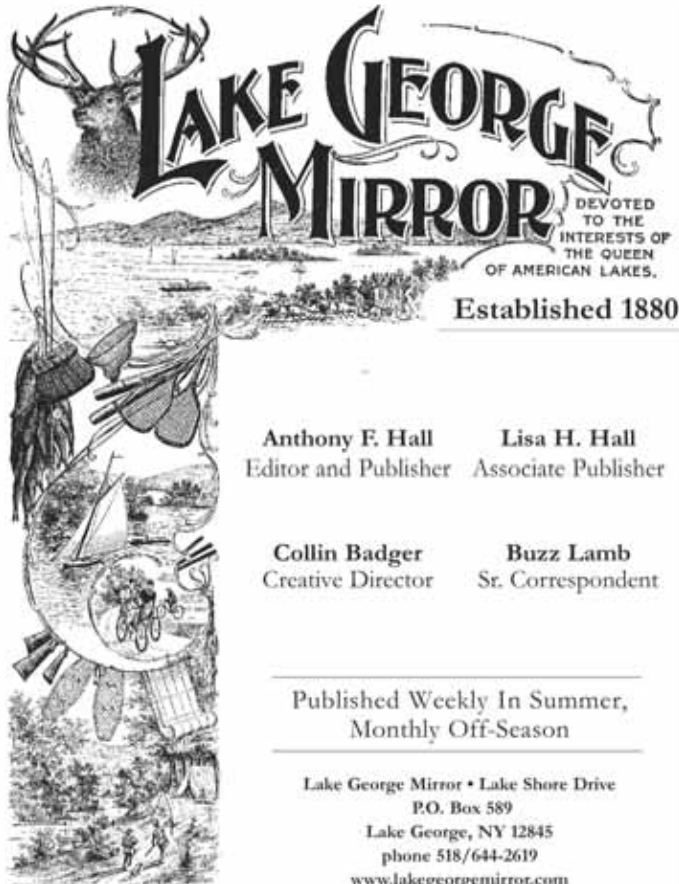


# EDITORIAL.

## Town Board is Right: No Alternative to Mandatory Boat Inspections

As Emily DeBolt of the Lake George Association commented recently, once an invasive species or some other threat to Lake George is recognized as a serious problem by everyone, it's probably too late to do anything about it. That's why the Lake George Park Commission's Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Invasive Species Spread Prevention and the Lake George Town Board deserve special recognition – not only for recognizing a problem, but for seeking solutions. Earlier this week, the Lake George Town Board adopted a resolution calling upon the Lake George Park Commission to adopt a program for mandatory boat inspections and decontamination. The Lake George Park Commission had indicated that it intended to develop a "Strategic Action Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species Decontamination Program" that would assess the costs and benefits of mandating decontamination. Budgetary constraints, however, appear to have defeated those intentions, at least for the time being. But that hasn't deterred the members of the Commission's Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Invasive Species Spread. As we report in this issue, the sub-committee will propose to the Commission as a whole that the lake's "stakeholders," that is, the representatives of the Commission, state agencies, local governments, advocacy groups, business and home owners, start meeting and identifying solutions that everyone can agree upon. Such a group, or task force, may recommend something other than mandatory inspections and decontamination. It is, however, difficult to envision more effective alternatives. As the resolution adopted by the Lake George Town Board points out, "Lake George interdiction currently relies exclusively on public education and voluntary compliance to check for visible plants and animals," and however helpful those efforts may have been, they have not stopped invasives like the Asian clam from entering Lake George. Warren County's Board of Supervisors also recognized that voluntary efforts were insufficient when it adopted a law last summer making it illegal to transport invasives. Lake George's resolution also points out how much Lake George's tourism and second-home economy depends upon its water quality, which cannot be maintained if more invasives establish themselves. So we hope the Commission votes to accept both the recommendation of the sub-committee to authorize a new Task Force and, ultimately the Lake George Town Board's recommendation that a mandatory system be instituted. No one likes one's own activities to be regulated. But in this case, we have little choice. The lake is at stake.



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