



New York Outdoors

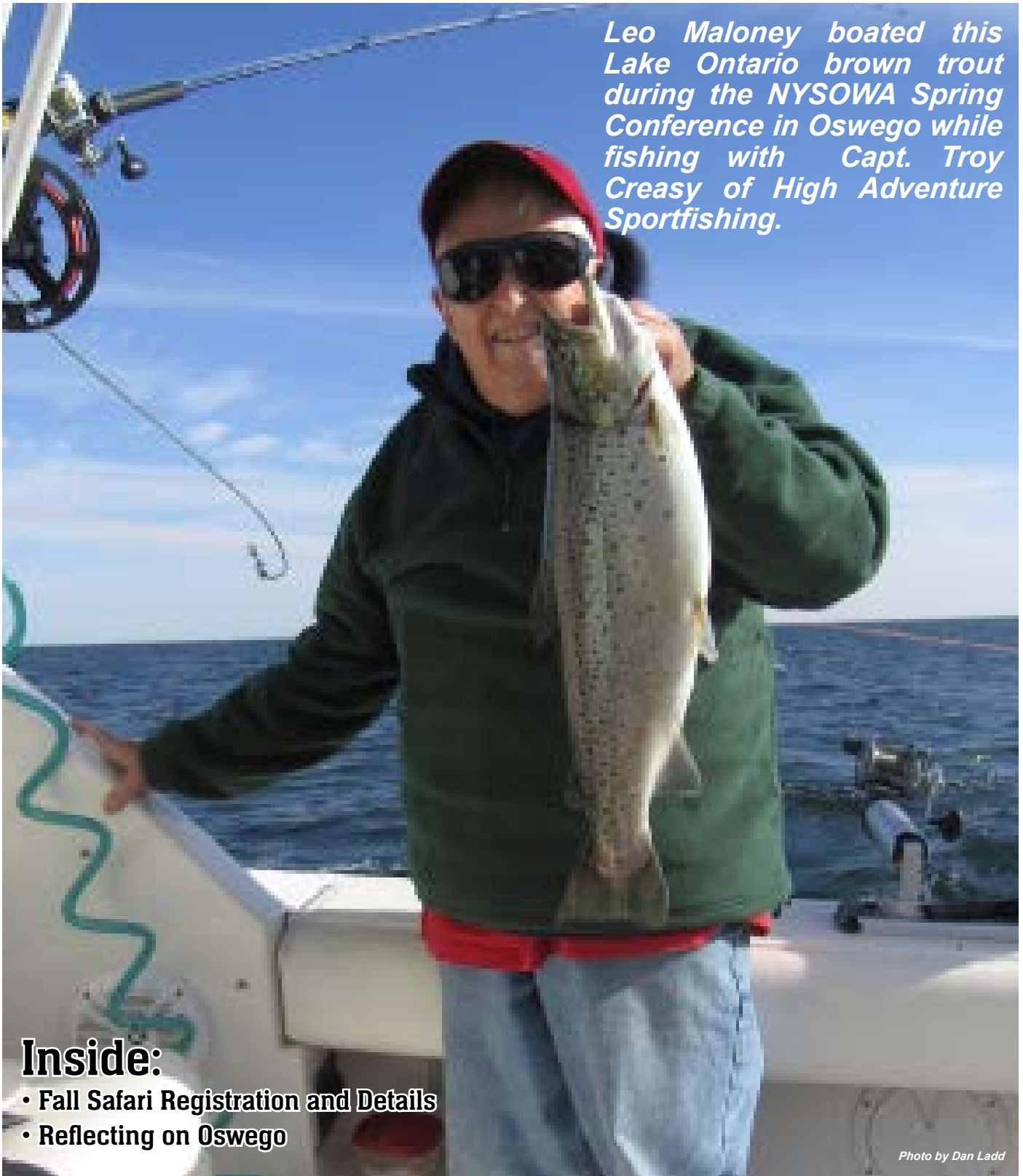
The Official Newsletter of the
New York State Outdoor Writers Association



Summer 2024

nysowa.org

Leo Maloney boated this Lake Ontario brown trout during the NYSOWA Spring Conference in Oswego while fishing with Capt. Troy Creasy of High Adventure Sportfishing.



Inside:

- Fall Safari Registration and Details
- Reflecting on Oswego

Photo by Dan Ladd

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We are always looking for members to work with our Conference Committee and assist in hosting Safaris and Conferences in their region. Please email buck@adkhunter if interested.

Calendar

Fall Safari

Pecks Lake Resort

Fulton County

Sept. 12-15

May 15-18 2025

Spring Conference

Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Scenes from the NYSOWA Spring Conference in Oswego

<https://visitoswegocounty.com>



NYSOWA FALL SAFARI

Sept. 12-15, 2024 Peck's Lake Resort

180 Peck Lake Road, Gloversville NY 12078.

<https://peckslake.com>

Schedule

Thursday, Sept. 12

6:30 p.m. - Meet-n-Greet/Snack and-Sip at Pecks

Bring a snack for the table (fish or game if possible) and a sample of your favorite brew, wine or spirit to share.

Friday, Sept. 13

Morning Outings

12:30 p.m. - Lunch at Franks Gun Shop (3831 NY-30, Amsterdam, NY 12010). *Sponsored by the NYS Forest Owners Association*

6:30 p.m.. - Dinner at Pecks and Demo of SIONYX Nightwave marine digital night vision camera. Sponsored by Mike Hauser and SIONYX

Saturday Sept. 14

Morning Outings

12:30 p.m. - Lunch On Your Own

5 p.m.. - Dinner at Pecks Sponsored Pecks Lake Resort

Note: Please bring your own bedding/linens for the bed in the cabins. Camping is also an option.

Registration Form

\$130 per person, includes lodging at Pecks (Non-Lodging fee is \$30)

Name(s):

Address:

Phone/email:

Outings Preferences (both days)

Please list preferences 1-3

Friday Sept. 13

- Guided Bass Fishing on Pecks Lake
- Guided walleye and/or rainbow Trout Fishing on Pecks Lake
- Guided walleye fishing on Great Sacandaga Lake
- Guided pike fishing on Great Sacandaga Lake
- On Your Own Activities (your choice: hiking, fishing at Pecks w/ small boats provided).

Saturday, Sept. 14

- Guided Bass Fishing on Pecks Lake
- Guided walleye and/or rainbow Trout Fishing on Pecks Lake
- Guide walleye fishing on Great Sacandaga Lake
- Guided pike fishing on Great Sacandaga Lake (limited)
- Black Bear Hunting, not guided but stand locations provided
- On Your Own Activities (your choice: hiking, fishing at Pecks w/ small boats provided).

Please send payment and form to:

Dan Ladd, PO Box 302, Fort Ann, N.Y. 12827

Or, register and pay online at: <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa>

Paddle: Bring your canoe or kayak, there's plenty of paddling/fishing opportunities on Peck Lake, and other nearby waters.

Hike: Kane Mountain is a very popular nearby moderate hike of 2.1 miles with a fire tower. Perhaps a Saturday afternoon group hike is in order:
<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/new-york/kane-mountain-north-trail-loop>

NYSOWA President Chris Paparo



It is hard to believe that summer is halfway over. Where did the time go? I hope you are all making the best of the summer season.

For those who were unable to attend the spring conference in Oswego, you missed a great time.

David Figura and Dan Ladd did an amazing job organizing a great weekend full of fishing, tours, guest

lecturers, dinners, and even spa treatments. Yes, spa treatments! I was extremely skeptical, but after hearing about how amazing the massages and the float tank were, I am disappointed that I did not take part in that experience. Thanks David and Dan for creating a very memorable spring conference.

Next up is Peck's Lake for our fall safari. Peck's Lake Resort is a NYSOWA supporting member and they have arranged to host us from September 12-15. If you have not attended a safari, they are more laid back than a conference. We spend more time exploring the area and socializing with members, and less time at formal meetings and dinners. I know I have said this before, but I deeply regret not attending conferences when I first joined NYSOWA. I always used the excuse, "I am not going to know anyone, so why should I go." I met so many great people at that first conference that I have not missed one since 2017. If you have never attended a NYSOWA in person event, you should really consider joining us at Peck's Lake in Fulton County. Spouses and significant others are also welcomed and encouraged. You can also invite a fellow outdoor colleague, who is not a member. If they are eligible for membership in NYSOWA, they will receive a free one-year membership when they register for the safari.

I really hope you will consider joining us at Peck's Lake Resort!

Northern Region VP Dan Ladd

If Ya' Can't Take the Heat....

Even up here in the North Country it's been a tough summer thus far in terms of the hot weather. So much so that it is impacting outdoor recreation; even hiking and fishing which are summer staples across much of the region.

What has gotten more attention, and rightly so, is the number of tornadoes that have taken place. Rome, in Oneida County, and Warrensburg, in Warren County are two areas that come to mind, but there are more. In some forested areas, swaths of trees were taken down by the mid-July storms. The storms and flooding closed the Hinkley State Park and several island campsites on Lake George. Water levels rose a foot, or more, on several Adirondack Lakes.



Follensby Pond/Raquette River

Perhaps you saw the press release earlier this summer announcing that (DEC) and The Nature Conservancy announced the State's acquisition of two conservation easements of 14,600 acres that include the historic and ecologically crucial Follensby Pond and miles of shoreline along the nearby Raquette River. These properties are near Tupper Lake, in the Adirondacks. The Nature Conservancy retains ownership of the Follensby property and New York State has acquired two conservation easements on the river that will be open to camping, hunting and fishing.

Follensby Pond is known as the site of Ralph Waldo Emerson's Philosophers' Camp in 1858. It also has a vibrant lake trout population which warrants study. While the Follensby Pond area is not open for general public recreation, The Nature Conservancy will provide opportunities for the public to learn about and visit Follensby Pond. Long-term plans are for The Nature Conservancy and DEC to establish a Follensby Pond Research Consortium which to date includes DEC, The Nature Conservancy, Cornell University, Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey.

National Hunting & Fishing Day 2024

Saturday, Sept. 28 is National Hunting and Fishing Day, which is also one of New York's free fishing days. This year will also feature some local events involving NYSOWA members. At the Wildlife Sports and Educational Museum, in Fulton County, Jerrod Vila will be part of a program that will feature the museum acquiring some new inventory. Stay tuned for that.

In Warren County, I'll be involved in the Warren County Conservation Council's Conservation Day, which will be focused on teaching basic outdoor skills at the Dunhams Bay Fish & Game Club. We'll have seminars on map and compass, archery, air rifle and fishing and will open the club's 3-D archery course and indoor pistol simulator. I'll be doing a seminar called Deer Hunting For Beginners.

There was a time when NHFD was a big deal. Learn more at <https://nhfd.org>

West/Central Region VP David Figura



Another NYS bass fishing record from the same Finger Lake

The state Department of Environmental Conservation recently certified that a huge largemouth bass caught in Cayuga Lake qualifies as a new state fishing record.

The bass, which weighed 12 pounds, 6 ounces, was landed by James Britenbaugh of Fairfield, Pa. on July 11 in the Finger Lake as he was practice fishing with a buddy prior to a scheduled fishing tournament on the lake. He caught the lunker using a wacky-rigged, Yamamoto Senko worm on the lake's western side in 8-10 feet of water. The fish measured 25 inches.

The record replaces the 11-pound, 4-ounce largemouth caught in 1987 by John Higby in Buckhorn Lake in Otsego County.

This is the second state record bass caught on Cayuga Lake in the past two years. In 2022, Thomas Russell Jr. landed an impressive, 8-pound, 6 ounces smallmouth bass using a Berkley Maxscent Minnow.

According to media reports, Britenbaugh kept his state record largemouth alive during the weighing and measuring process, and afterward released it back into the lake.

Cayuga Lake in recent years has earned a reputation for great bass fishing. Several Bassmaster Elite Level tournaments have been held there, along with a number of a Bassmaster regional and other club competitions.

Bassmaster Magazine, in its annual feature listing 100 of the best bass fishing lakes in the country, ranked Cayuga Lake No. 8 for the Northeast Region of the country. On a side note, the magazine listed Lake Erie/ Upper Niagara River No. 7 overall on the list, and No. 3 in the Northeast. The St. Lawrence River is No. 1 in the northeast and the country!

New National Marine Sanctuary on Lake Ontario

We heard it was "in the works" during a presentation given at the NYSOWA Spring Conference and it came to pass shortly afterward.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in June designated a 1,722-square-mile area in eastern Lake Ontario as America's 16th national marine sanctuary, essentially creating a vast underwater park extending from the mouth of the St. Lawrence River to west of Rochester.

The new Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary is the first such sanctuary in New York, and only the third in the Great Lakes region. It encompasses waters adjacent to Jefferson, Oswego, Cayuga and Wayne counties.

The federal designation will not interfere with existing commercial and recreational activities on the lake, nor impose limits on those who own homes or camps along the shoreline. But the sanctuary would make it a federal crime to disturb submerged artifacts.

"The waters and coastal communities of eastern Lake Ontario tell a story that begins with early Indigenous settlements and trade routes and continues through the era of European colonization. The area later supported the growth of the young American republic and the nation's industrial core," wrote Steve Featherstone in an article published on Syracuse.com.

"This designation will preserve Lake Ontario's historic shipwrecks, boost tourism and protect our beautiful waterways for generations to come," U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer said in a press release.

Lake Ontario fishing scene

I called Capt. Troy Creasy, of High Adventure Sportsfishing out of Oswego about the latest on East-

ern Lake Ontario fishing season.

"It's been one of the best seasons we've ever had," he said. "We're seeing more salmon than we've seen in years."

Why? Creasy said the natural reproduction of the fishery in the lake appears 'to be way up' and the bait fish (alewife population) is coming back." In addition, the successful pen rearing of stocked fish at various spots around the lake's southern shoreline that allows young salmon to reach a bigger size before getting stocked is also having a positive impact.

Overall, Creasy said, "We're on an up-cycle and we're riding high."

Creasy didn't feel all the warm weather we've been having lately has had much of an impact. The big determining factor is the wind, which moves the lake water around and affects its temperature. He predicted a normal salmon spawning run beginning in early September, particularly if rain keeps the tributaries flowing and high.

Capt. Burnie Haney, who launches out of Henderson Harbor east of Oswego, confirmed Creasy's comments, noting he and his clients have been experiencing the best salmon and brown trout fishing on the lake in the past four to five years. "And the lake trout we've been catching have been big – at times averaging 20 pounds or more," he said.

Haney hypothesized the relatively mild and ice-less winter this year has resulted in a better survival rate for the lake's alewives, a major bait fish in the lake.

He noted the mild winter and hot summer has resulted in an elevation of lake temperatures – currently some 7 to 10 degrees above normal.

"It's affected the near-shore fishing for pike, walleye and bass," he said. "You're seeing quality fish and fishing is still good as usual (for these species), but the hotter water is pushing the near-shore (action) into deeper water than usual for this time of year."

Meanwhile, on Lake Erie

Capt. Joel Ruggiero, of Bait Master Charters out of Dunkirk, gave Lake Erie high marks this summer – particularly for its superb walleye and 'world class' lake trout. Ruggiero focuses on the walleye.

"It's the best I've seen (in the past 25 years of doing this)," he said. "It's hard to describe. I'll go out for 3-4 hours and catch 20-something fish. The walleye fishing is on fire. The Eastern Basin is full of fish along with a tremendous amount of bait to feed on."

He said "his program" is pretty much using stickbaits and lead core line and trolling around in 40-50 feet of water.

He said the large numbers of walleye are the product of several seasons of successful spawning in the lake's western basin, bolstered by the large numbers of bait fish.

How long will the walleye fishing in the lake remain good?

"I'm not sure. It's based on the migration of walleye on the lake. The walleye aren't stocked. Most are hatched in the western basin (and move to the Eastern basin as they pursue baitfish)," he said.

He added, "There's still a lot of time left this summer and in early fall (to get out and to enjoy this lake's excellent fishing."

The fall segment of the LOC Fishing Derby on Lake Ontario

The popular LOC Fishing Derby on Lake Ontario moves into its third and final phase beginning Aug. 16 and ending Sept. 2.

The LOC Derby, put on by put on by Empire State Lake Ontario, has a spring, summer and early fall segments. This year, the tournaments will offer a total of \$153,275 in cash prizes, according to the contest's website.

The fall competition will feature \$71,425 in cash prizes, with a \$25,000 grand prize for the largest salmon. There will be four divisions (Salmon, Rainbow/Steelhead, Brown Trout & Walleye) with cash prizes for the biggest three or four fish in those categories.

For more on the LOC, the cash prizes and how to register, go to <https://loc.org/home-page>.



Southeast Region VP Tom Schlichter

It's been an interesting first half of summer on New York's southeastern front. Plenty going on, as is usually the case this time of year, especially down along the coast, where fluke fishing has been better than expected, sea bass action has been somewhat spotty, stripers have been very cooperative on Long Island's extreme east end – and cobia to nearly 60 pounds are making a big splash around bunker pods in ocean waters between Rockaway Beach and Shinnecock Inlet for the third year in a row.

It's likely the rising number of cobia encounters in New York waters is tied to ever-rising water temperatures thanks to climate change. This year, stripers seemed to head east pretty quickly, leaving the cobia on their own to harass the menhaden schools

while making themselves susceptible to live-lined bunker.

Even more interesting, I think, are reports of small juvenile cobia in some of the western south shore bays and canals. Redfish have also been spotted recently – at least one large school of the southern visitors was spotted in late July cruising towards Jones Inlet, although I've yet to hear of any confirmed redfish catches. No doubt, the southern invasion will continue through August and into September, as king mackerel have also been caught, and there's little doubt Spanish mackerel will soon make their appearance.

Oddly, all of the above has occurred at the same time some ocean-going anglers are reporting cooler than normal water temperatures along the beach in the waters between Fire Island and Shinnecock inlets. The number of bunker schools in that stretch seems fewer than usual this year, and the whales that sometimes sample them by lunge-feeding within sight of the beach seem to be holding further to the east and south of Montauk.

For those of you not familiar with the Billion Dollar Oyster Project (<https://www.billionoysterproject.org/reefs>), this is a good time to get acquainted. Believe it or not, it took less than 100 years to wipe out the oyster population in New York Harbor. This project aims to reverse that by restoring oyster reefs to New York Harbor in collaboration with New York City communities. Oyster reefs provide habitat for hundreds of marine species and can help protect the coastal areas from storm damage - softening the blow of large waves by reducing flooding and preventing erosion along the shorelines. The project has set up field stations at restoration sites where it and its partner organizations host regular field days utilizing an oyster installation. The stations are targeted for long-term community and student engagement with an emphasis on local involvement.



Redfish, along with cobia and Spanish Mackerel, are making more frequent appearances in New York as waters throughout the northeast continue to warm.

Felicia Scoozza photo.

Recently, The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Interim Commissioner Sean Mahar joined project representatives and students from the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School to deploy 50,000 one-year-old oysters into the Head of Bay section of Jamaica Bay. The installation marks a major milestone towards the goal of adding two million oysters to the site and restoring a self-sustaining oyster population in Jamaica Bay.

NYSOWA Membership News

NYSOWA Bob McNitt Memorial Scholarship Program

A 'SPECTACULA' SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE

By Dave Figura

Each year, the Scholarship Committee commits to sending two youngsters to DEC summer camps at a cost of \$350 apiece.

Last year and this year, parents of teenager Robert Lorenzo, of Jeffersonville in Sullivan County, one of the kids we tried to sponsor, were unsuccessful in trying to sign up their son for one of the camps using the DEC's highly competitive, online registration system.

This summer, the NYSOWA Scholarship Committee had another boy we had committed to sponsor, but his mother withdrew him from the mix just before the DEC summer camp registration deadline because of another commitment.

That left Robert, 13, who was still eager and deserving.

Thanks to a suggestion from NYSOWA member Glenn Sapir, the Scholarship Committee inquired about sending Robert to a unique camp offered by the prestigious Bill Canfield Fly Fishing School, which each summer partners with Friends of the Upper Delaware River for a great, week-long summer camp in Hancock, NY. Kids at the camp, ages 12-17, learn about the sport of fly fishing and the importance of river conservation.

The kids stay at the French Woods Sports and Arts Center summer camp on the bank of the river and have access to all the amenities during their non-fishing time.

The cost for attending the fly fishing camp was a little more than \$1,700. Scholarship Committee Chairman David Figura explained the situation to a spokesman from the camp and committed to paying \$700. He was accepted and the camp agreed to provide him with a scholarship to cover the remainder of the cost. He attended the camp from June 23-30.

While at the camp, the youngsters were only allowed to use their cell phones in the bunk house. ("They wanted us to be outdoorsy," Robert said)

Each night, an excited Robert called home and told his parents about the happenings of the day and how much fun he was having and what he was learning.

His parents were so appreciative, they contacted camp officials and inquired about having him attend another week at the French Woods Sports and Arts Center. Center officials accepted him and gave the Lorenzos a discount on the tuition. There, Robert dabbled in archery, guitar playing and water sports (including fishing).

When Robert came home, we interviewed him by Zoom about his experiences – specifically at the fly fishing camp.

"Before I went, I was mainly thinking it was going to be boring and I wasn't going to catch any fish," Robert said. "It turned out to be not what I thought. It was spectacular."

The camp supplied the youngster with a fly rod and reel that he was allowed to keep. He learned a variety of casting techniques, various knots, how to get a snagged fly out of a tree, fly tying, all about the various insects and other aquatic life in the river and how to read a stream, he said. The fishing guides were "amazing," he added.

One of the main things the program stresses to the youngsters is conservation. Such things as the importance preserving the water quality and shoreline of the river, taking out whatever you bring in and not leaving garbage. Also, respect for the fish and proper ways to catch and release them if you're not going to keep them.

"I did know anybody until I got there," Robert said. "I made a few friends, got a few of their phone numbers. It was an amazing experience. Most of them were from N.J. There was one from Chicago and one from New York City."

What would he say to someone who doesn't get the fun and enjoyment of fly fishing?

"I would say they need to get (outdoors) a little bit more. And instead of worrying about catching a fish, worry about what nature brings you and the time (spent) there. Listen to the birds.

Listen to the water whooshing. Just listen to everything around you," he said.

He said his favorite part of fishing is "being able to connect with nature and seeing how nature has its own ways."

Robert said he came home "psyched to fish." He told of a "big one" he missed on the Beaverkill on a fly that he tied with deer hair. It broke his line and he wonders if it was because of a poorly tied knot.

"Next time when I get out there he will not be missed," he said.

At the end of Robert's interview, his mom Maria Lorenzo, offered her heart-felt thanks to NYSOWA.

"My son has been through a very rough life," she said. "He was a foster kid and we adopted him. Fishing for him means a connection with his biological father who passed away a couple of years ago. You guys really rocked his world. He came back with another vision of life. He really did."



Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) Workshop

Each year, in memory of deceased, past NYSOWA president Melody Tennity, NYSOWA sends a woman to the DEC's annual, three-day, Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Workshop.

This fall, NYSOWA will be sending member Sue Bookhout.

This year's workshop is set for Sept. 13-15 at Forest Lake Camp in Chestertown in Warren County. Courses there will include: Stand Up Paddleboard, Fly Fishing, Intro to Fishing, Shotgun, Rifle, Plant & Tree ID, Knots, Map & Compass, Hunter Education, Kayaking, Wild Crafting, Power Tools, Archery, Crossbow, Basic Self Defense, Backpack Camping, Field Dressing and more.

The Scholarship Committee will cover Sue's \$440 tuition, plus make an additional \$100 donation to the program. The \$100 will go toward scholarships for those women who need financial assistance.

The annual \$1,000 academic scholarship

Each year, NYSOWA awards a \$1,000 to a college student enrolled in a curriculum related to journalism, outdoors or the environment.

All applicants are expected to approve of and understand the need for ethical methods of environmental conservation of our natural and wildlife resources. Included in these practices would be seasonal hunting, fishing and trapping for the various species in a conscientious effort to control and establish healthy and continuing populations of these species. It is with these beliefs in mind that all applicants are required to complete the

NYSOWA APPLICATION FOR ANNUAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP application. Find the form at: <https://nysowa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/NYSOWA-College-Scholarship-App.pdf>
The deadline for applying is Sept. 30.

The completed application should be sent to Scholarship Committee member David Taylor, Stony Brook University
50 Pinehurst Blvd.
Calverton, NY 11933

or by email to David.j.taylor@stonybrook.edu. He can be also be reached at 940-367-8720.
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JANICE & PAUL KEESLER SCHOLARSHIP FUND IS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2024

The Janice & Paul Keesler Scholarship Fund is proud to announce that it is now accepting applications from qualified students who wish to receive scholarship assistance. As a living memorial for two people who loved New York State and the outdoors, this fund assists students that wish to train in the field of wildlife management.

Janice and Paul were avid sports persons who wrote and lectured about the outdoors and founded and published the nationally recognized and respected New York Sportsman Magazine. A great loss to all those who appreciate the wonder of nature, Janice passed away suddenly in 1988 and Paul in 2005 after a battle with cancer. They are greatly missed.

This annual scholarship award is available to any New York State resident who has been accepted into an accredited institution of higher learning and is, or will be, working toward obtaining a degree in some facet of wildlife management. The twenty-ninth series of the Janice & Paul Keesler Scholarship Award will be distributed in the fall of 2024. To date, the fund has had the honor of distributing more than \$35,000 in grants to deserving Wildlife Management students.

An application may be obtained by going to www.keeslerscholarshipfund.org. The application can be printed from the website and sent through the mail or can be emailed. The completed application form must be returned to the committee no later than **September 15, 2024**. Mail to: Janice & Paul Keesler Scholarship Fund c/o Bridget Keesler PO Box 485 Newport, NY 13416 OR Email to Keeslerbridget@gmail.com Please add Janice & Paul Keesler Scholarship Application to Subject Area of your email to ensure your application is not overlooked.

Individuals or clubs wishing to make a contribution to the fund, may do so by sending a check or money order payable to: Janice & Paul Keesler Scholarship Fund. Mail to the above address. With the sincere gratitude of the Scholarship Committee, we thank you! This year and continuing on an annual basis, a wonderful couple who cared deeply about New York State's outdoor sports will be remembered in a meaningful way, thanks to the generous contributions of the outdoor sports women and men of New York State.

For additional information about the Keesler Scholarship Fund, please visit our website at: www.keeslerscholarshipfund.org or send inquiries to Keeslerbridget@gmail.com.

Witek Wins Keesler Award for 2024

Oswego, N.Y. — Charles Witek of West Babylon, NY (Long Island), was honored with the M. Paul Keesler New York Outdoor Citizen Award June 1, 2024 when the New York State Outdoor Writers Association held its annual conference in Oswego May 30-June 2.

The award is presented to an individual or organization that has effectively raised the public's awareness of outdoor recreational opportunities and conservation issues in New York State.

Witek has the respect of his peers and who better to tell the story of why he is deserving of the prestigious Keesler Award from NYSOWA. Witek is past president of the group.

“For over 10 years, Charles has written a blog, One Angler's Voyage, that covers many fisheries related issues that are associated with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act and the various management bodies and actions affected by such laws, as well as fisheries matters governed by New York State's Environmental Conservation Law and related regulations,” says NYSOWA President Chris Paparo. “He currently serves on the NYS Marine Resources Advisory Council and has held a seat on the Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Council. Witek has a deep passion for bringing public awareness to the many fishery conservation issues facing New York and abroad, and because of this, he is an excellent choice for the NYSOWA Keesler Award.”

“Charles Witek has never been afraid to speak his mind when it comes to fisheries management, issues of conservation, and the future of the outdoors lifestyle in New York State and the Mid-Atlantic region,” insists Tom Schlichter, Southeastern Vice President for NYSOWA.

“As an attorney, hunter, life-long angler and member of the policy team for Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA), an advocacy group whose mission is to ensure North America's outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting through education and work on behalf of wild public lands,

waters, and wildlife, Charles not only calls things as he sees them, he both informs the public and actively participates in bringing about the changes he believes necessary to protect our resources.”

“Based on his willingness to engage the public and actively participate in the discussions and representation that bring about change, Witek is surely worthy to receive the NYSOWA's M. Paul Keesler New York Outdoor Citizen Award.”

The award was created to honor worthy individuals and organizations, at the same time perpetuating the name of one of NYSOWA's dearest members. The late M. Paul Keesler spent nearly five decades promoting and conserving the outdoor wonders and recreational opportunities within New York State. Beginning with outdoor columns for the Utica Observer Dispatch and progressing to the popular New York Sportsman magazine, Keesler, and his magazine's contributors, enlightened, and educated readers statewide and beyond to the wild outdoor treasures of the Empire State.



Hauser Named 2024 Pass It On Winner for NYSOWA

Oswego, N.Y. -- Michael Hauser of Johnstown, NY was named the 2024 Pass It On Award winner by the New York State Outdoor Writers Association at its annual conference in Oswego held May 30-June 2. Hauser, promoter of the Adirondack Outdoorsman Show for nearly 20 years, has been “passing on” the outdoor tradition for many year and he was finally recognized for his efforts.

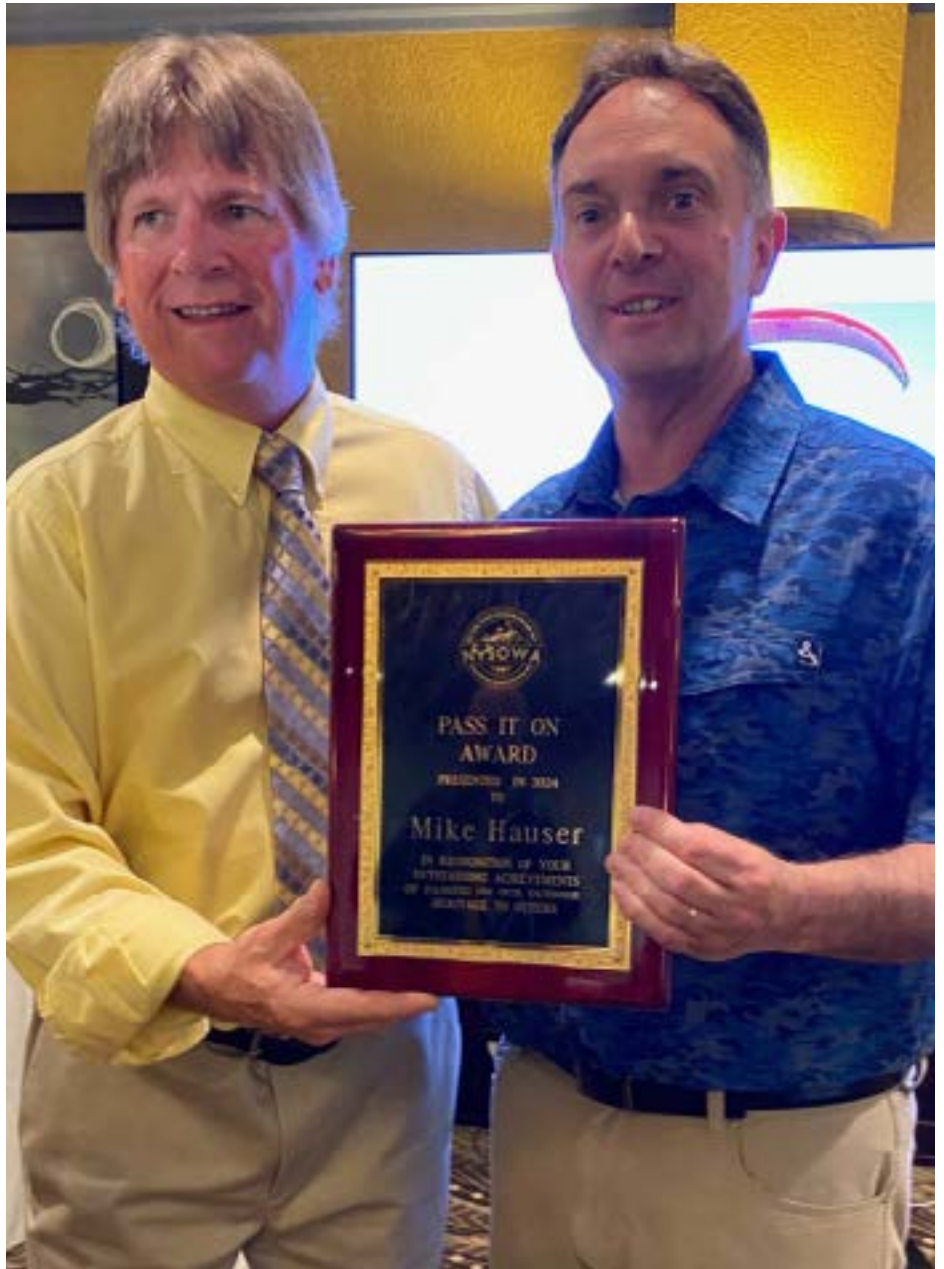
Each year, NYSOWA selects a member who should be acknowledged for their dedication to “Pass It On.” This annual award honors the person who has done the most to “pass on” our outdoor heritage. Initiated by Bass Pro Shops and continued by NYSOWA, it is an important award given at the group’s annual conference.

According to Dan Ladd, who nominated Hauser for the award, his Fulton County outdoor show is not just a profit-garnering event. “It is a community event that brings sportsmen and women together from around the region, and beyond. Mike specifically does not allow non-sporting vendors at his event, only those related to the outdoors.”

Over the years, Hauser has found ways to raise funds for local youth groups at his event such as through raffles and free fundraising booths. He also involves young people in the community in the show, recruiting them to help out and exposing them to the outdoor world in the process. These efforts also go beyond young people, as a way to honor fellow dedicated sportsmen Mike has established a program where his featured guests are honored at the show for their contributions to the sporting community. In addition, Mike seeks to help others in his community. When area legend Don Williams sought to sell his house and his many antique sporting and non-sporting relics (as well as an extensive outdoor library), it was Mike who answered the call and did his best to not only help Don, but to have these items end up where they would benefit all.

Mike is known around his community for his efforts that have supported youth sports leagues and the area’s sports history (especially baseball), but his efforts through his sportsman’s show and other endeavors show the same spirit for the sporting community. He was recently recognized by the New York State Assembly with receiving the 2024 Fulton County Liberty Bell Award from the Fulton County Bar Association for all of his hard work.

Both Bass Pro Shops and NYSOWA have recognized the fact that it is vital to pass on our outdoor heritage, including understanding the role of conservation and promoting an interest in our outdoor sports. This can be done in several ways such as creating an awareness through writing, helping organizations that promote these activities, or directly being involved in mentoring and educating. Congratulations to Michael Hauser!





NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Serving the outdoors through communication

May 28, 2024

Embargoed until June 2

For more information, contact:
Glenn Sapir
845-519-9027
glennsapir@gmail.com

NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES COMMUNICATIONS, PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

The New York State Outdoor Writers Association announced the honorees of its communications and photography recognition program at its Annual Awards Banquet, sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and held on Saturday, June 1, at Clarion Hotel and Suites Riverfront, in Oswego, NY.

The Excellence in Craft Communications and Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo Awards Program, sponsored by Redding Reloading Equipment, was judged by highly regarded writers, editors and photographers from outside the organization. First-place honorees received valued art awards, and second- and third-place finishers were recognized with certificates and cash awards

The first-place awards in the Excellence in Craft program were this year's annual edition of beautiful waterfowl decoys created by award-winning carver Bill Suitor of Youngstown, N.Y. Awards for first place in the photo recognition program were framed original paintings on feathers by renowned artist and NYSOWA member Deborah Brosen of Kinderhook, N.Y.

A complete list of first- to third-place finishers in both the communication- and photo-award programs follows.

Excellence in Craft Communication Awards

Magazine Feature: First place, Glenn Sapir, *Lessons from the Legends, Turkey Call, March/April 2023*; Second place, Angelo Peluso, *Studies in Success, The Fisherman, Feb. 2023*; Third place, Richard Redman, *Casting Lines and Colors, North Country Living Magazine, Fall 2023*.

Magazine Column: First place, Angelo Peluso, *Christmas Eve Tradition, Hook & Barrel Magazine, Oct. 25 2023*; Second place, Steve Piatt, *Time Together in a Tree, PENNLines Magazine, Nov.2023*; Third place, Steve Piatt, *A Winter's Walk, PENNLines Magazine, Jan. 2023*.

Newspaper Feature: First place, Steve Featherstone, *City Hunter's Family Tries to Cope after Fatal Fall*, *Syracuse Post-Standard*, Feb. 12, 2023; Second place, Tom Schlichter, *Into the Woods*, *Newsday*, Nov. 26, 2023; Third place, Steve Featherstone, *Syracuse's Fish Replica Artist Lures Anglers from across the Country*, *The Post-Standard*, May 7, 2023.

Newspaper Column: First place, Steve Piatt., *A Question Answered*, *New York Outdoor News*, Nov. 3, 2023; Second place (Tie), Glenn Sapir., *Excuses in the Outdoors*, *New York Outdoor News*, Dec. 15, 2023; and Steve Piatt, *One Photo, a Lifetime of Memories*, *Tonawanda Daily Review*, July 22, 2023.

Online Publication: First place, Angelo Peluso, *Euro Methods for Monster Carp*, *The Fisherman Online*, March 2023; Second place, Angelo Peluso, *Neglected Ponds Equal Lunker Largemouth*, *The Fisherman Online*, May 2023; Third place, David J. Figura, *New York Tribes Want Recognition for Treaties from 1700s*, *OutdoorNews.com*, Dec. 11, 2023.

Book: First place, Peter Fiduccia, *The Definitive Guide to Planting Food Plots*, *Skyhorse Publishing*, 2023; Second place, Joseph Gary Crance, *The Last Coon Hunter, Fifth Anniversary Edition*, *Lulu Publishing Services* 2022; Third place, Joseph Gary Crance, *The Time of the Backroads*, *Lulu Publishing Services*, 2022.

Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo Awards

Hunting & Fishing: First place, Chris Paparo.; Second place, Angelo Peluso; Third place, Sue Kiesel.

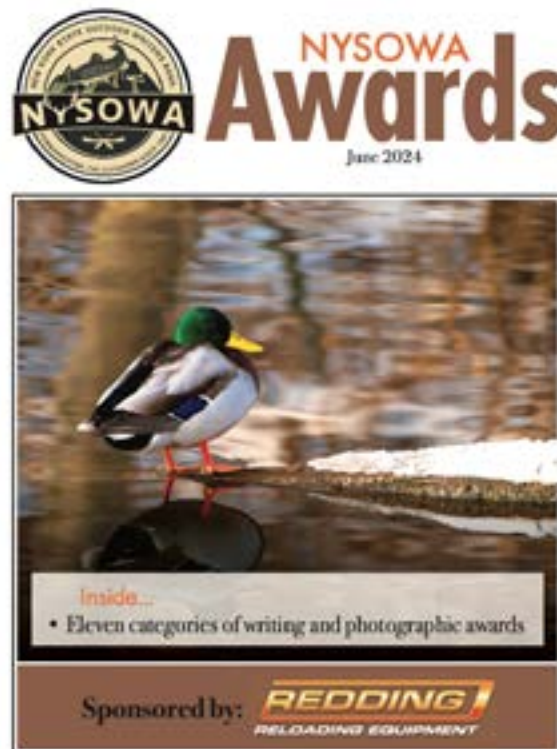
Outdoor Action: First place, Jerrod Villa; Second place, Deb Brosen; Third place, Deb Brosen.

Outdoor Scenic: First place, Angelo Peluso; Second place, Charles Witek; Third place, Jerrod Villa.

Wildlife: First place, Deb Brosen; Second place, Deb Brosen; Third place, Chris Paparo.

People: First place, Chris Paparo; Second place, Chris Paparo; Third place, Matt Haeffner.

-30-



Download the 2024 NYSOWA Awards Publication at:
<https://nysowa.org/2024/06/nysowa-awards-2024/>

IMPRESSIONS OF THE 2024 SPRING CONFERENCE

By Andrew Zysek

My wife, Farah, and I attended the NYSOWA annual spring conference and really enjoyed it.

Attendees had their choice of outdoor outings on Friday and Saturday mornings. Friday morning, we chose to go bass fishing on Oneida Lake and were assigned Capt. T.J. Dobs as our guide.

We met Dobs at the Oneida Shores boat launch with his 21-foot, black Caymas CX21Pro boat with a Mercury 250 HP engine.

Farah, who is afraid of water, had to be helped in the boat. We set ourselves down while Dobs prepared the baits and lures on his fishing rods that he supplied for the trip.

Soon, we left the launch area and sped out into the middle of the lake. With electronic fish finders, Dobs found and set up over a school of fish. I was eager to catch some bass as it had been several months since I last went fishing.

Trying to run a business and be a caretaker for my elderly grandmother at the same time can be a hectic lifestyle. It certainly takes away from extra fishing time.

Dobs had a large assortment of rods and baits. All were Shimano reels and Loomis/Shimano rods. He had various colors of swimbaits that he wanted us to use including French Pearl, Electric Shad, and Black.

He set me up with a Shimano Vanford reel and Loomis IMX 7'4" spinning rod with a 3.3" Keitech Swimbait. We were in about 15 feet of water at the time. I reeled in slow and casted several times before I got my first fish – a nice smallmouth bass. After a quick picture I released it back into the water.

This was prior to the regular bass fishing season, so it was catch and release fishing only. I love a good mess of bass fried over an open fire and a plate of green beans and fried potatoes to accompany it. It was just as well, though, as the hotel had no place to process the fish and no place to dump the remains.

After getting snagged on the bottom and struggling a little, Dobs set me up with another, colored Keitech. Within a few minutes I had a hit, and another bass was reeled in. We took a picture and released it.

In addition, the discussion on the boat turned to the topic of boats and time spent on the water. Dobs is a very experienced captain having fished and boated on numerous waterways including the Atlantic Ocean.

We spent the next three or four hours talking and fishing. Dobs landed a largemouth and a rock bass. I reeled in 6 to 8 smallmouth bass. Farah didn't have a fishing license and didn't fish. However, she did enjoy the boat ride.

Before heading into shore, Dobs showed us how fast his boat could go. It was impressive. I've never been in a boat like his before.

Most of my fishing has been creek and riverbank fishing, or from a canoe or john boat. This trip was an adventure for me.

When Farah and I got back to the hotel, we had a nice lunch at the hotel and heard a presentation from Peter Reuben, the DEC's director of the office of Indian Affairs, followed by Joe Heath, general counsel for the Onondaga Nation.

We then spent two hours relaxing and getting free treatments at the nearby Aqua Spa Float Center and Wellness Boutique – another perk of attending the conference.

Saturday morning was spent touring historic Fort Ontario, followed by a barbecue/lunch at the nearby Leatherstocking Club, which we were told is the oldest rod and gun club in the country. At the lunch, we heard about the club, along with an update on state legislation and other issues concerning crossbows from a NYS Crossbow Coalition official.

We left late Saturday night after the banquet and awards ceremony due to arrangements at home. Overall, the trip was a great time and a great success.



To ALL of my fellow NYSOWA Friends, a Thank You!



As you will see below from a previous post, it's THAT time. At 76 years old, it's time for me to slow down (like I can ever do that), but I'm going try. I've come to terms with a Florida firm, Ferrell Outdoors.com to take on my Florida titles and activities. And, I'll continue with my NY titles and activities until I can come to terms with someone up here.

But as I 'wind down' I want to thank my NYSOWA friends for many years of fun, support and some great friends. Those current and those who have passed over the years. It has been a great run. Great group and great memories of those outings.

Please take a look at this previous post about my remaining NY assets. Please share my words with anyone from 'the next generation' that I can pass on all of my 25+ years of work to.

My original warning to all is as follows

Seeking the Next Generation to Share My Outdoor Work

By: Roger Fulton, NYSOWA Member

I'm looking to semi-retire at the end of 2023 at the age of 76. But my New York 'outdoor' business needs some new blood to take it over. It could use someone with more hi-tech skills and ideas. I'd stay on as a 'mentor' as long as necessary. It's an "outdoor mini-adventures" business with many hiking, biking and kayaking regional books for New York and beyond. We have database files from our previous books for the Thousand Islands, the Lake George and Saratoga regions, as well as the Finger Lakes region. Books and data on the Erie Canalway and NY Fire Towers are also included. Detailed information files on more than 500 NY outdoor venues are included.

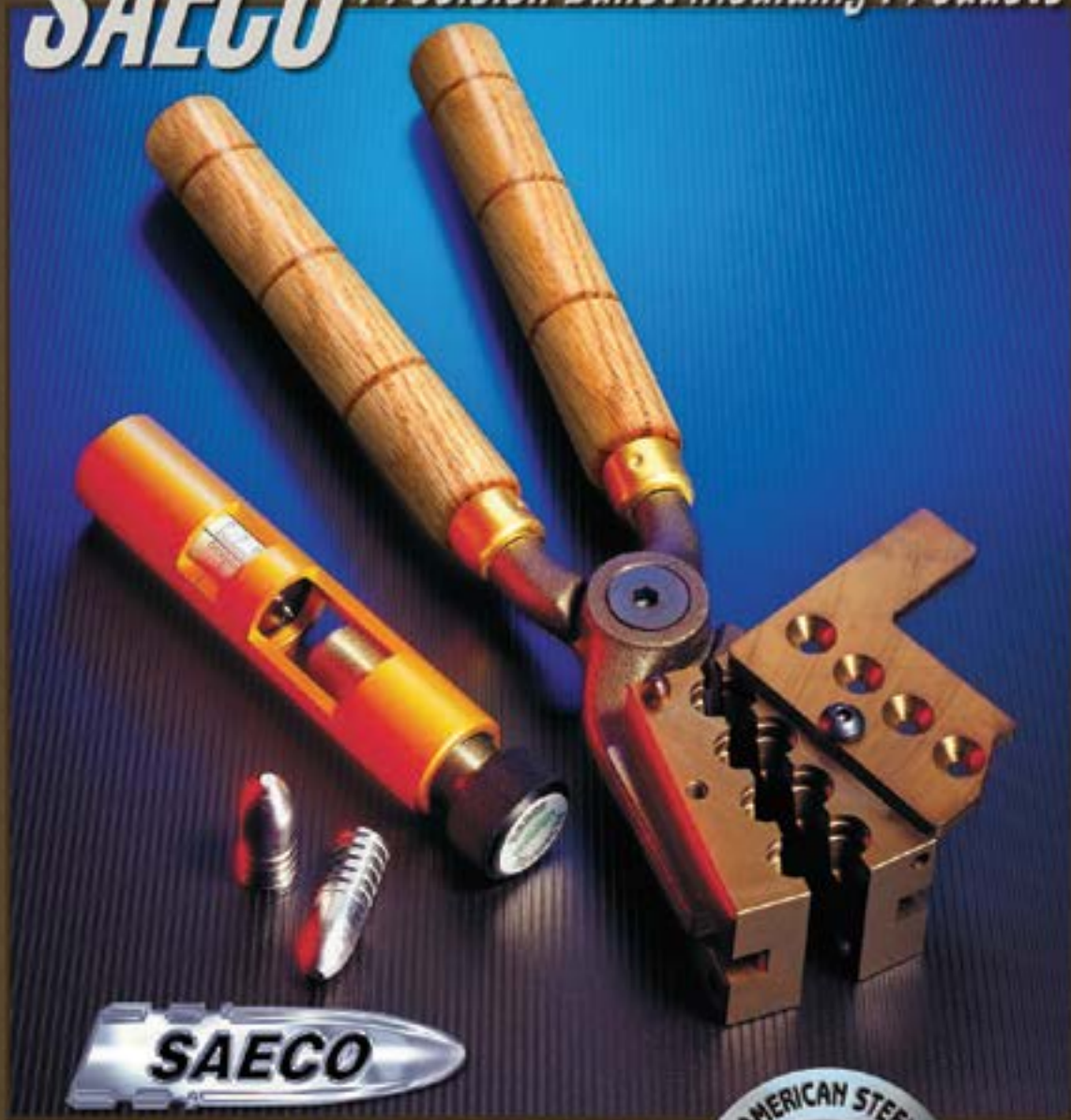
It also would include numerous PowerPoint programs we present to nature centers and libraries. It's been a part-time retirement business for me for many years, but could have great potential for the right 'outdoor-oriented' person who wanted to expand it, or add it to their existing outdoor business. It would be a great business for a guide or someone who has another 'seasonal' business to fill their offseason time.

They can lead groups or add or update my books or data bases, or whatever. My business is just a place where they can have a solid base and make it whatever they want. I've been in the writing, publishing and business world for more than 30 years, so I have a little bit of experience to pass on to the right candidate.

I can work out gradual terms without them putting up much money "up front". I have already reached a similar agreement with people in Florida for that aspect of the business. Hope to do the same with a good candidate in New York. Please take a look at my webpage and see if you see potential for anyone you know that might be a great candidate. www.RogerFulton.com. They can immediately take charge of all aspects of the business, or do it gradually. Either way, I'll stay on to mentor them for their future success. I just want my 30+ years of my outdoor books and work to go to a good home to be shared with future generations. Any inquiries are welcome and all terms are negotiable. Thank you for your time and consideration, Roger Fulton www.RogerFulton.com Roger@RogerFulton.com

NYSOWA Supporting Member News

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NYSOGA and the NYSOWA are partners in championing the great outdoors of New York State with both organizations contributing to the introduction and continual education of how to enjoy and protect the diversity of the massive native resources we have at hand. Each of our members contributes greatly to the economic impact of outdoor recreation which generates billions of revenue dollars annually throughout the state of New York.

As New York State Outdoor Guides our organization takes great pride in creating a community that trains, supports, and represents on a legislative level the guiding profession of New York State. We strive to uphold the highest levels of professionalism and ethics in outdoor guiding.

In March we held our 41st annual conference which was hosted at The White Eagle Conference Center located in Hamilton NY. The guide community comes together to offer courses in wilderness first aid, CPR, water safety and the state guide exam which are all offered on site. This year's event agenda offered additional sessions in Operations and Marketing, Physical Demands of Guiding, NYS DEC Sustainability Plan and Wilderness Safety. The keynote speaker Leslie Surprenant shared a presentation titled, "Empowering Wilderness Exploration – Anne LaBastille". This supportive community encourages new aspiring guides assisting individuals down the path to obtaining their first right of passage license as well as providing active guides an environment to take recertification classes and renewal testing.

We would like to acknowledge the work NYSOWA does in garnering attention for the great outdoors and promoting all the outdoor sports throughout New York while featuring the vastness of all the New York landscape has to offer. We recognize the importance of promoting the great outdoors through media resources especially when championed by those who are also stewards to all we know and love of our diverse natural ecosystem. This press attention encourages others to step out and start exploring with our hope being they hire a skilled NYS Outdoor Guide to make the experience that much more pleasurable.



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TowBoatUS 24/7 On-Water Towing Service Returns to Sodus Point Port again assisting boaters after unexpected closure

SODUS POINT, N.Y., July 9, 2024 – TowBoatUS Sodus Point, the 24/7 on-water towing and assistance service for recreational boaters, is back in operation under the new ownership of Capt. Grant and Karla Langheinrich, owners of TowBoatUS locations in Rochester, Oneida Lake and Clayton, New York.



Shortly before COVID, the port's former owners unexpectedly had to cease operations. "Since then, we've had overwhelming requests for TowBoatUS to come back," said Grant. "We appreciated BoatUS members who reached out to us as well as many folks in the marine community asking me to grow my business here. That enthusiasm really helped us make the decision to reopen the port, and we look forward helping boaters on the bay and lake."

The company provides round-the-clock, professional on-water assistance for recreational boaters including towing, battery jumps, soft ungroundings and fuel drop-offs, and is part of a nationwide TowBoatUS fleet with more than 300 locations and 600 response vessels.

Much like an auto club for recreational boat owners, Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) offers on-water Unlimited Towing Memberships for freshwater boaters and anglers for just \$109 per year. Membership comes with more than 25 valuable BoatUS benefits, including discounts at local fuel docks and transient slips at marinas. Also included are a subscription to BoatUS Magazine, free DSC-VHF radio registration and more.

The company's red 23-foot Maritime Patriot response vessel, which is fully outfitted for towing and salvage, homeports at Katlynn Marine in Sodus Point. All the company's captains are U.S. Coast Guard-licensed. Separate from BoatUS on-water towing, the company offers boat salvage services.

The fastest way to request assistance from TowBoatUS Sodus Bay is to download the [free BoatUS App](#), which connects boaters to the closest local towing captain. Additionally, the company can be reached at 315-744-2229 or by phoning the BoatUS toll-free 24/7 Dispatch Center at 800-391-4869.

For more go to [BoatUS.com/Towing](https://www.boatus.com/Towing) or call 800-888-4869.



Venison Donation CWNV Pantry Project

Attention Friends of the Venison Donation Coalition.

Please know that the Feeding NYS Venison Donation Program is very different from, and is **NOT** part of the Venison Donation Coalition. These 2 programs are separate.

Based in Albany NY, Feeding NY State operates many Food Donation programs on a statewide basis as a partner of Feeding America. Funding usually involves government grants. They work in concert with the 10-12 **FOOD BANKS** located in major cities and have large distribution networks. For details on Feeding NY State Food Donation programs and the wonderful work they do visit <https://feedingnys.org/>

The Venison Donation Coalition (VDC) remains an Incorporated 501c3 organization working completely on donated funds and one small annual grant from a county Department of Social services. Based in Bath NY the VDC is managed by a Sportsmen volunteer Board of Director's and a part time Program Aide. While our name remains the same, the Venison Donation Coalition has initiated the **Pantry Project in Western and Central NY**. This involves coordinating a Venison Donation Project where donated deer go directly from the participating processor to nearby **FOOD PANTRIES** (many of which are located in your local churches).

If you, your business or group would like to be listed as a sponsor to our efforts, Please email or call after visiting our website at www.venisondonation.com
Thank you for your continued support .

Sincerely,
Venison Donation Coalition
Board of Directors
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Bath ,N.Y. 14810

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NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Serving the outdoors through communication

MINUTES OF THE '24 ANNUAL MEETING OF NYSOWA

On Sunday, June 2, at 7:35 a.m., at the Clarion Hotel in Oswego, President Chris Paparo called to order the annual meeting of the New York State Outdoor Writers Association.

After the pledge of allegiance, Recording Secretary Glenn Sapir took the roll call of officers and directors. Present were Chris Paparo, David Figura, Dan Ladd, Tom Schlichter, Glenn Sapir, Charles Witek III, Leon Maloney, Megan Plete Postal and Jerrod Vila.

Absent were Stephen George, Deborah Brosen, Steve Piatt and Rich Redman.

Bill Hilts, Jr. moved and Dan Ladd seconded a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting. The motion passed.

Chris Paparo asked for the reading of any correspondence, and Glenn reported that he had sent a card on behalf of NYSOWA to the family of Mike Kelly and received and read the thank you card that Mike's wife, Chickie, had sent to the organization.

Dan Ladd moved and Glenn Sapir seconded to not present the vice president reports because they would be appearing in the upcoming newsletter. The motion passed.

Chris Paparo then asked for reports of committees.

David Figura, as chair of the Scholarship Committee, reported on donations to the fund of \$3,000 and \$500. We are sending a youth to a flyfishing camp in the Catskills at a cost to NYSOWA of \$700; the camp provided a \$1,100 scholarship toward the \$1,800 total cost.

Dan Ladd, as chair of the Conference Committee, reported that the Fall Safari will take place at Peck's Lake from Thursday, Sept. 12, to Sunday, Sept. 15. The Annual Conference will be in Niagara Falls from Thursday, May 15, through Sunday, May 18. In addition, Dan reported that the Oswego Clarion Hotel is bidding for the 2026 OWAA Conference, and if it gets the bid, we could consider piggybacking onto that conference, as we did in Lake Placid several years ago.

Charles Witek, as our new Membership Secretary, reported that we have 100 active members and 18 supporting members. Discussion ensued on how to improve our dues renewal process.

On behalf of the Recruitment and Social Media committees, Megan Plete Postol said little action has been taken, but the goal is to bring legitimate online communicators into the organization. Much discussion ensued, and the committees will take those comments into consideration as they move forward.

No Unfinished Business or New Business was brought up.

Bill Hilts, Jr. moved and Glenn Sapir seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Glenn Sapir,
Recording Secretary

APPLICATION FOR NYSOWA MEMBERSHIP



Name: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-Mail: _____
 Website: _____
 Do you receive payment for your services? _____
 Other Writer Affiliations: _____

CATEGORIES (Note: fillers are not considered to be articles in applying for Writer status)

A. Newspaper _____ Attach 12 tear sheets

City: _____
 Circulation: _____ Column Name: _____
 Published: Daily Weekly Monthly Periodics

B. Magazine _____
 Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____
 _____ National- Attach two tear sheets _____ Regional- Attach four tear sheets

C. Lecturer Attach copies of a published schedule or six paid presentations.
 Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

D. Photographer / Illustrator / Artist - Attach proof of publications of film/video, 8 stills, or prints.
 Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

E. Book Author - attach a copy of the Publishing House Catalog listing the book.
 Name of Book: _____ Publisher: _____

F. Editor/Publisher - Attach a copy of a current issue of magazine/newspaper.
 Name of Publication: _____

G. Radio/Television - Attach audio/video tape documenting (4) 30 minute or (8) 15 minute programs. Station: _____
 City: _____

H. Public Relations Agency - Attach copies of (6) news releases.
 Staff position or occupation: _____

I. Electronic Publishing - Attach 8 published outdoor columns or articles in last 12 mos. Electronic
 Publication: _____ web address: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____ Active: _____

Specialties

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> b. Firearms/Shooting | <input type="checkbox"/> c. Archery/Bowhunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Freshwater fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Saltwater Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Flyfishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g. Boating | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Camping/Backpacking | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Wilderness Survival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j. Trapping | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Outdoor Travel | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Outdoor Politics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> m. Nature | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Environmental Affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Natural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> p. Water Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> q. Cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> r. Nature |

Areas of Expertise

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Book Author | <input type="checkbox"/> B. Magazine Editor | <input type="checkbox"/> C. Newspaper Editor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Television | <input type="checkbox"/> F. Electronic Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> G. Magazine Columnist | <input type="checkbox"/> H. Newspaper Columnist | <input type="checkbox"/> I. Freelance |
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Sponsor Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Please enclose a check, made payable to NYSOWA, with this application and mail to:
Charles Wittek III, 1075 Tinker Ave., West Babylon, N.Y. 11704
 631-827-8664 - charleswittek@gmail.com

Join online at <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/members>



APPLICATION FOR NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSN. SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP

Supporting Membership Dues: \$60.00 per year.

Our company or organization, wishing to support the New York State Outdoor Writers Association (NYSOWA) in its program to further the causes of conservation and wise use of our natural resources, and to promote outdoor recreation activities, hereby applies for Supporting Membership.

Name: _____
Position: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____

City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Fax: _____
E-Mail: _____
Website: _____
Contact: _____

Please outline your organization's interests and activities in the outdoor field:

Applicant Signature: _____
Active Sponsor: _____

Please enclose a check, made payable to NYSOWA, with this application and mail to:

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631-827-8664 - charleswittek@gmail.com

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