

Is there an invasive species near you?

This week in New York, July 12-18, brings the second annual "Invasive Species Awareness Week" (ISAW) and there's simply no denying its importance: the impact of invasive species can be costly, and devastating.

From the longstanding battle to control the spread of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in Waneta and Lamoka Lakes in Schuyler and Steuben counties, to the more recent invasion of Hydrilla in the Cayuga Lake Inlet in Tompkins County, our waterway-filled landscape is no stranger to these threats.

But the overall danger of invasive species represents much more than just a fight against aggressive aquatic invaders.

And that's the point of the week ahead.

Sponsored cooperatively by a variety of statewide agencies and councils, including Cornell Cooperative Extension, the goal of ISAW is expressed this way, "Invasive species come in many forms, from plants



TOM O'MARA

and animals, to insects and diseases. Invasive species can greatly harm the ecology and economy of New York. Invasive species can reduce productivity of agricultural lands, impact diversity of natural systems, reduce wildlife habitat, and limit recreational activities ...Two of the most familiar invasive species are zebra mussels and purple loosestrife, but we also face many challenges with forest pests and pathogens, agricultural pests, and other aquatic invasive species and invasive plants."

That sounds the alarm: a broad spectrum of invasive species poses a serious risk to local ecologies and economies throughout the Finger Lakes, Southern Tier and statewide.

Estimates have pegged the nationwide economic cost of invasive species at \$120 billion annually in terms of environmental cleanup, eradication, destroyed crops and other agricultural losses, and diminished recreational and tourism opportunities, among other consequences. It's a staggering figure and New York State is far from immune to these crises.

Invasive species like the Emerald Ash Borer and the Asian Long-Horned Beetle, for example, are devastating to New York's timber and forest products industry. Many other dangers to waterways across the state have been alarming, including the aforementioned EWM and Hydrilla. Invasive species threaten New York's environment and economy by out-competing native species, diminishing biological diversity and radically reshaping entire ecosystems. One of the most difficult challenges is that many invasives are widely available in commerce for landscaping

and aquaria. Many are unknowingly transported by boaters, or on fishing gear.

Consequently, raising public awareness and education, in concert with direct eradication strategies, are the overriding goals behind ISAW and the local and statewide events associated with it.

For example, on Thursday, July 16, the Town of Ithaca Conservation Board is hosting an informational walk for the general public (contact the Town of Ithaca Planning Department at 607-273-1747 for details). On Tuesday, July 14 at 11:00 a.m., I'll be joining the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Friends of the Chemung River Watershed and other area officials at DEC's Grove Street boat launch in Elmira for an event highlighting aquatic invasive species.

Across our region, individual boaters are certainly a key line of defense.

One new law I sponsored last year required

the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to develop procedures for boaters to take to prevent the spread of invasive species, such as removing all visible plants and animals from, or cleaning, draining and drying both motorized and non-motorized watercraft and related gear when entering and leaving a launch site. It's just one straightforward approach asking all boaters to do our part to help protect waterways, regional tourism economies and local jobs.

Taking every possible step to stop the spread of destructive invasive species before they take hold is the most cost-effective and common-sense response. It represents a comprehensive and proactive strategy to enhance public awareness, strengthen accountability, and save taxpayer dollars.

Similar efforts are underway across the country and major outdoor outfitters such as Cabela's and Bass Pro are helping educate boaters on clean, drain and

dry procedures to prevent the spread of invasive species.

And that's just one example of the many initiatives underway to combat the spread of destructive invasive species and better protect the quality and economic potential of waterways, agricultural lands and forests throughout the Finger Lakes, Great Lakes and Erie Canal regions.

The undeniable fact is that the uncontrolled spread of invasive species would devastate regional tourism and cost local communities hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of jobs.

Read more about Invasive Species Awareness Week at <http://www.nyis.info/blog/>, or visit my Senate website omara.nysenate.gov.

— State Sen. Tom O'Mara represents New York's 53rd Senate District, which includes Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler and Yates counties, and a portion of Tompkins County.

OBITUARIES

Evelyn D. Hallenbeck

Dundee, NY/ Sebring, FL | Evelyn D. Hallenbeck, age 93, of Sebring Florida, died unexpectedly Wednesday July 8, 2015 at home.

Friends are invited to calling hours from 1-2 p.m. Wednesday July 15, at the Baird Funeral Home, 36 Water Street, Dundee; where her funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. with Pastor Robert J. Stuart officiating. Burial will follow in Tyrone Union Cemetery, Tyrone, NY. Memorial contributions may be made to Monterey Baptist Church, 911 County Road 16, Beaver Dams, NY 14812.

Evelyn was born at home in Bradford, New York on November 10, 1921 to the late Darwin and Maude Huey Sunderlin. She graduated from Bradford Central School in 1938. On April 19, 1941 she married Carl Emerson Hallenbeck. Evelyn was a homemaker, as well as, an employee of Corning Glass Works for 23 years, as she and Carl lived in the Corning area, finally settling on their farm in Monterey, New York. Leaving the Corning area, and moving to Montrose Pennsylvania to work at the Montrose Bible Conference, was an exciting time for her. She was known for her delicious baked goods. Finally, she and her husband decided to retire and move to Maranatha Village in Sebring, Florida, where she made many dear friends. She was a member of the Maranatha Baptist Church.

She is survived by a son, Paul Hallenbeck and his wife, Sally of Rhinebeck, NY and son, Roy Hallenbeck of Watkins Glen, NY. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Stephen Hallenbeck

and his wife, Melanie of Oxford, CT, Josh Hallenbeck and his wife, Michele of Broomfield, CO, Teri Androvette and husband, Norman of Port Jervis, NY and Roy Hallenbeck, Jr. and his wife, Helen of Jacksonville, FL. She is also survived by 10 great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Evelyn was predeceased by her son, Earl Hallenbeck in 1958; her husband, Carl Hallenbeck on May 21, 2010; and a sister, Mildred E. Trojanowski in 1994. Online condolences can be sent by visiting www.bairdfuneralhomedundee.com.



Merridew

Barbara Parsons Merridew

Barbara Parsons Merridew passed away peacefully, at home with her family around her on July 8, 2015. Barbara was born on June 30, 1930. She graduated from Scotia High School in 1949, received her Bachelors of Science from Alfred University's School of Ceramics in 1954 and earned her Masters in Education from Nazareth College via Keuka College in 1976. Barbara was an Art Teacher at Dundee Central School from 1971 until she retired in 1995.

Barbara's hobbies and interests included gardening, sewing, knitting, needlepoint, and singing with choirs including her church trio. Her artistic creativity carried over into everything she did. She gave freely of her talents and gifts to her community, church, and school where she worked.

Barbara was predeceased by her mother, Joyce M. Baldwin (1962); father, Arthur T. Parsons (1960); sister, Priscilla M. Osswald (2007), and her dear husband Stanley L. Merridew (1991).

Barbara is survived by her six children; Diane Opelt (Barry Essig) of So. Natick MA, Laura Opelt (Steve Dreiling) of Hammondspport NY, Marty Opelt of Ormond Beach FL, Joyce Frank (John) of Stuart FL, Bill Opelt (Kelly) of North Port FL, and Meg Morrison (Richard) of Hammondspport, NY. In addition to her six children she is survived by her brother Arthur (Joanne) Parsons of Keuka Lake and Englewood FL as well as grandchildren; Charlie Essig, Bethany Buryta, Heather Mastro, Jamie Shaw, Erik Frank, John Frank, Melissa Frank, Lauren Opelt, Cameron Opelt, Logan Opelt, Nathan Morrison, Courtney Morrison, and great grandson Jay Buryta and anticipated, Charlotte LaColla; cousins, nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Lake Keuka Community Baptist Church, 736 East Lake Road, Penn Yan, NY 14527 or to the charity of choice. A memorial service will be held for family and friends on July 25, 2015, 11am at the Lake Keuka Baptist Church. Arrangements by LaMarche Funeral Home in Hammondspport.

DEATH NOTICES

Jason R. Becker

Jason Richard Becker, 35, of Addison, died in July 2015.

Calling hours are 6-8 p.m. Monday at Carpenter's Funeral Home, 14 E. Pulteney St., Corning.

Private services will be held at the convenience of the family.

IN BRIEF

At least 2 dead in Ukraine sports club attack

MOSCOW — At least two people were killed Saturday in a gun and grenade attack in a western Ukraine city involving the country's notorious nationalist militia Right Sector. Police had surrounded some gunmen in a wooded area of the city of Mukachevo and were

trying to negotiate their peaceful surrender, a statement from the regional prosecutor's office said. But details of the violence remained confused. The prosecutor's statement said about 20 armed people bearing Right Sector insignia surfaced in the early afternoon and called for a meeting with local residents at a cafe. They then began shooting, the statement said.

HARPER LEE

Alabama hometown abuzz over author's new book

By Jay Reeves
The Associated Press

MONROEVILLE, Ala. | As an owner of the only secular bookstore in Harper Lee's hometown, Spencer Madrie figured he'd sell hundreds of books



Lee

more — after the stunning announcement that the author was releasing a sequel to her 1960 blockbuster "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Five months later, more than 7,000 copies of Lee's new novel "Go Set a Watchman" are headed to Madrie's Ol' Curiosities & Book Shoppe, located in a converted three-bedroom house near the courthouse square in Monroeville. He had to buy a new building across the street just to store all the books, many of which he will ship to online purchasers.

"We've sold to a bunch of different countries around the world and, of course, a ton of them in the United States," said Madrie. "That's exciting when you think that so many people care so much about a book release."

It's doubtful people anywhere care more than in Monroeville, a southwest Alabama town of 6,300 and the model for Scout Finch's hometown of Maycomb in both books.

"For me and my generation this is the 'To Kill a Mockingbird' of our generation, so this is history for us," said 25-year-old Hannah Hood, a Monroeville native and office manager at the local chamber of commerce. Questions arose earlier this year as soon as the publisher Harper revealed plans for "Watchman," which was written before "Mockingbird" and apparently sat in storage for decades.

The upcoming book traces the lead character Scout's return home about two decades after father Atticus Finch defended a black man wrongly convicted of raping a white woman in the 1930s.

Scout has a boyfriend named Hank in the new novel, and her older brother Jem is dead, according to an excerpt released Friday by



This photo taken Wednesday shows a truck passing a sign decorated with a mockingbird in Monroeville, Ala., the hometown of "To Kill a Mockingbird" author Harper Lee. Lee's second book, "Go Set a Watchman" is set for release Tuesday, and the town includes sites featured in both novels. JAY REEVES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOS

"We've sold to a bunch of different countries around the world and, of course, a ton of them in the United States. That's exciting when you think that so many people care so much about a book release."

— Spencer Madrie, owner of Madrie's Ol' Curiosities & Book Shoppe in Monroeville, Ala.

the publisher. As in "Mockingbird," the new book parallels parts of Lee's life.

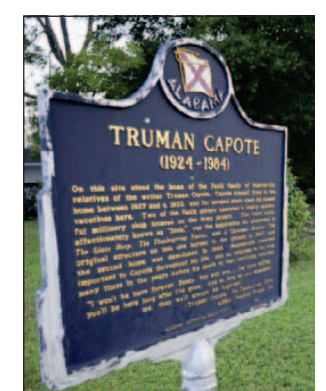
The new book was announced just weeks after the death of Lee's sister and longtime protector, Alice Finch Lee, and the author still hasn't commented publicly aside from written statements released through the publisher or Lee's current attorney, Tonja Carter.

The publisher's and Carter's claims aside, some in town still doubt the 89-year-old Lee really wants to release "Watchman," a 1950s manuscript which contained the seeds that later became "Mockingbird" at an editor's suggestion.

Still, many residents are excited about the new book.

Madrie expects to get his first shipment of 4,000 books in an 18-wheeler on Monday, and the store will open at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday to begin selling books at the first moment allowed by the publisher. Each novel sold by Madrie's shop will come with an embossed emblem and a certificate showing it was purchased in Lee's hometown.

Madrie has strung lights across the store's front lawn for an early-morning shindig and is bringing in an Atticus Finch impersonator who also sings Dean Martin songs on the side. Madrie



This photo taken Wednesday in Monroeville, Ala., shows ruins of the childhood home of author Truman Capote, who inspired the character Dill in Harper Lee's classic novel "To Kill a Mockingbird."

hopes to close around 2 a.m. before reopening the shop a few hours later for more sales, but he isn't counting on it.

"I know how people like to linger after a party," said Madrie.

A couple blocks away, volunteers will begin public readings of "Watchman" at 7 a.m. Tuesday in the old county courtroom, a childhood hangout for Lee and the model for the courtroom in the film version of "Mockingbird." Walking tours will be conducted around town pointing out sites mentioned in both books.