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The Newsletter of the SLA is  
 published 3 times a year.

Editor: Fran Fish  
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**Message from the President**

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc. (SLA) - a new simpler name (formerly the Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association, Inc.) but still the same organization.

First of all, we would like to thank everyone who has supported our Milfoil Eradication Project over the past four years. With all of your financial help we have been able to combat a serious threat to the Skaneateles Lake ecosystem! Special thanks go to Larry Rothenberg for conceiving the project, John Menapace for his ingenuity carrying it out, and Bob Werner for his professional expertise and guidance. A long term solution to this problem is now within reach as we enter the maintenance phase in 2011. As anticipated, this will require an annual effort.

The City of Syracuse Water Authority has not yet agreed to participate as a permanent funding source. Until this is achieved, annual funding for the maintenance of milfoil control will need to come from all of us who love and depend on the lake. I encourage everyone to join the SLA. With full participation we will be able to cover our anticipated expense for weed control and more.

SLA will expand its mission and become a more comprehensive lake association - working to monitor issues critical to lake health, informing the community on these issues and serving as a coordinator when the community decides action is required. Already, a committee on the very important issue of hydrofracking has been established to help with the research required to understand its potential impact on our lake and environs.

Communication among all of us will be augmented by combining our websites into one which will be regularly monitored and updated @ [www.skaneateleslake.org](http://www.skaneateleslake.org). E-mail will be used to regularly and expeditiously keep all members well informed and actively participating.

SLA has joined with lake associations representing the other lakes in the region to form the Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance. This partnership will allow us to share information and join forces to address similar concerns on lake issues.

Enjoy reading this first issue of the SLA Newsletter. As our plans continue to evolve for the revitalized lake association we sincerely hope everyone understands the importance of such an alliance to help keep our lake clear and pure! Please begin by returning the attached membership form with the dues for 2011 or go to [www.skaneateleslake.org](http://www.skaneateleslake.org) to both join and pay online. Don't forget to include your e-mail address.

Thanks for your anticipated participation!

Paul F. Torrissi, M.D.  
 President



Paul F. Torrissi, MD



## The Mission of the Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc. is to:

- Protect the Skaneateles Lake watershed;
- Prevent pollution of the waters of Skaneateles Lake;
- Encourage responsible use of the Lake and the land around the lake by:
  - Providing direct services to remove invasive species from Skaneateles Lake;
  - Encouraging governmental bodies to protect the watershed and the lake from pollution and invasive species through effective regulation and financial support of efforts to protect the lake water;
  - Promoting responsible stewardship by those who are residents of the lakefront and watershed and recreational users of the lake; and
  - Educating all who drink the water of Skaneateles Lake to have a better understanding of the value of efforts to protect their water supply from pollution and invasive species.

In our Newsletters, we will be bringing you articles that will teach you about the lake, help to make you a good steward of the lake and help you enjoy the lake and living on or around the lake.

**We look forward to your membership, participation, support and feedback.**

## A COMMUNITY PULLING TOGETHER

The Tri-county Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association's initial work was to make a plan to successfully eradicate milfoil from the lake and to develop a maintenance program that would ensure that the milfoil could not again get a stronghold. When the program began, 30 acres of milfoil had been documented in Skaneateles Lake, but more was found as the program got underway. A successful program would take an understanding of what was happening, a plan for removing the milfoil and MONEY to put the plan into action.

### Where did the money come from?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>448 residents who own waterfront property</b>                              | <b>3 local milfoil specific fundraising events</b>  |
| <b>155 local residents who do not own waterfront property</b>                 | <b>3 governmental agencies -</b><br><i>New York State, Onondaga County, and the Town of Skaneateles</i> |
| <b>23 family foundations or trusts</b>  | <b>2 businesses that provide services to Skaneateles homeowners</b>                                     |
| <b>20 local Skaneateles businesses and organizations</b>                      | <b>2 private corporate foundations</b>  |
| <b>5 Skaneateles businesses that collected donations from their customers</b> | <b>2 people who visit or vacation on the lake</b>   |
| <b>5 employer matching donations</b>  |   |

All together, these people, groups, agencies, and businesses donated \$1.4 million and the success of the effort to remove milfoil on the lake is their success.

Take a look at this list and if you live on the lake, live in communities around the lake, have a business that thrives because of the lake or just plain LOVE the LAKE, please join us as a member of the Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc. If you have not been a donor to the Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association in the past, please join the Skaneateles Lake Association now, and consider making an additional donation along with your membership dues.

## History of the “Lake” Organizations and the Efforts Taken to Protect Skaneateles Lake



In 1969 the Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association, Inc. (SLPWA) was formed with the purpose of protecting the lake from pollution related to runoff and septic systems. The Association was granted tax-exempt status in March 1971.

In the early 1970s because of a threat of oil pollution from two-cycle outboard engines operating on the lake, the President of the

SLPWA brought legal action against the Outboard Marine Corporation (OMC). He wanted them to stop manufacturing these engines and eventually OMC did stop. Over the next 20 years the Association worked on a number of issues that included:

1. Encouraging the Village and Town of Skaneateles and other towns within the Skaneateles watershed to adopt land use controls that would protect the lake from contamination from runoff. The Village had zoning controls in place in 1929 and updated and enhanced them for protection of the lake in 1975. The Town of Skaneateles adopted zoning controls in 1966 and the SLPWA encouraged both to improve their regulations in order to better protect the watershed. Currently the Village of Skaneateles and Towns of Skaneateles and Spafford have made significant progress in instituting zoning regulations for protection of the watershed
2. Working with governmental agencies and area residents to promote effective sewage systems.
3. Encourage efforts on the part of the City of Syracuse to manage the City's water draw from the lake in proportion to the watershed yield, which is vital for protection of the lake from excessive high or low lake levels.
4. Supporting the efforts of the City of Syracuse to limit its consumption of water to alleviate drought conditions that occurred in the late 70s.
5. Supporting efforts and legislation to limit heavy truck traffic that had resulted in accidents that spilled fuel and chemicals into tributaries feeding into the lake.
6. Addressing the problem of the risk of runoff that could send plumes of sediment and contaminants into the lake.

7. Urging the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Town of Skaneateles to develop mechanisms to ensure that contaminants adhered to boats and trailers were not brought into the lake when boats were launched from the state and town boat ramps on West Lake Road.
8. Supporting legal action brought by the Village of Skaneateles and the City of Syracuse against the Skaneateles School District and the NY State Department of Education to block construction of a school bus garage, town highway garage and joint fueling station near Shotwell Brook. This was important because Shotwell Brook feeds into the lake and the threat of a fuel spill had to be avoided.

In the early 1990's the Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association (not originally a corporation) was formed to continue the work of the Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association, Inc. that had become inactive. The Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association was incorporated by amending the corporate charter name for the Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association, Inc.

In January 2007 the Skaneateles Lake Milfoil Eradication Corporation (SLMEC) was formed as a non-profit organization with the focus of dealing with the milfoil infestation of Skaneateles Lake. Donations to the SLMEC were funneled through the TCPSLPWA and the work of removing milfoil from the lake began.

In June 2008, the Skaneateles Lake Milfoil Eradication Corporation merged with the Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association, Inc. so tax-deductible donations could be directly accepted for the Milfoil Eradication Project. Since that merging the TCPSLPWA, Inc. has continued to take action in all of the public policy areas addressed by the original SLPWA, Inc. and has undertaken a successful fundraising effort and plan of action to remove milfoil from Skaneateles Lake.

In January 2011, the Board of Directors of the Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association, Inc. voted to change its name to the Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc. and legally assume Tri-County's tax-exempt status.

The Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc. plans to remove the remaining major pockets of Milfoil from the lake in the spring, summer and fall of 2011. We will then continue with ongoing efforts to prevent the development of further large pockets of milfoil by careful ongoing removal and prevention of growth.

The Skaneateles Lake Association plans to continue with all of the public policy support and efforts of its ancestor groups to protect the watershed and the lake water and we will be joining with other groups and associations to ensure an effective voice for the future of our lake. One of those issues will involve our concern for hydrofracking as a threat to our lake water. Please be sure to read the article in this newsletter about hydrofracking, which was written by Mary Menapace.

*Written by Julie Scuderi and Robert Liegel*

# D O N O R S T O R I E S

## Why did you give to the Tri-County Skaneateles Lake Pure Water Association?

**JP who lives in Florida.** "I do not live in Skaneateles, but I visit usually twice a year. Two years ago when I was out in a boat I saw all these weeds. When I am at the lake I love to swim and ski and the weeds were unsightly. My fear was that the next time I came for a visit it would look like a lake I had lived on where they had to mow the weeds out of the lake. I asked my host about the weeds. He told me about the milfoil problem, its threat to the lake and about the work of the TCSLPWA. **When I got back to shore I wrote a check to the TCSLPWA."**

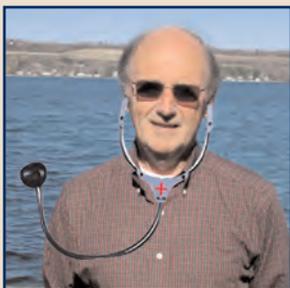
**DV who recently bought a home on the lake.** "My neighbor wrote me a welcome letter and said that she knew I would love my house and lakefront. She also told me about the work of the TCSLPWA and its need for donations. I did not have to take a 2nd look at the lake to know that I wanted to be a part of the effort and I immediately sent a donation. **A few weeks later after watching the divers work out on the lake, I sent a 2nd donation."**

**SD who lives in Elbridge.** We do not have a place on the lake, but my wife and I try to sponsor everything that is local.

**JM who lives in the village of Skaneateles, but not on the waterfront.** The number one reason I gave is **because of the drinking water.** Regardless of the fact that I do not live on the lake, **I drink from the lake.** But also, my husband and I live here because of the lake. I may not see it first thing every morning when I wake up, but I know it is there and the **health of the lake** is essential to this great community resource.

**What is your donor story? E-mail us at: [skanlakeassoc@att.net](mailto:skanlakeassoc@att.net) and tell us why you donated.**

## ASK Dr. Bob



Dear Dr. Bob,  
Every once in a while I notice all these suds or foam on the lake shoreline. Is someone using too much soap in the washing machine?  
Sincerely,  
Curious and Concerned

Dear Curious and Concerned,

Well, someone may be using too much soap in the washing machine, but that **is not** what is causing the occasional shoreline foam.

Bubbles are created when waves topple through the air back into the water again as might occur when white caps are formed. These bubbles are formed underwater and then quickly rise to the surface. You can see this for yourself by pouring water into a glass.

In order for a bubble to persist at the surface, the surface tension of water surrounding the bubble needs to expand when the bubble reaches the surface. Under water, the pressure of the water compresses the bubble, but when the bubble gets

to the surface the pressure is greatly reduced and the bubble tends to expand dramatically. A bubble in pure freshwater will typically pop when it reaches the surface due to the high and rigid surface tension of water surrounding the bubble. If the surface tension is reduced, then the bubble is more flexible and less likely to break. An accumulation of such bubbles can lead to foam.

The factors that reduce surface tension in water are often naturally occurring organic matter that acts as a surfactant. Lakes with high concentrations of dissolved organic matter such as in the Adirondacks tend to more commonly develop foam. Skaneateles Lake typically has a relatively low level of dissolved organic matter, but at certain times of the year and under ideal conditions the level can get to be fairly high at the surface. For example, in the fall, soluble organic matter is leached out of the fallen leaves and carried into the lake, which can reduce the surface tension in the water. Patches of vegetation, such as milfoil, which die back can also release organic matter into the water and reduce the surface tension. If the wind builds up and creates waves and white caps, foam can develop. It is most likely that this was the cause of the foam last year.

In any case, it is very unlikely that such an event is a signal of a problem for the lake.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Robert Werner

# Hydrofracking Skaneateles: What it Means and What You Might Do

Some definitions first –

**Hydrofracking** – literally – to use water to fracture rock to release gas, more recently slang for High Volume Slickwater Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing or, HVHF – a highly industrialized method of extracting natural gas from shale. For the purposes of this article, hydrofracking will mean HVHF.

**Skaneateles** – A lovely town wrapped around the northern end of one of the cleanest lakes on earth. The lake is one of the few remaining unfiltered municipal drinking water sources in America.

**Hydrofracking Skaneateles – oxymoron or reality?** We're on the edge. Without vigilance and action, there could be drilling in our watershed as early as this summer.

## Hydrofracking – the Process

Hydrofracking for natural gas involves mixing water, sand and chemicals, then pumping them down a wellshaft and out perforations in the wellbore pipe, under high pressures so the rock is fractured. The sand remains in the fractures, allowing gas to escape. The technique is nothing new – it's been used for many decades. But, High Volume Slickwater Horizontal Hydrofracking is entirely new, in fact has never yet been allowed in New York State. Horizontal fracking versus the old style vertical fracking is a matter of scale because the wellbores are exponentially longer when the drill is turned and goes sideways through the shale horizontally, up to a mile and a half. Vertical hydrofracking, still allowed in NY, uses a regulated maximum of eighty thousand gallons of water. High Volume hydrofracking requires three to eight million gallons of water per well and twenty tons of chemicals additives per million gallons. With the fracking, (ramping up of the pressure on the fluids injected into the wellbore,) the fluid picks up radioactivity, volatile organic chemicals, heavy metals and salts from the strata, turning the water mixture into toxic waste. Up to thirty percent of the fluid flows back to the surface – at minimum, a million gallons each frack – where it has to be stored, handled, transported, (in our neighborhoods) and ultimately disposed of, as it cannot be treated to be returned to the hydrological cycle. The rest of the toxic brine remains underground.

Each wellpad will have between six and twelve wells. Truck trips? Do the math. Not even including the building of the pads and the equipment and the drilling, just for the water and flowback fluid alone at 5000 gallons per tanker truck – thousands of truck trips are required for each well fracked. And we worry about the garbage trucks?

## Hydrofracking and the Lake

Millions of gallons of toxic waste are created with hydrofracking. The industries claim they recycle 100% of the waste now, but that's misleading. They do use a mixture of 20% flowback with 80% fresh water for subsequent fracks. But, at the end of each frack, there is at least one million gallons of toxic waste introduced into the human environment – handled and stored and transported in and over our fields, our neighborhoods, our roads, our watershed. There is an abundance of surface

water – ponds, creeks, wetlands, lakes, and rivers in the Finger Lakes. The aquifers are most often unmapped. Add to this the fact that there are over thirty thousand orphaned, undocumented gas wells in New York State and you have a script for contamination with any spill, well blowout, illegal dump of fluid or accident. Surface spills travel for miles underground. In every state that has been hydrofracked, there are alarming rates of mishaps and multiple instances of water contamination, as well as dangerous underground gas migration problems.

## Current Federal State Local Regulations

Last year, in response to widespread documented cases of health effects and water contamination, Congress mandated the EPA to study the safety of hydrofracking and drinking water. The results are expected in 2012.

Oil and Gas Extraction industries are exempt from federal environmental regulations including the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act. Fossil Fuel extraction industries receive tens of billions of dollars a year in Federal tax breaks and exemptions, which amounts to subsidies. The Renewable Energy sector – solar, wind, geothermal and hydroelectric, on the other hand receive next to nothing, and hence viable renewable technologies have no chance to compete in the US market.

In New York State a moratorium on high volume horizontal hydrofracking is in place until July of 2011. Concurrently, the DEC was ordered to review and update its' antiquated permitting documents and put them out for public comment for thirty days. This process could feasibly be pushed through by August and permits for hydrofracking could be issued by the fall. Municipalities like Skaneateles have no control over the process of gas drilling once a permit has been issued by the DEC.

Which brings us to Local Regulations - Though the state has all control over regulating mining, including oil and gas that is not to say towns have no control. We cannot pass laws specific to mining but we can pass laws to protect our roads, laws to control nuisance noise and lights, laws that say where mining's permissible – (zoning). And we can prohibit industry that is incompatible with our way of life according to what we as a community value, as outlined in a Comprehensive Plan. Skaneateles has a Comprehensive Plan, a good one that is just now being updated.

## What You Can Do

Learn more. For local events, references and county lease maps, go to [fivetownwatershed.wordpress.com](http://fivetownwatershed.wordpress.com). **Sign the petition at that site, which will be presented to the town board in support of protective language in our land use codes.** Demand road ordinances, light ordinances, noise ordinances, moratoriums, and prohibitions. Go to Town Board and Planning Board meetings and keep hydrofracking in the discussions. Support the Frac Act - federal legislation to repeal federal environmental exemptions. Call on Andrew Cuomo to take a cautionary stance on industrial drilling throughout the state. Let's keep "Hydrofracking Skaneateles" merely an incongruous figure of speech and not a reality.

*Written by Mary Menapace*



## What is the status of the efforts to remove Milfoil from the lake?

*An interview with Dr. Robert Werner (Bob) and John Menapace*

### **Bob, when we started the efforts to remove Milfoil from the lake, how big was the problem; how much milfoil was there?**

In 2001, when we first became aware of this problem, we surveyed the lake and counted 39 patches. We repeated the survey in 2006 and we counted 111 patches. If the milfoil had been allowed to grow unchecked we estimate we would now have around 180 patches.

### **John, how did you come to develop the early mechanism you developed for removing the milfoil – hand digging out plant by plant and vacuuming the removed weeds up to the pontoon boats for collection? Was that a technique that had been used elsewhere or did you have to build the mechanics or modify ones that were available?**

The method of using the suction harvesting equipment came from conversations with people from Lake George and upper Saranac Lake. They steered me to the maker of the suction pumps in California. There was a guy out of Rochester that was selling a small suction unit mounted on 8-foot pontoons. I knew we needed larger craft for Skaneateles Lake. I designed our pontoon boat for this purpose. The first boat worked as planned. Bob Dewitt was the first diver to use the equipment. After he was under the water for about an hour and a half I called him up. He asked me if the equipment was a problem. I told him there was no problem with the equipment, but the boat was going to sink if we put any more milfoil on it. (There is a picture on the website of Bob and Terry Dewitt on the first day.) We built two more boats for the next summer with some upgrades and modifications. We added a larger air compressor to accommodate 3 divers and lifting cranes for getting equipment in and out of the water more quickly which reduced our setup and pickup time each day. We also changed the equipment to exhaust the pump engines and compressor air dumps under water to quiet the noise topside on the boats. For safety we put marine radios, real time XM weather and GPS on all the boats. All of the equipment has worked well for the last four years with just routine maintenance.

### **John, last year you started using a new technique. Can you tell us about that technique and why it was developed?**

Last year we started using geo textile mats laid on the lake bottom. These mats starve the plants of sunlight and kill them. This technique had been use in other lakes and earlier in Skaneateles, but on a smaller scale. We modified the boats and made equipment to roll out 430 by 12 ft. rolls of geo textile. There were plenty of rocks on the bottom to weight the cloth in the first area we did near Mandana. Other areas we planned on doing did not have enough rock for weighting. We needed a better way to weight the cloth to keep it on the bottom. I did some small-scale experiments with cable as weighting. When I came up with the amount of weight that worked we built a 14 ft. wide sewing machine to sew pockets in the geo textile cloth every 6 ft. on the narrow width of the cloth. We inserted a cable into the full length of these pockets. We made up 85 ft. lengths of geo textile in this manner that rolled up weigh about 150 lbs. We load these rolls onto the pontoon boats and take them to the site we want to cover. Divers roll out the cloth on the weed beds. The geo textile is left down about 10 weeks.

We also built a roll up barge with a hydraulic reel with an arm that goes down near the bottom to roll up the mats. The rolls can be moved to a new site and rolled out again. Last year we rolled out about 5 acres of mats.

### **Bob, the removal efforts have been going on now for 4 years. Where are we now? How much milfoil is left to be removed?**

By the end of the summer in 2010 we had reduced the number of patches from the 111 patches we had counted in 2007 to just 28 patches, most of which were in the south end of the lake. In terms of area this is about 4-5 acres.

### **Bob, when we get these last big patches removed are we done?**

In addition to the 28 patches at the south end of the lake, there are still a few incipient patches scattered throughout the lake. These patches are generally small, about the size of a dining room table or less. Although they are not an immediate problem, they are sources for new re-growth and will have to be removed in the future. Right now we are concerned with the removal of the large patches. Milfoil in Skaneateles Lake reproduces by fragmentation. This means that the number of fragments coming from milfoil patches is directly related to the amount of milfoil in the lake: the more milfoil the more fragments for reproduction and spread of the plant. So, what we have done so far should greatly reduce the reproductive potential of milfoil and slow the spread of the plant. Unfortunately, milfoil will be impossible to eradicate completely. We will have to conduct maintenance removal indefinitely into the future. Maintenance work, however, will be much easier and less expensive. The heavy lifting will be completed this summer.

### **John, what mechanisms will you use for long-term maintenance efforts and what amount of resources do you anticipate we will need for those long-term maintenance efforts?**

Our long-term plan is to keep at least 1 crew of four or five divers on the lake to do a combination of matting and suction harvesting. This crew should be able to remove any remaining patches and keep up with any new growth that occurs.

## Staghorn Cliffs

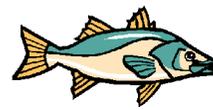
**Twenty acres of forested land with dramatic cliffs plunging into the southeastern portion of Skaneateles Lake have been preserved. The Finger Lakes Land Trust recently announced the gift of 1,300 feet of shoreline just south of Staghorn Point with the accompanying land above. Staghorn Fossils (somewhat resembling a "stag's horn" from the remains of Rugosa Coral a million years ago), which are found at the base of the cliffs, have long been admired by boaters and divers.**

David Dickinson from DeWitt and his children: Thomas and Scott Dickinson, Laura Dickinson Maguire and Hollis Dickinson Wilson donated the land. Andy Zepp, Finger Lakes Land Trust Executive Director, said the area would be called the Cora Kampfe Dickinson Conservation Area in honor of David Dickinson's mother. Cora Kampfe Dickinson had owned the property and had wished it to remain in its natural state.

**If you would like more information on the Land Trust go to their website at [www.flt.org](http://www.flt.org) or call (607) 275-9487.**

*Written by Buzz Roberts*

# Fishing Skaneateles Lake



## A Visit with Charlie Coleman, Bill Barron and Rose Thompson

My husband and I eat enough fish to have grown gills, but my experience with fishing is limited to watching the patient and, what often had to be, cold fishermen on Skaneateles Lake from my living room window. So when I wanted to write an article about fishing Skaneateles Lake I asked for directions to the experts and those directions led me to Charlie Coleman, Bill Barron and Rose Thompson.

I met with Charlie, Bill and Rose in the back section of the Bearwood Bait and Tackle Shop. There was a lot I wanted to learn about fishing Skaneateles; it only took one question to get the three of them started. "So, what is so special about fishing Skaneateles Lake?" I asked. The three of them answered in one voice, "the quality of the fish. Of course, then I asked, "why are the Skaneateles Lake fish better quality?" You may be surprised at their answer.

According to Charlie, Bill and Rose in all the other Finger Lakes the fish feed on fatty sawbellies, a type of minnow. Skaneateles Lake does not have fatty sawbellies so the fish in Skaneateles are higher in protein and lower in fat. Just what the doctor ordered! This is such a special situation in Skaneateles Lake that the DEC prohibits fishing in Skaneateles Lake using fatty sawbellies as bait. Charlie, Bill and Rose told me that believe it or not the lack of fatty sawbellies for food means even Carp from Skaneateles Lake can be pretty good eating. I will take their word on that, but they assured me they had cooked up a carp on their wood stove at the bait shop for a good meal.

Charlie told me that as a result of high quality food the perch from Skaneateles Lake are delicious. He added that the catch limit for perch from the lake is 50 a day and that a fisherman can sell 50 a day. I remembered that someone had once told me if you want a great perch dinner go to the Colonial Lodge. I asked if the perch from that restaurant were so great because they were fresh caught from the lake and Charlie said, "absolutely." Of course, they also must have a chef who knows how to prepare them. I had a visit with Shelly Ferris one of Colonial Lodge's owners and she confirmed that they do serve perch from Skaneateles Lake caught by local fisherman.

Rose asked if I knew that Skaneateles Lake is the only one of the Finger Lakes that does not have to be stocked. (I did not.) She explained that the minnows that are found in all the other Finger Lakes are lacking in vitamin B1. She went on to explain that minnows that are Vitamin B1 deficient are like fish birth control. The fish that eat those minnows do not produce eggs or if they do produce eggs those eggs do not become fertilized. In the other Finger Lakes, the Vitamin B1 deficient minnows significantly diminish the reproduction of fish within the lakes themselves.

I asked Charlie and Bill if there was anything else that made the fishing in Skaneateles Lake so good. Again their answer was in unison, "The zebra muscles." I was puzzled by that as my Lake Ontario zebra muscle experience was that zebra muscles were an enemy of the fisherman. Charlie and Rose explained they believed the zebra muscles had cleared the water so well that the grasses down at the deep bottom of the lake grew better. These grasses are great for the fish because the algae produce plankton that attract and feed the insects and the minnows eat the insects and the fish

eat the minnows. They explained that it was all a life cycle. They also explained that the crabs in the lake (which are fresh water versions of crawdaddies) eat the zebra muscles and the bass eat the plentiful and well-fed crabs. This makes the bass caught in Skaneateles Lake today much bigger than the bass were before the zebra muscles came to be in the lake. They laughed when they told me about the bass they catch that have little cuts around their mouths from eating crabs that have eaten zebra muscles. I guess there are bits of sharp zebra muscles inside the crabs. They also told me the bass would eat the zebra muscles directly off the rocks in low water, which also results in them cutting the flesh around their mouths.

After we talked about perch and bass I asked them about the trout in the lake. I knew the lake had lake trout, but was surprised to find out the lake also has rainbow trout, brown trout and landlocked salmon. The salmon are put in the lake by the DEC and at one time the DEC also stocked the lake with what they called golden trout, but the latter have been fished out of the lake.

When we talked a bit about the quality of the lake and taking care of it responsibly, Charlie and Bill both repeatedly used the phrase, "it only takes one bad guy." They related stories of places where they had previously been allowed to access the lake over private land to get on the ice and fish in the winter. They reported that access had been lost because of "one bad guy." I could only respond that the "one bad guy" ruining things for others was true of all uses of the land around the lake and its waters. They all agreed.

I invited Charlie, Bill and Rose to make use of our lake access for shoreline fishing and they told me that they would take me up on it AND give me at least one fish from their catch. I ended my interview with only one more question, "CLEANED?"

Be sure to read our next issue's story about fishing for lake trout and Bill's unique lake trout fishing rod.

*Interview by Fran Fish*



**Rose Thompson and Charlie Coleman** (*Bill Barron was busy carving a miniature lobster fishing boat at the time of photo.*)

**Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc.**

**P. O. Box 862**

**Skaneateles, NY 13152**



**Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc.  
Membership Application**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

May we send you future issues of our newsletter/other communications electronically? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

For our records, please note if you are a waterfront owner or if you have water rights with your property. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If winter address is different, please complete below:

Street Address/PO Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
Dues and Donations (SLA Inc. is a 501c3 organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible in compliance with federal and state regulations)

Annual Dues: \$100

Annual Dues plus a donation of \$150 for Milfoil Boat support for 2 hours: \$250

Annual Dues plus donation of \$900 for Milfoil Boat support for a full day: \$1,000

In major support of the Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc., enclosed is a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in addition to the annual dues.

Please make checks for your membership dues and any donations payable to the **Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc.**

Members donating \$150 in addition to membership dues will be publicly noted as Co-sponsors of the Milfoil Boat for a day.

Members donating \$900 in addition to membership dues will be publicly noted as Sponsors of the Milfoil Boat for a day.

**Mail your membership application and check for dues and donations to:**

**Skaneateles Lake Association, Inc.**

**P. O. Box 862**

**Skaneateles, NY 13152**

You may also join SLA, pay your dues and make donations at: [www.skaneateleslake.org](http://www.skaneateleslake.org)