

New York State Canal Conference coming to Geneva

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GENEVA — The Canal Society of New York State is bringing its 15th New York State Canal Conference to this Ontario County city.

The annual fall gathering begins Sunday and continues through Tuesday at the Ramada Geneva Lakefront. It's being co-presented by the New York State Canal Corp. and Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.

The conference will include presentations of major importance to canal communities, tourism professionals and others working to enhance, protect and promote the state canal system.

“The 2014 New York State Canal Conference will showcase the Finger Lakes region and Cayuga-Seneca Canal, as well as Seneca Lake and the city of Geneva,” conference chairperson Kal Wysokowski said.

The program includes keynote speakers Robert Gioia, chairman of Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp.; John Robinson, from Our Ability Tour; and Gavin Landry, executive director of Tourism, I LOVE NY.

Breakout sessions will focus on critical issues such as eco-tourism, crafting the nomination of the canal barge system for the National Register of Historic Places and a close look at the economic impact of the Canalway Trail from Parks and Trails New York.

Mobile workshops will take attendees to the Erie Canal Heritage Park at Port Byron and the Lyons Dry Dock.

“As a community, the city of Geneva is proud to host the 2014 New York State Canal Conference, as the canal has played a significant role in shaping the economy of the city and New York state as a whole,” Mayor Ron Alcock said. “The conference will show how we continue to depend on the recreational and commercial activities of the waterway, and will outline development opportunities that will enhance our economic fortunes for the future.”

“The New York State Canal Conference presents an opportunity for canal stake holders from across the Empire State to build upon the past year’s accomplishments and explore future opportunities to capitalize on our historic canal system,” state Canal Corp. Director Brian Stratton said. “Whether it is the transformative impact of Gov. [Andrew] Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Councils, the resurgence in commercial shipping or the Canal system’s role as an upstate tourist destination, there is a palpable sense of hope in communities all throughout the canal corridor.

“With the Canal system already supporting \$6.2 billion in non-tourism-related and nearly \$380 million in tourism-

related economic activity, this conference is a vital piece of continuing to use the Canals to produce real change for some of New York’s most iconic and historic communities.”

As part of the conference, Craig Williams, retired New York State Canal Museum director, will receive the Spirit of the Canal Award Monday night.

Brookfield Renewable Energy Group, Bergmann Associates and AJ Costello & Son Development also are sponsoring the conference.

To register, email The Rivers Organization at rick@riversorg.com.

Online

www.canalsnys.org

www.eriecanalway.org