunions and peaceful vacations enjoying the beauty of Keuka. The Keuka Lake Association is preparing for another busy summer as we work to protect the watershed and preserve Keuka's pristine water quality.

With approval of the 9 Element Plan the KLA is working with our agency partners to identify grant opportunities to reduce pollution from runoff, prevent erosion from road ditches and farmland, protect stream banks and wetlands and identify/contain sources of nutrient pollution. Representatives from the KLA attend meetings of the Keuka Watershed Improvement Cooperative (KWIC) which is responsible for septic system compliance. We are working with KWIC to upgrade their inspection schedule to prevent costly septic failures to homeowners with disastrous consequences to local waters. We also attend the meetings of the Keuka Lake Outlet Compact (KLOC) which controls the outlet gates. In this role, the KLA provides monitoring of the lake level by equipment at the Penn Yan treatment plant. We report the lake level on our website and also report and advise on issues raised about gate operation (no pun intended). The KLA will continue our 30+ monitoring of the lake's water. All that data has been recently collated into a spread sheet accessible by professionals for purposes of research and reporting. This year we are continuing our new partnership with the Finger Lakes Institute at Hobart and William Smith College to analyze our water samples and provide consultation on the results. We hope to pioneer a new "app" allowing easy interpretation of long-term trends and to flag seasonal hot spots!

Boating, fishing, and swimming are all part of *lake life* on Keuka. These recreational activities are also the economic *life blood* of lake communities. Every spring the KLA meets with county Sheriffs and the DEC Environmental Conservation Officers to review safety regulations, learn of issues (there's always something new), relay our members' concerns and what we can do educate the public on current boating and fishing regs. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) can also impact recreational activities with adverse economic consequences. This season the KLA will continue to control Starry Stonewort in the Northwest branch marinas to prevent spread. Enhanced surveillance for AIS is being developed throughout the lake. With increased awareness and education, we can reduce the risk of "weeds" choking our shorelines and fish spawning grounds. As fishery biologists from the DEC and USGS continue to work on Keuka Lake, the KLA has provided sampling assistance, staging areas for DNA research and public awareness and education. We are a "squeaky wheel" in the Finger Lakes, constantly demanding more information and research to enhance and maintain the fishery.

So much has changed so quickly in this digital age, we at the Keuka Lake Association are striving to improve our communication strategies on our website, in social media as well as traditional print. Be sure not to miss the monthly e-newsletters as well as Facebook, Instagram posts, Twitter and our YouTube channel. (If you are not a regular user of these social platforms, look at the top left portion of the KLA home page and click on the appropriate icon.) Also, look for us in newspaper articles and enjoy our newsletter in all color!

Did you know up to 1400 lake front property owners are not members of the Keuka Lake Association? A new targeted door-to-door membership campaign aims to reduce that number. So let your friends and neighbors on the lake know who we are, what we do and importantly why you are a member. Together let's close the "ring of members" around our beautiful shoreline.

Finally, with great sadness the KLA has bid farewell to our former President Denny Carlson. Our sadness is only surpassed by our gratitude for his inspired leadership and generosity of spirit. He was my personal mentor from the time I joined the Board and I will strive to carry on his and all of our mission to preserve and protect the lake for future generations.

## 2023 Project Update: Cisco Restoration in Keuka Lake

By **Alex Koeberle**, PhD Student, Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, Cornell University  
Project Collaborators: NYSDEC Region 8 and Finger Lakes Hub, USGS-Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Science, USFWS Northeast Fishery Center, and Cornell University

If you noticed several blinking lights that appeared to be 'drifting' around this fall, your suspicions were likely correct. These solar-powered lights were, in fact, six drifters deployed by NYSDEC and Cornell University to characterize deep currents in Keuka Lake. This was part of an ongoing project to restore populations of native Cisco (*Coregonus artedii*), previously considered extirpated from many of the Finger Lakes including Keuka Lake.

So, what might drifters have to do with monitoring fish?

Little is known about water movement, particularly at deep depths, in the Finger Lakes. Hydrologists suspect that this movement is likely caused by deep currents, however, to date no empirical measurements have been made within Keuka Lake. Understanding how water moves is important for using emerging technologies to monitor fish populations, particularly for a species like Cisco, which inhabit the cool, deep waters below the lake thermocline.

In 2020, project scientists collected environmental DNA (also known as 'eDNA') to detect where Cisco were distributed throughout the lake. Water samples may contain fragments of DNA shed from aquatic organisms, and scientists can in turn analyze these samples in the lab to identify species that are present. Results from this study revealed that Cisco DNA was detected in water samples collected in October 2020 within the Northwestern arm as well as around the Bluff.

Starting in 2018, NYSDEC began stocking hatchery-raised juvenile Cisco into Keuka Lake to reintroduce a native forage fishery to improve ecosystem health. Cisco were once the main forage fish in Keuka Lake and served as an important trophic link between the much smaller plankton community and the much larger, and popular, Lake Trout fishery. Some of these stocked fish were surgically implanted with small acoustic transmitters that enabled project scientists to track their movement and survival over time on a lake-wide acoustic telemetry array.

Scientists use these emerging technologies to compare where eDNA was detected and where fish with acoustic transmitters were tracked. The project team found that while the Northwestern arm had both eDNA and acoustic telemetry detections in October 2020, other areas like the Bluff only had eDNA detections. One hypothesis is that deep currents might be one factor for transporting eDNA in the water column, perhaps causing this mismatch in eDNA and acoustic telemetry detections.

While we are still busy analyzing data from the drifter experiment this fall, preliminary results are highly successful. We tracked all six drifters via GPS units for nearly three weeks in October 2022 and found that they moved considerably throughout the lake, as much as three miles within the first few days of being deployed.

Formally known as 'Lagrangian Drifters', the original design was by Lew McCaffrey, NYSDEC, who along with undergraduate students from Le Moyne College use them to measure deep currents in the Finger Lakes with low-cost, reliable equipment. Most of the drifters can be assembled with equipment from a nearby hardware store and use SPOT-brand GPS trackers to follow their movement.

*Continued on page 5*

*Cisco Restoration - Cont.*

We concluded the acoustic telemetry component of this project in 2021, however, NYSDEC stocks Cisco annually each fall, including over 36,000 fingerlings stocked in October 2022. NYSDEC Bath Fish Hatchery is currently undergoing development to continue to expand Cisco production for Keuka Lake. As more data is analyzed we will continue to share it.

We want to thank Keuka Lake Association for your continued support of this project, including members who helped with the eDNA survey in 2020 and again for the public support of the Keuka drifter project this fall. Please feel free to reach out to Alex Koeberle (Cornell University) or Brad Hammers (NYSDEC) with any questions: [alk239@cornell.edu](mailto:alk239@cornell.edu) and [brad.hammers@dec.ny.gov](mailto:brad.hammers@dec.ny.gov).

Visit this YouTube link for launching drifters in Keuka Lake: <https://youtu.be/uuleC26XkKA>. Note, the original drifter design was funded by Le Moyne College and the Keuka project was funded by NYSDEC and Cornell University.



**Photo 1:** Sarah Rubenstein, USGS-Tunison, assists with deploying drifters to measure deep currents in Keuka Lake, October 2022. Photo by A. Koeberle, Cornell University.

**Photo 2:** Alex Koeberle, Cornell University, and Lew McCaffrey, NYSDEC, release the GPS-equipped float attached to the drifter below the water surface. Photo by S. Rubenstein, USGS-Tunison.



## SENECA-KEUKA 9E PROJECTS UPDATE

Steve Butchko-KWIC, Mark Morris-KLA and Colby Petersen - Keuka Lake, Watershed Manager



Executive Committee briefs Keuka Lake group on initial projects

Property owners around Keuka Lake may be noticing some changes in the impact of stormwater run-off now that work has begun on projects aimed at reducing the flow of phosphorus into the lake.

One project — adjustments made to a tributary leading to Brandy Bay on the west side of the east branch — has already reduced the sediments flushed into the lake, according to Colby Petersen, Keuka Watershed Manager. The Yates County Soil & Water Conservation District built weirs in the tributary and used rip rap to slow the flow of water which often carries pollutants that are known to increase the instance of harmful algal blooms (HABs).

This project, and more like it, are the result of the work done over the past five years to quantify the status of Seneca and Keuka Lakes, and develop a plan to improve the water quality in both lakes. The research and the resulting Seneca-Keuka Watershed Nine Element Plan for Phosphorus lays the groundwork for many more projects to be completed in the coming months and years, says Steve Butchko, former Wayne Town Supervisor and member of the Seneca-Keuka Watershed Partnership Executive Committee. That committee secured the funding and guided the process which resulted in the plan's approval by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of State.

The plan includes an extensive matrix that prioritizes potential actions in six categories: Hydrologic Resilience, Best Management Practices on Working Landscapes, Wastewater Management, Invasive Species Management, Local Laws, and Education, Outreach and Economic Development.

Butchko, Petersen, Seneca Watershed Steward Ian Smith, and Executive Committee member Mark Morris presented a progress report to the Keuka Watershed Improvement Cooperative (KWIC) Nov. 28.

The plan, structured around nine elements identified by the Environmental Protection Agency, identifies the causes and sources of non-point source pollution, involves key stakeholders in the planning process, and identifies restoration and protection strategies. It is a working plan that will be implemented throughout the entire watershed for years, according to Butchko.

The plan uses two types of models to predict the impact of a proposed project in a specific sub-watershed.

The 800 ft. long Brandy Bay project cost \$60,000, and \$300,000 will be needed to complete another 2400 feet of improvements, says Petersen. Securing those funds is one reason the watershed's plan is so important. Butchko calls the approved plan a "membership card" that improves the chances of winning state or federal grants to help pay for such projects.

Other projects that have either been recently completed or begun around Keuka Lake include:

- 150 ft. of weirs in the headwaters of Sugar Creek
- New 12-inch diameter drainage pipe installation in the town of Pulteney. Petersen says such installations from the 1960s and 1970s are beginning to fail.
- Vineyard sprayers are now available in every township in the Keuka watershed.



Cont.. From page 6

- Facilities on farms for safely containing chemicals that might spill during mixing of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides
- Expansion of the wastewater inspection area in the Keuka watershed

Potential future projects for the Keuka Watershed include:

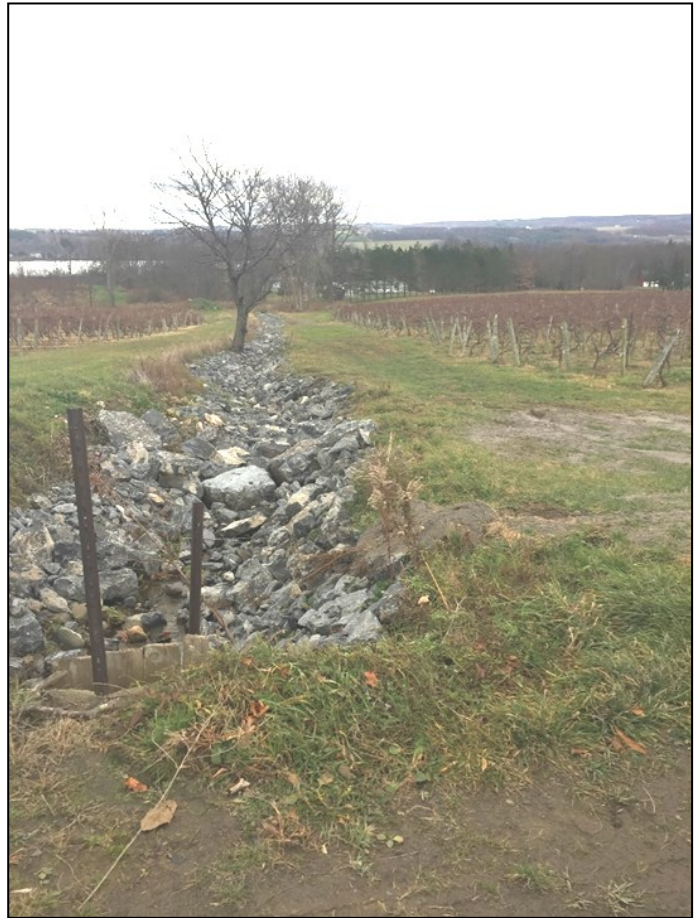
- Development of a lake level management pool to keep Keuka Lake's level closer to the established model and to make Keuka's outflow more natural
- Green infrastructure project for Penn Yan, similar to those recently completed in Dundee and Geneva. These projects help manage stormwater runoff
- Planting trees in open areas, such as near the Hammondsport School.

## BACKGROUND

The Seneca-Keuka Watershed spans 712 square miles and stretches from the Town of Italy in western Yates County to the Town of Hector in eastern Schuyler County; from the Town of Horseheads in Chemung County to the Town of Geneva in Ontario County; and from the Town of Fayette in Seneca County to the Town of Urbana in Steuben County. Seneca and Keuka Lakes contain more than 50 percent of the water of the 11 Finger Lakes and they are joined by a natural waterway, the Keuka Outlet, historically known as Minnesetah River.

The project is sponsored with funding provided by the New York State Department of State under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund. Additional funding is provided by Seneca Watershed Intermunicipal Organization, Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association, Keuka Watershed Improvement Cooperative, Keuka Lake Association, The Finger Lakes Institute at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Seneca County, Schuyler County, Ontario County, Yates County, Steuben County, and Corning Inc.

The Seneca-Keuka Watershed Partnership Executive Committee includes Mark Venuti (Seneca Watershed Intermunicipal Organization), Dan Corbett (Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association), Steve Butchko (Keuka Watershed Improvement Cooperative), and Mark Morris (Keuka Lake Association) with Advisors Lisa Cleckner (Finger Lakes Institute), Ian Smith (Seneca Lake Watershed Steward), Colby Petersen (Keuka Watershed Manager) and Administrator Betsy Landre (Ontario County Planning Dept.) For more information about the Seneca-Keuka Watershed Partnership contact Ian Smith at 315-781-4559 or [ismith@hws.edu](mailto:ismith@hws.edu), or Colby Petersen at 315-536-5188 or [Colby@ycsoilwater.com](mailto:Colby@ycsoilwater.com).



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## 2023 ALEXANDER & ESTHER WAHLIG KEUKA LAKE WATERSHED SCHOLARSHIP

The goal of this scholarship, sponsored by the Keuka Lake Association, is to assist a graduating senior high school student who is planning to enroll in a four year program (may include a two year college with plans to transfer to a four year institution) and who is planning on pursuing a career in general environmental sciences or limnology or water quality/watershed management.

Eligible applicants include senior students graduating from high schools in the Keuka Lake Watershed, including Haverling Central School, Dundee Central School, Penn Yan Academy, Prattsburgh Central School, Hammondsport Central School or senior students whose parents are Keuka Lake Association members.

The one-time \$1000 scholarship will be awarded in one installment upon satisfactory completion of the first semester and submission of a transcript sent to the Keuka Lake Association office for review by the committee.

The selection committee is composed of five mem-

bers appointed by the Keuka Lake Association and will meet in April of the student's graduating year. **The committee must receive application forms by April fifteenth of the graduating year.** By June first the committee will send the selected recipient a letter and forward a copy to the guidance department of the appropriate school.

The application must include a letter of recommendation from one of the applicant's teachers and a 250 to 300 word essay describing the student's interest in his or her selected field of study and how the student plans to apply that knowledge either in a future career or for enriching his/her appreciation in the environmental sciences or water quality/watershed management.

Students should submit an application for the scholarship to the Keuka Lake Association by mail to: P.O. Box 35, Penn Yan, NY 14527.

An application is below and is available on our website: [www.keukalakeassociation.org](http://www.keukalakeassociation.org)

**Keuka Lake Association**, PO Box 35, Penn Yan, New York 14527  
Ph. 315-694-7324 [info@keukalakeassoc.org](mailto:info@keukalakeassoc.org)

### Alexander & Esther Wahlig Keuka Lake Watershed Scholarship Application

The goal of this scholarship, sponsored by the Keuka Lake Association, is to assist a graduating high school student who is planning to enroll in a four year program (may include a two year college with plans to transfer to a four year institution) and who is planning on pursuing a career in general environmental sciences or limnology or water quality/watershed management.

Eligible applicants include students graduating from high schools in the Keuka Lake Watershed, including Haverling Central School, Dundee Central School, Penn Yan Academy, Prattsburgh Central School, Hammondsport Central School or senior students whose parents are Keuka Lake Association members.

The one-time \$1000 scholarship will be awarded in one installment upon satisfactory completion of the first semester and submission of a transcript sent to the Keuka Lake Association office for review by the committee.

The selection committee is composed of members appointed by the Keuka Lake Association. The committee must receive application forms by April 22th of the graduating year. In June, the committee will send the selected recipient a letter and forward a copy to the guidance department of the appropriate school.

**Students should submit an application for the scholarship to the Keuka Lake Association by April 22, 2022 either by mail (P.O. Box 35, Penn Yan, New York 14527) or electronically to [info@keukalakeassoc.org](mailto:info@keukalakeassoc.org).**

The application must include a letter of recommendation from one of the applicant's teachers and a 250 to 300 word essay describing the student's interest in his or her selected field of study and how the student plans to apply that knowledge either in a future career or for enriching his/her appreciation in the environmental sciences or water quality/watershed management.

Last Name	First Name	M.I.
Address	Town or City State	Zip Code
Phone	E-mail Address	
Planned Major	College or University	High School Average

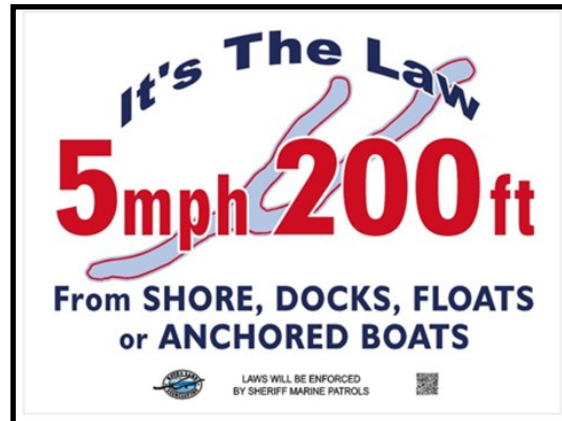
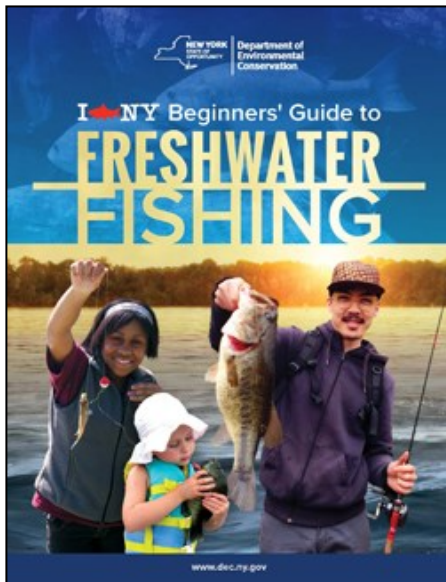


## NAVIGATION & RECREATION—STEVE HICKS



### INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT FRESHWATER FISHING ON KEUKA LAKE?

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) website has a number of easy-to-read guides and other information about freshwater fishing, such as this one:



#### 5-200 YARD SIGNS AVAILABLE FROM THE KLA

Please contact the KLA office if you are interested in picking up a 5-200 lawn sign - that many also use near docks and roadside - reminding people about the lake speed limit. Decals are also

Go to <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/44804.html#Guides> to find this guide and others.

#### NAVIGATION REMINDER:

Soon many of us will begin to go out on the lake with our boats. Please be careful and be aware of any 'new' obstacles in the lake that may have changed over the winter, like buoys, large branches, etc. Please be cognizant of the wake your boat might be making against the shoreline whether you are close to or farther from shore, especially when the lake water levels are typically higher in the spring.

Also, before heading out make sure to check the following:

Life Jackets – Do you have them in your boat? Are they all clean and intact? If there are any tears, you should probably replace them. Installing some reflective tape near the shoulders on the front and back is a great idea.

Signals / Flares - Should all be dry and in working order. Review the expiration date!

Fire Extinguishers - Make sure you have checked the gauges and expiration dates of your Coast Guard Approved marine fire extinguishers.

First Aid Kits - Make sure everything is stocked in your kit, and that medicines have not expired or been compromised.

#### A Note from the Yates County Sheriffs' Office:



We thank the KLA for their (\$1,900) donation of a Cardiac Life Powerheart G5 AED unit (Automatic External Defibrillator for use on the YCSO Keuka Lake Marine Patrol Boat. This is a contemporary unit that once attached gives voice commands to the First Responder. Also the YCSO Marine Patrol Officers and deputies have been trained on the use of an AED, and all patrol cars currently have them as equipment. An AED is used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. It's a device that can analyze the heart's rhythm and, if necessary, deliver an electrical shock, or defibrillation, to help the heart re-establish an effective rhythm and save a life.

At Left: Sheriff Ron Spike, KLA's Steve Hicks, Lt. Ed Nemitz

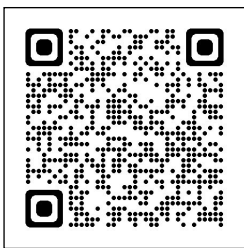
**COMMUNICATIONS—DOUG DEFRANCO**

Dear KLA Business Member,

In a recent survey of our members, we found that over 1/2 of them actively try to use businesses that support the KLA. In an effort to increase the visibility of business such as yours, we would like to start a new program and feature one of our business members each month in our Monthly E-Newsletter.

If you are interested in being featured, please provide us with a brief description of your business, the services or products you provide and what makes your company unique. It would also be interesting to include why you find it important to support the KLA and our Mission to Preserve and Protect the Lake.

We will select one business each month to spotlight, using the information you provided us. We can also include a link to your website and any email contact information. Along with your submission, feel free to include any photos, artwork (logos), or videos you would like us to consider to include.



Our monthly E-Newsletter is sent to approximately 1600 member e-mails and receives about a 73% open rate. This is a good opportunity for you to reach a large number of our loyal members.

On the left is our new QVR code.

This is planned to be an ongoing program all year, as such there are no deadlines, as we will accept submissions throughout the year for consideration. If you are interested, please send any submissions or questions to us at [klacommunications@gmail.com](mailto:klacommunications@gmail.com).

**MEMBERSHIP—JOHN HAGREEN**

Dear KLA Members.

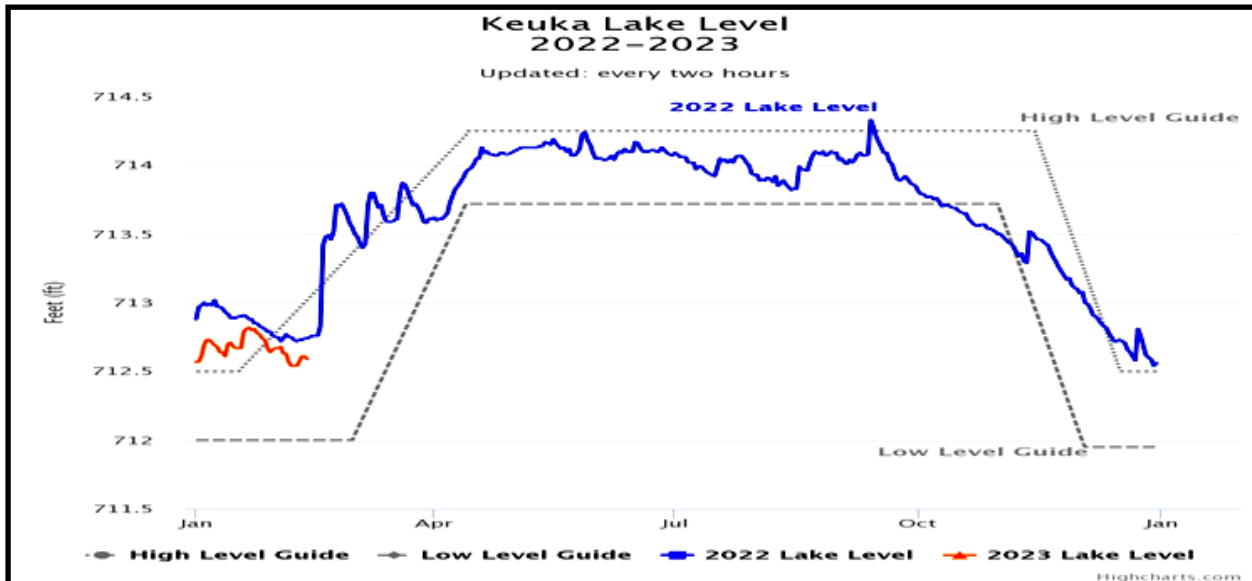
Spring is on the horizon and of course that means our annual KLA membership campaign. We thank you in advance for your continued support of this hard working organization. The KLA Board of Directors, in concert with upwards of over 100 dedicated volunteers, will spend the next several months working on many projects which both protect our lake and inform Keuka Lake users on best practices for lake living. We have several ongoing efforts including monitoring invasive species and our substantial project partnering with Seneca clean waters on the Nine Element (9E) plan. As always we look forward to your support and hope you have a safe and wonderful summer season on our beautiful lake.

Thank you, John

**WELCOME NEW/RETURNING KLA MEMBERS:**

Todd Anderson, 531 Assembly Ave., KP  
 Matt & Donna Fronk, 2403 WLR, PY  
 Patricia Grow, 10194 ELR, H'sport  
 Marino Family, 15426 WLR, Pult.  
 Tom & April Muccigrosso, 10382 WLR, H'sport  
 Karlie & Frank Rinere, 11964 E. Lake Rd., H'sport  
 Steve & Donna Sisson, 773 ELR, PY

## LAKE LEVEL—WAYNE HAND



For the month of January, the actual lake level was a little above the objectives (guidelines shown above), but typical for where KLOC has maintained it in Dec. & Jan. for the past few years. Some people think that this level was a record low, but this was not true and for many of the last 25 years the actual level was within the guides, several inches lower (confirmed by the historical chart shown on the website lake level page). It was also confirmed that the indicated levels shown on the website continue to be very accurate, and KLOC has no desire to alter the current objectives in winter.

For the first half of February, the level was within the guides and we hope that will continue into spring, as the level rises. We also hope that minimal ice continues to not form, to minimize any potential for ice damage to shoreline assets, especially on the North end.

The Yates County Highway Dept. requested minimal water flow through the gates into the outlet for a few days in early February to allow some bridge maintenance downstream, and KLOC complied, resulting in no issues.

Extreme rain events result in large amounts of sediment flowing down the streams and gullies toward the lake. One of these is Kimball's Gully, which flows down from Milo into the outlet near the old Penn Yan Boat Plant location. For the past several years, it has been KLOC's responsibility to periodically remove this washed-in sediment and debris from the outlet in that area, which aids maintaining a navigable channel in this area. It is not KLOC's responsibility to dredge the outlet in all other areas. KLOC has requested a permit from the NYSDEC to allow this clearing activity to take place while the water level is low, but as of this writing, have not received an approval. As a result, this activity may need to be delayed until the winter of 2024, which could make boat navigation in this area of the outlet challenging, until then.

### WINTER/SPRING BOATING REMINDER:

*"No owner or operator of a pleasure vessel less than twenty-one feet, including rowboats, canoes, and kayaks shall permit its operation, **between November 1st and May 1st**, unless **each person** on board such vessel is wearing a securely fastened United States Coast Guard approved wearable **Life Jacket** of an appropriate size when such vessel is underway."*

## Poor Man's Lake Trout- Critter Corner—David deCalesta

When we first began to rent cottages in the 1990s on Keuka Lake (before we bought a lakeside home in 2002) I was hot to learn how to catch lake trout. My father-in-law took me out on one occasion trolling behind his ski boat with a Sutton spoon attached to copper line he unwound from a wooden spool (but copper like can also be spooled on a large level-wind reel). The copper wire was used to get the lure down to depth (over 50 feet). Alas, it was a nice day on the lake, but we caught no lake trout. Interestingly enough, the Sutton Spoon Company (founded in 1867) is still making spoons on Main Street in Naples NY.

A friend told me he caught lake trout using a "Seth Green" rig with live bait (usually a sawbelly or other large minnow). Seth Green developed the "Seth Green" rig in the late 1800s. Basically a long "dropper" line of over 100 or so feet was dropped in the water, weighted down with a one or two-pound lead weight. At 20 or so foot intervals along the dropper line, 15-foot lengths of "rig line" line were attached with a trolling spoon at the end. The Seth Green rig was trolled at speeds of 1-2 miles per hour. The lead weight kept the line down, so the rig allowed fishing at multiple depths, putting a lure before trout at the depth they were feeding. When using live bait instead of spoons, the Seth Green rig is fished stationery rather than trolled, moving it from time to time to cover different parts of the lake.

I didn't want to bother with making Seth Green rigs, so I tried fishing from the shore at depths of 50 or so feet, using a sawbelly with a double hook threaded through its back with a special needle. I got the minnows down to depth with a large sinker. Never caught any lake trout, but did manage to catch smallmouth bass and brown trout.

There are several charter boat outfits offering guided lake trout fishing trips on Keuka Lake - just google charter fishing on Keuka Lake to find them. The guides generally get spoons down to depth using a downrigger outfit (heavy weight to get lure down to depth fitted with a quick release snap so that when a lake trout hits the spoon, the fishing line is released from the weight, allowing the angler to reel in the fish). After catching a trout with a downrigger, the weight has to be hauled back up and attached to a fishing line fitted with a spoon. Fishing with several downriggers at different depths, like a Seth Green rig, allows charter boats to get the lures down to the depth where lake trout are feeding. Daily charter boat fees generally run \$300 - \$500 for 1-6 people fishing for 4-8 hours.

You can also get spoons down to depth using devices known as "Dipsy Divers"; most stores stocking fishing equipment sell them. The divers either come with a series of locations for attaching line to achieve a desired depth, or as individual divers set for (fixed) different depths. A spoon is attached with about 15 feet of leader behind the diver. Trolling speed is 1-2 mph. A friend who writes and outdoor sports column for the Erie Times came up with a friend and the three of us, using divers at different depths, caught about 12 lake trout in 3 hours.

My "fishing boat" is now a 12-foot kayak, hardly suited for trolling of any type. However, using a weighted spoon (called a Swedish pimple - some sporting goods stock them or you can find them online), you can make long casts (with a spinning reel/rod outfit) and let the lure sink to the bottom, usually over at least 100 feet of water. Then retrieve the lure in a series of jerks, reeling in the slack line, then jerking the spoon again - this is called jigging. I can usually catch a laker or two using this method, kayaking out to several spots (such as just off the bluff) where lakera can be caught at depth. Swedish pimples usually cost in the range of 3-4 bucks apiece for a "poor man's laker outfit."

**For area boater safety courses, consult the following:**

[www.americasboatingclub.org](http://www.americasboatingclub.org)

(Americas Boating Club – ex USPS) [www.cgaux.org](http://www.cgaux.org) (Coast Guard)

**Local Sheriffs' Depts.**

**Yates:** <https://www.yatescounty.org/faq.aspx?qid=71> - 315-536-4438

**Steuben:** <https://www.steubencony.org/pages.asp?PID=194> - 607-622-3901 or 1-800-724-7777



KLA Calendar available:

Longs' in Penn Yan  
Browsers and Cinnamon Stick in  
H'sport  
Crooked Lake Mercantile in B'port  
Lyon-Smith Brewing Co.—  
Keuka Park

## DAVE'S CRITTER CORNER REVISITED - MARCH 2017

### The Other Exotics: Birds and Mammals

Exotic birds and mammals of Keuka Lake, like exotic fish, were mostly introduced accidentally, with the exception of a few bird species of European origin. Some of the unintended “introductions” actually are range expansions of species historically absent from the Finger Lakes region. All introductions carry some negatives as some species damage crops, homes, or compete with native species for habitat resources like nesting sites or food. As of this writing, there are no established populations of exotic reptiles and amphibians in the Keuka Lake area.

#### First, the birds - Cormorants

Cormorants were described in the September 2016 critter corner as “exotics” by nature of expanding their range from southern states. I occasionally have seen them on Keuka Lake as single birds swimming or flying. The major problem with cormorants is their habit of nesting in large communal colonies where they destroy trees used as nest sites and create smelly messes with their excrement. The key is to disrupt the bird colonies before they get established: NY DEC biologists can help with these efforts.



**English sparrows and starlings.** These birds were brought to North America in the mid- to late 1800s in New York City to bring a few “English” touches to the local bird community. Since their introductions, both birds have spread westward and occupy all lower 48 states. Both are aggressive and displace native bird species with similar nesting sites (both use natural or man-made cavities). **English sparrows** take over blue-bird nest boxes, evicting the intended occupants. A simple work-around to this problem is to place *two* blue-bird nest boxes on the same tree/post. Both birds will keep away their brethren but will tolerate each other as both will have their desired nest box.

In addition to displacing native bird species, **starlings** can be major sources of damage and crop loss to cherry orchards and vineyards as they will descend in large flocks and ruin the crops by pecking cherries and grapes and/or eating them. Grape growers use the acetylene exploder guns to scare away starlings (and deer!) when the grapes are ripening and targeted by starlings. In extreme cases with heavy starling losses some grape growers may drape black plastic bird netting over entire grape rows.

Starlings love to nest in the soffits under roof edges and can make quite the racket (and mess!) when nesting. They can be kept out of soffits and other points of entry by screening the openings (as small as ½ inch wide) with hardware cloth.



**Brown-headed Cowbirds.** These birds may be called *landscape* exotics. About the size of a starling, and all black except for a bronze head, these are birds of **open** meadows and thickets, generally not found in the interior parts of forests. However, with forest fragmentation—opened up contiguous forestland with powerline rights-of-way, roads, and gas and oil extraction sites, and dividing large contiguous forests into small, isolated woodlots—cowbirds find formerly inaccessible forestlands within their reach.

The problem? Cowbirds are “dump nesters.” They lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, which then have to raise the cowbird young. Cowbird nestlings are aggressive and outcompete the young of the parasitized parents. Openland birds evolved with cowbirds and build new nests over the eggs of cowbirds or remove the eggs as evolved defense mechanisms. Interior forest bird species that did not evolve with cowbirds are endangered by reproductive failure—they end up raising cowbird young while their young are forced out of the nest or starve.

### Next, the mammals

**Coyotes** were the subject of the April 2016 Critter Corner article, so they have pretty much been covered. They are a good example of the old axiom “nature abhors a vacuum.” When wolves were extirpated from New York in the 1800s, coyotes travelling east from western states filled the empty niche of apex predator (top predator with no predator that eats or kills it-except man) of deer. Contrary to what some deer hunters may think/say, coyotes were not introduced into the state to control deer by the DEC.



(*C. l. lestes*)



**Norway rats** hitchhiked across the oceans aboard sailing ships in the late 1700s and rapidly spread westward from the East Coast. Originating from Asia (not Norway!) the rats colonized Europe and from there the Americas. Like coyotes, rats eat anything but favor urban/suburban areas for feeding and breeding areas – never seen or trapped a rat in the deep woods! Rats, because of their close habitation with humans, are vectors in the spread of bubonic plague (a few cases, 1-12, occur annually in the U.S, spread mostly through fleas from the rats and other rodents) and leptospirosis (from rat urine), which can result in liver and kidney damage. Keeping

sources of cover (like stacked wood) away from home exteriors and screening any openings to the inside of the home (including ventilation openings in soffits – rats are good climbers!) with ¼ inch hardware cloth will keep rats out of your home.

**Wild (European) Boars** were stocked in private hunting preserves in the Finger Lakes region and some escaped to form breeding populations, but these seem to have died out with none reported in the wild for decades. They are very prolific reproductively, often having several litters or 8 or more piglets at a time. They have a distinctive body shape, and the piglets are striped. Adults average 200 pounds for males (boars) and 175 pounds for females (sows) but large males can reach 500 pounds. They can cause havoc on golf courses by their habit of “rototilling” the soil looking for grubs and tubers. Should you see one, call the regional DEC office in Bath (607-776-2165).





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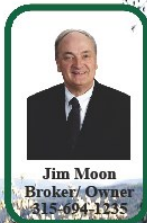
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Margo G. McTaggart,  
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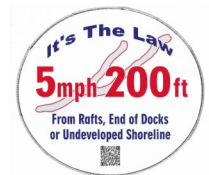
\_\_\_ **Two KLA decals -**



\_\_\_ **Two Business decals**

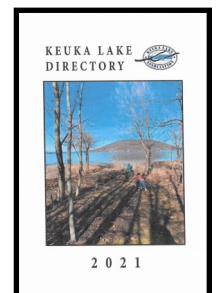
KLA BUSINESS MEMBER

**NEW 5.200 decals and lawn signs are available in the KLA Office**



\_\_\_ **LP HOLDERS: \$8.00 incl. S&H**  
**Also available in the above local stores**

\_\_\_ **2021 Directories: \$10.00 incl. S&H**



Keuka Lake Association, Inc.  
PO Box 35  
Penn Yan, NY 14527

**YOUR MARCH NEWSLETTER HAS  
ARRIVED!**

**The KLA's mission is to preserve and  
protect Keuka Lake and its natural beauty  
for future generations.**

### ***Interested in Joining the KLA Board of Directors???***

Keuka Lake Association is seeking interested members for our Board of Directors. Our mission is to preserve and protect Keuka Lake and its natural beauty for future generations. We are seeking individuals who are interested in the health and well-being of our beautiful lake.

All backgrounds are welcome, especially individuals with a finance, science, social media/marketing or engineering background.

Directors are appointed for two-year terms. The Board generally meets monthly on the first Wednesday evening of each month.

***If you are interested and would like to be considered for nomination as a Keuka Lake Association Director, please send your resume with contact information and a letter of interest to or if you'd simply like more information regarding the position, contact: Steve Brigham at [spbrigham@hotmail.com](mailto:spbrigham@hotmail.com) .***