

Network News

*It takes a
Network to protect
a watershed.*



Celebrating Cayuga Lake Through the Art of Quilting—An Invitation

Patricia Haines-Gooding *CLWN Board of Directors*

Caring for Cayuga Lake is not just about policy, meetings, and field work!

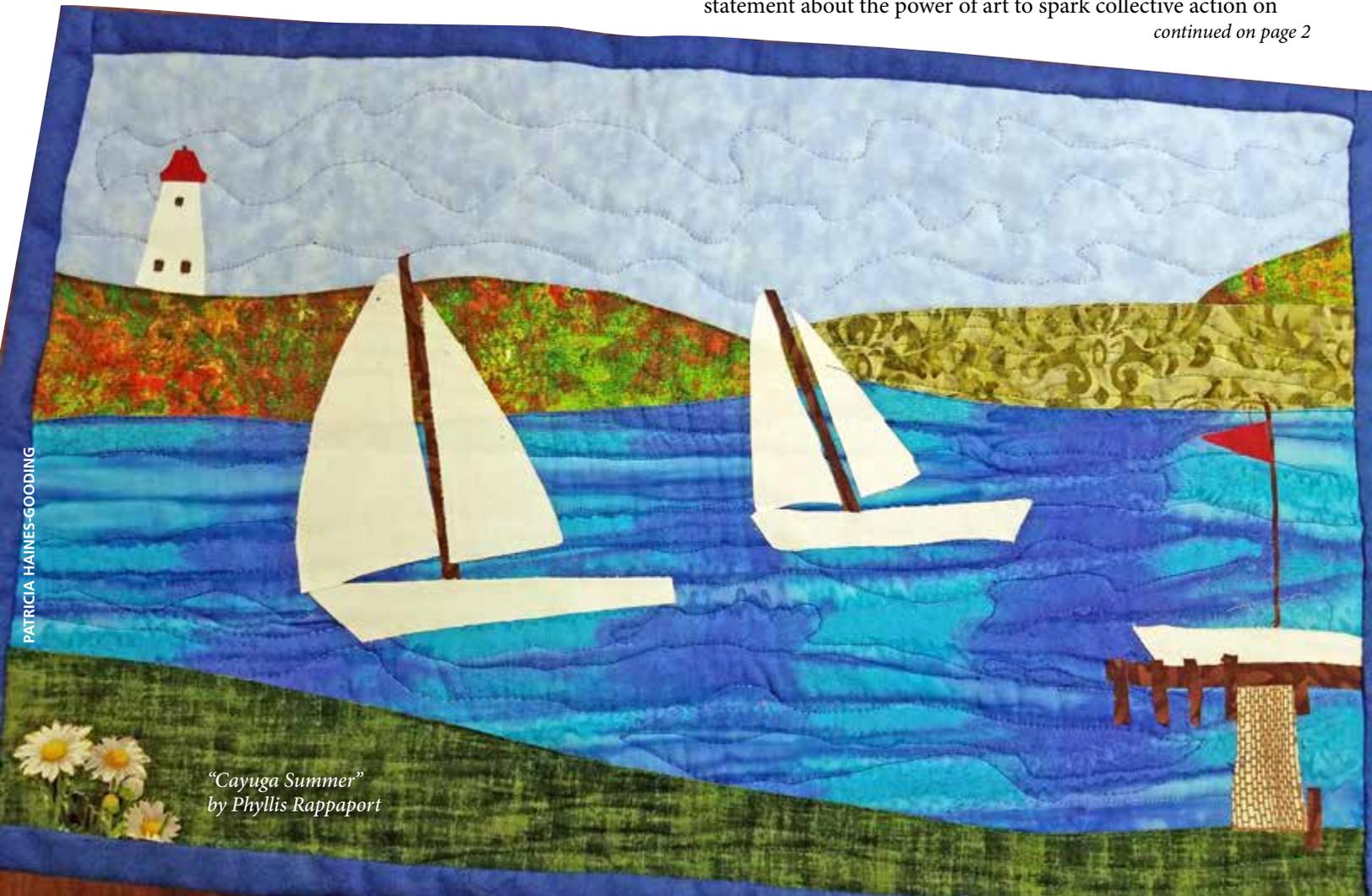
We invite Cayuga quilters—all ages and experience levels, wherever you live—to join in a shared artistic journey to express our connectedness to the Lake we love. For generations quilts have embodied creativity, heritage and community.

Watershed groups across the country

are starting to call on this art form to draw attention to the increasingly critical need to protect the waters that give us life.

For this project, images of water, woodlands and fields of corn, boats and fish, animals and birds, whatever we most love about living here, will be exhibited together, as a lake-wide statement about the power of art to spark collective action on

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*“Cayuga Summer”
by Phyllis Rappaport*

PATRICIA HAINES-GOODING

Mel Russo's Living Legacy: Milkweed and Monarchs

Seneca County residents will remember CLWN Board member Mel Russo for many things, but few know that his most recent, vibrant project will continue to enliven roadsides, schoolyards, and home gardens for years to come.

Patricia Haines-Gooding *CLWN Board of Directors*
Michelle Henry *CLWN member & volunteer*

Mel seeded this tradition before his death last April, by giving out CLWN-sponsored milkweed packets throughout Seneca County to science teachers. Tompkins County students are now involved. At the encouragement of CLWN volunteer Michelle Henry, this past fall Mrs. Tripodi's Newfield first grade and Mrs. Drumluk's fifth grade joined hands to create a special milkweed garden in Mel's honor. As Mrs. D. enthused, "It's every teacher's dream to have older kids with younger kids outside getting their hands dirty and learning."

Responding to widespread concern about the demise of these iconic butterflies, many school districts encourage elementary classes to grow and release their own, learning about their miraculous migrations to Mexico along the way. The biggest threat, however, comes not from delicate wings flying so many miles but from lack of food close to home. Monarchs lay their eggs only on milkweed; and their caterpillars eat only milkweed. Eradication of milkweed in both agricultural and urban areas is one of the key reasons for the threatened demise of this beloved butterfly.

Mel's watershed protection insight was that milkweed is a sturdy plant that can grab and hold soils, preventing erosion. Helping Monarchs by growing milkweed plants also means protecting soils and slopes, reducing runoff.

Digging in the new garden's soil came second to watching the white seed silk whirl away in the wind, and taking home their own packets for home gardens, on that magical sunny October day in Newfield. It was too late this year for the Monarch caterpillars tenderly nurtured in each classroom to find a home just outside their window, but next year, they will find what they need to thrive. Knowing that future Monarchs will awaken to a



Photo of a female Monarch butterfly on Mexican milkweed, in Pennsylvania. © Derek Ramsey / derekramsey.com / Used with permission. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monarch_Butterfly_Danaus_plexippus_on_Milkweed_Hybrid_2800px.jpg

Thanks to Mel Russo and editor Susan Backlund, we are able to provide groups with milkweed seeds in these beautiful, informative envelopes. The seeds are collected locally on Deb Grantham's Ithaca farm.

feast evoked enthusiastic invitations to return next year.

Thanks to a grant from the Hardy Seeds Foundation and fresh milkweed pods from CLWN Board Chair Deb Grantham's horse pasture, we welcome opportunities to share Mel's legacy with families, schools, gardeners of all ages throughout the Cayuga Lake watershed. September and October are the best planting months, and Steward Hilary Lambert will pass along your interests to the Milkweed Project volunteers. 🐦



Celebrating Cayuga Lake Through the Art of Quilting—An Invitation *continued from cover*

behalf of the Lake at the heart of our regional identity.

Quilting groups, school classrooms, Scouts, and any interested persons are invited to create and submit blocks (max 30" square) that will draw viewers into connecting with the watershed. All modes—abstract, traditional, collage, paint—are welcome.

A form detailing the submission process will soon be available on the CLWN website www.cayugalake.org. Completed

squares are due by July 1, 2019. Our goal is to mount an exhibit that can travel to libraries, wineries, community centers, quilt shows and other public places starting in September 2019.

If you are interested in having this exhibit visit your public space, or in helping us develop a tour, please get in touch! Patricia Haines-Gooding welcomes suggestions and questions to levelgreen2010@gmail.com, or text to 607-339-9472. 🐦

Lead in Salmon Creek Community concern is growing

The Lansing Rod and Gun Club (LRGC) is a long-established gathering place for local families who enjoy trap shooting. Trap is one of several forms of competitive clay pigeon shooting, in this case using lead shot. Their clubhouse and shooting area are situated on a bend of Salmon Creek just above Ludlowville Falls. Below the falls is a beloved local swimmin' hole. Downstream the creek flows through a steep-sided gorge into Cayuga Lake, with Lansing's Myers Park along the south bank and the Salt Point natural area on the north bank of the creek. This stretch of Salmon Creek and the lakeshore is home to hundreds of bird species, including Ospreys, ducks, and Great Blue Herons. The creek here is a NYS DEC-designated and maintained public trout fishing stream.

Two years ago, the LRGC agreed to abide by a US EPA order to stop shooting into creek areas, and to develop methods for periodically collecting lead shot. They were not required to clean up the fifty years of lead that has accumulated. However, in recent months the LRGC has, apparently, decided to not comply with this order, and instead is proposing to move its trap shooting area to a new, equally vulnerable site on adjoining property along Salmon Creek.

There are well-established, factual reasons to be concerned about the toxic legacy of fifty years of lead shot buildup in this creek. Lead pellets are attractive to birds and other wildlife, and often fatal. This is well documented. The Network and others will be seeking funding to ascertain impacts to birds, wildlife, and human uses of this area. A new local community group, Citizens for a Healthy Salmon Creek Watershed, is informing the public about the situation via letters sent to local media. Following is a letter from Karen Edelstein. Contact: karen.edelstein@gmail.com

Open letter to the members of the Lansing Rod and Gun Club:

I have heard from sportsmen across the state, as well as members of the Lansing Rod and Gun Club (LRGC), that they want their children and grandchildren to have the shooting and fishing opportunities that they, themselves, have had. Looking to the future in that sense is good...but only if it includes conscientious stewardship for the land, water, animals, and humans whose habitat is impacted by these recreational activities.

For close to a decade, I was an educator with a statewide Cooperative Extension program for sportsmen who wanted to make a difference for the future of the resources that they love. The motto of the program was "Passin' It On." The hundreds of men, women, and youth I instructed were committed both to honing their skills in fishing and shooting, and also to learning about and improving the land and water that supported their recreational interests. Through our shared respect for ecology and natural resources, we held compatible visions of conservation.

On their website, the Lansing Rod and Gun Club refers to their membership as "concerned conservationists" who "as a club take conservation seriously." But what kind of conservationists knowingly load tons of toxic lead shot a year into the environment? What part of their aspiration of "We always like to make new friends" includes building a shooting range 500 feet from a neighbor's home? What part of a conservation stewardship foregoes switching from lead to non-lead



View downstream along Salmon Creek, with Cayuga Lake in the distance. Note the proposed new trap shooting range (foreground) and the present range between the Lansing Rod and Gun Club buildings and the creek-side bluffs.

BILL HECHT

shot, in spite of lead's known risks to human and environmental health?

If your club folds due to declining membership or inability to pay your taxes, the burden of cleaning up your contaminated property would shift to the tax-paying public of Lansing and New York State.

This contaminated property is the Gun Club's legacy, and, most certainly, is not compatible with the health and well-being of the residents of Ludlowville.

LRGC has been around for 63 years. The vibrant hamlet of Ludlowville has been here for well over two centuries. Lead shot does not respect property boundaries, and migrates downstream, downslope, and into the food chain. The Gun Club's choices about how to pursue their trap shooting hobby impact us all.

By continuing to add lead to the soil—whether at the existing trap range, or in the new area you are proposing to

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Water Chestnut monitoring and removal in the City of Ithaca drinking water reservoir

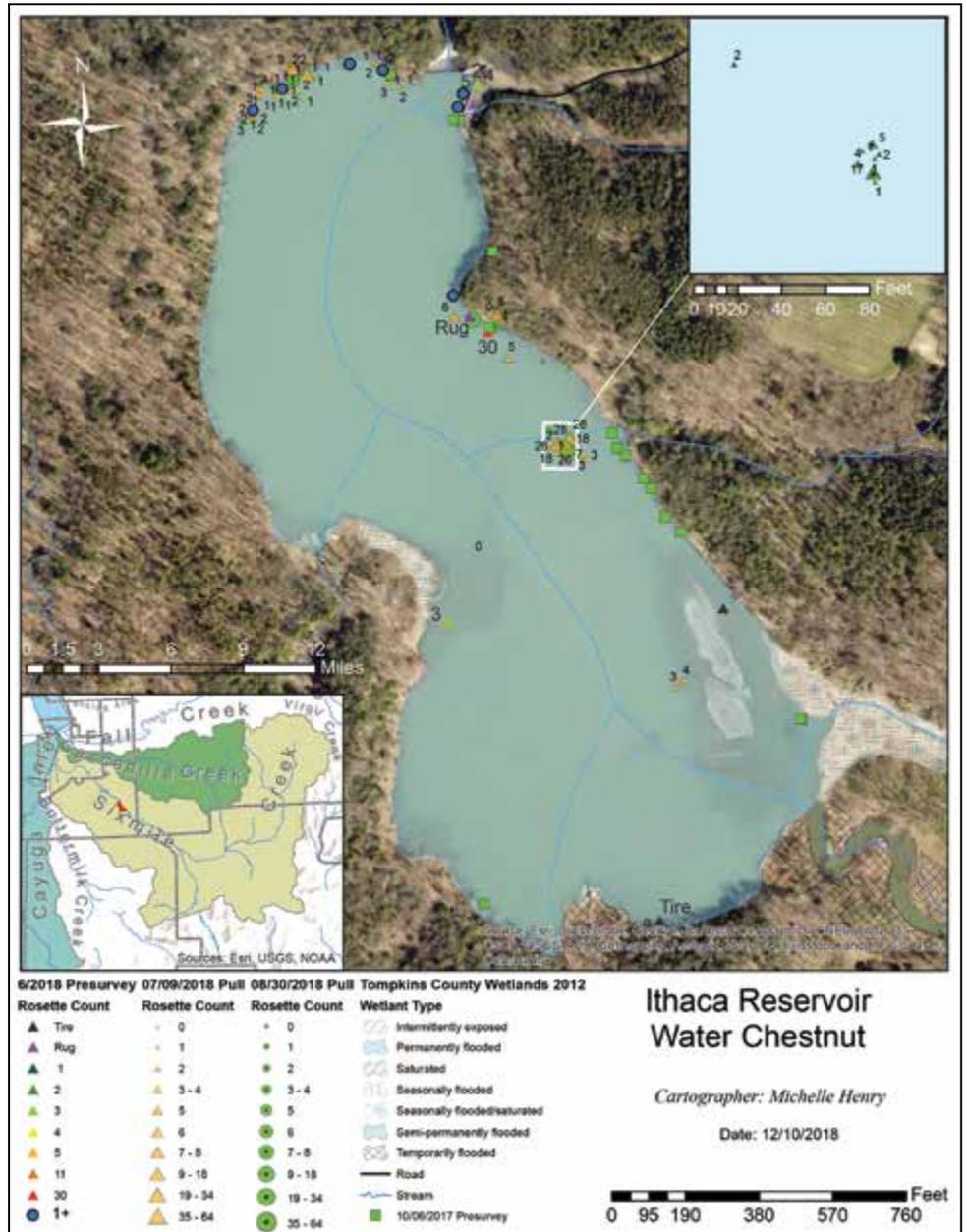
Michelle Henry Member, CLWN and Water Resources Council for Tompkins County

Great things happen when knowledgeable scientists keep an eye out for invasives, and local colleagues collaborate in the name of invasive species stewardship!

During a routine late-summer 2017 survey of Ithaca Reservoir by Rebecca Gorney (NYS DEC), the presence of invasive Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*) was reported to Roxanna Johnston, City of Ithaca Watersheds Coordinator and Lab Director, City of Ithaca Water Treatment Plant.

Roxy reached out to Hilary Lambert, Steward of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network. Reservoir neighbor Patricia Gooding (CLWN Board) and Michelle Henry, prior Water Chestnut Strike Team Lead, Finger Lakes PRISM, were asked to work with Roxy to develop a plan for long-term eradication of *Trapa natans* in the City of Ithaca's drinking water supply.

With DEC's initial data and a more thorough survey made by Michelle Henry



Water chestnut removal, Ithaca Reservoir, summer 2018.

and Cynthia Brock (Ithaca Common Council member), a sprinkling of rosettes along the north and eastern shores was mapped during October of 2017.

Two 2018 pulls were carried out, with six to seven participants in each, using Stand Up Paddleboards and other small vessels. A total of 39.6 lbs. of Water Chestnut was hand-pulled from the 44-acre reservoir, on July 9 during Invasive Species Awareness Week and on August 30.

This modest amount is a testament to what a small group of watershed stewards

can accomplish when invasive species are caught early. Locations of the plants were mapped for future monitoring and removal. Evidence of *Trapa natans* pervasiveness is apparent, with the tripling of rosettes along the northwest and east banks since the initial 2017 survey. As with any chestnut eradication effort, this project will be a vigilantly persistent long term project. 🐾

Hydrilla Update

Our 2018 season-end hydrilla public information session at Wells College had a packed house.

Thank you to the seven staffers from the Finger Lakes Institute who attended, along with many members of the public, government officials, and hydrilla experts. The big news is that hydrilla may be locally eradicated at Cayuga Lake's south end, but it has spread into the lake.

Bob Johnson (Racine-Johnson Associates) and Mike Greer (US Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo office) reported on hydrilla plants in the shallows off of Stewart Park, Ithaca; and the treatment area offshore of the Village of Aurora, halfway up the eastern shore.

Bob also reported that trusty Hydrilla Hunter Paul Closs found a new tangle of hydrilla from his kayak along the northern edge of the Cayuga Inlet, identified by Michelle Henry before handing it over to Bob. We thank Paul—and call on his paddling community to help search along that shoreline next summer.

Emmy Yost and Jared Bedient are a seasoned kayak and scuba duo carrying out a detailed lakeshore survey for hydrilla under the direction of Hilary Mosher at the Finger Lakes PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management). They



Paul Closs with the rake that he used to collect hydrilla, while kayaking during our October 20 lakewide Hydrilla Hunt.

found flourishing hydrilla plants along the docks at Don's Marina, on the east shore in King Ferry. See their map here: <http://fingerlakesinvasives.org/hydrilla/>.

If hydrilla gets a toe-hold in the shallow waters at either end of the lake, or offshore of cottage communities and marinas, it will soon grow into a stranglehold on lake use and enjoyment. Please consider helping Dave's Team with hydrilla information dispensers around the lake next summer. We

are developing a lakewide municipal hydrilla forum in January-February 2019: see Upcoming Events on page 8.

Harmful Algal Blooms Update

We had a hot, wet summer and the lake saw many cyanobacteria blooms. Thank you to all the volunteers who collected data and reported blooms to habshotline@gmail.com. The Community Science Institute, Finger Lakes Institute, NY DEC, Upstate

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A Good Question

Patricia Haines-Gooding
CLWN Board of Directors

During Ithaca's Wizarding Weekend at the end of October, one of our young visitors asked, "What can I do at home to protect the Lake?" Since CLWN members are pledged to do just this, we want to know what YOU do, at home and every day, to take action on Cayuga's behalf.

Some thoughts sent in thus far:

- Pick up trash wherever you see it, so it won't get into streams and ditches that run down to the Lake.
- Check detergent and fertilizer contents for phosphorus, a factor in creating Harmful Algal Blooms (cyanobacteria/blue-green algae).
- Don't throw pharmaceuticals down the toilet or sink, they are an increasing threat to water quality.
- Don't let water run in the sink when not in use.
- Collect rainwater for your gardens (maybe not needed this wet summer and autumn!)
- Adopt a creek near your home and safeguard its banks as well as its waters.
- Watch for Hemlock Woolly Adelgids when out for your family hike in the woods.
- Come Spring, join the Hydrilla Hunters, HABs Harriers or stream monitoring groups.



Go for "Zero in the middle" phosphorus-free lawn fertilizer!

Your ideas? Please share with Patricia, levelgreen2010@gmail.com. You can contact Jenn Tufano Grillo, programs@cayugalake.org, for more information on these topics and activities. 🐦

Lead in Salmon Creek Community concern is growing

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contaminate with no viable mitigation plan or concern for the neighbors' property value—is nothing shy of selfish and short-sighted, towards the environment, towards neighbors, and for the future of your club.

Members of the Lansing Rod and Gun Club: please consider what you really want that legacy of "passin' it on" to be. 🐦

Karen Edelstein
*Citizens for a Healthy Salmon Creek Watershed
Lansing, NY*

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Cayuga Lake in the Great Lakes Basin

Rebecca Ruggles CLWN Issues Committee member

As someone who relishes my daily views of Cayuga Lake, I often feel at a loss: how can I understand the many issues and impacts on the quality of Cayuga Lake waters? And exactly how is our lake part of an even larger ecosystem?

AT the end of November, I attended a half day conference that gave me a better understanding of all of this. At Hilary's invitation, I joined a few CLWN Board and committee members at the Great Lakes Action Agenda Work Group meeting for our sub-basin.

Cayuga Lake is part of the Southeast Ontario sub-basin and our bi-annual meeting work group meeting took place in Auburn on November 30. The DEC has been holding these work groups since publication in 2014 of the Great Lakes Basin Action Agenda.

About 25 people ringed the conference room at the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District offices on November 30. Participants represented a reassuringly diverse array of organizations—from local governments to state agency staff, from local watershed groups to the Nature Conservancy.

For me, just seeing this array of people and the organizations they represent was an education. For instance, I didn't know that the DEC and New York State Ag and Markets have a Memorandum of Understanding to implement cover crop programs. Or that Resilient New York is an initiative focused on climate change, and that the working assumption is that all communities are at increased risk of flood due to global warming.

A plan to develop a citizen monitoring team for cladophora was presented. Work is also underway on emerging contaminants such as PFOAs, PCBs, and pharmaceuticals.

We heard about the Trees for Tribes program and heard concerns voiced about industrial siting of wind turbines

that contribute to forest fragmentation. Of course, there was discussion of both known and new invasive species—ugh!

Funding has been and will continue to be available from multiple sources, for projects such as shoreline stabilization

using natural approaches, forest stewardship, and riparian restoration, among much else.

A lively discussion took place towards the end of the meeting on ways to engage more residents in watershed protection work and support. Some few random highlights: the NYS Office of Environmental Justice supports youth summer jobs; the DEC has a curriculum writer who is available to help school teachers of environmental education (at all levels); and using Facebook to recruit participants is more effective if the message comes from a local citizens group than from a government agency.

My biggest take-away from the meeting was to notice how actively our four CLWN representatives participated and contributed to the discussions. I don't think I'm just biased: I truly saw Hilary, Louise Mudrak, Patricia Haines, and Michelle Henry speaking up at least

as often as the numerous DEC staff present. Across the table was long-time Network member and leader, Professor Niamh O'Leary, Wells College, who contributed as well.

Our team's knowledge of our watershed was comprehensive. They know who is in action to protect what, and their probing comments on who was missing at the table added substantively to the meeting. I left more confident than ever that our own Cayuga watershed and lake are in good hands. 🐾



We are stewards for the Great Lakes. The central and eastern Finger Lakes drain to Lake Ontario via the Seneca-Oswego river system. The western Finger Lakes drain via the Genesee River through Rochester to Lake Ontario. Managing the Water Resources of the Oswego River Basin in Central New York (2002). Kappel and Landre, USGS http://www.cayugalake.org/files/all/usgs_oswego_rb_report_fs180-99.pdf

Harmful Algal Blooms Update *continued from page 5*

Freshwater Institute and many researchers are reviewing the data for trends and clues as to what's causing the blooms and how to reduce their numbers. Farm agencies are working with farmers to reduce nutrient runoff, and communities

are beginning to think about how to reduce septic pollution.

We'll report in more detail as the new picture emerges from the 2018 data. It is not too early to commit to being a HABs Harrier in 2019! Contact [\[cayugalake.org\]\(http://cayugalake.org\) for more information. Check the outreach and education tab at the Community Science Institute for reports from their December 2018 meeting: <http://www.communityscience.org/>. 🐾](mailto:programs@</p></div><div data-bbox=)



Cayuga Lake Watershed Network
170 Main Street POB 348
Aurora NY 13026
www.cayugalake.org

It takes a Network to protect a watershed!

December 2018

Dear Friends,

AS the federal government withdraws from protecting America's waters, only **local vigilance** and **action** will safeguard and protect Cayuga Lake. With the support of our members, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN) is working to **assure that Cayuga Lake remains a valuable and wonderful resource for generations to come. We invite you to renew, join or give a gift membership today for 2019!**

In 2018, our members' support enabled CLWN to maintain and enhance programs that successfully combatted threats to the lake—**our response to Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) being just one key effort in 2018.**

With HABs, as with all our programming, we emphasize education, mobilization, facilitation and collaboration as key strategies to maximize program impact. In the case of HABs, we collaborated with the Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Team, Community Science Institute, NYS DEC, Departments of Health, and other agencies; facilitated the HABs work of our partners and local governments; educated the public about how land use and climate change have impacted HABs; and we mobilized over 100 members and other volunteers who collected suspect water samples for scientific assessment.

Our HABs efforts will continue in 2019. And we will continue our many other activities that help safeguard the lake; these include community conferences, Embrace the Lake cleanups, volunteer monitoring to help eradicate aquatic and land-based invasive species that contribute to lake degradation, and more.

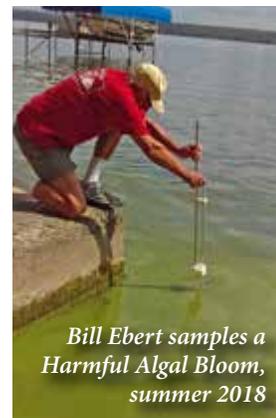
Your membership and support have huge impacts on the success of these efforts to protect Cayuga Lake.



Paddlers remove invasive water chestnut from Ithaca's reservoir, July 2018

PLEASE HELP MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.

*Renew your membership
Become a New Member
Give a Gift Membership
And generously support our HABs work and
all of our programs in 2019.*



Bill Ebert samples a Harmful Algal Bloom, summer 2018

THANK YOU – hope to hear from you soon. Have a healthy, positive, water-loving holiday season.

Hilary Lambert, Steward/Executive Director; steward@cayugalake.org
Jennifer Tufano Grillo, Program Associate; programs@cayugalake.org

*Please donate or join by mailing your check to Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, P.O. Box 348, Aurora, NY 13026
or with PayPal by visiting www.cayugalake.org.*

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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- Advocate
- Protect

Current Resident

Upcoming Watershed Events

Check our website www.cayugalake.org & Facebook page for the latest!

Building Personal Resilience Resources—beginning in February 2019. We are beginning to feel the bite of climate change—global change, according to Bob Howarth—in our everyday lives. Extreme weather ruins our plans for an orderly autumn cleanup of the backyard; a Harmful Algal Bloom spoils a day at the lake. Fruits and vegetables are unavailable or unaffordable, their season cut short by frost, ruined by rain. Farmers are planning their activities and crops around new, uncertain seasons. Homes along a creek are wiped out by many inches of rain in a single, brief torrent.

But these are the smaller things—transformation of our world and planet are under way. How can we learn to adapt and live with the unexpected? Let's start building personal resilience in the face of the unanticipated. Watch for resources, links, activities and discussion, beginning in February. Contact steward@cayugalake.org to help build.

Hydrilla Lakewide Forum—January-March 2019

Hydrilla is out on the lake (see article on page 5). Eradicated at the south end, it is finding its way into other areas along the shore. With our partners at the Finger Lakes Institute and the Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization, we will be reaching out to all lakeside communities to renew the urgent message of finding it early before it becomes a big, costly removal problem. If you want to be sure your

community is included—be it a cluster of cottages or homes, village or municipality, contact steward@cayugalake.org so that you can help us get the word out to your leaders and help them get the information they need for the summer and fall of 2019.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid—winter months

Winter and early spring are a good time to be looking for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, the white aphid-like insect pests that feed on and eventually kill hemlock trees. We can help you learn what it looks like, or you can do your own research at the New York State Hemlock Initiative website <https://blogs.cornell.edu/nyshemlockinitiative/>. There are effective, inexpensive treatments available—but use the right ones! Contact programs@cayugalake.org for help.

Embrace the Lake spring cleanups

Would your community, church or Scout group like to do a springtime cleanup along a road—ditches are waterways, too—a creek, the lakeshore? We can help you plan and carry out a cleanup. We provide location suggestions, posters, garbage bags and disposable gloves. All free, part of our mission to protect our lake and creeks. We helped with about eight cleanups in 2018. Contact programs@cayugalake.org for more information. ➤