



Photo by Steve Benzschawel

**Lake John Association  
P.O. Box 437  
Annandale, MN. 55302**

**Promoting the care and betterment  
of Lake John  
[www.lakejohnassociation.com](http://www.lakejohnassociation.com)**

**Volume 7, Issue 1**

**Winter 2018**

## **From the President's Dock**

Were you surprised how many zebra mussels were attached onto lake equipment last fall? One adult female can produce anywhere from 100,000 to 500,000 eggs in a year. To date, there is no known treatment to eradicate them. (top photo)

It has been a very busy 2017. All of you should know by now of the Wright Regional Inspection Program for watercraft and some equipment, which was started in an effort to create a better way of stopping the spread of existing and new Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), because the present inspection /education system is not working. **After much delay** it was finally up and running only on October 11th thru October 31st. The Greater Lake Sylvia Association (GLSA) started on this pilot project way back in January 2017. The GLSA



asked Pleasant Lake and Lake John to join them in this pilot project and to each contribute \$5000 for each of the next 5 years towards operating expenses. The Lake John Board voted in favor in doing so and the first payment (from the AIS fund) was made in 2017. The GLSA has spent tons of volunteer hours & their own money in getting this project off the ground with little help from the DNR. Wright County had to approve the plan...not once but TWICE. The plan was to have it up & running by June 15th. The DNR finally gave their approval on September 25th. The meat of the project, "Float Your Boat" was taken out of the final plan last year but we hope it will be included in 2018. Also taken out by the County Attorney was having inspections when boats **left** a lake because the ordinance could not be enforced. The Governance Council, a subcommittee of the GLSA, consists of Chris Hector, Blaine Barkley from Lake Sylvia; Dave Boie, Lake Pleasant; Elaine Fleskes, Lake John; Kathy Jonsrud, head of Communications & Education, Cedar Lake; Doug Flatz, Lake Moses, head of operations; Ron Elsner, Sugar Lake, engineering advisor; Russ Fortner, Lake Sylvia, head of construction; Peter Pescheck, Granite Lake, head of chemist team. Also in attendance at the weekly conference calls were Alicia O'Hare from Wright Soil and Water Conservation District and Jefferson Bishop from Anchor Dock. We also met together when necessary. For the 3 weeks of October operation, there were 313 inspections, 508 staffing hours, 237 zip tie seals returned at the accesses & 32 law enforcement follow-ups.

The scary part about all the AIS news is the threat of Starry Stonewort. (Now 11 lakes in Minnesota are infested). As you know, Lake Sylvia has it. They battled the DNR over their reduction of the size on the requested area and their authorizing only 2 treatments. In the end Lake Sylvia was allowed a larger area and 4 treatments. I have no idea what that cost Lake Sylvia but I know it couldn't have been cheap.

(Continued on page 2)

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Doug & Jill Harms—Section 1

Jack & Nancy Techel—Section 2

Jon & Karen Navratil—Section 3

Gary & Terri Hilgers—Section 3



(From the President's Dock, continued from page 1)

It came to my attention last November that there is a group on Facebook opposing the new inspection regime implemented by Wright County Board on behalf of the 3 various Annandale area lakes. This is what they say: *"If the County Board refuses to reconsider this measure, non-resident boaters reserve the right to organize a boycott of Annandale & South Haven businesses in order to drive the point home that these communities need both residential and non-residential commerce in order to thrive"*. Also, apparently, anyone can put anyone else's name on that site as if they had signed up, without their knowledge or permission. Here are the same false arguments they give all the time....lakeshore owners are trying to privatize the lake they live on and no matter what, lakes will get invasives anyway!!! This group doesn't get **WHY** it is necessary to move forward to try and protect the lakes. **PLEASE MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL BUSINESSES EVEN MORE!!!!!!!**

There was a very interesting Letter to the Editor in the Annandale Advocate on October 4th by the Board of Directors of the Big Sand Lake Association and parts are worth repeating here. *"The DNR's AIS prevention program of public education and sporadic boat inspections is a lamentable failure that threatens all of the waters in Minnesota, the livelihood of the multi-billion dollar tourist industry, property values, and all those who enjoy our lakes and rivers. Current inspection protocols do not cover enough access points or hours of the day to give a reasonable person faith that boats leaving infested waters will not carry AIS to other, non-infested lakes. The historic DNR mission to enhance access to waterways is at odds managing contaminated lakes. Containing AIS, while at the same time allowing access in and out of infested lakes, is contradictory. The fact that the DNR is the same agency responsible for maintaining and increasing lake access and is also responsible for the AIS prevention program is an obvious conflict of interest. It is essential that these opposing programs be managed by separate, independent agencies to ensure that a vigorous prevention program is not hindered by the current passive responses to contaminated lakes."*

Lake John has a total of 142 property owners who live on the lake or have lake access. In 2017, we had 107 members which means 35 donated nothing! I added up what we have spent out of our AIS fund to fight AIS in the last 4 years....**\$67,978.38**. An eye opener isn't it? In the General Fund the last 4 years, we only spent **\$6749.41 total**, ranging from a low of \$1303.80 in 2017 to a high in 2015 of \$1947.00. Here is another blow. From 2014 thru 2017, we were reimbursed in grant money, **\$26,205.26**. **There will be no grant money from the DNR or the County in 2018.....NONE!!!!!!!** After having CLP and EWM surveys done in 2017, we learned we have 52.9 acres of Curly Leaf Pondweed and 24.2 acres of Eurasian Watermilfoil. We continue our efforts in controlling these invasives.

At the last annual meeting in June, the subject was brought up about starting a "Lake Improvement District (LID) and most people in attendance were in favor of it. LID collects funds through the County tax system. If approved by a majority vote of the membership, this would not take effect right away. (Please see Committee Chair Steve Benzschawel's full page insert, explaining how that would work). Seven area lakes already have this set up successfully and it works well.

Bruce Nystrom, secretary, also has a survey (see insert) that he would like you to answer on the high water levels we are experiencing. We have been dealing with beavers/beaver dams /floating bogs this past fall as well.

Elaine Fleskes, Lake John President



**Our annual meeting will be held at the South Haven Hall, 521 Oak Avenue, South Haven, Saturday, June 23, 2018. 9:30 coffee and doughnuts, meeting starts promptly at 10:00 am. This is a good way to meet your neighbors, get caught up on what we have accomplished this past year and enjoy a nice lunch as well. Hope to see you all there!!!!!!**

**Lake John Association---Time to Pay 2018 Dues**

Annual dues to Lake John Association are \$50.00. (\$30 goes to the General Fund and \$20 to Critical Needs/ Invasive Species Fund.)

Lake John Association is a 501 C (3) tax exempt organization, so dues and gifts are tax deductible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(only if different from roster listing)

**Lake John Annual Dues (\$50)** \_\_\_\_\_  
(We truly appreciate any additional support)

<u>GEM CLUB</u>	
Sapphire	(\$1-99)
Emerald	(\$100-499)
Diamond	(\$500-999)
Ruby	(\$1000+)

Add My Additional Gift To:

General Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Invasive Species Fund \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Gifts not indicated for a specific fund will go into the Invasive Species Fund)

check here \_\_\_ if you wish to remain anonymous

**\$50.00 ICE OUT CONTEST\***

As a member, you have a chance to WIN \$50.00 if you guess the correct date ice is gone from Lake John\*. (In case of a tie, winner will be selected in a drawing). ONE ENTRY PER MEMBERSHIP.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ice Out: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*ENVELOPE MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN MARCH 1 TO QUALIFY**

Send entire page to: Lake John Association, P.O. Box 437, Annandale MN. 55302



## Lake Improvement District

The purpose of a lake improvement district is to preserve and protect the lakes and to increase and enhance the use and enjoyment of the lakes. The state approved this system to help maintain or improve water quality. A LID allows for greater local involvement in lake management activities. This LID would eliminate the Lake John Association collecting funds for invasive species projects and this new funding mechanism would take its place in 2019.

The purpose of our LID is to provide funding to continue treatment and control of the existing invasive species already in Lake John, and to try to prevent invasive species from entering our lake in the first place. We know that grants we have received in the past are being eliminated. Even if the total money granted on a state level stayed the same, that total pool of funds keeps getting divided into more parts so money granted becomes less. More and more lakes are getting invasives and are applying for funding to fight their invasives. Some lakes have been getting nothing because grant pools are being exhausted before they can fill all the requests. Costs for controlling these invasives will continue to increase especially if new invasives enter the lake.

This LID will be composed of 5 to 9 board members that all must be property owners in the district being taxed and the majority must be residents of the district. The LID is responsible for preparing an annual report to the county board with a copy to the DNR. This report includes the budget request for the next year.

The LID must approve or disapprove any project costing the district more than \$5000 and discuss other district activities. An LID does not have any taxing authority of its own. Rather the county board specifies the funding arrangement when it establishes the LID. In our case the county would assess and collect taxes for the benefited properties. A LID still can be the recipient of grants if any are available.

A LID is established by a petition of property owners or by a county board resolution. In our case we are doing a petition of property owners. We can send you links to articles about Lake Improvement Districts. This includes legal description documents and a question and answer document concerning LID's. At the earliest, this plan would start in 2019. For Links on the LID materials please email me at [benzschawe@aol.com](mailto:benzschawe@aol.com). Make sure you refer to LID in the subject line of the email, so that the request isn't confused for some junk mail.

Our lake has seen a dramatic improvement in areas where Curly Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Water Milfoil are since we have been chemically treating. We spend \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year treating these invasives. There is much more in addition to just treating invasives that requires funding. There are plant surveys required to apply for permits and from time to time we bring in experts to look for new invasives, all of these require funding.

We have also made a commitment to the Greater Lake Sylvia Association to join a pilot project in an effort to make boats and equipment entering our lakes free of invasives. There is a \$600,000 matching grant that was granted to this organization. There are currently three lakes in this pilot project; Lake Sylvia, Pleasant and Lake John. The plan is to add more lakes as the pilot project is proven and the kinks are worked out. This new inspection and decontamination station costs us \$5000 per year. This \$5000 is a small fraction of the amount of money it takes to inspect boats at boat landings. One goal is to develop a system to "Float the Boat" in a pool of water that will kill all invasives including ones that a trapped in places where they can't be seen.

Steve Benzschawel, Committee Chair

(OVER)

Petition to the County Board:

1. The name of our district is the "Lake John Association LID"
2. We will have nine directors to make sure we have representation from all sections.
3. All parties owning lake shore or with access to the lake will be include as part of this district.
4. Costs will be assessed to the benefited properties.
5. The current invasives we have are Curly Leaf Pondweed, Eurasian Water Milfoil, and Zebra Mussels. There are more invasives in lakes within a ten mile radius that we hope don't reach our lake.
6. We chemically treat CLP and EWM most years. There is no financially feasible treatment currently for Zebra Mussels. We are also a member contributing to "Float the Boat" program. New infestations will most likely lead to more treatments and higher costs. We are currently in the pilot program contributing \$5000 per year. Chemical treatments for CLP and EWM currently run \$7500 to \$20,000 per year.
7. The negative is no one wants higher taxes, but this is a more equitable system. Everyone that lives on a lake does this for a reason and part of that is to enjoy the lake. For a lake with a maximum depth of 29 feet aggressive growing plants can take over and greatly reduce personal enjoyment.
8. We have one DNR boat landing on our lake. We welcome all boaters but we don't want hitchhikers that some of those boats can bring.
9. We have a total assessed valuation of approximately \$26,000,000 that we want to protect.

**PLEASE SEND THIS PAGE TO THE LAKE JOHN ASSOCIATION**

**This page will be submitted along with our request to form a LID if the majority approve**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Vote for: \_\_\_\_\_

Vote against: \_\_\_\_\_



# LAKE JOHN SURVEY RE: WATER LEVELS

Purpose: To collect data from citizen taxpayers about our watershed status/effectiveness

Why: Several members of our association have exchanged numerous communications with our local, county, state, and federal agency representatives regarding lake management. One issue has been our experience with a relatively consistent high-water level condition (see DNR charts online).

For several years, the representatives of these agencies have succeeded to deny, delay, divert, and simply do nothing to improve conditions. Some of us think it's their job to provide public water and watershed management and proper maintenance of our watershed system. They seem to think they are doing their jobs; or (if not) it's the citizen taxpayers who need to go through the "red tape" to obtain permits and bear all the expenses to prepare for, and complete, any repair, restoration, and solutions to a problem.

We want to gather and distribute all the indisputable facts relative to the matter as possible this Winter. Then, we can be better suited to debate, and educate, for solutions in 2018. Hopefully, we can motivate the government to do its jobs; that's why we pay them.

Thank you for your time. One response per household, please. Please return this survey to association at P. O. Box 437 with your payment of Dues or separately. If you have questions, please direct them to me or to a Board Member or Section Representative.

Bruce Nystrom, Secretary      [brucenystrom@hotmail.com](mailto:brucenystrom@hotmail.com)      320-274-2205

Cut -----

1. Are you aware of our water level conditions? Y or N
2. Has your shoreline been damaged due to ice expansion or water level erosion? Y or N
3. Have you sustained damage to your dock, lift, raft, or watercraft from loose bogs? Y or N
4. Have you been denied access to or normal enjoyment of your shoreline by loose bogs? Y or N
5. Have you lost sandy beach conditions due to water level conditions? Y or N
6. Have you "trucked in" sand or rock to restore your shoreline? Y or N
7. Have you observed destruction of wildlife habitat from water level conditions? Y or N
8. Have you (previously) reviewed the Minnesota DNR Website on local lake water levels? Y or N
9. Are you informed about our local watershed? What it is, where it goes... elevations, etc.? Y or N
10. Is your street, driveway, or lot adversely affected by water levels? Y or N
11. Do you (regularly) operate a pump to drain your basement or crawl-space? Y or N.
12. Are you satisfied with the status quo and an opinion that "it is what it is" ...let it go? Y or N

Comments:



Elaine Fleskes, President—274-5399  
Steve Benzschawel, Vice Pres.—612-558-0215  
Amy Comben, Treasurer—612-245-7625  
Bruce Nystrom, Secretary—274-2205  
Karen MacMillan, Section 1—274-3893  
Jim Splinter, Section 2—320-980-0560  
Jon Navratil, Section 3—274-5350  
Bob Fleskes, Section 4—274-5399  
Jean Sutherland, Section 5—612-644-0862  
Paul Fliegel, Section 6—320-260-5674

### MISSION STATEMENT

- To assist in the conservation & preservation of the natural resources of Lake John.
- To promote the general welfare of the members as it pertains to their personal & property interests related to Lake John.
- To serve as an information resource for concerned citizens and an advocate for our members in appropriate matters.

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**Our annual association meeting will be held on Saturday June 23, 2018, 9:30 AM with coffee and donuts, meeting starting promptly at 10:00 AM at the South Haven Hall, 521 Oak Ave. Hope to see you all there.**