

GUEST VIEWPOINT

Doubtful conclusion

By Henry Hansteen

For many, perhaps even most of us, early September is a harsh reminder of the devastating terror attacks of 2001. And although one probably wouldn't know it through the popular news media, there are many glaring contradictions between the government's 9/11 conspiracy theory and what the actual evidence and expert research demonstrate.

Let's examine the unprecedented free-fall and symmetric drop of World Trade Center 7, which occurred about seven hours after the twin towers exploded and disintegrated, spewing tons of toxic dust for miles — toxic dust that the government insisted was safe, knowing that it was anything but safe.

WTC7 was a 47-story, steel-framed, hurricane- and earthquake-resistant high-rise. At 5:20 p.m. that day, all four walls and everything within accelerated toward the ground at free-fall speed with near-perfect symmetry as if nothing but air was resisting its drop. This is not mere opinion. It's a matter of easily verified fact. The video evidence proves it, and even the National Institute of Standards and Technology has finally acknowledged it.

At www.ae911truth.org, almost 900 architects and engineers and 5,000 other supporters prove convincingly why the government's theory is physically impossible. Also worth noting is the fact that although many steel-framed high-rises have suffered infernos of far greater size, intensity and duration than WTC7, there are no examples elsewhere of such buildings suffering a complete collapse. In fact, I am unable to find an example where even one major support column buckled.

There is, at minimum, one fundamental problem with NIST's explanation for WTC7's unprecedented drop: NIST attributes the instant, total and symmetric failure of WTC7's massive, resilient steel frame to gradual, partial and asymmetric weakening of the frame. However, not only is it physically impossible to cause a steel-framed high-rise to drop at anywhere near free-fall speed, even with a raging inferno that engulfs the entire structure, weakening every support column at the same rate, but video evidence shows that much of WTC7's steel frame was never even exposed to any fire.

Originally, government-hired researchers claimed that WTC7, although it wasn't struck by a plane, suffered significant structural damage in one corner due to tower debris impacts. NIST also speculated that fuel oil tanks in the building may have ruptured, causing a much hotter and larger than normal fire. With no evidence to support either claim, NIST abandoned them and now theorizes that structural damage played no significant role — that, instead, nothing but ordinary office fires caused WTC7's free-fall drop for the first and only time in history.

This is physically impossible. When steel is heated gradually, it loses its strength gradually. Furthermore, when steel does become hot enough that the forces exerted cause it to bend, it becomes stronger through a process known as "work hardening."

NIST's theory does not hold up. Please join heroic first responders, victims, family members, scientists and others in demanding a new investigation into the 9/11 attacks. Visit www.nyccan.org and www.911research.com for more information.

Henry Hansteen lives in Enfield. He is a technician in Cornell's Laboratory of Elementary Particle Physics.

OPINION POLL

As New Yorkers prepare for the law to take effect on nickel deposits on water bottles, do you think this move will reduce litter?

Go to the Viewpoints section at ithacajournal.com and cast your vote.

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Provided

Students participating in the Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom project pull a plankton net from the lake as they collect samples during one of the classroom cruises.

LEARNING ON THE LAKE

Floating Classroom experience reaches all ages

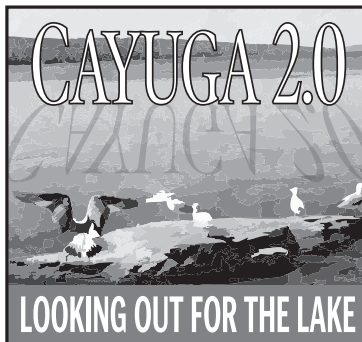
What do you think: Is Cayuga Lake in good shape? If you're not sure, you're not alone. Nearly 200 area residents have responded to that question in a brief survey, offered during eco-cruises with the Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom. So far, opinions are surprisingly well-distributed among "good," "not-so-good" and "I don't know."

From water supply to gas drilling, lake-related issues have generated a torrent of opinions and reports on the state of Cayuga Lake during the past year. Experience and training allow scientists to evaluate

assessments of nutrient loading, water quality and lake ecology, and to form opinions with some degree of confidence. Without the benefit of that background, however, many people will find this same information confusing, if not simply overwhelming. And that might explain the lack of public consensus on the overall health of the lake.

Providing access to the lake then, and experiences that can help everyone develop a basic, intuitive understanding of Cayuga Lake, seems an important step toward making the stewardship of Cayuga Lake a truly community-driven effort. The Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom Project set sail aboard Tiohero Tours' vessel, the M/V Haendel, in 2003, with exactly this mission. Today, with support from watershed municipalities and private sponsors, we offer lake-based learning for more than 2,000 youths and adults each year.

Our initial focus on youth helped us to achieve an important milestone in 2008, by serving students from every school district in our nearly 1,000-square-mile watershed, from Seneca Falls to Newfield. As students conduct science investigations, create art



ABOUT THIS SERIES

Cayuga 2.0 is a series of monthly guest viewpoints about the health of the Cayuga Lake watershed and the challenges and opportunities related to it. The viewpoints are provided by the Tompkins County Water Resources Council.

► Next month's installment: Municipal watershed management.

ON THE WEB

The Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom is a project of the Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization. For more information about the classroom, go to:

► floatingclassroom.blogspot.com
► www.floatingclassroom.cayugawatershed.org

and explore local history with the Floating Classroom, our crew works not only to teach facts but to encourage personal understanding and a sense of community, centered on the lake.

To be sure, this cannot be accomplished during a single field trip, and our project has broadened accordingly. In collaboration with Trout Unlimited, we now offer a six-month program called "Trout In The Classroom" at many local schools.

During the fall, classes receive trout eggs and rear fingerlings for spring release along neighborhood streams. Over the winter, they learn about natural cycles, habitat conservation, fly-tying and much more. We also have partnered with other summer youth programs to offer "Water Wizards" and "Cayuga Explorers" — week-long programs that allow youths to spend time devel-

oping their interests on the lake.

Our mission isn't limited to students. This year, we introduced weekly eco-cruises for people of all ages and backgrounds. The cruises have been inspiring for our crew members, as we host artists, musicians and ecologists. Every week, we learn something new from guests and passengers.

The excursions have been equally popular with the individuals who fill our boat each Sunday, ready to get involved with their lake. These "pay-what-you-can" eco-cruises run through the end of October, and the donations we receive demonstrate our community's support for science-based, outdoor education. They also help us provide scholarships for area classes to get out on the lake.

Maintaining a safe, certified boat and an experienced crew is not cheap, and we owe a tremendous debt to Tiohero Tours, local foundations, town boards and schools that have supported us. This year, we are also asking community members to demonstrate their support by joining us for an eco-cruise, sponsoring a class trip or lending their talents by joining the "Friends of the Floating Classroom."

Over the coming months, additional commentaries will be offered in this space by other members of the Cayuga Lake Monitoring Partnership. On behalf of each of them, and the entire Floating Classroom crew, I encourage everyone to get out on the lake, and pause to consider what this beautiful body of water means to you.

When it comes to evaluating the health of Cayuga Lake, you might be tempted to think, "Heck if I know, leave it to the experts!" But, you don't need to be an expert to have an opinion that matters — just a little experience. Get your feet wet, let water run through your fingers, share your thoughts. Form your own opinion.

Bill Foster is program manager for the Cayuga Lake Floating Classroom Project.

DARTS & LAURELS

Cayuga at Twilight support

LAUREL: From Family & Children's Service of Ithaca to Warren Real Estate, Inc. of Ithaca for its generous 12th-year sponsorship of "Cayuga at Twilight" that raised more than \$42,000 for children's mental health services. The Sept. 13 event was a huge success thanks to all who participated. Guests enjoyed an afternoon of music, fine food and wine, while touring five beautiful homes in the Cornell and Cayuga Heights communities. The agency appreciates corporate support for the event from Morgan Stanley/Smith Barney, Merrill Lynch, Tompkins Trust Co. and True Insurance. Special thanks to Chuck Tauck & Fran Littin from Tauck World Discovery for donating a European River Boat Cruise trip for two raffled at the event. Art was provided by featured artist Laurel Guy.

Many thanks to the restaurants, caterers and wine providers as well as numerous other businesses and groups that provided music, flowers, graphics, transportation and beverages.

A very special thanks to all of our participating homeowners who made the afternoon a pleasure for all who participated. Family & Children's Service of Ithaca also thanks the Cayuga at Twilight committee for its hours of work to make the event a huge success.

Inconsiderate mom

Dart: From Barbara R. Noyes of Ithaca to the mother who allowed her children to chase each other up and down the crowded sidewalk next to the Ithaca Times during the Apple Festival last weekend. They crashed into me, a 72-year-old grandmother. After they hit me, they were allowed to continue chasing. Their mother was irresponsible.

Red Cross benefit

Laurel: From the Tompkins County American Red Cross to those who made the 2nd Annual Finger Lakes Wine & Food Tasting on Sept. 11 a success. Thanks to supporters who bought tickets and bid on auction items. Special thanks to David Hall of National Book Auctions for his volunteer auctioneer skills and to our event sponsors, All Stone & Tile, Alternatives Federal Credit Union and the Holiday Inn Ithaca. Also to Ron McHenry at Staples. Thanks to all our Auction Donors, especially local businesses: The Antlers, Captain Bill's Cayuga Cruises, Carla Inc. Jewelers, Carriage House, Crystal's Spa & Salon, Dr. Frank Wine Cellars, East Shore Café, Elm Tree Inn, Guilt Free Wine Touring, Greek Peak Ski Resort, Habitat, Hangar Theatre, Hilton Garden Inn, Hosmer Winery, John Thomas Steak House, Kitchen Theater, LaTourelle Resort, Madeline's Restaurant, Monsour Jewelers, Moosewood Restaurant, The Rose Restaurant, Schooley's Inc. Jewelers, Seneca Lake Wine Trails, State Theater, Swedish Hill Vineyards, Unfinished Furniture Store, William Henry Miller Inn, All Stone & Tile, Belle Melange, Life's So Sweet Chocolates, Heights of Wellness Acupuncture, and CAbi Fashions.

Thanks also to our participating wineries and eateries. It wouldn't have been a success without them.

WRITE TO US

We welcome letters no longer than 200 words. Please include your name, address and a daytime telephone number. We edit for brevity, accuracy, clarity and grammar. Edited letters should address a single idea. We reject anonymous letters, poetry, Internet pass-alongs and form letters. Writers are limited to one letter within 30 days. Letters and articles may be published in print, electronic media or other forms. We regret we cannot return or acknowledge unpublished letters.

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What do you think?

Comment on today's letters: ithacajournal.com/viewpoints

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Saturday, Oct. 3, 2009. On this date:

► In 1951, the New York Giants captured the National League pennant as Bobby

Thomson hit a three-run homer off the Brooklyn Dodgers' Ralph Branca in the "shot heard 'round the world."
► In 1995, the jury in the O.J.

Simpson murder trial found the former football star not guilty of the 1994 slayings of his former wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman.

DOONESBURY

