

Environment

2/28/18-THE DAYS OF PLASTIC BAGS IN NEW YORK COULD BE NUMBERED. A NEW BILL IN ALBANY WOULD OUTLAW THE FAMILIAR SHOPPING BAGS AND IMPOSE AN TEN CENT FEE FOR PAPER BAGS. THE MOVE IS DESIGNED TO CUT BACK ON THE 23 BILLION PLASTIC BAGS NEW YORKERS USE EVERY YEAR. SUPPORTERS OF THE BILL SAY THEY CLOG LANDFILLS AND POLLUTE THE ENVIRONMENT. THE BAN WOULDN'T APPLY TO PLASTIC BAGS USED BY RESTAURANTS OR TO PACKAGE BULK PURCHASES OF MEAT OR PRODUCE.

2/21/18-UNSEASONABLY WARM TEMPERATURES HAVE LOCAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES KEEPING AN EYE OUT FOR FLOODING. AFTER WEEKS OF WINTER WEATHER THE COMBINATION OF SOARING TEMPERATURES AND RAIN HAD CREEKS AND STREAM RISING ACROSS THE AREA. IT'S ALSO TRIGGERED THE BREAKUP OF THE ICE COVER, CREATING POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ICE DAMS. THAT INCLUDES IN SYLVAN BEACH, WHERE RESIDENTS ONCE AGAIN FACED THE PROSPECT OF FLOODING AS ICE PILED UP AT THE MOUTH OF FISH CREEK.

2/21/18-STATE OFFICIALS WILL BE HOLDING A SERIES OF PANELS ACROSS THE STATE TO FIND WAYS TO COMBAT BLUE GREEN ALGAE. THE POTENTIALLY TOXIC ORGANISMS HAVE BECOME AN INCREASING PROBLEM IN LAKES ACROSS UPSTATE. THAT INCLUDES ONEIDA LAKE, WHERE MASSIVE BLOOMS OF THE ORGANISM HAVE FORCED SWIMMING BANS AT SYLVAN BEACH AND VERONA BEACH STATE PARK. EXPOSURE TO THE ALGAE CAN CAUSE SERIOUS RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS IN BOTH HUMANS AND ANIMALS. THE CENTRAL NEW YORK PANEL WILL BE IN SYRACUSE ON MARCH SIXTH.

2/16/18-THE CITY OF UTICA'S PLANNING BOARD WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED DOWNTOWN HOSPITAL. THAT COMES AFTER A 3-1 VOTE BY BOARD MEMBERS LAST NIGHT. THE PROCESS EVALUATES NOT ONLY THE POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROJECT, BUT POTENTIAL CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS AS WELL. AS WITH EVERYTHING INVOLVING THE HOSPITAL THE MOVE WASN'T WITHOUT CONTROVERSY. CRITICS SAY HAVING CITY OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF THE REVIEW COMPROMISES WHAT SHOULD BE AN UNBIASED PROCESS.

2/9/18-WEDNESDAY'S FAST MOVING SNOWSTORM CAUSED SOME MAJOR HASSLES, BUT IT ALSO SET UP A GREAT WEEKEND OF WINTER SPORTS. THAT INCLUDES THE CITY OF UTICA OPENING UP THE VAL BIALIS SKI AREA. THE FACILITY WAS ONLY ABLE TO OPEN FOR A FEW DAYS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS DUE TO A SHORTAGE OF SNOW, BUT THAT'S DEFINITELY NOT GOING TO BE AN ISSUE THIS WEEKEND. THE FRESH BASE OF SNOW SHOULD ALSO BE IRRESISTIBLE TO SNOWMOBILERS IN THE NORTH COUNTRY.

2/8/18-HARD AND HEAVY. THAT'S HOW FORECASTERS DESCRIBED THE SNOWFALL FROM YESTERDAYS STORM. BUT IT WAS ALSO FAST, COMING TO AN END EARLY LAST NIGHT. THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF DIGGING OUT

TO BE DONE, BUT OFFICIALS SAY PUBLIC WORKS CREWS HAVE BEEN WORKING THROUGH THE NIGHT TO CLEAR THE ROADS FOR THIS MORNING'S COMMUTE. THEY'LL SPEND TODAY MAKING SURE SECONDARY ROADS ARE FREE OF SNOW AND BEGIN CUTTING DOWN AND HAULING AWAY THE MASSIVE SNOWBANKS LINING THE STREETS.