

# Newsletter

## A Letter from the President

A few issues ago I borrowed the line from a Grateful Dead song "Don't tell me this town ain't got no heart, you just gotta poke around". I'm going to borrow another one. The year is 2020, "What a long strange trip it's been". It seemed like a good opening, but I refuse to rehash what we all know too well, so, let's concentrate on the key words to these thoughts, Fun, Facts, Fraternity, and Future.

Just for Fun, how about a Fun Fact: There are 225 billion times more molecules of water in a teaspoon of water from the lake than there are teaspoons of water in the lake. This is based on our Lake having a surface area of 275 acres, an average depth of 4 meters and the volume conversion 1 cm<sup>3</sup> = 1ml. Well, I thought it was a fun fact. Back to the four F's.

When we meet again around the lake in 2021 let's all have some FUN, we deserve it. WCLA will be offering fun activities, new and traditional, and we hope you take advantage of these as you can. Also take advantage of activities that I know will be offered by the Caroga Arts Collective (CAC) and the town's Parks, Lakes, Recreation, and Tourism (PLRT) Commission.

**FACT:** In the summer of 1988 a group of South Shore residents met to discuss concerns with the environment of the lake and other issues. All residents of West Caroga Lake were invited to a meeting at Pat & Ernie Hopper's camp and over 50 people attended. From this the WCLA became a reality with Kevin Grygiel as its first chairman.

**FACT:** In 2016 we had 159 members. From 2017-2020 we have added 74 members, 233 total at this time, a 46.5% increase from 2016. Our 233 members represent households, not individuals, so WCLA currently represents well over 500 people of all ages. **FACT:** 19 member households have been with us since 1991, the first year dues were recorded. By the way, the yearly dues in 1991 were \$20.00. **FACT:** We have members from 19 States.

**FRATERNITY** is defined as "a group sharing common interests" and a "feeling of friendship and mutual support within a group". More on this later.

What will the **FUTURE** hold, what do you want it to hold, and how will you help to make that happen for WCLA? I don't know what the future will hold but I'd like to take this 233 out for a spin and see what we can do with it. I would like to see more participation in all our activities/projects. I would like to see partnerships develop between WCLA and East Caroga as well as WCLA and CAC for the benefit of all involved. I would like to see WCLA representation on and participation with the town's Lake Management Committee and the Parks, Lakes, Recreation and Tourism Commission. I would like to see us continue to grow in membership and to have all dues, still \$15.00, paid by the due date of June 30th. And, I would like to see us work toward making your visions for the future of WCLA become reality. To do all this we need to use our fraternity to get involved, communicate ideas, get to know each other and work together always for the benefit of our lake, our members, and the town.

Details on activities that are already planned, in the planning stage, and being considered are included inside this issue and/or will be communicated to you by email. Please let us know your ideas, thoughts, and how you can help build this future when you can. As needed during this "long strange trip" I must remind all that mandated restrictions and organizational decisions can possibly affect 2021 activities.

For now, all is a go. Be safe, keep our fellow citizens in your thoughts, and plan for a great 2021 for all.

SEE YOU AROUND THE LAKE in 2021 as we continue moving the peg forward for WCLA.

- Don Hopper, WCLA President



### In this issue

## Celebrating 100 Years of Sherman's

page 6-7

- 1** MORE FISHY FUN page 2  
An update on the Caroga Lake fish stocking initiative.
- 2** "I REMEMBER WHEN" page 4  
Memories of the Caroga Lake area, submitted by our members.
- 3** ON THE HORIZON page 10  
Things to keep an eye on and look forward to in the community and offered by WCLA.
- 4** DATES TO REMEMBER page 11  
Mark your calendars for our most popular events including the annual boat parade, chicken dinner & more.

### ORGANIZATION INFO

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# More Fishy Fun

## Caroga Lake Fish Stocking Initiative Update

As you hopefully may recall, WCLA participated in a joint fish stocking venture with East Caroga Lake Protective Association last year ( 2019). More than 800 fish, including 400 Rainbow Trout and 400 Brown Trout, were stocked, half going into West Caroga Lake and a half going into East Caroga Lake.

The current crisis we are all facing impacted the fish stocking industry to some degree. WCLA was able to procure and stock more than 150 largemouth bass at various points on the lake, from both the North Shore and South Shore in June 2020. The plan was to stock another 100 trout into West Caroga during autumn of 2020, but a critical water shortage from our fish hatchery forced us to delay this stocking until the spring of 2021. WCLA has already raised and budgeted \$2000.00 for the 2021 stocking season. We will keep you posted on progress.

### Casting Forward

We have been in touch with members of the Town's Lake Management Committee and Parks, Lakes, Recreation, and Tourism Commission(PLRTC) about having West Caroga representation. These are relatively new initiatives for the town. Their basic organizational structure and initial appointees are in place, but they will be looking to add to this and will always be looking for help in both areas as their current plans develop. We have talked about a partnership on fish stocking with DEC, Lake Management, West Caroga, and East Caroga. DEC seems to be extremely supportive of this. No details yet. If you wish to know more about these committees, go to [wclainfo.com](http://wclainfo.com), STAY UPDATED tab, Town website, Departments, Lake management, or PLRT commission.

### Latest DEC Fish Survey

This mid-August 2018 survey was designed to evaluate the states stocking efforts. West Caroga Lake was last surveyed in 2004. The lake is currently stocked with 5,200 splake each year. All nets were set on the bottom of the lake with the intent of capturing splake to collect data on their growth. Nine species of fish were collected.

A temperature and dissolved oxygen (DO) profile was also collected during the mid-August survey. Sufficient oxygen for trout was observed down to a depth of 50 feet where the DO was 5.0 ppm at a temperature of 41.4 °F. The splake appear to be providing a quality fishery and are surviving multiple years while coexisting with warm water species. The stocking policy will remain in place, along with the current special fishing regulation (NYCRR 10.3 (18) (b)) which allows ice fishing. The smallmouth bass fishery also appears to be doing well with some quality fish being captured. Not many young bass were seen in the survey, but due to the net placements this is to be expected. West Caroga Lake is currently managed under statewide black bass (smallmouth and largemouth) regulations which will not be changed.

Species	No.	Avg.Length
Splake	66	11.9"
White Sucker	3	18.8"
Rock Bass	1	3"
Bluegill	1	8.2"
Yellow Perch	4	6.6"
Smallmouth Bass	24	14.7"
Brown Bullhead	1	4.7"
Pumpkinseed	1	8.5"
Lake Whitefish	7	18.9"

# In the Weeds

Season totals for weed harvesting and boat wash participation.

Gene Centi reported that the weed harvesting program ended September 9. They took a total of 3112 bushels out for the season. That is down 29% from last year. Last year 4398 bushels were removed.

West Caroga Lake was surveyed 5 times during the season. Divers worked on the lake a total of three times extracting approximately 40 bushels of milfoil. The majority of the milfoil concentration has continued to be along the north shore. No new invasives were found.

On East Caroga they found one new invasive (curly-leaf pondweed) which was concentrated at the association docks. It is believed this was caught early enough to eradicate it.

The boat wash station inspected a total of 156 water crafts. Curly-Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Water Milfoil was found and removed from four watercraft. At the East Caroga campground launch a total of 386 water craft were inspected. Eurasian Water Milfoil was found and removed from two watercraft.

# Town Developments

## Caroga Volunteer Fire Company

The Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company had a flag raising ceremony at their new facility on Oct. 31. They expect to be fully moved into the new station in January.



## Here Comes the General



Dollar General recently announced that its store in Caroga Lake is now open. It is located at the lower end of the Caroga Fire Co. property. The store is expected to employ approximately six to 10 people, depending on the need. The company provides employees with competitive wages, telemedicine eligibility, Dollar General's Employee Assistance Foundation,

health insurance coverage options, 401K savings and retirement plans, tuition reimbursement, paid parental leave and adoption assistance to eligible employees.

Dollar General is deeply involved in the communities it serves and is an ardent supporter of literacy and education. Since its inception in 1993, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded more than \$186 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, helping more than 12 million individuals take their first steps toward literacy or continued education. WCLA board members who have been there were impressed with the availability of merchandise and the store in general (pun intended).



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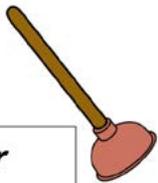
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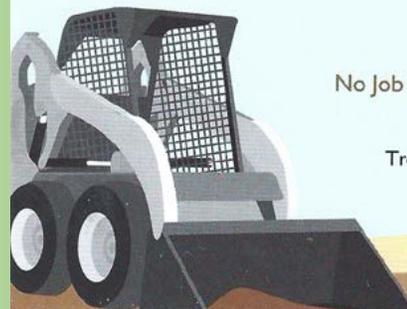
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## Welcome Bags

A new WCLA program to welcome newcomers in our community.

Summer 2020 started our Welcome Bag project. Our Welcome Bags include information about the area, such as information about the WCLA, hiking and kayaking spots, restaurants and shops, information specific to Caroga Lake, etc. We also included a deck of cards, a favorite camp pastime, a WCLA light-up keychain, and some patriotic leis, just for fun.



Bags were distributed to new members who were brand new to the area this year. If you know of someone who has just moved into the area and wants to become a member of the WCLA, please let us know.

## Town-Wide Yard Sale

A look back at 2020's sale, and a look forward to 2021.

A report from board member Debbie Drain

The Town of Caroga Yard Sale was held on July 25th, and our West Caroga Lake Association once again participated in it. We were able to space all our tables to maintain social distancing and even provided masks and hand sanitizer for our patrons. Thanks so much to all of our members who donated items for sale this year. We had quite a collection of things to sell, and we were able to raise just over \$1,500 for the association. Special thanks go out to the Hogan Family for graciously letting us use their property on East Shore Rd. again this year. Many hands make light work, and I would like to thank everyone who helped us set up and those who stayed and supported throughout the day.

A Call for Help

Debbie will be stepping down as yard sale coordinator, so if we want to keep participating we will need someone to take her place. This is not a one person job, so we would need a chairperson and a committee. Please be thinking about getting involved with this. It not only supports our other endeavors, it gives visibility to WCLA as an association involved in our town and allows us another opportunity to talk with people about what we do for our lake, our town, and our members. Debbie will definitely talk with anyone interested about what the job entails and provide support throughout the process. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Three years of participation in the yard sale has raised \$3900 to support WCLA endeavors.**





# A Salty Problem: Looking for a Low Salt Diet

Resolution 2020-123 to Support the Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Act was passed at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on Wednesday October 14, 2020.

The Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Act bill is named in honor of the late Randy Preston, who rallied local government support for protecting the park's waters from road salt while he served as Wilmington town supervisor. It passed the state Assembly on July 20, the state Senate two days later, and was recently signed by Governor Cuomo.

According to a press release from local advocacy group AdkAction, "Each year, over 190,000 tons of road salt are applied to roadways in the Adirondacks, posing a threat to aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, water quality, and the safety of drinking water. New York State uses about 2.5 times more salt per lane-mile than county and municipal road crews."

A 2019 study from the Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's College said of 500 Adirondacks wells tested, 64% of these downhill from state roads had sodium levels exceeding the federally recommended health limit endangering those on low-sodium diets, corroding pipes, ruining appliances and water flavor.

What about when runoff reaches the lakes? One area of emerging concern to WCLA is the discovery of potentially concerning levels of Sodium and Chloride levels in both Caroga Lakes. According to a recent Adirondack Lake Assessment Program (ALAP) study published on the town website, West Caroga has moderate levels of these chemicals present in the water (the chloride level is higher than 81% of all lakes participating in the study, and 88 times higher than the lake in the study with the lowest level) and East Caroga has high levels of these chemicals present in the water (the chloride level is higher than 94% of all lakes participating in the study and 188 times higher than the lake in the study with the lowest level). The ALAP study suggested that these elevated levels of Sodium and Chloride are indicators of excess road salt seeping into the lakes. WCLA sponsored its own study through the New York State Federation Of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) by participating in the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP), a multiple year program of collecting

and testing a significant number of water samples. The first year results of this study also suggested that West Caroga Lake has moderate levels of Chloride in it. Although research on the long term effects/impact of road salt, and the resulting elevated levels of sodium and chloride on aquatic life isn't conclusive at this point in time, WCLA has concerns that these long term effects are likely to be adverse.

The Adirondack Road Salt Reduction Task Force will be a 14-member group of appointed state and local stakeholders. It will research alternatives to salt spreading on winter roads and submit its recommendations by Sept. 1, 2021. Then, for three years from 2021 to 2024, the pilot plan will test these management practices on all state-owned roadways within the boundary of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park.

These measures could involve spreading different substances on the roads, using new types of plows that scrape up more salt, changing how salting is done to focus on prevention and removal, having plows drive slower to avoid salt bouncing off the roads, and reducing speed limits in low-salt areas.

**"Each year, over 190,000 tons of road salt are applied to roadways in the Adirondacks, posing a threat to aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, water quality, and the safety of drinking water."**

Resolution 2020-123 to Support the Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Act was passed at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on Wednesday October 14, 2020.



Photo by Richard Nilsen

## Background: A Bit of History

In the 1870's, Caroga Lake was a farming community. The center of activity was at the Five Corners/Five Points (up the hill past Vrooman's) with a hotel and various stores serving the business community of Wheelerville (Nick Stoner Inn/golf course area) and Caroga Lake. Around 1877 Joseph Sherman built the first hotel in Caroga located at the peak of the triangular area formed by the intersection of the roads from Gloversville and Johnstown,

east of Sherman's. He ran it with his wife Elizabeth, and in 1894 they were joined in the operation by their son Frank. According to Frank, in an interview in 1943, across from the hotel beside the water were five fish ponds. Three ponds in the front row were each 100 foot in length, extending from where the stairs up to the dance hall are over to Floyd's house. Floyd and Frank Sherman were brothers. Floyd's house is still there at the edge of the Sherman's property next to Mead creek. The Merry-Go-Round and Whip were built behind and just to the left of the

# The Road to Sherman's — Celebrating 100 Years



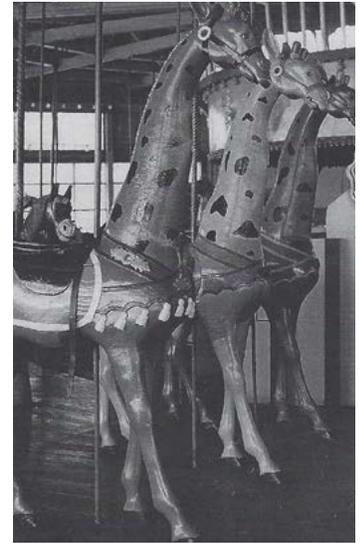
house. The Joseph Sherman's Caroga Lake Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1899. Joseph and family moved across the street to Frank Sherman's house, where Frank ran a store and the Post Office from 1894 to 1900. Frank moved around a lot in the early 1900's including Canada Lake, Johnstown, and Pine Lake. During that time Frank's house was run as a hotel by George Fort.

Lumber mills and tanneries were extremely important to the growth of the Town of Caroga. Lumber was needed in building the growing country and a growing need for leather developed, spurred by needs during the Civil War. Curing the leather involved large amounts of tannic acid which came from tannin which was derived from the bark of hemlock trees. Therefore tanning mills were built near hemlock forests where there was already large amounts of lumber being milled that was used to build the tanneries. In the grand scheme of things it didn't take long to exhaust lumber supplies and ready to harvest hemlock bark in the Town of Caroga, so the mills closed down and moved on.



*"I actually ran away from home when I was 5 years old to go see Trixie at Sherman's, there was a pole up there and they had a monkey," said Scott Horton, who grew up in Caroga and previously served as the chairman of its planning board. "My parents thought I had drowned."*

*Quote originally printed by Matt Hunter of SpectrumLocalNews on 10/16/2018*



## Success from the Jaws of Failure

The last big attempt to lumber the Pine Lake area was made by Frank Sherman. He built a dam at Pine Lake at the site of the current dam in 1908 and his saw mill burned in 1911. He had to go into bankruptcy. In 1919, the beach along the east shore of West Caroga Lake was a popular destination for many people from surrounding towns. There was a small bath house and a hot dog stand along the beach. During the winters of 1919 and 1920 Frank Sherman set up a portable saw mill west of London Bridge Road where he produced large quantities of lumber that he stacked on his property at Caroga. Everyone was curious about this since Frank had not had much luck in the lumber business. In the spring and summer of 1920 a two story pavilion and dance hall was erected along the waterfront. As soon as it opened in 1921 it began attracting crowds, and the rest as they say "is history".



Photo by Richard Nilsen



We could keep going on and on about Sherman's since the 1921 opening, but we will leave you to your own "remember when....." memories.

Thank you Sherman's and Happy 100th Birthday. We can't wait to see what the future holds.



# On the Horizon

Learn about other endeavors under discussion and/or being planned for the WCLA community.

## Caroga Kids

WCLA is considering developing a summer activity program to be available to not just children of our members, but to all youth in the town. We were going to contact the school about the possibilities but with uncertainty with budgets and future restrictions this idea is still on the table.

## Boater Safety

Bringing the state course closer to Caroga, including looking into members training to teach the course.

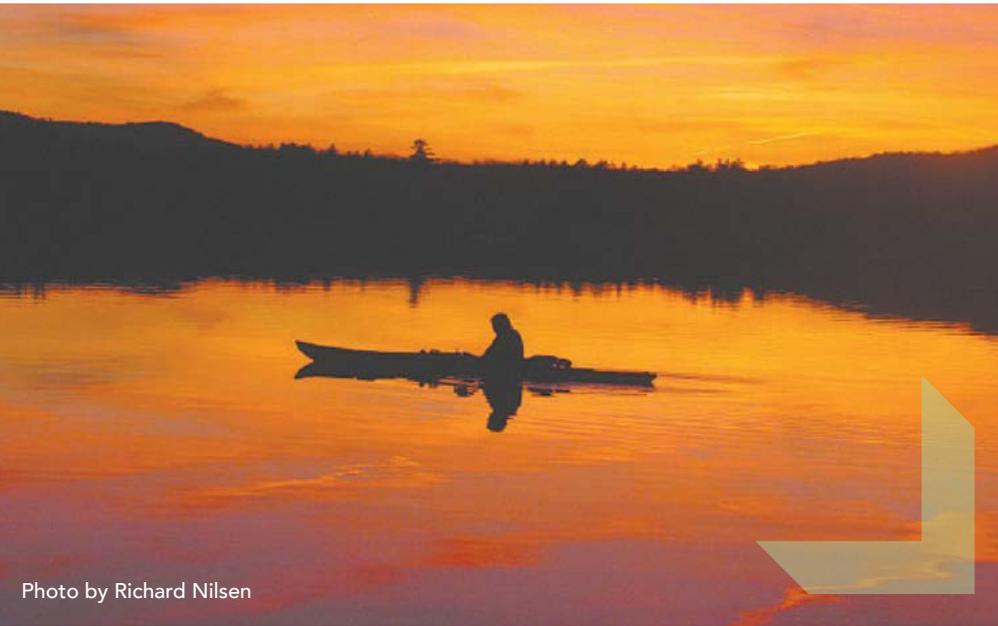


Photo by Richard Nilsen

## Bridge Painting

The concept is to get rid of the graffiti, paint a simple <-- WEST CAROGA / EAST CAROGA --> underneath at the top of the sides, and paint scenes on the support wings, 4 total. ADK wildlife like loons, eagles, bears, deer, fish etc. have been discussed. The project has been approved by the DOT and the APA thanks to Clint King with NYSDOT Transportation Maintenance Fultonville (covering Fulton and Montgomery Counties). We have permits in hand along with some project guidance from Angela Chiricosta, a DOT Engineer out of Utica. We can now begin working out the logistics of the project. We have reached out to East Caroga Lake Protective Association (ECLPA) president Rick Mendetta and he said "some board members" may be interested in helping us work on the project.

As we grow beyond our current 233 member households, your board has been planning ways we can use WCLA funds for the benefit of the lake, our members, and the town. We can't bring these ideas to fruition without you. If you can volunteer your time, ideas, expertise etc. to these or any of our other scheduled events, PLEASE contact us through the website or email.

## Did you know?

During the Middle Ages ships arriving in Venice from infected ports were required to sit at anchor for 40 days before landing. This practice, called **quarantine**, was derived from the Italian words **quaranta giorni** which means 40 days. Some sources say it was derived from the Venetian language word for 40 days, **quarantena**.

On the Olympic flag, the five rings represent the five participating continents: Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Oceania/Australia. And the six colours: white (background), blue (Europe), Black (Africa), Red (the Americas), Yellow (Asia), and Green (Australia/Oceania), are those that appear on all the national flags of the world at the present time.

And for the math geeks, did you know if you multiply 111,111,111 by 111,111,111 you get the number 12,345,678,987,654,321. (12 quadrillion, 345 trillion, 678 billion, 987 million, 654 thousand, three hundred twenty one).



Photo by Richard Nilsen

# I remember when...

Enjoy some memories of the Caroga Lake area from our wonderful members.

"[I remember when...] Saturday nights in Caroga lake; the parents went dancing upstairs at Sherman's. We played on the midway. I loved the "Tilt-O-Whirl" and bumper cars, finally being able to reach the gas pedal on the go-carts. Candy apples were the best, getting popcorn from the "Popcorn Lady" and Peanuts from the Peanut man and his monkey (Mitzi?) Then Dad would drive us up to the Stratford Dump to watch the bears! No TV, No internet, the good old days." - *Mel Charles*

"I remember when we used to tube with real inner tubes. My kids don't believe us, but we did. And we always had to be careful with the direction the stem was facing." - *Bruce Barkevich*

"I remember when Dale Shuster and his sister Jeanne rode their bikes (middle school age) from St. Johnsville (a 30-minute drive by car) to visit Sherman's because it was such a happening place. This was in the early 1970s." - *Vicki Shuster*

"I remember when, in the late 1940's...The car was packed when we arrived home from school and we headed from Johnstown to W. Caroga Lake, not to return until Labor Day...Daily bath was a swim in the lake and my mother washed our clothes in the lake with a washboard...The bathroom was an outhouse, 50 feet in the woods from the camp during the day and a pottie under the bed at night...The beach from what was call Currented Hogan's Point to Sherman's was Public and anyone could use it...Jimmy Nicholson, a midget, ran a bar to the left and back of where the post office is now located. The building is still there...The Dorsey Brothers and other Big Jazz Bands would come to Sherman's." - *Walt (Jim) Hogan*

**To be included in future newsletters, send your remembrances to [wclupdates@gmail.com](mailto:wclupdates@gmail.com)**

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FB-Nick Stoner Inn & 19<sup>th</sup> Hole

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# 1776 Meets 2020

WCLA had record participation in 2020's annual boat parade with 45 boats!

This past summer's annual boat parade was a great success! The theme was "1776 Meets 2020", and we had some very creative boats out on the water!

A very special thanks to Dick Stahl for organizing the event, and to our wonderful judges: Libby Palcovic & family, Linda Gilbert and Scott Horton.

We are excited to announce next year's theme: "Sherman's —100 Years of Memories". Get started planning those boat decorations and let's make 2021's parade the biggest yet!

### Best in Parade:

- 1st Place: Rogers
- 2nd Place: Hopper
- 3rd Place: Hermance

### Best in Theme:

- 1st Place: Maddocks
- 2nd Place: Hogan
- 3rd Place: Stevens

### Most Creative:

- 1st Place: Granato
- 2nd Place: Zeina
- 3rd Place: Potocar



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Weds. And Thurs. 3-11  
Fri. and Sat. 12-12

5083 St. Hwy. 29A, Stratford, NY  
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1st Place - Best in Parade



1st Place - Best in Theme

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### General Meeting

**Saturday, June 19th, 2021**  
10am • Caroga Chapel  
Speakers TBD

### Annual Boat Parade

**Sunday, July 4th, 2021**  
4pm • On the water by Sherman's  
Theme: Sherman's - 100 years of memories • Prizes & Categories TBD  
Flare Lighting at 9:30pm

### Town Garage Sale

**Saturday, July 31st, 2021**  
WCLA will be set up at the Hogan's Camp on East Shore Road.

### Chicken BBQ

**Saturday, August 7th, 2021**  
Nick Stoner Inn  
Details TBD

### Cornhole Tournament

This event had to be cancelled last year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Details this year are TBD.

**Note: Due to the ever-changing situation regarding COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines, please keep an eye out for updates in your email and on our Facebook page.**



1st Place - Most Creative

## Parting Shots

**Newsflash** — Scientists have just shown that if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.

And, on days you wish winter was over, think of Barrow, Alaska. Barrow is the northernmost city in the United States, and the ninth northernmost city in the world. It is 320 miles north of the Arctic Circle. When the sun sets there on Nov. 18 or 19, it doesn't rise again for 65 days. More than 4,000 people live there. On average, Barrow's high temperature is above freezing only 120 days per year, while temperatures are at or below zero degrees 160 days per year.

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P.O. Box 158  
Caroga Lake, NY 12032



*To this day, our purpose remains “to be concerned with the preservation and improvement of the recreational and residential environment of the West Caroga Lake Area.”*

SEE YOU AROUND  
THE LAKE,  
SUMMER 2021!



Photo by Richard Nilsen