



# WEST LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

---

April, 2005

---

## 2005 ANNUAL MEETING

The West Lake Annual meeting is scheduled for May 10th at the Portage Central Middle school cafe from 6:45-8:45 pm.

The address is 8305 S Westnedge.

Our agenda is full. The WLIA is excited to have TWO guest speakers share their expertise with the lake residents.

Our first guest speaker will be Robert Hudson, Deputy Chief of Operations from the Portage Fire Department. Chief Hudson is going to cover ice rescue and recovery as well as touch on fire safety for your boat. Many of you witnessed the fire department on the ice day and night going through their training during this past winter.

Our second guest speaker will be newly elected Drain Commissioner William French, who will share information on Storm Water and County drains. This is very important to our lake since up to 83% of West Lake's water comes from storm water run off. The storm water dumps huge amounts of nutrients into the lake, which forces us to have continual weed treatments.

We are very fortunate to have both of these gentlemen available to share their experiences.

We certainly hope we can get as many residents there as possible. Please come and get informed and involved in your lake. See you on May 10th.

### 2005 Weed Treatment Program

The weather has finally broken and many lake residents are excited about enjoying the upcoming season on the lake.

While the residents are preparing to put in docks, boats and all the other goodies for use in the lake, the lake association has been busy too!

The West Lake Improvement Association (WLIA) has helped get approval of the new 5-year lake management assessment with the city of Portage. Our *new* annual commitment will be \$25 per household per year. This

assessment program has allowed the WLIA to contract Progressive AE Inc. from Grand Rapids to conduct our lake surveys in preparation for our weed management program.

For the 2005 season, the WLIA has contracted with Aquatic Services Inc. to spot spray herbicides to control trouble areas until we can get approval to use SONAR. WLIA has a long term relationship with Aquatic services and they do a great job treating the lake.

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has **new** requirements that have forced the WLIA to delay Floridone (Sonar) treatments until 2006 at the earliest.

WLIA hopes everyone enjoys a safe & fun lake season.

---

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### **Thank you!**

For some people this is becoming harder and harder to say. Many times it's because other people fail to say it to them. I am saying it because I am truly thankful for all the work being done by the West Lake Improvement Association.

This is my first year as President and the Directors have been just totally awesome in their help and experience. It has been a quick year, but a very productive year for the board.

Many things have been done or are getting done.

- Our 5-year assessment has been approved and I'd like to thank the lake residents that went to the City Council meetings showing their support.
- The board is cutting costs for the newsletters by hand delivering them and printing them ourselves. That thanks goes to the editors Mike and Denise Granchi, the publishers Fred and Sandy Welsler and the delivery by Ralph Colwell.
- Thanks to Jane Emanuel for welcoming new residents with the welcome pack and writing interesting stories for the newsletter.
- Thanks for the "Get It Done" attitude and follow up by Ralph Colwell when something needs researching at the city or elsewhere.
- We are getting so much information about fighting purple loosestrife and new storm water requirements. Phil Guichelaar and Tom Scott have been so valuable in following up on these topics.

- Thank you Thom Phillips for the insight and ideas to help foster greater ideas from all board members. That has been very helpful to me.
- Thank you Charles Nelson and Janeene Hobbs for making me feel so much a part of the board once I was elected. I really appreciated those kind words and encouragement.
- Thank you Mike Granchi for keeping me in line with the orders of the meeting and the adhering to the bylaws of the WLIA.... and for developing the new West Lake Improvement Association's web site.
- Finally the money lady, Treasurer Diane Barkholz. Thank you for handling all the treasurers duties with a tight fist. I am sure the Association feels good knowing that the money isn't spent foolishly, but rather wisely. You truly do a great job.

The board isn't made up of a bunch of "yes" people and that makes it so much stronger. Many ideas and thoughts are expressed on both sides and the important thing is the winner is always West Lake. Everyone wants to improve the lake and have differing thoughts on how to achieve that.

Thank you, board members and lake residents for the great year and I am looking forward to a fantastic upcoming year.

## SWIMMERS ITCH

Please be aware that Goose droppings are a large contributor to Swimmers Itch in the lake. If you take the time and effort to pick up Goose droppings, **PLEASE DO NOT** dump them in the lake. This action will increase the odds of Swimmers Itch. THANKS!

## MOVIN' ON UP...

... Real Estate prices on West Lake, that is...

West Lake Real Estate Update! This is a new section in our newsletter. I've asked one of our neighbor Lakefront Specialists, Bill Witek from Prudential Preferred Realtors, to give us an update on our lakefront real estate as well as other news worthy items. Bill's been in the real estate business for 21 years and actually has lived on Austin Lake for the past 17 years.

Bill states that in the past year there have been 8 homes that sold on West Lake with prices ranging from \$108,500-\$371,500. During the previous year there were 9 homes that sold with prices ranging from \$109,900-\$769,900!! Currently there are 6 homes for sale with lakefront property with prices from \$119,900-\$439,000.

West Lake home prices are very similar in value to homes on Austin, Eagle, and Crooked Lake in Texas Township. West and Crooked Lake both enjoy the limited public boat access as well as beautiful natural shore-line areas.

The appreciation on all of these lakes have outpaced off lake properties consistently throughout the years. If you have any specific real estate questions or if you'd like a free update on your current value call Bill at 327-3939. Also, for anyone thinking of making a move or would simply like the information for your real estate library, Bill has a new free special report called "27 quick and easy fix up tips to sell your home Fast and for Top Dollar!"

---

## STORM WATER REGULATION SEMINAR

Tom Scott and Phil Guichelaar attended a day-long seminar called "Current Legal Issues in Storm Water Regulation in Michigan" on March 29.

The seminar featured talks by legal and environmental experts on subjects ranging from the Great Lakes Water Resources Management Agreement to the necessity to obtain construction activity permits when soil runoff into a lake is probable.

The talks on sanitary sewer overflows fortunately were not applicable to our lake. The issue of storm

water detention ponds, such as the large pond south of Meijer's on Shaver, and wetlands, such as the bog on the west end of our lake, were discussed in the context of potentially being community assets.

Properly engineered, vegetation at the storm water inlet can filter out sediments and phosphorus, releasing clean water to the remainder of the pond. The seminar information will be an important input to the WLIA planning efforts over the next several years.

---

## ANNUAL FERTILIZER REMINDER:

### FERTILIZING YOUR LAWN

When you want your lawn or garden to grow faster and greener, you usually put fertilizer on it to increase the nutrients available to the plants. As a West Lake property owner, you may be providing fertilizer to the nearby water and not just to your lawn.

Almost anything you put on the ground on your lakefront property will reach our lake. When nutrient levels increase in a body of water, the plants in that lake react just like the plants in your garden--they grow faster.

You can have an attractive lawn and garden on a lakefront property without harming the lake. The trick is to keep the fertilizer where you want it--on your grass. Instead of having your lawn slope down all the way to the waters edge, provide a buffer strip a couple of feet wide along the water where you leave natural vegetation or plant deeply rooted plants that will remove the nutrients from the soil. This buffer strip will also help stabilize the shoreline and prevent runoff.

When planting a new lawn, choose a variety of grass that needs less nitrogen, thereby requiring less fertilizer to keep your lawn healthy. Fescue, for example, requires only 1/2 to 1/3 as much nitrogen as a lawn of bluegrass. Additionally, the experts say it is better to use small amounts of fertilizer several times than to use a large amount once. That way most of the fertilizer is used by the plants and won't

run off into the lake; you'll save money and you'll protect the lake.

I am always disappointed when I see a lawn service or can smell the fertilizer on someone's lawn when I go for a boat ride. If you are going to fertilize yourself or if you want to utilize a lawn service, please follow these guidelines:

**A fertilizer recommended and claimed "safe" for lakefront usage is available at Romence. Also, all-natural fertilizer's are available throughout the area. They contain 30% water-soluble nitrogen, no phosphorous (that's the real culprit in aquatic weed growth) and 20% potassium. A spot-aerosol is recommended for weeds rather than a "weed-n-feed" application.**

**REMEMBER:** The value of your waterfront property depends largely on the quality of the water in the lake. By planning how you will manage your lawn and garden, you and your neighbors can protect your investment for yourselves and the future.

***IT'S WORTH IT!***

---

---

.... **AND THE WINNER IS.....**

The Winner of the West Lake Culinary Award for the 2004 WLIA Annual Picnic was **Theresa Foss**.

Theresa's Mac & Cheese recipe was enjoyed by all.

And....Theresa REALLY LOVED the Grand Prize of an all expense paid trip to the Bahamas.... Kidding!!

But we DO thank her for both the enjoyable dish and sharing her recipe.

**Mac & Cheese**

2 cups, Uncooked macaroni  
2 cups, Whole milk  
1/4 cup, Flour  
1 teaspoon, Onion salt  
12 oz., Sharp cheddar cheese (about 3 cups shredded)  
4 oz., Monterey Jack cheese (about 1 cup shredded)

1/4 cup, Butter melted

Cook macaroni in boiling water for about 10 minutes. Drain. Place milk, flour and onion salt in a jar with tight fitting lid and shake together. Reserve about 3/4 cup of cheddar cheese for topping. Stir remaining cheeses and milk mixture into pan of hot macaroni. Pour into a lightly greased 13 by 9 baking dish, sprinkle with reserved cheese and pour melted butter evenly over top. Bake in 350 degree oven for 30 to 35 minutes until bubbly and lightly browned.

Note: I used Kraft Cracker Barrel Sharp Cheddar Cheese

---

---

**WEST LAKE CLASSIFIEDS**

**GMC Envoy SLT '04**, 4WD, 4-door, brand new (1K miles), vortec 4200 inline 6-cylinder, loaded: trailer package, on-star, satellite radio, more. Incredible buy, \$26,900 (sticker price -- \$39,675) PHONE -- 327-2869 or (269) 217-1563

**Sea-Doo 4-Tec Sportster** and trailer, 4 seater, 4-stroke 155 Rotax engine, 15'4", swim platform, ski pylon, more. New -- driven approx. 5 hours, \$11,900 (original price -- \$15,600) PHONE -- 327-2869 or (269) 217-1563

**1987 Sea Nymph CC191**, 19 foot Aluminum Boat with 140 hp Evenrude. Includes E-Z Loader Trailer. \$4000 or best offer. Call Mike 327-4533

---

---

**UPCOMING "LAKESCAPING" TRENDS**

*Editors Note: There is a new "trend" in landscaping lake frontage that appears to be finally taking hold among riparians across the country. I first heard about it several years ago at a Michigan Lakes and Streams Conference and dismissed it with a "not in my lifetime" However, as time has passed and I've developed a better understanding of watershed*

*management and lake ecology, I've come to the realization that this way of managing lakefront property "makes sense" and is something that I am very interested in pursuing on our own property.*

*I don't expect everyone to "agree" with this way of managing lake frontage, but it is worthy of some consideration. In particular, those of you considering installing a metal or plastic "hard" seawall may want to spend a little time checking this out. It is considerably less expensive, requires less maintenance (lawn cutting and sand replacement) and is much better for the lake ecosystem than the man-made systems.*

*If you are interested in seeing what is being described here, the Kellogg Biological Station, 3700 E. Gull Lake Drive, Hickory Corners, MI 49060. has 400 feet of frontage on Gull Lake divided into four areas to simulate four different lake lots. Each lot demonstrates a different alternative shoreline landscape, or lakescape. A variety of more natural erosion control methods are also demonstrated. Interpretive signage will help visitors better understand each lakescape design and its ecological benefits.*

*I would encourage you to take a look and see if it is something that you would be interested in doing. (You can contact Jane Herbert at KBS at (269) 671-2412 x 222 or Barb Ledesma, Gull Lake Quality Organization at (269) 629-5411.)*

#### *WHY LAKESCAPE?*

*" Creating a more natural shoreline area can greatly enhance the enjoyment and beauty of your lakeshore, while improving and protecting one of the home owner's most valuable assets - the lake itself.*

*A more natural shoreline area - wildflowers, native trees and shrubs - require less watering, maintenance and chemical inputs than traditional turf lawns. It provides habitat for fish, frogs, birds and other interesting shoreline animals year round. The deep roots of native plants stabilize shoreline areas and reduce erosion from waves and ice.*

*Lakescaping can also protect the lake itself. Fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides can turn clear water murkey and weedy, contaminate or kill fish and*

*cover the water's surface with smelly algae. Creative alternative landscaping can keep these elements out of ground and lake water.*

*Like a garden, one should note that patience is important in establishing a more natural shoreline. It will take a few years to reach it's full potential of beauty and effectiveness, but the rewards will be worth the wait" (quote from KBS Project Lakescaping update, Fall, 2004)*

*There are several contractors and suppliers that are ramping up to meet the growing demand. You can get information from the KBS while you are there.*

*I have copied the information below from a publication of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Association of Lakes, and The River Alliance of Wisconsin website, and I will have more info in future newsletters.*

*Here is the web address and I will put a link on the WLIA website shortly.*

**[www.bcwf.bc.ca/programs/wetlands/downloads/featuresteward.pdf](http://www.bcwf.bc.ca/programs/wetlands/downloads/featuresteward.pdf)**

*THANKS!!*

*In a sense, we are all 'waterfront landowners' because we all live in a watershed—even that storm drain at the end of the driveway or street eventually leads to a waterway. Storm water flowing over roads, lawns, and yards picks up dirt, lawn fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, toxic heavy metals, pet waste and other pollutants that do not belong in our lakes and rivers. Whether you own property on a large lake or a small stream, the water and shorelands are altered by what happens on your home turf. When natural shorelands are replaced, an important filtering system is lost, allowing polluted runoff to flow directly into the lake or stream. Did you know that many of the pleasurable aspects of your favorite lake or river are dependent on healthy, well-vegetated shorelands? The next time you're out in the boat fishing, swimming on a hot July afternoon, or just listening to loons calling over a still lake, consider the central role shorelands play in maintaining these activities. Natural shorelands contain a lush mixture of native grasses, flowers, shrubs and trees that help to filter polluted runoff*

and provide important habitat for animals in the water and on the land. Flourishing shorelands provide some of the most effective protection for water resources in Wisconsin. Literally, without shorelands and their diversity, the 'nature show' cannot go on.

## Natural Shorelands:

### *How They Work*

It's a fact: natural, thriving shorelands can solve many water quality problems on lakes and waterways. The loss of natural shorelands is not only a threat to water quality, it also can create other troubles. For example:

- **Erosion:** Removing shoreland vegetation destabilizes the shoreline and can lead to loss of land. Shorelines must stand up to scouring currents, fluctuating water levels, moving ice, flooding, surface runoff from higher ground, boat wakes, and wind-driven waves.
- **Flooding:** Land development leads to increased runoff from impervious surfaces such as roofs, roads, driveways, and parking lots. More water reaching lakes and rivers at faster rates can cause flooding during heavy rains.
- **Unightly algae blooms:** Just as fertilizers make your lawn green, they make your lake or river green by feeding algae and aquatic weeds.
- **Damage to fisheries:** Clearing trees exposes water to more sunlight, raising water temperatures, lowering oxygen levels, and stressing fish and their food supplies.
- **Loss of habitat:** The water's edge is prime real estate for birds and other wildlife. Backyard bird feeders are no substitute for good plant cover and natural food.
- **Loss of privacy:** Boaters, anglers, water-skiers, jet-skiers, and swimmers all love Wisconsin's lakes and rivers. Shoreland vegetation screens homes from public view and helps to reduce noise from boats and jet-skis on the water.

So, natural shorelands can benefit the average shoreland homeowner in significant ways. But how do they benefit the natural world? The following section gives a quick tutorial on the precise ways that natural shorelands work with the entire lake or river ecosystem. And yes, that includes humans.

### *Water Quality*

Shoreland vegetation traps and filters sediment and debris from rainfall and snow melt. Depending on the size (length and depth) and complexity of the shoreland, 50%—100% of the solid particles can settle out as plants slow sediment-laden runoff. In general, wider shorelands are more effective than narrower shorelands, and trees, shrubs, and grasses are more effective than just grass. For slopes less than 15%, most sediment-settling occurs within the first 35 feet. Greater widths are needed on steeper slopes or where sediment loads are particularly high. To filter fine-grained sediments such as silt or clay, more depth may also be needed.

### *Flood Control*

By slowing the flow of runoff, shoreland vegetation allows water to soak into the soil and replenish the groundwater supply. Groundwater reaches lakes and rivers at a much slower and constant rate than surface runoff. This helps limit flooding and maintain water flows during the driest times of the year. If you build on a floodplain, not only is the natural ability of the floodplain to absorb high waters reduced, but you are also risking damage to your property. By reserving the natural vegetation found on floodplains, the severity of floods may be reduced.

### *Shoreline Stability*

Native plants can help stabilize shorelines and reduce erosion. In the water, aquatic plants, such as water lilies and pickerel weed, help protect shorelines by deflecting and absorbing the cutting action of waves, ice and boat wakes. As you move onto the land, the deep root systems of native plants provide a framework that helps to hold banks together. Plant stems also protect banks by slowing storm water runoff, allowing more time for the runoff to soak into the soil and preventing erosion. If there is active bank erosion, at least 30 feet of natural vegetation may be necessary to address erosion from upland runoff. Severe bank erosion usually requires an engineered solution to stabilize and rehabilitate the bank—but this engineering can incorporate plants.

### The next installment will cover:

Aquatic Habitat, Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat, Recreation and Aesthetics, and Property Values.

**2005 WLIA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

I want to be a member of the West Lake Association for 2005 and support our organization for lake improvement. Enclosed is \$25 for membership dues. (\*If the \$25 Membership fee is a hardship, please call Patrick. We still want you to join!)

We would like to hear your comments . (If you elect not to join WLIA, PLEASE let us know why. We cannot correct "issues" if we do not know what they are. Thank You!)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

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

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

Please mail this membership form and a signed proxy if applicable to:

Diane Barkholz

OR: drop it off at any one of your West Lake Director's homes

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

..... (CUT HERE) .....

**YEARLY PROXY FOR WEST LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION MEMBER**

(THIS FORM WILL ALLOW YOU TO HAVE SOMEONE CAST YOUR VOTE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING if you cannot attend. Please be sure to fill-in the appointees name on the line after "appoint \_\_\_\_\_".  
THANK YOU!)

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

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS:

That I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby make, constitute and appoint  
\_\_\_\_\_, to be my true and lawful attorney in fact, for me and in my name, place and  
stead to vote at any general, annual or special meeting of the West Lake Improvement Association, a  
corporation, and otherwise to act as my proxy or representative, in respect of any and all shares, now or  
hereafter held by me therein, and I empower my said attorney also to substitute and appoint from time to time  
one or more proxies or attorneys in fact with the same or limited powers, such appointees each and every being  
subject to revocation at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witnessed By

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Member

**MULTIPLE YEAR APPROVAL:**

(If you have **NOT** filled this form out before, please do it now. THANK YOU!!)

I/we hereby give my/our approval for the projected selective herbicide treatments of West Lake if and when needed to control the excessive growth of exotic weeds and to treat for swimmers itch if an outbreak occurs. I fully understand that all permitting is approved by the DEQ.

I/we understand that there is a possibility of not being able to irrigate my/our lawn and/or garden with lake water during forewarned specific dates following a treatment. This approval includes my/our shoreline to the center of West Lake in Portage Michigan.

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

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

..... (CUT HERE) .....

**WELCOME TO THE LAKE:**

**2005 WLIA Board of Directors**

President	Patrick Duggan	.	
Vice-President	Ralph Colwell		
Secretary	Phil Guichelaar		
Treasurer	Diane Barkholz		
Directors	Jane Emanuel		
	Mike Granchi		
	Janeene Hobbs		
	Chuck Nelson		
	Thom Phillips		
	Tom Scott		
	Fred Welser		