

## HISTORY OF ORANGE LAKE FISH AND GAME ASSOCIATION

The Orange Lake Fish and Game Association, located in Orange County, was incorporated in 1914. It was a new sportsman club made up of local residents in Newburgh, New Windsor and Town of Newburgh, plus members from other county towns and villages. Those early pioneers were responsible for early stocking of bass, pickerel, panfish, and the rumor of pike. They also were responsible for lake outflow, general cleanup of waters and shores and monthly meetings.

The beginning forefathers were Henry Kernahan, Bill Fenwick, James Walls and George Mould. Early directors were Silas Beers, Fred Kernahan, Bill Merrit and John Rothery. Members of the families still live in eastern Orange County....it's called "history." Access to Orange Lake was through fields and swamps or through the yards of the few houses on the lake. The outflow of the lake was used to power the waterwheels of several mills, making products for early industry.

In the 20's, 30's and 40's OLFGA was composed of 40 to 50 members, probably half fished and hunted waterfowl and the rest used the lake for recreation. In 1942, the club got its first legal access to the lake when Thomas Chadwick donated the lot you see today to OLFGA. The membership had grown to 70 members. After 1946, membership was opened to sportsmen from Sullivan and Ulster counties. Active members grew to over 100.

In the late 50's club officers decided it was time for a boat launch and parking lot. Material to fill the lot was donated from construction companies and NYS demolition of local bridges being replaced. There's even a rumor of a Newburgh trolley being part of the fill! In 1959 the boat launch was graveled in and the slide-off hole for boat trailers was dug. Members now had an official launch and a lockable gate was installed on Route 52. Final fill work was completed in '63 and Tom Chadwick sold the lot to OLFGA in '73.

In the 1970's Ray Wheat and Donald King were two presidents who led the club into the modern era. It was also the time when the NYS-DEC became partners with the club in protecting the waters and the shorelines of Orange Lake. Regulations now had to be followed by all lake users, home owners and club members.

During the 80's Tommy Curtis, Walter McKeon and Pete Kosloski served their terms as presidents. What came next was unusual for sporting clubs! Carol Horne of Walden, NY was elected president of OLFGA in 1987. Her family loved activities on the lake and they were avid fishermen. Carol always wanted a pavilion for club functions and Family Day. Long time member, Dave Scheer, suggested to Carol that they should ask Ed Stumpf to take on the job of getting a pavilion built. Ed was the member who suggested club fishing tournaments be started and Carol and club members said yes in 1990.

Stumpf, who served as a board member, contacted the DEC for permission and the Town of Newburgh for a building permit. In 1992, after buying a pavilion kit locally in Florida, NY, the construction began and was completed that summer. Picnic tables were added for member enjoyment. Also included were a scoreboard for tournament stat results, a grill for cooking, a weigh-in table and attached floating docks for boating anglers. Family Day was celebrated on the new pavilion that year and the kids loved it.

Carol Horne retired as president in December of 1992 and nominated Ed Stumpf to replace her effective Jan. 1, 1993. The motion was passed and so began a 20 year presidency for Stumpf. Club membership was static at 300 having reached that number during the late 80's. A working

relationship was started in 1994 with the home owners Civic Association and it remains today, stronger than ever. Ed Stumpf attended the home owners meetings as liaison to OLFGA.

During Stumpf's presidency a semi annual newsletter was created to keep members informed of events going on in the club and upcoming tournaments and stat results. These were mailed to all members every Spring and Fall. Ed also obtained better and cheaper liability insurance for the club. The old wooden docks were replaced with aluminum docks, both walk-on and floaters. Very easy to install in the Spring and store away each Fall. A wood stockade fence was erected at the lot entrance and a new steel swinging gate completed the project. A porta potty was rented for the lot during the fishing season. The number of club tournaments grew to more than 10 per year as travel contests were added to the schedule. Two divisions, A and B were created, and awards were presented to the top anglers at the annual Christmas party. During the years going forward, the lot was resurfaced several times with new shale.

July's Family Day continued to grow in size. Club officers Pete Kosloski and Mike Hall made sure the kids had great panfish tournaments with official weigh-ins and prizes for all the kids. A picnic with family members followed and boat rides and swimming filled the afternoon. The tradition continues today!

In 2012, Ed Stumpf decided to retire as president and he nominated Mike Hall, the current vice president, to take over the reins of OLFGA. At the Christmas awards dinner that year, Mike moved up to president, after 10 years as vice-president. His nomination passed the vote and another new era began.

Under Mike Hall's leadership, more aluminum docks were added, a new bigger stockade fence was erected, the pavilion was repainted, tournament travel increased with the addition of away sites like Sacandaga, Mohawk River, Candlewood Lake and Lillinona in Connecticut. In 2014, Mike coordinated the opportunity for club boat owners to attend a US Coast Guard boating course and boat inspection.

In 2016 in an effort to bring the Club into the 21st century, President Hall announced to club members of an upcoming website to be developed and activated this year. The website will include tournament schedule, results, point standings in A and B division, notification of upcoming events, and photos from past and present.

The future looks bright for a fishing club that's now over 100 years old and still growing.

#### Current Officers:

President:	Mike Hall
Vice President:	Andy Tanner
2nd Vice President:	Phil Gaudioso
Treasurer:	Pete Kosloski
Secretary:	Lou Curci
Financial Treasurer:	Chuck Connors