

Summer 2008

SOS Newsletter

Photo by Wolfgang Tinz



President's Report

Dear Valued Members of SOS,

I hope the 2008 season on Sodus Bay will be one you will enjoy and allow you to rediscover the services provided by Save Our Sodus,

Inc. Our services encompass the education of our members and political representatives, submitting grant applications, training for volunteers, volunteer clean up activities, financial investment in bay improvement programs and the ongoing recruitment of new members and board members.

SOS has a number of activities you can participate in this year and help support the mission of our organization. Your Board of Directors is busy working for you and our bay. Don't hesitate to contact any one of them if you have an issue or concern.

Please review the information in this newsletter and find a program or activity you can participate in. Your willingness to become involved and support our organization will help reinforce what we have accomplished and the ongoing protection of our special but endangered natural resource, Sodus Bay.

Save Our Sodus continues to enjoy the time of our volunteer members and the financial support of all our members. Both are important to our mission and our ability to make progress with the water quality we strive for. Please review your personal role in our association. Anything and everything you can do will help give incentive to our organization and the programs we promote.

This season has a number of challenges facing Sodus Bay and they are significant in scope and long term con-

sequences. The proposed transition of weed harvesting from WC Soil & Water to a private organization continues to be a proposal without substantiation. The proposed change in the lake level management is another concern your Board of Directors have been working on for several months. You need to understand what is being proposed and make your voice heard. Please take the time to educate yourself on these issues and take appropriate action. Again, your Board Members are available to you if you have any questions or need additional information.

On behalf of the SOS Board, I want to thank you for your support of the mission of SOS and your confidence in our representation.

Sincerely,
Chuck Frederick

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5th Annual water chestnut harvest

By Linda Edinger

Volunteers are needed on Saturday, July 12, for the 5th Annual Water Chestnut Harvest. We will meet at 8:30 am at the Sodus Bay Yacht Club for coffee and donuts. From 9:00 until 11:00 the harvest of this invasive weed will take place from our boats around the perimeter of Second Creek. After returning to the Yacht Club you're free to pursue the rest of your day's activities knowing you've helped save Sodus Bay from a threatening predator.

This is the 3rd and final year of a grant that SOS obtained to eradicate the water chestnut from Second Creek. The more volunteers that come to help, the more benefits we receive from this grant. If this plant is left to spread (which it does exponentially) it shades out the local vegetation preferred by the fish and water fowl. Also, the dense

mats formed by the leaves makes boating, swimming, fishing, and other water related activities very difficult if not impossible. Therefore, this invasive weed could drastically affect the beauty and use of Sodus Bay as well as decrease the values of all waterfront properties.

Please come help us on July 12. Older children, and adults of all ages can help. Small motor boats, kayaks, canoes and skiffs are best and there are always extra seats available for those without their own watercraft. You should also be on the lookout for this plant in other areas of the bay and remove and destroy any you find. If you would like to volunteer, have any questions concerning this harvest day, or need information about the water chestnut itself, contact Linda Edinger at 483-6337.

SOS Mission: To improve, protect and preserve the quality of water in the Sodus Bay Watershed

Weed Harvesting Program

By Chuck Frederick

One year ago, SOS received notification from the Soil & Water Agency of Wayne County of their intent to transition the weed harvesting program for the bays of Wayne County from their agency to a not for profit organization. Their anticipated transition time frame would be the Spring of 2008.

The basis for the decision was represented as a result of the program being too large for S&W to manage. SOS responded with a letter in opposition of their decision to remove weed harvesting from a government sponsored structure and the letter went on to give the reasons why the program should remain under government control and administration.

In a proactive attempt to provide the Wayne County Board of Supervisors with another alternative for weed harvesting, your SOS Board commissioned a committee to work on an organizational plan to submit for evaluation. The committee worked together with bay organization representatives from Port Bay, East Bay and Blind Sodus Bay. The ad-hoc Wayne County Bay Association group then proceeded to develop and in October of 2007, present to our Bay Supervisors the document "Management of Weed Harvesting in Wayne County Bays". The document was endorsed and agreed to by the organizations representing the four bays, the WC Water Quality Control Committee and the Aquatic Weed Committee.

The document called for the management of weed harvesting by a WC department other than Soil & Water, an

advisory committee from the bay associations, a financial contribution by the three towns representing the four bays, a financial commitment by the WC Board of Supervisors and monies already allocated by the State of NY.

Unfortunately the plan submitted was not accepted. The Soil & Water Board has continued to promote a proposal for a Bay Shore Cooperative and the WC Board of Supervisors has endorsed this concept. I say concept because as of this date, their "plan" is still a concept with out any structure or details.

This brings us up to date on where weed harvesting is today. Currently, WC Soil & Water is responsible for weed harvesting for the 2008 season. Concurrently, an Advisory Committee has been established to review the proposed Bay Shore Cooperative and the operational requirements required to manage such a program. Our SOS representative is Ed LeRoux and he represents Sodus Bay. Paige Staton from SBIA is the alternate for Sodus Bay. Rob Williams from Soil & Water is the "neutral"

and fifth member of this committee

The Committee has met and will continue to meet to determine the viability of the Bay Shore Cooperative concept or another recommendation to the WC Board of Supervisors. They have a deadline of mid September for their determination.

It has been and remains the opinion of your Board of Directors the transition of this program to an organization outside of the direction and accountability of our WC government will be a backward step for the maintenance and improvement of Sodus Bay.

We encourage our membership to speak to your town and county officials and help them understand the value and importance of our bay and their representative responsibility to help keep our bay clean and desirable for our residents and visitors.

SOS and Sodus Bay needs your help with this issue. Your silence could allow for the slow but inevitable limited use of Sodus Bay and the devaluation of the property and businesses surrounding it.

Save These Dates in 2008

- Saturday, July 12:**
Annual Water Chestnut Harvest
Sodus Bay Yacht Club-8:30 a.m.Kickoff
- Saturday, September 6:**
Annual SOS Dinner
Sodus Bay Heights Golf Club
- Saturday, September 13:**
Shoreline Cleanup

SOS Awarded FL-LOWP Grant

From Ann Hayslip



Nothing is more unpleasant than the decaying masses of floating weeds and weed fragments found around our docks and inlets late in

the summer. This annual problem will be the subject of a study to be completed this summer thanks to a grant awarded to SOS by the Finger Lakes – Lake Ontario Water Shed Protection Alliance.

Last summer an SOS intern collected data about the problem, interviewed local bayshore residents, and studied what has been done on other water bodies. This summer, the grant will make it possible for SOS to complete the study by hiring someone to consolidate the research, develop a plan of action and draft a final report.

Watch the fall newsletter for more information.

Serving Save Our Sodus

SOS Board of Directors

- | | |
|---|--|
| President: Chuck Frederick
315-594-9081 | Secretary: Susie Earl
315-331-1462 |
| Vice President: Donna Chittenden
315-483-6554 | Treasurer: Guy Berretta
585-388-7058 |

Directors:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Linda Edinger 315-483-6337 | Carolyn Jaeger 315-461-1076 |
| Dennis Grandjean 315-483-9629 | Mike Sullivan 315-483-8603 |
| Ann Hayslip 315-483-8225 | Rosemary Thomas 315-483-0292 |
| Mark Tyman 315-483-9623 | |

A letter from the American Littoral Society *Introduction by Mark Tyman*

For those of you who have participated in our annual beach and bay cleanup you know the satisfaction of helping keep our waterways and surrounding areas clean and debris free. The following article will give you a sense of how your efforts fit into the global scope of this annual event. The article is sent to us from the New York state cleanup coordinator, we report our local totals to her and she in turn reports to a national coordinator in Washington, DC.

As is often said, every journey starts one step at a time and our steps here in Sodus Point are an important part of the global journey to a cleaner, healthier environment. If you have joined us in the past thank you for your support, if you haven't participated in the cleanup effort please consider joining us this year. It's an important event and you'll have the satisfaction of going green as we all work to keep our beach and bay clean. Save the date, Saturday morning, September 20th.

Dear Beach Captains:

I just returned from the annual International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Conference where I met with coordinators from all over the world. It is inspiring to hear how each state and country is trying to educate people to the worldwide problem of litter, and what we are all doing to improve and preserve the environment.

According to the 2007 ICC report on the past September cleanup, the Ocean Conservancy counted 378,000 volunteers who scoured 33,000 miles of shoreline in 45 states and 76 countries, and bagged approximately 6 million pounds of trash. The report catalogs the nearly 7.2 million items found, ranging from

cigarette butts to fishing lines and plastic bags that pose lethal threats to wildlife. In fact, volunteers found 81 birds, 63 fish, 49 invertebrates, 30 mammals, 11 reptiles and one amphibian entangled in debris.

Fifty-seven percent of the trash was related to shoreline recreational activities (food wrappers, bottles, cups, lids, etc.), 33 percent from smoking-related activities, 6.3 percent from fishing or waterway activities, 2 percent from dumping and less than 1 percent from medical and personal hygiene activities. Volunteers found vehicle tires, building materials, beverage holders - and 2.3 million cigarette butts, filters and cigar tips.

Perhaps the saddest part of the report's findings is that the problem is entirely preventable. We literally are trashing our world because too many people just don't care, or are totally unaware of appropriate behavior.

Right here, in the state of New York in the 2007 cleanup, 9,339 New Yorkers participated at 284 cleanup sites covering 677 miles, and documented 142,243 pounds of trash. Two most important goals of the American Littoral Society are to activate a growing number of participants each year and to add additional sites to our growing list of areas to document and clean. We are proud

to say that New York ranks 4th in the number of volunteers in the country. Not bad!

And so, I thank all of you who have already registered for the 2008 cleanup and encourage those who have not yet sent in your registration to do so ASAP. Attached is the registration form in case yours is misplaced. We fell slightly short of our usual 10,000 volunteers last year, most probably because of inclement weather, so I encourage you to plan a rain date.

Thank you for your interest in helping our environment. Please alert others in your area as to how they can join the event. You may wish to forward this letter to them.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Barbara

Barbara Cohen, American Littoral Society, New York State Beach Cleanup Coordinator, 1478 Point Breeze Place,

Far Rockaway, NY 11691, Tel: 718-471-2166, Fax: 718-471-0034, Email: alsbeach@aol.com
www.alsnyc.org

SOS Membership Drive

By Mark Tyman

The annual SOS membership drive kicked off in January with a mailing to past members and prospective new members. The goal of the drive is to exceed last year's membership total of 506 members. Responses to the first letter brought 362 renewed memberships and 35 new members! At the same time renewals were starting to arrive our SOS president, Chuck Frederick, was working with Wayne County supervisors regarding the future of the weed harvesting program. Although the details are still being worked out we do know that Wayne County Soil & Water does not want to operate the weed harvesting program after the 2008 season. Some of this information was used in a second mailing to prospective members in early May, highlighting the need to support SOS in the face of this challenge (See article in this newsletter). After the second mailing our membership total climbed to 440 of which 47 are first time members! We are still not at our goal to meet or exceed 506. Our challenges are bigger than ever this year and we need your support as we take on this formidable work. If you have not renewed, please consider doing so, your \$25 membership fee can go a long way in the work to keep the bay clean and navigable. If you a neighbor on the bay who is not a member, please help us spread the word, we will all benefit by working together to promote the health of this beautiful bay. Thank you for continuing to support SOS in 2008 and beyond.

IJC Makes Water Level Decision - Maybe....

By Ann Hayslip

After 5 years of study and more than a year of delays, the International Joint Commission (IJC) finally announced its decision on changes to the Lake Ontario water level protocol in March of this year. Rejecting the three proposed plans (A, B+ and D+), the Commission countered with its own plan, titled Plan 2007.

For those of us on the south shore of Lake Ontario this was a mixed blessing. We were strongly opposed to the three original plans which eliminated upper and lower water level limits in favor of letting the Lake levels go "back to nature".

Unfortunately, Plan 2007 (though not quite as potentially destructive as some of the proposed plans) did not include the protections we feel the south shore needs.

To complicate matters, our governor Paterson and DEC Commissioner Peter Grannis immediately began lobbying the IJC to reject Plan 2007 in favor of the original proposals, B+ holds the most potential for severe high and extreme low water conditions for us. Paterson

and Grannis have been influenced by the well-organized, vocal lobby from the St. Lawrence River area that wants the Lake to return to its "natural" state.

As this newsletter goes to press, public hearings by the IJC have been scheduled around the Lake. The meetings closest to us are in Greece, NY on Wednesday June 11 and in Oswego on Thursday, June 26. It will be critical for us who would be so negatively impacted by this decision to be present to make our case.

If you are not able to attend either meeting, please write the IJC before July 11, 2008. Address: The Secretary, United States Section, International Joint Commission, 2401 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Fourth Floor, Washington, DC, 20440 or email,

comment@washington.ijc.org

In your message include an appeal to the IJC to "keep your 50 year commitment to protect the south shore of Lake Ontario". "Make no decision that will cause harm."

If you have other questions, you may contact me at:

ahayslip@rochester.rr.com



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Join SOS

SOS Mission: To improve, protect and preserve the
quality of water in the Sodus Bay Watershed

----- (Please Cut here and mail) -----

I/we value SOS programs and projects and want to keep Sodus Bay clean for our own and future generations. Here's my tax-deductible contribution to help in this effort. If I have not yet paid my dues, please apply this contribution to that.

\$25 (Household Membership) _____ \$50 or more (additional donation) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

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Please make **checks payable to SOS** and send to PO Box 424, Alton, New York 14413