



A letter to our tourism partners:

Another year has flown by and it's been a busy one for the Oswego County Tourism Office. Thanks to the support and generosity of our tourism partners and our County Legislators, we continue to build upon our great resources and expand many of our marketing programs.

Here are a few highlights of the past year:

Oswego County's reputation as a great place to snowmobile continues to grow, with promotion on **SnowCountry NY** to run in 2012 on public television. We were also featured on **"SnowTrails TV"** on Time Warner and MSG Plus as part of a 4-county promotion.

Our **new Fishing and Hunting Guide** is in the final phases of production and will be ready in January.

Oswego County was chosen as a destination for ILNY's **"Greenest New Yorker"** tour and was promoted in many blogs about our area and its history.

We continue to experience excellent fishing conditions on the lakes and rivers. Fishing promotion has expanded to new markets, new shows, and new targeted audiences.

Gray's Sporting Journal ran a photo spread of the Salmon River in December. Steelhead fishing on the Salmon River was featured on **Field and Stream's** on-line video site.

The **17th annual Lake Ontario Pro-Am Salmon and Trout Team Tournament** was held last July. A huge thank you to our Oswego County sponsors at www.lakeontarioproam.net/oswego/ - without your help this event would not be possible. The 2012 edition of the Pro Am will be July 13 - 15.

The first **War of 1812 Symposium**, held last April in Oswego, was very

successful. The War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee is hard at work planning this year's event, which will be held March 31 at the American Foundry in Oswego.

The **City of Oswego Peace Garden** was named a War of 1812 Bicentennial Peace Garden and is featured in a new 6-county Peace Garden Trail brochure.

Our staff hosted several familiarization tours for group tour operators and has developed a number of new itineraries for visitors to enjoy.

We participated in the planning and promotion of the first ever **Tri-Oswego Ironman Triathlon**, bringing a whole new group of visitors to the county. Thank you to the Broadwell family and their committee for their hard work to drive this new initiative.

We continue to expand regional distribution of our tourism brochures, and distributed more than 34,000 **visitor guides and fishing and hunting guides** in 2011.

Our ad in **"Oprah!"** magazine generated more than 5,000 leads. Each one received an Oswego County Visitor Guide.

Thank you to all who have volunteered and supported our efforts over the past year. We would not be able to accomplish anywhere near this level of promotion without the support of the many people who volunteer and assist our staff.

A very special thanks to those who so generously donated prizes for Oswego County tourism marketing programs: Capt. Ernie Lantiegne, Guide Fred Kuepper, and Douglaston Salmon Run for the New York State Outdoor Writers Fall Conference; Capt. Rick Miick, the Eis House, Canale's Restaurant for

the Fort Drum Winter Recreation Fair; Douglaston Salmon Run, Guide Paul Conklin, Capt. Steve Kowalski, Guide Fred Kuepper, Capt. Roger Young, Capt. Pete Lahosky, Capt. Dave Silver, Capt. Dan Coleman, Capt. Ed Monette, Capt. Ron Hill, Guide Tony Gulisano, Brookfield Power, and Otis Technology for the Oswego County fishing and hunting photo contest; and Cold Spring Manor B and B, Eddie's Place, Redfield Volunteer Fire Company, Buck's Family Restaurant, and the Oswego County Snowmobile Association for helping us coordinate the filming 100 miles of snowmobile trails in one day.

Best wishes for a peaceful holiday season and a successful New Year.

- Dave Turner, Jan Clevkin,
Mary Ellen Barbeau,
Jessica Burt, Kelly Jordah,
Cassie Breen

News from



It's great outdoors.

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Snowmobile sales, interest up in 2011

Reprinted from Powersports Business and
www.nyssnowmobiler.com



Snowmobile sales increased 10 percent worldwide during the 2010-11 season, and more units were registered than the year before, according to a survey by the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association.

Sales of new snowmobiles in the United States were up 5 percent, with 51,796 units sold. The average price decreased slightly to \$8,397. New unit sales in

Canada were up 8 percent with 40,878 models sold. Canada's average price was also down slightly to \$9,361. Sales in Europe and Russia were up 20 percent, with 30,389 units sold.

The number of snowmobiles registered across all ISMA regions also increased. The U.S. saw a hike of 50,158 over the 1.5 million from 2010. Canada experienced a jump of 20,168, to bring its total to 602,902, and European registrations rose to 530,000.

The www.gosnowmobiling.org Web site also saw an increase in traffic with 3 million visitors during the season. Eighteen percent of visitors say they do not own a snowmobile, but are interested in purchasing.

The survey also found that:

- The average age of a snowmobiler was 43 years old, though the median age is tracking lower to include additional Generation Y customers entering the market.
- About 65 percent of snowmobile buyers purchased their first sled this past season.
- On average, snowmobilers rode 1,141 miles each, which is 10 percent more than during the 2009-10 season.
- The majority of snowmobilers in North America are club/association members.

Congratulations to the Winners of Our Fishing and Hunting Guide Photo Contest!



*Best of Show Winner:
Morgan Ingram*

Our new Oswego County Fishing and Hunting Guide will be ready in January. As with our Visitors' Guide, we agreed that the best way to showcase our great outdoors is with pictures of real people experiencing real activities. So we decided to hold another photo contest!

We chose 17 winners from the nearly 90 photos we received and they will all appear in the new guide due out in early 2012.

The winners were: Morgan Ingram (Best in Show); Ashleigh Krebs (Youth Fishing); Dawn Rucando (Youth Fishing); Captain Ed Monette (Lake Fishing); Tom Baschiani (River Fishing); Beth Clark and John Beck (River

Fishing); Tony Gulisano (River Fishing); Cora Miligy (Ice Fishing); Jim Erlwein (Pond Fishing); Paul Conklin (Scenic Fishing); Janet Rebeor-Dexter (Scenic Fishing); Andrea LaRue (Youth Hunting); Tammy Miller and Jay Stuckey (Turkey Hunting); Shawn Griffith (Deer Hunting); Randy Poyneer (Waterfowl Hunting); Robert Clark (Scenic Wildlife); and Scott Parkhurst (Fishing Safety).

The Oswego County Fishing and Hunting Guide will continue to highlight tips, tricks and hotspots as well as river guide, lake charter and marine services. Approximately 100,000 guides will be printed and distributed at trade shows and to individuals throughout the Northeast, greater U.S. and Canada.

To view the winning entries as well as all of the photographs in the contest, go to the Oswego County Tourism's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/visitoswegocounty.

Fort Ontario Improvements

Fort Ontario is undergoing some major improvements. Electricians have installed new state-of-the-art security and fire alarm systems and high definition live feed and recording video cameras throughout the buildings and grounds. Work on the fort's infrastructure using NYS Capital Improvement and Federal Environmental Protection Funding will continue through the winter. The work involves improvements to the drainage system, heating systems, and building renovations. The fort's small staff, volunteers, and contractors, directed by regional engineering staff, are conducting the work.

Paul Lear, Fort Ontario Superintendent, reports that one or more buildings at the state historic site may be closed, under repair, and unfurnished at any time next year. However, the fort will still be OPEN and visitors will be able to walk the ramparts, parade ground, and underground stone casemates in the footsteps of our nation's greatest and lesser known military figures.

A room in the Enlisted Men's Barracks has been fitted up for lectures, videos, school tours, and special programming. Weddings continue to be popular at the fort.

This year, a major French and Indian War event will be held at the fort on June 29-July 1, and a Civil War event on September 29-30. For more information on activities at Fort Ontario contact Paul Lear at (315) 343-4711. The fort is located at the north end of East 4th Street in the City of Oswego.

Tourism Advisory Council Presents Ambassador Awards



The Bridgehouse Brats accept their award.



TAC chairman, Ed Lighthall (left), with recipients Richard & Naneen Drosse



Fran Verdoliva (left) & Jan Clerkin (right) with recipient Fred Kuepper

The Oswego County Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) presented its 2011 Tourism Ambassador Hall of Fame Awards to the Bridgehouse Brats of Phoenix, Richard and Naneen Drosse of Minetto, and Fred Kuepper of Mexico. The awards are handed out each year to recognize the extraordinary support and commitment of time and energy given to the Oswego County tourism industry.

The **Bridgehouse Brats** are an exceptional group of young volunteers who greet visitors and boaters on their way through the locks of the Oswego Canal during the summer months. The group was co-founded by Cathy Lee and Carole Sponable and its members serve free coffee and lemonade, run errands, and deliver lunch and groceries to visitors in Phoenix.

Richard and Naneen Drosse are dedicated to a variety of environmental and community projects, including raising public awareness and organizing efforts to control the spread of water chestnuts along the Oswego River corridor. Under their leadership, the Friends of Great Bear have re-established and maintained more than six miles of trails, and built several bridges and benches at Great Bear Recreational area. The couple also helps to organize the annual Magic in Minetto event, as well as Earth Day clean-ups, Environmental Management Council projects, and Minetto beautification activities.

Fred Kuepper has organized many fly-fishing programs on the Salmon River including Project Healing Waters, a volunteer group that helps wounded military veterans re-adjust to daily life through fly-fishing. Through the Tug Hill/Black River chapter of Trout Unlimited, Kuepper coordinated several women's fly-fishing seminars with the NYS DEC, and is involved in stream clean-ups, brook trout studies, and other projects. Kuepper is a licensed guide and operates Fred's Outdoor Adventure Guide Service.

Volunteers Make a Dent in Water Chestnuts

Many volunteers, conservation organizations and angler groups worked together last summer to help slow the spread of water chestnuts in local waters.

Water chestnuts are an invasive species that can be very difficult to control once it is established. They create large floating mats of vegetation that limit the penetration of sunlight which inhibits the growth of native plants and disrupt the food chain.

Volunteers hand-pulled several acres of plants on the lower Salmon River at Port Ontario and in portions of the Oneida and Oswego rivers. The Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District applied a chemical treatment to an

additional 200 acres on the Oswego River.

The Oswego County Legislature allocated funds to pay for chemical treatment of the Oswego River which were reimbursed through a state grant. The application will take place again in 2012 subject to available funding. Plans

are also underway to conduct further hand-pulling projects next summer.

For more information about water chestnut removal, contact the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District at 592-9663 or visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/50272.html>.



Water Chesnut plant



County Legislator Shawn Doyle (center) assisted in the project at the Salmon River Estuary.

2012 Winter Events:

Jan. 14: Winona Forest Try-It Ski Races, 9am-noon. Admission TBD. Winona State Forest, Boylston/Mannsville. www.winonaforest.com.

Jan. 14: Winona Forest Classic 5K Snowshoe Race. Admission TBD. Winona State Forest, Boylston/Mannsville. www.winonaforest.com.



Sled dog rides will take place at the Oswego County Winter Carnival thanks to the Cupcake Mushing team!

Jan. 21: Northern NY Vintage Snowsled Race, 10am. Admission \$10/general, 12 & under free. Oswego County Fairgrounds, Sandy Creek.

Jan. 21: CNY Arts Center Snow Day, 10am-2pm. Admission free. Check website for location details. www.cnyartscenter.com.

Feb. 3-4: Warm Up Oswego Festival, Fri 7-10pm, Sat noon-midnight. Admission free. YMCA Armory, McCrobie Civic Center, Downtown Oswego. www.warmuposwego.com.

Feb. 4-5: Mad River Children's Ice Fishing Derby, 7am-4pm. Admission TBD. Sandy Pond Sportsman's Association, 3201 Co. Rte. 15, Sandy Creek. www.sandypondsportsmans.com

Feb. 11: Northern NY Vintage Snowsled Race, 10am. Admission \$10/general, 12 & under free. Oswego County Fairgrounds, Sandy Creek.

Feb. 11-12: 12th Annual Great Eastern Whiteout, 8am. Admission TBD. Fulton War Memorial, 609 W. Broadway St.

Feb. 11-12: Oswego County Winter Carnival & Ice Fishing Tournament. Sandy Pond, Sandy Creek.

Feb. 11-12: Tug Hill Challenge Sled Dog Race, 9am-5pm. Admission free. Winona Forest, Boylston/Mannsville. www.winonaforest.com.

Feb. 18: Winona Forest Tourathon. Admission TBD. Winona Forest, Boylston/Mannsville. www.winonaforest.com.

Feb. 18-19: Ice Fishing Derby, 6am-4pm. Admission TBD. Sandy Pond Sportsman's Association, 3201 Co. Rte. 15, Sandy Creek. www.sandypondsportsmans.com.

For a complete list of events, visit our Web site at: www.visitoswegocounty.com



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