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# THE CURRENT

## Chautauqua Lake Association Newsletter

### CLA Crews React Quickly to Tornado Damage

*Storm Packed 125 MPH Winds*



**Work crews from the CLA reacted quickly to damage caused by an EF2 tornado that touched down in Mayville, packing top wind speeds of 125 miles an hour during the weekend of July 24th, 2010.**

CLA crews worked diligently to clean up debris on Chautauqua Lake after a vicious storm on Saturday, July 24th.

CLA general manager Paul Swanson said a dozen crews worked for eight hours on Sunday to clear the lake of all sorts of items that were left floating in it. “We were picking everything up from logs, branches, tin, building materials, docks — you name it, we picked it up,” he said.

An EF2 tornado, packing a top wind speed of 125 mph, touched down near Lyons Road in the town of Chautauqua at about 4:40 p.m. Saturday, July 24th. Approximately 150 yards wide, the twister traveled seven miles to Dewittville, leaving a path of destruction on both sides of the lake in the process.

A great deal of debris ended up in the lake itself, and the CLA’s effort to clean it up and make the waterway safe for boaters again was impressive, said Capt. Rick Willman of the Summer Wind. He said he only saw three logs floating in the lake while he was out Sunday, and those were nowhere to be found when he passed through again Monday. “They’ve done a fantastic job,” he said. “All these creeks and everything really were flooded, and they flushed all this dead wood that’s been laying up the creeks and everything.”

Swanson said his crews usually have the day off on Sundays, but they were called in to work an emergency shift in the aftermath of the storm in very inclement weather. “It was in extremely bad conditions — those kids were out there in the pouring rain all morning long,” he said. “They deserve a lot of credit for it.”

The work began in the Mayville area, with crews taking four pieces of equipment out down both sides of the lake to make the cleanup happen. All extensive efforts were successful.

Swanson added, “There were no accidents, no complaints of any boats or anybody hitting anything. “Evidently, it went pretty well.”

## CLA Board of Directors Highlight 2009 Accomplishments at Annual Dinner

### Cornell Landscape Architect Gives Keynote Speech

Accomplishments like the recent dredging and clean-up of Goose Creek were highlighted at the 63<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting of the Chautauqua Lake Association at the Lakewood Rod and Gun Club on Monday, June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Director Craig Butler opened the meeting with a solemn tribute to Betty Sheldon, a long-time benefactor for the group. He said, "We're thankful for her long life, her friendship and her guiding light. Her love for Chautauqua Lake lives in each of us."

Chautauqua Lake Management Commission chairman Lyle Hadju spoke briefly on the newly released 5-year plan for watershed management. "All of us at the CLMC appreciate the leadership CLA President Chris Yates and General Manager Paul Swanson bring to the table. They are a tremendous resource for the objectives we have set for the future of our lake."

President Chris Yates said even though major funding sources to the CLA have been cut over the past two years, the Association is "continuing our 60-year role of being steward of the lake. Despite reduced funding from local and state sources we've made great improvements to the lake in 2009. We have to recognize the generous support of our membership and private foundations as the mainstay for our existence." Yates said even with an unstable economy, some membership levels have doubled and tripled. "This signifies the faith and confidence lake residents have in the CLA and we continue to earn their support through their love for Chautauqua Lake."

He cited the many improvements the CLA has accomplished in the past year, specifically the dredging and clean-up of Goose Creek in Ashville Bay. "This was a tremendous and expensive undertaking for the CLA. But, with the guidance of our manager Paul Swanson, we were able to remove tons of debris and provide a navigation lane going in and out of the creek. An area in the lake was curtained off so loose sediment could not flow elsewhere into the lake."

The need for dredging was identified by the Chautauqua Lake Management Commission. Goose Creek was determined to be the best location point to test tributary sediment build-up dredging on Chautauqua Lake. He also cited the scientific approach the CLA maintains in controlling weed growth. "We have a hands-on relationship with Robert Johnson of Cornell University Research Ponds ensuring a scientific approach to any problems that may arise in the lake. The decrease in nuisance vegetation like Eurasian milfoil has become apparent in recent years because of the efforts of Johnson and his team."

Jamie Vanucchi from the Cornell University Department of Landscape Architecture was the keynote speaker for the evening. She is an ecological designer and teacher with expertise in storm water and shoreline management. She spoke on how all those who enjoy the lake need to become involved in the "science of design."



Keynote speaker Jamie Vanucchi (left) joins CLA Member Bill Locke for a photo.



CLA President Chris Yates (left) called the meeting to order. Keynote speaker Jamie Vanucchi gives her presentation



Bob Johnson from the Cornell Research Ponds Facility poses for a picture with Jane Conroe.



Board Members Lyle Hadju (left) and Terry Turner were the lucky winners for the basket raffles.

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Stewardship is extremely important to the restoration of our streams and waterways," Vanucchi said. "We have to keep people working together to make things happen." She talked about how the construction of natural

**"The CLA continues to use good science and good stewardship to encourage their members to be active in preserving their love for the lake."**

*CLA President Chris Yates*

remedies such as bio-retentive rain gardens and aquatic buffers are a critical part of watershed management. "These types of preservation projects restore and refresh what people value most about the lake." She cited cities like Denver, Seattle and Portland as trailblazers in the areas of

"harvesting water." She said the fact that Chautauqua Lake has a tremendous amount of docks will be a challenging aspect to effective landscape design. "We are currently implementing plans at Maple Springs and Light House Point that include planting deep-rooted native plants and grasses along with roadside gardens to improve water quality."

### CLA Goes Green With Installation of Solar Panels



The CLA continues to be innovative when managing their operations. With the assistance of NYSERDA and the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, HSBC and the Wilhelm Hoppe Foundation, the association was able to install solar panels to increase the energy efficiency of operations.

## CLA Hosts Scientific Symposiums About Aquatic Life in Chautauqua Lake



**CLA President Chris Yates (back left) joins Cornell aquatic scientist Robert Johnson and his team at a presentation called "What Lies Beneath Chautauqua Lake," held at Chautauqua Suites in Mayville this past July.**

The Chautauqua Lake Association sponsored two workshops in July given by aquatic scientist Robert Johnson of Cornell University.

"Things are changing in this lake," Johnson, said. "While things are improving with invasive species, there may be an increase of native plant species coming to the surface that could hamper recreation by entangling boat motors or causing other nuisances. Although he said most plants are important to the ecology of the lake, except invasive species, excessive growth of them is a concern. He said a decrease in Eurasian watermilfoil, an invasive species, has been seen.

Excessive and nuisance growth of the plant in 2006 was probably due to climatic factors, he reports, adding emergent watermilfoil flowers provided egg-laying area for the caddis flies, and numerous tips underwater provided habitat for moth and weevil larvae. In 2007, he notes, weevils weakened the watermilfoil, and the flies ingested plant leftovers. In 2009, he reports plants recovered with an increase in native species but less watermilfoil. He said insects control the plants by eating them, adding, there are not enough insects to make a big enough impact on Chautauqua Lake.

Cutting down on nutrients getting into the lake can also help control the growth, as will limiting erosion and providing buffers to control nutrients coming off landscapes.



## Chautauqua Lake Association

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*A Clean Lake is Everyone's Business!*

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### A Letter From the President

September 2010

Dear Chautauqua Lake Neighbor,

This letter is to ask you to please help us financially. We provided this year's needed services. Would you be so kind as to provide for us so that we can continue to serve you?

Needless to say, the July 24<sup>th</sup> Tornado on the lake came with a vengeance and our crew was on the lake at dawn on Sunday morning cleaning up the debris floating in the lake and on the shores of the hardest hit communities. We returned several times to areas we had just cleaned and found that we also had to address many of the problem areas. The storm was felt even in the lower basin. This unexpected expense has left us in need of assistance from you. Please don't feel that it is someone else's obligation as we depend upon individuals and businesses for operating expenses.

Again this summer, we worked from dawn to dusk with two shifts on weekdays. Our shoreline crews cleaned the entire 42 miles of shoreline at least once and returned to problem areas many times. Our harvesting crews have removed **over 135 tons each and every day** and our weekly production was reported throughout the season on our web-site, [www.chautauqualake.org](http://www.chautauqualake.org). These increased efforts, initially begun two seasons ago have led to a noticeable difference in the quality and enjoyment of the lake.

We also have continued, through Cornell University's Research Ponds Department, our efforts to control invasive weed growth with herbivores. A brochure addressing these efforts was enclosed depicting valuable information especially for lakefront owners in your last appeal letter. The results of the Cornell work, particularly in Burtis Bay, have contributed significantly to the improvement in the lake's condition this summer. By all reports it has been a great year for the enjoyment of the lake, except for the late algae bloom, which is a natural occurrence.

As we move into our repair and maintenance operations for the balance of the year, we especially need your financial help in order to finish the year at a break-even level. Some of our expenses increased substantially this year. The second shift results in significantly higher payroll expenses and other costs. We rely on individuals and businesses to contribute approximately 60 % of our annual budget, with local and state governments (this year we will only receive \$25,000 instead of \$50,000 from New York State and we have not received it yet) providing the remaining 40%. We appreciate your continued support and ask that you consider assisting us in any amount you can afford and a small increase would be greatly appreciated.

Your donation is tax deductible. Please mail your pledge card in today. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

P. Christian Yates

Chautauqua Lake Association President