

# Network News

*It takes a Network to protect a watershed.*



## CLWN's New Water Quality Committee (WQC)

**Bill Ebert** WQC Chair; member, CLWN Board of Directors

*Bill Ebert is a CLWN Board member, Canoga resident and long-time water sampling volunteer. In January 2019 he received approval by the CLWN Board of Directors to establish a Water Quality Committee.*

**B**ill, his co-sampler Tom Casella, and other dedicated volunteers recognized the need to create a formal group that would centralize information about issues such as water quality sampling, Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), aquatic invasive species, and the numerous other water quality issues that the Network has been focused on. The new WQC will also help centralize needed interactions with the Department of Environmental Conservation and other agencies.

Bill and Tom have a vision: to focus public attention on water quality issues and form cooperative partnerships both within and outside of the CLWN to develop action plans for mitigating and solving water quality problems. Additionally, many individuals and small groups are sampling water bodies around the watershed. This committee hopes to connect them all, especially those operating at the lake's north end.

### The new WQC's main areas of concern

**Stream Monitoring:** Understand the water quality issues of each lake tributary, and prioritize attention needed to help remedy these issues. This includes data reporting, developing projects for restoration and getting them funded and implemented with such partners as the Intermunicipal Organization of the Cayuga Lake Watershed, municipalities, the Finger Lakes Institute, and numerous researchers.

**HABs:** Understand Harmful Algal Blooms, and other algae issues. Promote research and solutions to protect Cayuga Lake's water quality. Many algae forms appear in the lake and creeks each year, and people want to know about them. Some algae species may be more disruptive to lakeshore residents than HABs, but little information is available.

*continued on page 2*



Worth protecting! View south along Cayuga Lake from Myers Point, Lansing.



# We have an updated website!

*Beginning in early January 2019, our website has undergone a comprehensive overhaul.*

**AS** of February 25, what you see is powered by a modern platform from Word Press, using Divi themes and page-builders. Our Ithaca-based web services provider AWP (Ancient Wisdom Productions Inc.) did the behind-the-scenes work, trained three of us in the basics, and helped us update and transfer content to the new site.

While not radically changed, the site is refreshed with new photos, updated content, and—we hope—a livelier, sharper approach to communicating the urgency of our work and the need for your active support in protecting Cayuga Lake and its watershed. The website is easier for us to update and we have new tools for creating innovative presentations, graphics and content.

Thanks go to our Board member Mike Duttweiler for plunging enthusiastically into this big task, prioritizing tasks for staffers Jenn Tufano Grillo and Hilary Lambert, and sharing many of his beautiful photos of Cayuga Lake. Thanks also to AWP staff Bryan Bates for skillfully and gently guiding us in the right direction, and to our Treasurer John Abel for working out exactly what we needed in cooperation with AWP Founder



*Jenn Tufano Grillo and Mike Duttweiler train with Bryan Bates of Ancient Wisdom Productions to update and maintain our website.*

Christopher DelCollo.

Finally, a big thank you to the Triad Foundation, Inc. of Ithaca for responding quickly to our need for funding to support these much-needed improvements. 🐾

## CLWN's New Water Quality Committee *continued from cover*

**Invasives:** Centralize information on Cayuga Lake's aquatic plants, fish and other fauna, and aquatic invasive species including Hydrilla, Water Chestnut, and many others. This requires continued strong ties with the Finger Lakes PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management), and working with sister organizations on other lakes.



*Bill Ebert (right) talks with Issues Committee member George Adams. Bill, a CLWN Board member, is centralizing water quality concerns and projects within our new Water Quality Committee.*

**Septic Practices:** Review practices of each county in the Cayuga Lake watershed; Understand and share septic options for homeowners; Understand and communicate about onsite treatment, municipal sewer availability and WWT (wastewater treatment) plants on the lake.

**Agriculture:** Understand Best Management Practices (BMPs) for agriculture, where and why they are used and not used;

Work with County Soil and Water Conservation offices, Cornell Cooperative Extension and other agencies to more effectively promote BMPs to farmers and other lakeside and creekside landowners; Review stormwater runoff issues and practices and their effect on road ditches and downstream water quality; Better understand and communicate about the looming impacts to farming and water quality from climate and global change and extreme weather events; Understand and communicate about the relationship between farming practices, nutrient runoff, and creek and lake water quality.

**DEC Interface:** Communicate with NYS DEC in Albany and at the Syracuse Hub and with researchers about the pending Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and related planning documents including the 2017 Cayuga Lake Restoration & Protection Plan; long-term monitoring plans for the southern shelf and eventually the entire lake; the HABS Action Plan for Cayuga Lake; and other documents.

The Water Quality Committee's founding members are being finalized, and the WQC begins meeting this spring. You will find updates on their work via our community conferences, articles in this newsletter, and on our updated website. There they will soon have a significant presence, providing helpful information tools for the public, and a centralized online location for lake and creek water quality data and links.

Contact Bill Ebert [wsebert@yahoo.com](mailto:wsebert@yahoo.com) for information about the WQC. For information about the Network's other committees, please look under "About" at [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org). 🐾

# IT'S YOUR TURN!

## Volunteer Recruitment & Membership Renewal for 2019

**Volunteers:** We are seeking new volunteers to help with our projects and tasks. Please see the list below, and check activities you'd like to know more about. Mail this tear-out to us, or contact Jenn at [programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org). We'll be in touch soon!

**MEMBERS:** it's time to renew for 2019! Please make a tax-deductible 2019 donation to your Cayuga Lake watershed protection organization. You can use the form below to join or renew. Mail completed form w/check to CLWN, PO Box 348, Aurora, NY 13026

**DONATIONS** can also be made via paypal at our website [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org). THANK YOU!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 May we add you to our listserv? ☐ Yes ☐ No

### We have membership levels to suit everyone's needs.

Please check one of the levels below.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> \$10 Student/Senior | <input type="radio"/> \$50 Organization/Agency   |
| <input type="radio"/> \$25 Individual     | <input type="radio"/> \$100 Headwaters Donor     |
| <input type="radio"/> \$35 Family         | <input type="radio"/> \$250 Lake Sponsor         |
| <input type="radio"/> \$50 Business/Farm  | <input type="radio"/> \$500 Watershed Benefactor |

### We are growing and expanding our effective programs.

Would you like to make an extra donation to support this work?

- \$\_\_\_\_\_ Unrestricted—for general operations.  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ To support water quality tests on Canoga, Burroughs, Yawger and Milliken Creeks.  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ To support improved outreach to YOUTH, our watershed's future protectors.  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ To expand our springtime Embrace the Lake creek, lakefront & ditches cleanups.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

(payable to Cayuga Lake Watershed Network please)

Payment can also be made via Paypal at our website [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org)  
 Your Contributions to the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network are Tax Deductible

### VOLUNTEERS! I would like to learn more about/volunteer for:

- ☐ HABs Harrier—Looking for algal blooms via summer-fall shoreline monitoring
- ☐ Hydrilla i.d. kit dispenser setup and maintenance—spring-fall install and refill hydrilla information dispensers in public areas around the lake, as part of Dave's Team.
- ☐ Embrace the Lake cleanups—spring: clean up trash in self-designated area of the watershed. We provide gloves, bags, snacks, site advice. Free.
- ☐ Host a CLWN Membership/Fundraising event at my home/cottage—year-round.
- ☐ Join a CLWN committee such as Programs, Community Relations, Issues—year-round.
- ☐ Join the Network News advisory group—help with ideas, research and writing news articles.
- ☐ Help with issues and events around Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Invasive species control, trained volunteer water sampling, possible buffer plantings, tabling at public events.

Volunteers are needed  
 (this is our intern Carly Shonbrun-Siege, at Covert Town Hall) to help maintain over seventy hydrilla i.d. kit dispensers around the lake. Join Dave's Team and help with this!



Trained volunteers take water samples along Milliken Creek; also on the Canoga stretch of Cayuga Lake shoreline and on Yawger and Great Gully creeks. We need your help with this!



# HABS Harriers—first call!

## Join Cayuga Lake's Harmful Algal Bloom monitoring team for 2019

**Hilary Lambert** Steward/Executive Director, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

*We're looking for new volunteers to join our established team to monitor the Cayuga Lake shoreline for Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) this coming summer. Also known as cyanobacteria or blue-green algae, HABs are on the rise in Cayuga Lake and across the region. They can be toxic; they are ugly, and people and pets need to stay away from them. Will you help us ramp up our monitoring and reporting vigilance in 2019?*



*This drone photo of bright green Harmful Algal Blooms along the Canoga shoreline, northwest side of Cayuga Lake, was taken in September 2018 by Tom Casella.*

**IN** 2018, the Community Science Institute (CSI) of Ithaca carried out lab analysis of the HABs samples collected by Harriers and members of the public. They documented forty confirmed cyanobacteria blooms, seventy percent of which had microcystin toxin levels above the acceptable limit for ambient water set by the NY State Department of Health. These blooms with higher toxin levels were observed to occur more frequently in September, were dominated by specific taxa (types) of cyanobacteria, and many of them occurred in the northern half of the lake.

Last year, CSI recruited and, with the NY Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC), trained over 70 volunteers around Cayuga Lake as HABS Harriers. These Harriers monitored thirty percent of the Cayuga Lake shoreline weekly from July to October. This year we are looking for thirty new volunteers and we aim to cover fifty percent of the shoreline. Our short-term

goal is to keep the public alert to blooms that may threaten human and animal health. Long term, we seek to better understand factors that promote HABs so that we can manage the risk they pose to our recreational enjoyment of the lake and drinking water.

### **What's involved in being a HABS Harrier volunteer?**

- You commit to walking a designated stretch of shoreline once a week and submitting a report as to whether you observed a Harmful Algal Bloom.
- You attend a two-hour HABs identification and sampling workshop in June, presented by the Community Science Institute and the DEC.
- The shoreline zone you designate can be your own property or that of a friend; or you can select available public shoreline for your regular patrol.
- If you observe a suspicious bloom, you take pictures, record the location,

report it, take a sample and get it to the CSI lab for analysis.

- The monitoring season is from July–October with flexibility when you need to be away.

CSI works together with DEC and other agencies to alert the public quickly to where the blooms are threatening lake use. Blooms are reported on CSI's website at the HABs Reporting Page.

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN) partners with CSI to get information out to the public. Go to the CLWN website for more HABs information—click on Algal Blooms at the top of the home page. We need your help this summer to protect our beautiful lake and our enjoyment of its waters.

Please contact Hilary Lambert [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org) for more information about becoming a HABS Harrier. 🐾

# Out of the vaults of deep time (Well, kind of) Our first newsletter issues, 2000-02

**Hilary Lambert** Steward/Executive Director, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

*What was the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network focused on, back in its early days? No doubt many of you remember. Here's help for us newer arrivals: Sharon Anderson (Steward, 2001-2008) recently unearthed four of the earliest issues of the Network News, from Spring 2000 to Winter 2001.*

The kickoff announcement in 2000 was that the Park Foundation was funding the Stewardship position, support staff and office functions with a five-year commitment, to “help facilitate public participation in the development and implementation of the emerging management plan for the Cayuga Lake Watershed, increase public awareness of watershed issues, and work with existing public and community organizations concerned with Cayuga Lake.”

The Park Foundation's support over the years since has helped us stay on course to maintain these long-term goals, and to amplify our outreach and urgency with the emergence locally of extreme weather and global change. Today we are also grateful to many funders and partners, old and new!

Several articles were written by Kathy Bertuch (then and now with the Central NY Regional Planning and Development Board) about progress in developing the first Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan and the Watershed Characterization. Also, José Lozano (today Lab Director, Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility; Biological Energy), provided an overview of the lake's water quality and challenges, based on the 1998 Characterization. These documents, developed by the Intermunicipal Organization of the Cayuga Lake Watershed (IO) and issued in 1998 - 2000, have guided watershed wide research, monitoring, planning, education and mitigation in the years since.

The RPP was updated in 2017 by a team led by Steward Hilary Lambert, involving experts and residents lakewide. It holds a treasure trove of information with links to much more about our watershed, and is being used by the IO and state and local agencies, in concert with other plans and guidance documents, to help protect our lake and creeks.

Other early days foci were on migrating birds; celebratory events; news from Albany; boating issues; farm runoff control; groundwater contamination; and that perennial favorite, the seasonally fluctuating water levels of Cayuga Lake. Many of the authors and people mentioned are still closely involved with water quality protection and science. Thanks to everyone then and now.

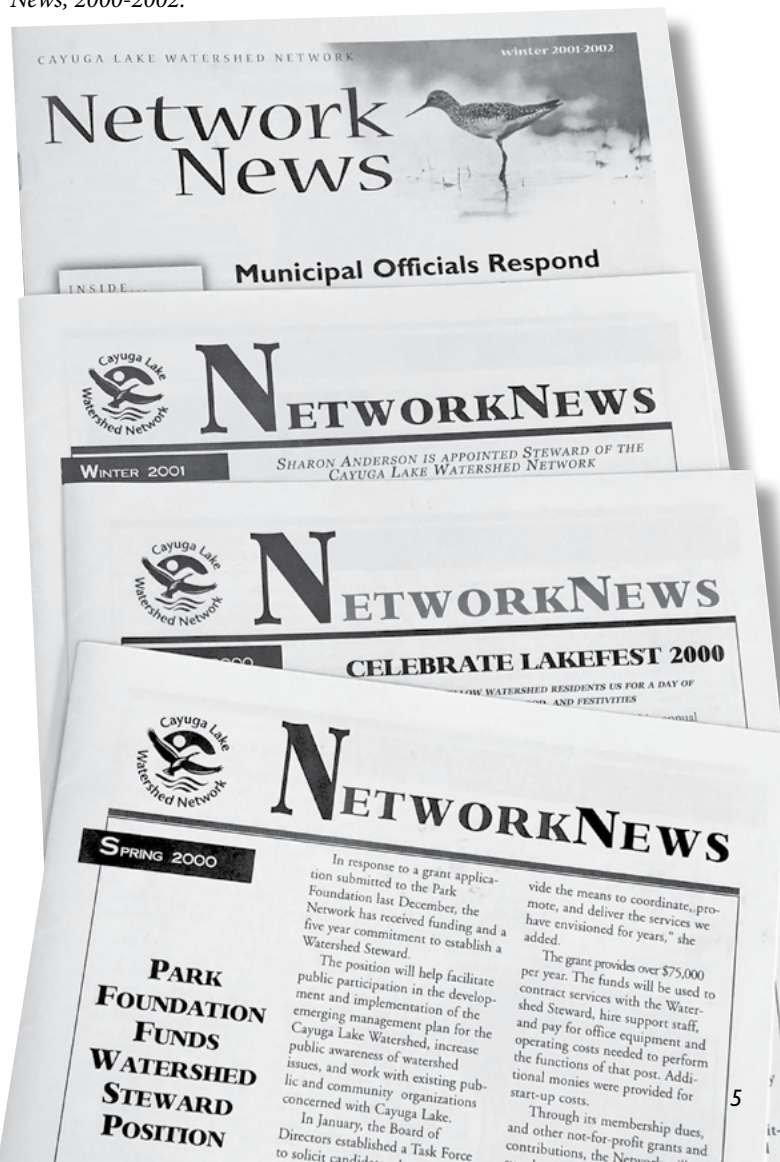
Also noted are the first steps taken by Steve Penningroth to establish regular volunteer-based water sampling, on Fall Creek. Today the Community Science Institute that he and others founded, with certified water lab, conducts volunteer-based creek, lake, well water and Harmful Algal Bloom sampling around the lake and across the region.

My favorite article is “Follow-Up on Gas Drilling,” a prescient piece written by then-Board member Barney Unsworth in 2001. The article details our founding chair,

Jim White's evaluation of a proposal to drill for natural gas in the Finger Lakes National Forest. White tartly commented that if all factors are considered, this activity would be a money loser, not maker, for the governments concerned, and called for a Congressional ban on drilling in or under national forestlands. A “No Action” decision was announced by the Finger Lake forest supervisor in late 2001, meaning no gas drilling at that time. Considering the firestorm that was to come, from 2008-2014, after which fracking-based gas drilling was banned statewide, it is gratifying to know that the Network was already leading the way on this important water protection issue.

These early issues will be added to our online newsletter archives soon at [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org). 🐦

*Four of the earliest issues of the Network News, 2000-2002.*





# Funding for septic system replacement now includes seasonal, secondary homes

**Funds remain available for septic system replacement assistance into 2019. Seasonal and secondary homes are now included.**

- The information below is from Tom Scoles at the Seneca County Department of Environmental Health and pertains to funding availability for the Seneca Lake and Cayuga Lake shorelines in Seneca County. Contact Tom: [tscoles@co.seneca.ny.us](mailto:tscoles@co.seneca.ny.us) <[tscoles@co.seneca.ny.us](mailto:tscoles@co.seneca.ny.us)> or call (315) 539-1945.
- For information about funding along the Tompkins

County shoreline, contact the Environmental Health Division, Tompkins County Department of Health: <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh/email> <<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/eh/email>> or call (607) 274-6688.

- For the Cayuga County shoreline, contact the Environmental Health Division, Cayuga County Department of Health: [cchealth@cayugacounty.us](mailto:cchealth@cayugacounty.us) <[cchealth@cayugacounty.us](mailto:cchealth@cayugacounty.us)> or call (315) 253-1405.



## Seneca County Health Department

Health and Senior Services Building  
2465 Bonadent Drive, Suite 3  
Waterloo, NY 13165

Division of Environmental  
Health Services

Phone: 315-539-1945  
Fax: 315-539-4745  
[www.co.seneca.ny.us](http://www.co.seneca.ny.us)

January 1, 2019

The Seneca County Department of Health is pleased to announce its participation in the Clean Water Infrastructure Act of 2017 State Septic System Replacement Fund. Funds for the program were made available to Seneca County through the efforts of Senator Helming's office and total approximately \$225,000.00 for 2018.

Properties served by an onsite waste water treatment system (septic system) that are failing and/or in need of updating which are:

1. within 250 feet of Cayuga or Seneca Lake.
2. single or two family homes.
3. small businesses which produce less than 1,000 gallons per day of waste water.

are eligible to participate in the program.

The program is a reimbursement model and property owners must pay for the required engineering and site work up front. An application to receive the funding must be filed for review with the Health Department and if approved a reimbursement of up to 50% of the project cost, with a maximum of \$10,000.00 may be awarded.

Applications are now being accepted; please contact Tom Scoles at the Seneca County Department of Environmental Health for further details.

# Upcoming Watershed Events

Check our website [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org) & Facebook page for the latest!

## **Want to do an Embrace the Lake Cleanup along a ditch, stream, creek, the lakeshore?**

We can help your group, club, neighborhood organize your event, providing posters, gloves, and locations, free. March—early May is best. Contact [programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org)

**Earth Day is Monday April 22.** The national Earth Day Network has information at [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org) about their 2019 theme, “Protect our Species”—those that are endangered and threatened. Watch our Facebook page, and the Glorious Trashbirds page, plus website and listserv for local events during Earth Week, to include cleanups and celebrations.

**May 3-4: “Empowering Lake Associations in Challenging Times”—The NY State Federation of Lake Association’s annual conference** is a great way to learn more about lake health, public policy, and community engagement. The 36th NYSFOLA Annual Conference will be held May 3-4, 2019 at the Fort William Henry Hotel and Conference Center in Lake George, NY. For more information and registration forms, please contact Nancy Mueller at [fola@nysfola.org](mailto:fola@nysfola.org) or (800)796-3652 or go to the NYSFOLA website conference page <https://nysfola.org/annual-conference/>. Hotel information and reservations: Ask for the NYSFOLA room block prices. There are three different room types/prices to choose from (while they last). <https://www.fortwilliamhenry.com/>. Contact [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org) to learn who else is attending from the Cayuga Lake area. Ridesharing possible!

**Saturday May 18: Community Conference, location and speakers TBA. The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network’s spring event at the north end of Cayuga Lake.** Watch our Facebook page & website [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org) for details about location and presentations on restoring better water quality in our creeks, reducing runoff from lakeshore yards and gardens, Harmful Algal Blooms, Hydrilla & other invasives, and our new Water Quality Committee. From 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Free, refreshments served. Contact Jenn Tufano Grillo [programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org).

**Friday June 7: The Network is co-sponsoring a trash-based art show at Ithaca’s Community School of Music and Arts gallery for its June First Friday event.** In keeping with our support of trash cleanups, the Network celebrates localish artists who make vibrant use of discards and litter. There will be photos, displays, sculpture, and re-interpretations of found objects. Also, maps and words about trash locations and types; and we hope to offer off-site activities in June and July. The gallery is at 330 East State Street. Watch our listserv, Facebook page and website for details. Contact Network Board member Paul Closs for more information [PaulCloss@gmail.com](mailto:PaulCloss@gmail.com).

**SPRINGTIME: Check for Hemlock Wooly Adelgid damage on the lakeshore.** Paddlers and early-season boaters, please keep an eye out for damaged or dead patches of hemlock trees along the lake. Report with location and photos (if possible) to [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org) and we will get the information to the New York State Hemlock Initiative at Cornell U.

**Schools, Scouts & Monarch Butterflies:** For their grueling, multigenerational flights between North America and Mexico, Monarch butterflies need food in the form of milkweed leaves. Milkweed plants grow well in open areas and can help prevent erosion and runoff. Win and win! If your school, scouts, community group want to do a planting to help both butterflies and water quality, contact Michelle [shedsterh2o@gmail.com](mailto:shedsterh2o@gmail.com) or Patricia [levelgreen2010@gmail.com](mailto:levelgreen2010@gmail.com)—Free.

**Spring and summer: Watershed quilt activities and displays** will be happening at a variety of events. Contact Patricia for events and how to take part in this beautiful project [levelgreen2010@gmail.com](mailto:levelgreen2010@gmail.com).

**July 7 - 13: Invasive Species Week:** Watch for local activities to control/educate about invasive species. More information here: <http://www.nyisri.org/event/2019-invasive-species-awareness-week/>.

**August 21: CLWN’s Annual Meeting & Picnic!** From 5:30-9 p.m. Lakeside location tba. 🐾

## **Volunteers—you got time?**

We got tasks, large and small, one-time and ongoing. See page 3 for how you can get involved to help protect our lake, creeks, and communities, human and natural.

## The mission...

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network identifies key threats to Cayuga Lake and its watershed, and it advocates for solutions that support a healthy environment and vibrant, sustainable communities.



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### Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

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By appointment.  
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to arrange.

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The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network thanks Leigh Dezelan of Dezelan Design and Pioneer Printing of Lodi for newsletter production excellence.



- Educate
- Advocate
- Protect

Current Resident

## CLWN's James White dies at 101

*We are preparing an article for the mid-year issue of the life and times of our founding Chair, James C. White, who died on October 2, 2018. If you would like to share for publication memories and stories about Jim, please send them to [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org) by early May.*



James C. White, 1916 - 2018. CLWN's founding Chair.

*Thank you.*