



# LAKE GENEVA PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

## 2004-2005 Board Members

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### PLEASE NOTE!

With this issue of the newsletter you should also have received your beach passes and a copy of the new handbook.

If you did not receive your beach passes, it is because you have not paid your dues, which are payable no later than June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. Dues are \$100.00 per lot (not per owner).

If dues are not paid timely, liens will be filed on each lot. Members whose dues are unpaid may not use the beaches, lake, parks, or vote at the annual meeting.

-Stu



## President's Message - Into Everyone's Life, a Little Rain Must Fall

And it did. Sadly, however, it brought things other than May flowers. It seems to have brought silt and dirt from Wildflower Meadows Development, which appears to be the primary cause of potentially serious problems with Lake Geneva. The Board has spent considerable money and both Board members and other members of LGPOA have spent considerable time over the last several years attempting to protect our lake from storm water runoff originating from Wildflower. The developer's storm water management plan was approved by the City, which was to have protected our lake both during and after construction. The Plan included the building of retention ponds, a berm, a swale, silt fencing, and silt bags.

Although the retention ponds were to have been put in first, it appears they were not. Construction began, and we had more rain than expected. The berm broke, the silt fence failed, the silt bag was useless, and, with each hard rain, we had significant silt runoff into the channel, which has extended into the lake. The developer and engineers, as a temporary fix, raised the berm and the silt fence, covered the dirt piles, placed straw bales and stones in the swale, all of which failed with each new rain, resulting in additional silt pouring into the channel.

The Board retained the engineering firm of Wetland and Coastal Resources to assess the damage, which may include significant silt in the channel and lake, destroyed fish spawning habitats, lower oxygen levels, a fish kill, and weed control problems. As a result of the low oxygen levels and high turbidity, Professional Lake Management ("PLM") was only able to treat part of the lake at one time for weed control to prevent loss of fish. Our weed treatments were May 24 and June 4.

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## PLAYING IT SAFE IN THE SUMMERTIME

You may have recently noticed the increase in active police patrols within the Lake Geneva community. This is a result of numerous complaints received from area residents regarding speeding vehicles, sign stop violations, and excessively loud music coming from car stereos.

As the summertime and (hopefully) nice weather approaches, pedestrian and bicycle traffic will further increase. The vast majority of the vehicular traffic in the area is directly attributed to residents that reside in the Lake Geneva community. It is for that reason I strongly urge all of our licensed drivers to be extra cautious of their personal driving habits. Please take the opportunity to talk within your family unit about the importance of paying close attention to pedestrians, bicycles, rollerbladers, and children playing in the area. Also discuss the consequences of not adhering to the speed limit of 25 mph and coming to a complete stop for stop signs. These consequences can range from steep fines and points assessed on the violator's driver's license to increased insurance rates or, more dramatically, living with the injury of innocent bystanders.

Loud car stereos that can be heard from a distance greater than 50 feet are in violation of the City Ordinance. Fireworks that shoot off the ground are illegal. Please respect the peaceful, safe, and quiet environment that all of our residents deserve.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please feel free call me at 669-9131.

Larry Jerue, Chief of Police  
DeWitt Police Department  
414 E. Main  
DeWitt, MI 48820

## COMING SOON TO A COMPUTER NEAR YOU!

The newly revised Official Lake Geneva website should be up and running within the next several weeks. For current, accurate information concerning the Lake Geneva Property Owners Association, please visit [www.LGPOA.com](http://www.LGPOA.com).

The new website features a wealth of information such as: current news about the lake, beaches, parks, and the neighborhood, as well as building use & restrictions, committee descriptions, Board contacts, past newsletters, local website links of interest, and much more.

Please Note: Lake Geneva Property Owners Association has only *one* official website maintained by the Lake Geneva Property Owners Association Board of Directors. It is not endorsed or sponsored by any outside entity. The LGPOA assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or content on other websites not authorized by the LGPOA Board of Directors. For current, accurate information concerning Lake Geneva, please use the website address listed above.



A couple friendly reminders: Have your beach passes in your car when visiting the parks.

Also, Board meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at the DeWitt Public Library, from 7:00 to 9:00.

### LAKE WOES BE-GONE by Jim Rhoads

Once again the unpredictable nature of springtime in Mid-Michigan has thrown us a curve ball. Our water temperatures are unusually high for this time of year, while our oxygen levels are unusually low. This combination places a great deal of stress on the ecological balance in our lake and increases the likelihood of a fish kill. Our water quality problems seem to have been exacerbated by all the rain, the warm water temperature, and then combined with the silt-laden runoff that has entered Lake Geneva from the Wildflower Meadows Development. The damage this may have caused is yet to be determined.

The curly leaf pondweed is getting very thick and requires aggressive treatment immediately. Unfortunately, if we treat as aggressively as we need to, our chances of a fish kill are greatly enhanced. Our contracted lake management team at Professional Lake Management (PLM) recommended we treat half the lake, beginning with the west side, which we did on May 24. They then recommended that we treat from the middle of the lake and east a couple of weeks later, which we did on June 4. This allowed sanctuary of sorts for oxygen-seeking critters while the treatment does its thing. They were also due to come out the week of June 20 to deal with an algae bloom.

Originally PLM was going to treat the east side of the lake first but due to the turbidity (cloudiness/muddiness) of the water they have chosen to treat the west side first. Everyone on the lake and visiting the parks should have all seen the yard postings and the noisy activity of the PLM hovercraft while they were out and about. With PLM's help, hopefully we will win the battle of the weeds this year.

### BOARD APPROVAL and DEQ PERMITS

Please remember that Board approval is required *prior* to doing any construction on your property, including your shoreline, such as construction of a seawall. An MDEQ permit is required for almost any project in the lake or on the shoreline. Below are several examples of projects that do require DEQ permits: 1) Construction of a new or repair of an existing seawall, whether made of wood, boulders, stones, or any other material. 2) Any work below the high water mark. 3) Any change of shoreline. 4) Pulling weeds, dredging, or any other project that would disturb the lake bottom.

If you are planning any projects, please contact the Building Committee to seek Board approval prior to beginning the project. Keep in mind the Board meets once each month; therefore, be sure to allow enough time for the Building Committee to review your plans and present them to the Board for final approval. Be aware that obtaining a DEQ permit may take several months.

You may contact the DEQ at:

**Geological and Land Management Division Permit Consolidation Unit 517.373.9244**

**Announcing our Latest Edition...** (by Heidi Fernandez)

We have recently created a Lake Geneva Property Owners Association Handbook. The handbook has been published and is being distributed to all homes within the Association with this newsletter

Please take some time to review the handbook to become re-acquainted with rules, restrictions, and usage of the beaches, lake, parks, and neighborhood. It also includes the history of Lake Geneva, board and committee descriptions, meeting schedules, and Association dues.

If you do not receive your new handbook, contact Barb Hamm, the Welcoming Committee Chair, or Stu Shafer for your copy.

(Continued from page 1)

Because of the cloudiness of the water, it appears we may need more treatments than originally anticipated. Please see the article by Jim Rhoads for a full update on the treatments.

Wetland and Coastal Resources will provide us remediation alternatives and recommendations. We have retained an attorney to represent us in negotiations with the developer and will proceed with litigation if necessary. Our members who had the foresight to be concerned that the Wildflower Development may adversely affect our lake were right. While the storm water management plan looked good on paper, it appears it was not implemented properly prior to the rains.

Some members have indicated that they have had damage to their yards and flooding in their basements, which they attribute to the Wildflower Development. If you have had damage, I would appreciate it if you would send me an email or call me so that we can document all problems which may have resulted from Wildflower.

On the bright side, our new park equipment is installed, and being used. Fish appear to still be swimming, the rain is soaking in, and the sun appears not to have left us for good. Even when things are a little tough, life is good.

- Stu Shafer, President

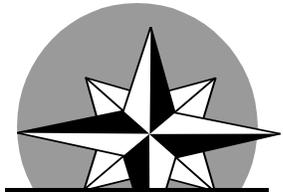
**THE CARE AND NON-FEEDING OF A LAKE**

The primary source of weeds in the lake is phosphorus run-off from lawn fertilizing. We all need to and must do our part by only using Phosphorus-free (the middle number on your fertilizer bag) fertilizers on our lawns, not fertilizing within 20 feet of the lake or roadside ditch, and reducing the amount of watering we do.

If you have a lawn service, please ask them about the phosphorus content of the fertilizer they are using. Lake safe does not necessarily mean phosphorus free!

Lakes actually do die off, and a dead lake would not be kind to your property values, whether on the lake or off.

Phosphorus-free fertilizer may be purchased at the DeWitt Grain Elevator on West Round Lake Road, 669-5950.

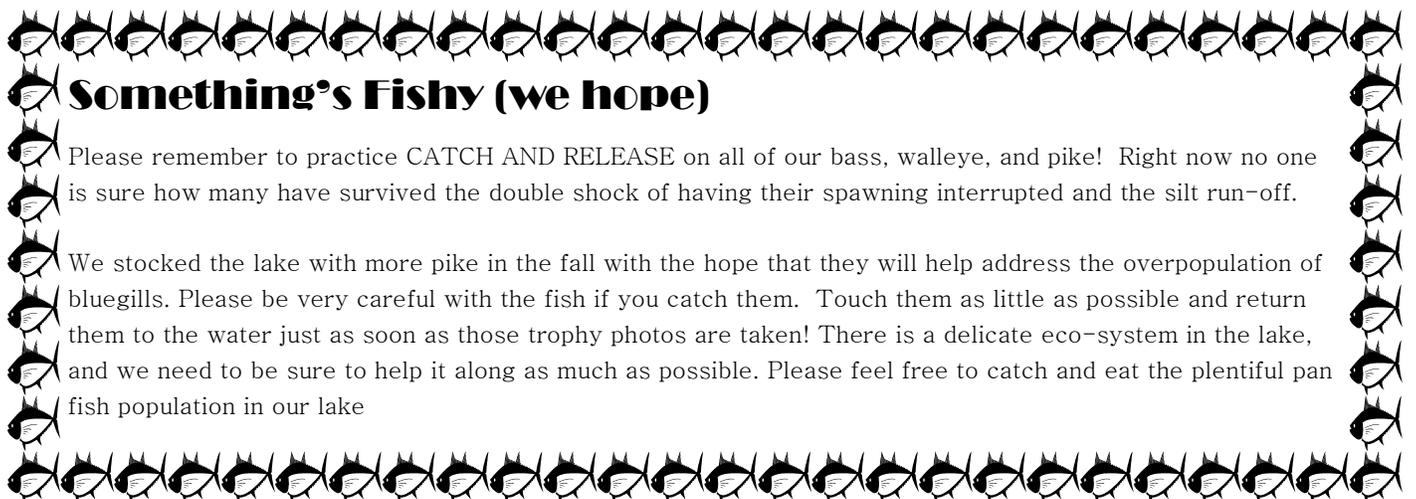


**A friendly reminder that anything you put on the ground potentially ends up in the water table and possibly Lake Geneva—this includes cigarette butts, poisons, oil, fertilizers, and litter!**

**Give Your Lawn a Lather - Terry Gartside**

Mix one cup of liquid dish soap and one cup of ammonia (get the lemon, bugs are not citrus-loving) into your 20 gallon hose end-sprayer. Be careful not to let the ammonia touch flowers or bushes.

This treatment softens the soil for improved water penetration and removes pollution from grass blades so osmosis can take place. If you have a problem with toadstools, this exercise is a must. A once a month bath will reap great rewards!



**Something's Fishy (we hope)**

Please remember to practice CATCH AND RELEASE on all of our bass, walleye, and pike! Right now no one is sure how many have survived the double shock of having their spawning interrupted and the silt run-off.

We stocked the lake with more pike in the fall with the hope that they will help address the overpopulation of bluegills. Please be very careful with the fish if you catch them. Touch them as little as possible and return them to the water just as soon as those trophy photos are taken! There is a delicate eco-system in the lake, and we need to be sure to help it along as much as possible. Please feel free to catch and eat the plentiful pan fish population in our lake

**Summary of 2004 Annual Meeting**

On March 10, 2004, we had this year's Annual Meeting. Three of our Board members' terms were up, and they chose not to seek reelection.

**Board Members:** A long-time member was Bruce Wojcik. One of the most important resources for a Board is institutional knowledge, memory, and experience. Each meeting, it is reinforced how essential these things are to the efficient operation of the Association. Bruce Wojcik gave us all of that.

Gone also is Theresa Patterson. In the last two years, Theresa supervised the purchase of new equipment for the East and West Parks and has helped improve the utility and beauty of our parks. Theresa has agreed to be on the Beach and Parks Committee to assist with the completion of the installation of our equipment purchase.

We also said good-bye to the incredibly dedicated Dave Hunsaker. Last year, Dave was our Treasurer, City Liaison, and chaired the Building Control Committee. Dave was ever vigilant in presenting our position to the City regarding storm water management and other issues involving the new Wildflower Meadows Development, and in the passage of a new City Ordinance designed to regulate the storm water. Dave has been the point man for all requests for approval of building projects and coordinated with our new Assistant Treasurer in developing a better billing process for the members. As luck would have it, Dave has agreed to be on the City Liaison Committee

Our Assistant Treasurer, John Waugh, took a job up north and was no longer able to work with the Board. As a result we gained Mike Lacharite, who is proving to be a great asset to the Board.

Three new great additions to the Board of Directors were unanimously elected: Heidi Fernandez, Kathy Dominguez, and Dan Skorich, all of whom have been longtime members of the Association.

**Finances:** Last year we budgeted \$58,400, spent \$54,383, and our revenue was \$46,965, resulting in a deficit of \$7,418. This year our proposed budget is \$67,300 and our potential revenue will be \$49,050, which means we will have at least a deficit of \$18,250 if we collect all of our dues. In 2003, our delinquent dues totaled \$9,785. Liens have been filed against the properties where dues are owed.

It is unlikely that our costs will go down. There have been substantial increases in electricity, and labor costs continue to go up. Eventually we will need to repair or replace the pumps. The old river pump should be removed. The dam needs some work. While we have about \$50,000 in cash and can absorb deficits for a couple of years, we expect that we will need to ask for a dues increase in a year or two. The annual dues of \$100.00 are extremely low compared to other associations.

**Lake:** Our biggest problem in the last few years has been weed control. An explanation was given, since this issue has been the cause of so much controversy. Several years ago, we retained Aquatic Technologies for our weed control. In order to chemically treat weeds, an application must be made to the DEQ. Once a permit is granted, the weeds can be treated for the season. Two years ago, our weeds were not treated until July, which was too late. In talking to Aquatic Technologies, it appeared that the problem was with the DEQ's timeliness in reviewing and granting permits. In order to avoid another problem, our agreement with Aquatic Technologies was that they were to submit the application to the DEQ in the first week of January. We gave Aquatic Technologies a check December 26<sup>th</sup>, but they did not submit the application until the end of February. DEQ did not review it until June, and found it to be defective. The permit was issued the beginning of July, and Aquatic Technologies would not respond to our inquiries as to when they would treat. As a result, we terminated our relationship with Aquatic Technologies and retained Professional Lake Management ("PLM").

PLM is the largest harvester of weeds in the state of Michigan. They mapped the lake, and assessed our weed problem. The results of their assessment were very helpful. First, we have a number of "exotic" weeds (non-native) due to people bringing their boats and trailers into the lake without cleaning them. In this way, bad weeds from other lakes end up in our lake. Second, weeds grow so rapidly because of phosphorous, which ends up in our lake from fertilizer. This is why, if you fertilize, it is essential that you use phosphorus free fertilizers. Third, PLM confirmed what we already knew. Harvesting is bad. Each time a weed is broken, it grows ten more. If you harvest 10 weeds, 100 grow back. If you harvest 1,000 weeds, 10,000 grow back. PLM indicated that the harvesting done in the channel and the north end has created a more expensive and significant problem.

PLM has been doing an excellent job. They submitted the DEQ application in November and the permit was granted soon thereafter.

We also discussed a number of other issues including speeding in our neighborhoods, park equipment, creation of our web site, publication of our handbook, and the need for volunteers to be on our various committees, and our need for an historian / archivist.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**Assistant Treasurer:**  
Michael Lacharite

**Beach / Parks:**  
Dan Bambery (Chair), Terry Gartside, Yvonne Lantz, Kathy Dominguez

**Building Control:**  
Stu Shafer (Chair) , Dan Norberg, Bob McClean, Dan Skorich

**Lake Level and Water Quality:**  
Jim Rhoads (Chair), Dan Bambery, Tim Walter, Dan Norberg

**City Liaison:**  
Dan Skorich (Chair), Dave Hunsaker, Terry Gartside

**Compliance:**  
Stu Shafer (Chair), Dan Norberg, Bob McClean, Doug Earle

**Newsletter:**  
Melissa DeMong (Chair), Heidi Fernandez, Stu Shafer, Kathy Dominguez

**Website/Handbook:**  
Heidi Fernandez (Chair), Melissa DeMong

**Website:**  
Barb Hamm (Chair), Terry Gartside, Deneene Benham

**Tips and Tidbits for your garden**

Use an old piece of carpet for planting and weeding - your knees will thank you

Marigolds are a magical flower, they will keep away rabbits, and will help your tomatoes and beans produce better. Planting in the same place yearly provides the best soil benefits.

Don't throw out that old broom handle! Tie your old broken broom handle to your garden hose with short pieces of rope, starting right before the nozzle. You are now able to guide the hose where the water is needed most, namely, the roots and surrounding soil (avoid watering the leaves).

Hair, both human and canine, makes a great pest repellent.



Greetings,  
I would once again like to thank everyone who took the time to submit an article or an idea for an article.  
If you have any comment on what you see in this newsletter or something you would like covered in a future newsletter, or if you would like to submit an article for consideration, please feel free to get in touch with me. My phone number is 669.4484.  
My E-mail address is melissademong@yahoo.com .  
Have a wonderful summer! - Melissa