



INDIAN LAKE ASSOCIATION *in the Adirondacks*

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018

2018 ANNUAL MEETING/PICNIC

Please join us for the 2018 annual meeting and picnic Saturday August 11 at the Byron Park pavilion. This year we will be discussing lake level management, invasive species prevention, water quality, and other topics of concern to lake residents. The Association will be following developments concerning the Lake Store, the marina, water safety, and town development plans. We light the grills at 4:30 and dinner is at 5:15. The annual meeting starts at 5:45 over dessert. So please RSVP with the enclosed mailer or by e-mail and plan to bring your questions, comments and your appetite.

LOCAL NEWS & VIEWS

~ Jon Voorhees

Winter temperatures hovered in the normal range. Snowfall was about average, even if its timing wasn't optimal. The lake froze over on a predictable date and to a normal depth. But one alarming crack did appear in the deep, smooth ice of Indian Lake: The Lake Store and Smiths Cottages will not be reopening.

The Lake Store, in particular, and its proprietress, Eris Thompson, have been institutions in Sabael for as long as anyone can remember. For many families, this was the first place that their children were ever allowed to walk to (or boat to) on their own... the first place where they ever bought anything with their own money. Many young people, year round or summer residents, got their first working experience there under Eris, or her first husband, Max Golde, or her second, Bill Thompson, or her right hand man Don Liddle. Many of you probably have Indian Lake T-shirts in your dressers that you acquired there. Many more probably saved a lower unit or two on their boats thanks to the excellent Granger Davenport chart of Indian Lake that Eris sold over the years. And who hasn't enjoyed an old-fashioned ice cream sundae from the Lake Store soda fountain?

At the age of 92, Eris finally surrendered the reins of the two businesses last summer and is now in a nursing home in Saratoga Springs. Business at both places had dwindled in recent years; and despite the heroic efforts of Josh Golde, Eris' grandson, who definitely turned the momentum back in a positive direction, the family has sadly decided to throw in the towel.

News of these closings sparked a real sense of unease about the future of tourism in the Town of Indian Lake. A number of other accommodations are also for sale; and one has to wonder if critical mass can be maintained to support the whole business community here. Businesses in a small community such as ours tend to support one another by their very existence. For example, Smiths would provide customers not only for itself but also for the restaurants, stores and the theater. And those businesses, in turn, helped create a more attractive destination for Smiths' guests.

As accommodations yield place to private homes, the loss to the local economy and culture is likely to be profound. Studies have shown that travelers spent almost \$78 million in Hamilton County in 2016. The County generated \$9.3million in state and local sales taxes that year, much of it from tourists. Melody Lodge, a popular eatery in Speculator also has gone up for sale during the winter. A rough calculation shows close to half of all accommodations businesses in the Township are either for sale or under stress.

And another small, dark cloud appeared on the horizon as a part of the proposed State budget. Governor Cuomo wants to replace NYS property tax payments to municipalities with Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs). These would be pegged to a baseline number and thereafter escalate by a state devised formula, rather than by normal assessment, as has always been the case. The immediate impact would be negligible, but there is great concern on the part

of all Adirondack communities and all the regional environmental organizations that the system would fail to keep pace with normal assessments; and as the gap inevitably widened, individuals would be required to shoulder an ever-increasing share of the burden, threatening Park communities' viability. The State's tax payment presently accounts for over half of our Town's revenues.

Meanwhile, local property and school budgets look like they'll again be underneath the State's property tax cap. But you can wipe that small smile off your face when you learn that the price per kwh of electricity went up by one third as of February.

Controversy continued to surround the old grocery store building. Signs hung in the windows there during the winter saying it was "the future home of the Indian Lake Fire Department and Regional Security Training Center". However, at their February meeting the Town Board pulled the rug out from under this plan, by voting unanimously to decline a \$639,000 grant from NYS that would have covered 50% of the conversion expense. In July the Town Board had voted 3-2 in favor when asked to voice support for the Fire District, when it proposed making this grant application. Unfortunately, it was later learned that the Fire District was not eligible to be the grant applicant. So, when the award was made to the Town, instead of the Fire District (the actual applicant), the Town was unprepared to come up with the required matching funds to complete the project and unwilling to try to convince the State to bend its own rules regarding the grant and award it to the Fire District instead. Hence, the fate of the building remains in an awkward state of limbo.

The Town has also refused to sign off on the Abanakee dam replacement, claiming that the work has never been properly completed. Meanwhile, they have put out a Request For Qualifications for engineers for the Adirondack Lake dam replacement, which has also been mandated by inspectors. The Town is not planning to use the Laberge Group, that supervised the work at Abanakee.

The Town's interests, as represented by the State Department of Environmental Conservation, did prevail in a major court case against the environmental organization, Protect, to establish a long sought after snowmobile trail system, which had been promised as

part of the Essex Chain of Lakes land acquisition by the State a few years back. Although they've declined to appeal that particular case, Protect did throw another obstacle in the path of this project by singling out a needed bridge across the Cedar River, part of a connector trail between Newcomb and Minerva on the trail network, for a point of further legal resistance.

It's the hope of Indian Lake, and the four other local communities that share the trail project, that it will someday also become a popular destination for mountain biking and equestrian trails, which could attract different types of visitors at different seasons and thereby help spawn other local businesses.

In February, Governor Cuomo awarded another \$103 million to Frontier Communications for further improvements to broadband internet access in the North Country. This brings the total State investment to \$341 million. This, the third round of awards, was greeted with considerably less enthusiasm than previous cycles, since so few people have actually seen any improvement at all, so far. It seems ages ago that Frontier strung fiber optic cable along Route 30 into Sabael. But that cable still remains unlit. It is said that Frontier will finally get around to turning it on in the third quarter of this year. One thing is likely, though: if the cable is ever activated, there will be no consideration given to subsidizing customers, whose access will be charged at prevailing rates, making Frontier a double recipient of New York's bounty.

One ray of sunshine, though, was Charter Communications' acquisition of Hamilton County Cable TV. More familiarly recognized as Spectrum Cable, Charter is the second largest cable operation in the country. After coming out of Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2009, Charter rebounded to become a major player in the communications industry. It offers most of its 25 million customers very competitively priced packages of cable, internet and voice services. It is the fervent hope of all those striving for the Town's success that this new player will quickly bring free market competition to our benighted, vassal electronic domain.

Another bright spot was the encouraging news from APIPP that no new aquatic invasive species infestations were found in any Adirondack lakes last year! Progress may be hard won, but the fight is not without its rewards. Or, as Scripture teaches: "Tribulation

produces perseverance; and perseverance, character, and character, hope.” We hope for the future of our lake, our Town and its people. Or, as they used to say in the state of New York, “Excelsior!”

2017 ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

The Association held its 39th annual meeting and picnic on August 5 at the Byron Park pavilion. Joe Hancock and Pete Sinski once again grilled the hamburgers, veggie burgers and hot dogs to perfection to complement all of the salads, casseroles, chips, dips, fresh fruits and desserts that filled out the buffet. The business meeting began as everyone settled in with desserts and coffee. The members reelected Pete Sinski and Carmen Adler to three year terms on the board and added a new board member, electing Marsha King Purdue to a three year term. Marsha was born in Indian Lake and is a life long resident. She is a partner in the local law firm of Purdue and Wells, and serves in the part time position of Hamilton County District Attorney.

Rich Vincelette reported that for the year ended June 30, 2017, revenues were \$3,220.00 which included a number of contributions at the voluntary higher levels. Expenses totaled \$1,627.93 yielding a bank balance of \$5,911.39 as of August 5, 2017. The main expenses were for the annual meeting and picnic, printing of the newsletter and boater’s guide, testing the lake water quality, membership in the Adirondack Lakes Alliance, and the Association scholarship. There were 104 memberships as of the annual meeting.

Our guest speaker was Erin Vennie-Volrath, Aquatic Invasive Species Project Coordinator for the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program. Erin presented a power point program explaining how non-native invasive plants threaten our Adirondack lakes, and the measures that are ongoing to prevent the spread of these plants. She also set up a display of actual invasive plants that have been found in other Adirondack lakes, such as Eurasian milfoil, variable leaf milfoil, water chestnut, and curly leaf pondweed.

The minutes of the 2017 annual meeting are available for your review on our website.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues are unchanged from the rates that went into effect in 2014. The basic membership options are \$15 for

one year or \$35 for three years. In 2014 we instituted voluntary higher levels for members who would like to contribute more, and so far we have received many membership payments at the higher levels. This generosity is helping the Association strengthen its financial position and better prepares us to respond as issues that concern our membership arise. The current membership dues levels are:

- Lake Level - \$15 for 1 year or \$35 for 3 years
- Baldface Mt. - \$25 for 1 year or \$60 for 3 years
- Dug Mt. - \$40 for 1 year or \$100 for 3 years
- Snowy Mt. - \$50 for 1 year or \$125 for 3 years

Please note that your membership expiration date is printed on the address label on the last page of this newsletter. Please check to see whether you are due to renew your membership.

ILA DICK MERRILL SCHOLARSHIP

Last year the Association's scholarship of \$200 was awarded to Indian Lake High School Class of 2017 graduate Josiah Voorhees for pursuit of studies at SUNY Adirondack while learning the family business at Camp Driftwood. The scholarship was named for Dick Merrill, a long time board member, educator and lake advocate. It is awarded to graduates of Indian Lake High School who have exemplified good stewardship of the lake and the environment.

WATER QUALITY

~ Joe Hancock

During last summer Joe Hancock and Russ Evatt sampled the waters of Indian Lake 3 times, in the early summer, mid summer and early fall. Each time a sample was drawn from the “deep hole “ of the lake, frozen and sent to the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) at Paul Smiths College. This year will mark the 15th year of our participation in their program. It is a collaborative program between Paul Smiths and Protect the Adirondacks. The program includes participation of over 90 volunteer water testers covering 67 lakes throughout the park. After the testing season is over a report is generated and can be found at http://www.adkwatershed.org/sites/default/files/alap_2017_report.pdf

Our sampling sessions last year included taking a secchi disc reading, which measures water clarity, drawing a

lake water sample, and taking a portion of the sample using vacuum pump to draw water through a cellulose membrane filter for chlorophyll-a analysis, which indicates the amount of algae present. The rest of the sample is frozen and sent to Paul Smiths. One of the great benefits of our lake and most of the Adirondack Lakes is the absence of algae blooms which have become all too common in other NYS waters, most notably the Finger Lakes. Our secchi disc readings have been fairly constant over the years averaging about 15 feet. The secchi disc is a round metal plate with an alternating black and white color pattern. We lower into the water until it disappears from sight. After each session we would send a report of our secchi disc reading, a frozen sample of the lake water, and the frozen membrane filter to the AWI. As directed by the AWI we took our samples from the deepest part of the lake. This is done this way for several reasons. One reason is to get the most accurate data from samples taken in the same spot. This will give the best indication of any true changes in the water quality. Also it is best to avoid sampling near shore or near a stream outlet as these areas could have very different water qualities depending on rainfall, or other water runoff influences.

The results from 2017 indicate that our lake continues to maintain good water quality, with little change in the major readings, including a slight decrease in pH which had been slowly increasing in the past few years. pH is measured on a scale of 0-14 with 7 being neutral, less than 7 is considered acidic and greater than 7 is considered alkaline. Our lake averaged 6.8 for the season which is considered circumneutral and falls within the range that most of the lakes tested at. Other elements such as chlorophyll and chloride (road salt) as well as phosphorus (higher levels can stimulate algae growth) have all stayed nearly constant and indicate a healthy lake that can support aquatic life.

A major factor in maintaining our lakes good water quality is the amount of water turnover or flush rate, which is 1 to 2 times per year depending on snowpack, and rainfall. Also the lake has a very large water shed surrounding it, but it is sparsely populated with little influence from fertilizers and road salt so the water entering from brooks and streams is relatively clean. We can all help maintain our clean lake by keeping our septic systems in good working order and avoiding the use of lawn and garden fertilizers near the water.

INVASIVE SPECIES UPDATE

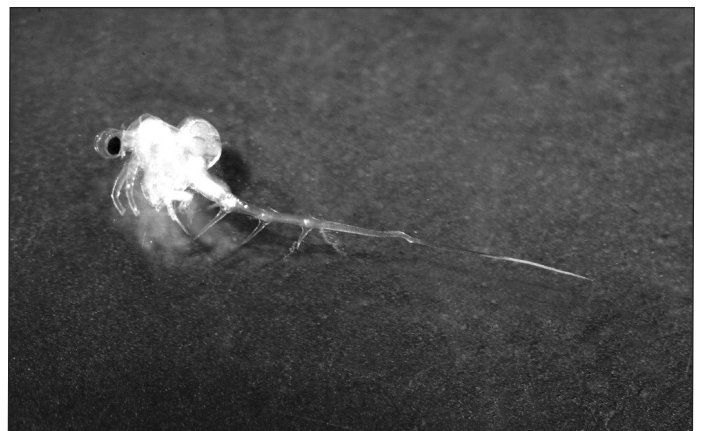
~ Gail O'Brien

The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) announced that last year, for the first time in a decade, no new Adirondack lakes were reported to be infested by aquatic invasive species (AIS). This great news shows that the recently expanded program of boat launch inspectors, decontamination stations, lake surveys and boater education is making an impact in the fight to prevent the spread of these ecologically harmful and economically costly invaders. With nearly 75% of Adirondack lakes surveyed found to be invasives-free and only 12 species present in interior lakes, the Adirondack Park, is one of the few places where the odds are high for keeping invasive species out of our cherished waterways.

"A real opportunity exists in the Adirondacks to protect against widespread degradation by AIS. Detecting infestations early can lead to removal when the likelihood of successful eradication is highest. Everyone who lives or recreates in the Adirondacks plays a critical role in protecting our waters from AIS," said APIPP's AIS Project Coordinator, Erin Vennie-Vollrath.

Many organizations have worked tirelessly to help prevent aquatic organisms from entering our lakes and rivers and even though this is great news the prevention measures must continue and hopefully grow to keep our natural resources healthy.

According to the Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's College, visitors expend over \$1.2 billion dollars annually and tourism provides employment for over 26,000 residents. Clean and abundant water is a main ingredient of the tourism package that attracts



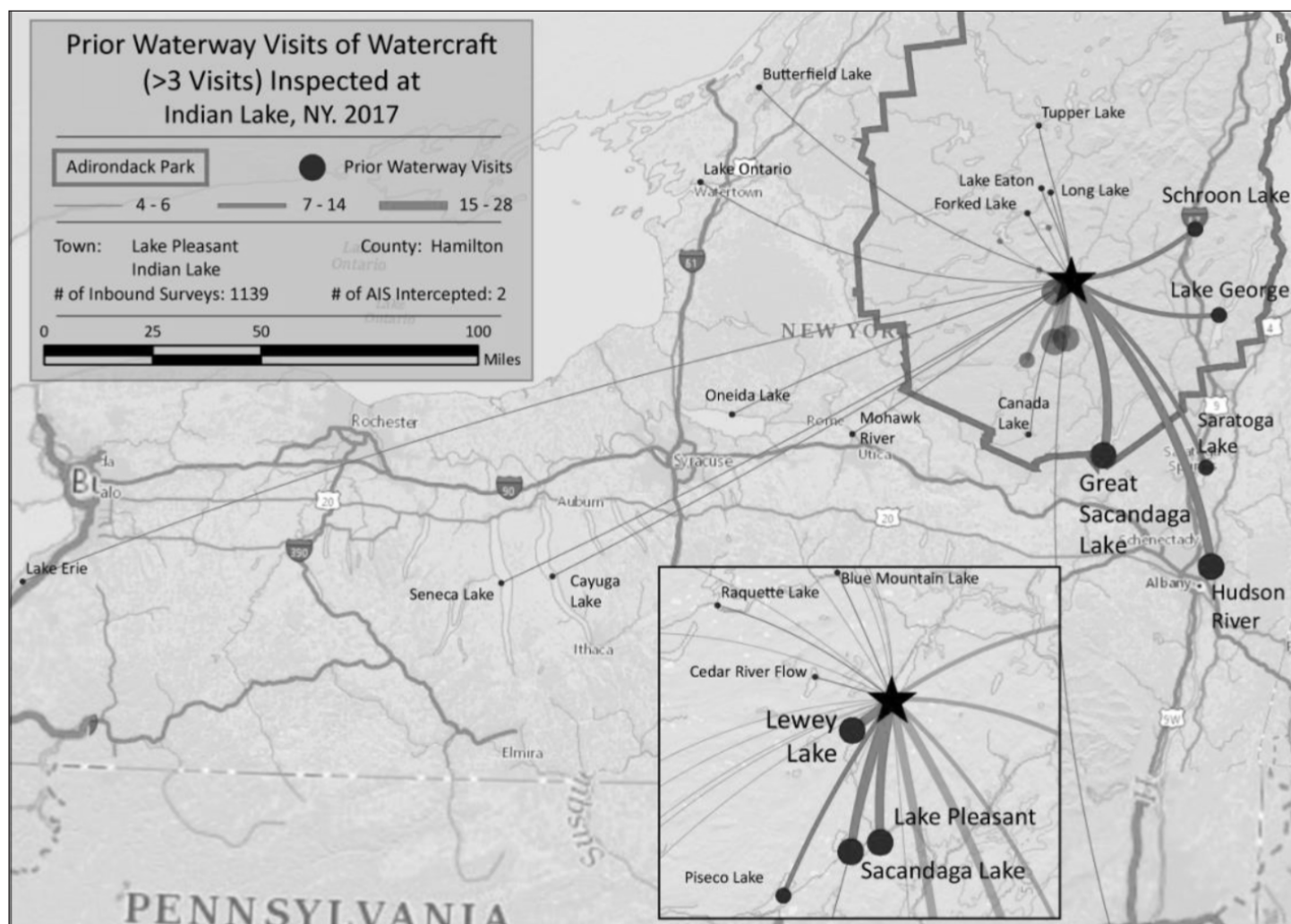
Spiny Water Flea (photo enlarged)
Actual size is less than a half inch including the tail.

visitors to the Adirondack Park, as over 85 percent of visitors desire waterside lodging and approximately 70 percent want to swim, fish, or boat while visiting the Adirondacks.

Last summer was the third year that boat stewards have staffed the Indian Lake DEC boat launch ramp, checking boats for invasives and familiarizing boaters with proper preventative measures. The 2017 report from the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program shows 2,444 boats inspected at the Indian Lake ramp last year between May 26 and October 9. Of those, 6.5% failed inspection meaning that they carried some form of organic material that was invasive, non-invasive or unknown. Each was cleaned before entering the lake. Two of the boats carried positively identified invasive species. Boaters are doing a better job taking preventive measures by washing their boats, draining the bilge, emptying bait bucket and livewells. Last year 53% of the boat launch visitors showed spread prevention awareness, so there is room for improvement.

For 2018, the NYSDEC Adirondack Park Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention Program will provide two stewards and a decontamination station for Indian Lake. Stewards will be present Thursday through Monday and work staggered shifts to provide either 12 hour (providing peak traffic hours overlap) or 16 hour (non-overlapped 8 hour shifts) coverage, depending on site characteristics. The optimal coverage hours for Indian Lake will be determined as the season progresses.

The only invasive species found in Indian Lake to date is the spiny waterflea which appeared in 2016. This is a crustacean less than one half inch long with a barbed tail. The species consumes small zooplankton that is an important food for young native fish. The barbed tail of the spiny waterflea prevents smaller fish from eating them and thus can interrupt the food chain. They are difficult to keep out of the lake due to their transmission on fishing gear. Research is ongoing but currently, there is no known management technique once the crustacean is established in the lake.



Map from the Adirondack Watershed Institute Stewardship Program 2017 Final Report

Last summer, our Association once again organized a team of volunteers to survey the shoreline for invasive aquatic plants. We are pleased to report that our lake shows no signs of the common invasives such as Eurasian milfoil, variable-leaf milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, and water chestnut. Each summer our Association's volunteer surveyors divide up the 39 mile shoreline and search assigned sections for plants that fit the description of common Adirondack invasives. Last year our survey team included Pete and Ellen Sinski, Ellie Menz, Paul Coppock and Gail O'Brien. You can get involved in helping, by contacting Gail O'Brien at: gailo@timberlock.com, 315-945-0568, or any board member.

APIPP's Aquatic Invasive Species Project provides training to volunteers on how to survey for and document aquatic invasive species. Citizen volunteers can attend one of these training sessions to sharpen their identification skills and learn how to conduct a survey. Volunteers paddle along the perimeter of a waterway, surveying for aquatic invasive plants, and document the area searched and any infestations discovered. Volunteers can also survey for aquatic invasive animals such as spiny waterflea and Asian clams using plankton tows and sediment sieves. Collected aquatic invasive species presence and absence data is forwarded to APIPP, and entered on the invasive species distribution map. This distribution information helps APIPP to focus its prevention and management efforts. Interested in participating in this volunteer training opportunity?

Contact APIPP's Aquatic Invasive Species Project Coordinator at adkinvasives.com/contact-us

CLEAN IT, DRAIN IT, DRY IT

TARGET LAKE LEVELS

Last year our lake levels throughout the boating season were much more favorable than during the unusually dry 2016 season. The return of more normal rainfall last year allowed the operators of the Indian Lake dam to keep lake levels higher in August and September. Throughout the season lake levels were consistently closer to the new target elevations that were implemented in 2016 by the Hudson River and Black River Regulating District at the request of our Association. These revised targets provide for an earlier

draw down after the spring flood to reveal the beaches earlier, and a slowing of the traditional rapid draw down in the late summer to extend the boating season. The targets involve increasing the draw down rate slightly on May 1, reaching a target on July 1 that is a foot lower than the pre-2016 target, and on August 1 slowing the draw down so that on September 1, the lake is a foot higher than the old target level. On October 1, the draw down is accelerated to increase the lake's collection capacity. This is all subject to change due to unusual weather conditions and events. Last year the lake levels compared to target were approximately as follows:

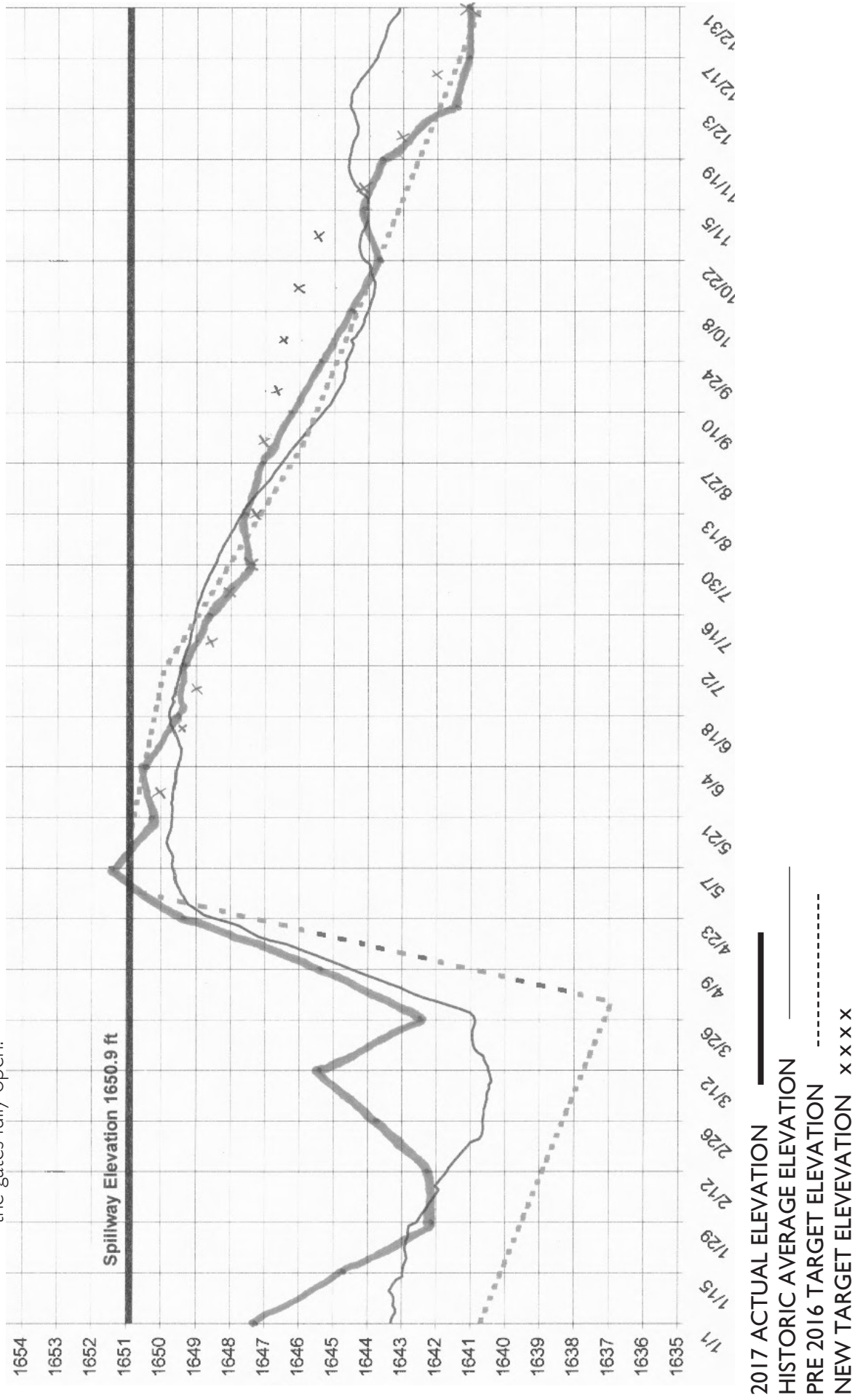
May 1	at target
June 1	+10"
July 1	+3"
Aug. 1	-3"
Sept. 1	-5"
Oct. 1	-19"

The Hudson River Black River Regulating District operates the Indian Lake dam and is responsible for managing the downstream flow through the Indian River and the Upper Hudson. It must perform a balancing act, particularly late in the season, to keep a sufficient flow in the Upper Hudson and support dam releases from Abanakee for white water rafting, while slowing the outflow to hit the higher targets. They also need to quickly draw the level down after October 1 closer to 1644' (about 26' by the painted rock gauges) to prepare for heavy autumn rains. We are pleased that the Regulating District is trying to accommodate our concerns, but we need to remember that the District's primary statutory mandate is to regulate the flow of streams and rivers as required for downstream benefits such as prevention of flooding, and providing sufficient water flow for wastewater treatment, and hydroelectric plants.

The Regulating District has tentatively scheduled its June 12, 2018 board meeting to be held in the Indian Lake Town Hall beginning at 10 a.m. The public is invited and will have an opportunity to ask questions.

INDIAN LAKE WATER LEVEL ~ 2017

Below is a graph from the Hudson River Black River Regulating District that shows the target water levels agreed on between the Indian Lake Association and HRBRD for the lake in effect prior to 2016 (dotted line), the new target levels effective in 2016 (small 'x's) and the historic average water levels (thin solid line). Added to the graph are the actual levels from USGS data (heavy solid line). The combination of the large drainage area and the relatively small outlets on the dam mean that a large rain event or rapid snow melt can make the lake rise significantly even with the gates fully open.





Indian Lake Association ADK, Inc.
P.O. Box 973, Sabael, NY 12864
www.ilaadk.org

INDIAN LAKE ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors 2017-2018

President – Paul Coppock 518-648-0762
Vice President – Maggie Evatt 518-796-3964
Secretary – Carmen Adler 845-594-2721
Treasurer – Richard Vincelette 518-648-5542
At-Large – Autumn Blanchard 518-648-5409
At-Large – Gail O'Brien 518-648-5494
At-Large - Pete Sinski 518-648-5980
At-Large – Marsha King Purdue

ILA Website: www.ilaadk.org

INDIAN LAKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC BYRON PARK PAVILION SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 2018

4:30 pm – Barbeque Picnic
5:15 pm – Dinner
5:45 pm – ILA Business Meeting

ILA will supply the burgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers FREE to ILA members. There will be a \$5.00 charge for non-member guests. The guest fee will be applied to a new annual membership for anyone not currently an ILA member so please invite your friends and neighbors. Each family should bring a dish to share (appetizer, salad or dessert) as well as drinks of your choice.

Please RSVP with the enclosed mailer or contact:
Richard Vincelette – rbvincelette@gmail.com