



Lake Leelanau

LAKE ASSOCIATION

Spring 2017
News & Views from the Watershed



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Coming soon



President’s Letter by Nick Fleezanis

Iceboats replaced pontoon boats and ice-fishing shanties appear on our beloved lake. But with March we expect ice out and a return to our liquid playground. Docks and hoists will begin to appear and we look forward to spring.

Another winter has come and gone and we’ve seen our lake transform from placid clear water to frozen ice.

Your lake association has been busy working with the Michigan Swimmer’s Itch Partnership (MSIP) preparing for receipt of our portion of the state appropriation from the DNR towards our swimmer’s itch project. With the dissolution of the former company called SICON, we are reviewing bids from the two new companies that will offer us control measures for the reduction and management of the swimmer’s itch problem our lake has faced since the stoppage of control measures back in the late eighties and early nineties. Our thanks to all those members who have contributed selflessly to the swimmer’s itch project.

Your association also made comment concerning the replacement of a boathouse approved for construction in the Narrows. A public hearing was held and officers and members were present to make their concerns heard to the MDEQ concerning wildlife and environmental issues impacting the Narrows.

The lake level monitors were finally installed at three locations on the lake. The software that collects data began to record critical data that will eventually be made available to members and property owners on the lake association website. Water temperatures and lake levels will be presented in graph forms to better control and maintain the levels in both south and north lake.



Board of Directors

OFFICERS

Nick Fleezanis, President
313-418-8248 | drnick9744@yahoo.com
Jeff Sanborn, Vice President
231-946-8680 | JFSanborn80@gmail.com
Dan Sweeney, Treasurer
231-256-9182 | dan.sweeney@hotmail.com
Cindy Kacin, Secretary
231-256-8873 | cakacin@charter.net
George Prewitt, Past President
231-499-4470 | geoprewittjr@charter.net

TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

John Popa, Bingham
231-947-1088 | jjpopa@charter.net
Help Wanted, Centerville

Robert Bosch, Elmwood
231-421-1676 | rbosch10@yahoo.com
Wayne Wunderlich, Leland
231-256-9294 | Cedarhavencot@Hotmail.com
Jeff Green, Leland
231-256-0644 | green@indiana.edu
Gene Wishowski, Solon
231-941-2302 | LKLeelanau@aol.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Jim Kacin, Fish
231-256-8873 | captainjimbigfish@gmail.com
Mark Smith, Communication
231-256-7892 | mark@lakeleelanau.org
Bonnie Gotshall, Water Safety
231-929-2177 | gotshall2002@aol.com
Barb Kobberstad, Membership
231-256-8802 | musicmom4@juno.com
Hugh Farber, Water Quality
231-256-7187 | hughnbetty@gmail.com

Image Contributors: copyright Mark Smith, Bonnie Gotshall

Mission Statement

To make this body of water, Lake Leelanau, a better place to live. To establish on-going programs to promote and protect the best interest and uses of riparian owners, boaters, fishers, bathers, and all other parties who have access to this body of water. In doing so, the Association will review and respond to all issues relating to the protection and preservation of the Lake Leelanau environment, the surrounding land and the water, including issues regarding safety, and recreational enjoyment of the lake. In addition the Association will address issues related to governmental regulation and taxation, and will review all property development proposals to determine what impact the projects could have on the riparian owners and users of Lake Leelanau.

President's Letter, continued

The new revision of the lake association handbook is progressing as planned and will be made available to members later this year. Look to have the handbook hand delivered to you by lake association members and volunteers. It is the board's hope that this revised handbook will be a reference for you to use for best practices in preserving the quality of the lake environs, and a better understanding of our precious watershed.

The association officers and board members look forward to serving you, but can only do that effectively if you make your concerns and desires known to them. We ask that you visit the website (LakeLeelanau.org) and make comment, or call officers and committee chairs to volunteer and contribute to your association. Friend us on Facebook and pass on your favorite recollections and fun times on the lake. Your board looks forward to another productive year. Together we will make a difference.

Nick Fleezanis

Lake Leelanau Lake Association
Follow us on Facebook – spread the word!



Communications Report by Mark Smith



Help Wanted

Since joining this organization and becoming communications chair over two years ago I have been pleased to make new friends and eager to help spread the word of all the good work done by LLLA. Today, however, I am writing to let you know that, due to increased outside commitments, I will be resigning as communications chair of LLLA, effective March 15th. Sad but true.

I will stay on to help with the transition of whoever comes along to take my place. As we move forward with finding a replacement, I will be involved in helping make the transition easier. The communications chair needs to be conversant with WordPress and needs to know how to edit and put together a newsletter. Duties include maintaining the LLLA website and Facebook site, as well as writing and soliciting articles for the quarterly newsletter and website. As stated, editing skills are a must, as well as general knowledge of photo editing and online engagement.

If you are willing and able to take on this job, or if you know of someone who is willing and able, please let us know. You can reply to nick@lakeleelanau.org or mark@lakeleelanau.org and let us know. This is a fine organization, with wonderful people. I hope you can get involved.

In other news, I want to take this opportunity to encourage all of you to visit our site at lakeleelanau.org, and subscribe to our newsletter, so that you never miss a post. Also, we have a [Facebook](#) site, which is slightly different, slightly more fun. Go there .. go there and like us and follow us ... please! That helps promote our organization, and it's not hard. Just recently, for example you will see some wonderful aerial shots of our beautiful lake. Outstanding! You don't want to miss this. Enjoy. And keep warm, those of you who have not retreated to warmer climes. :)

Pics by Bonnie Gotshall Water Safety Chair



Membership Report by Barbara Kobberstad



Our lake depends on you to keep it healthy and vibrant so a big THANK YOU to you, our current members. Your financial support is invaluable as we strive to effectively maintain and improve the quality of our lake. The 2016 calendar year saw us with a total membership of 365 families. With upwards of 1400 riparians on Lake Leelanau, it seems we need to do more to encourage those who are not members that what we do is very important.

To that end, I will be sending out reminder notes to those whose membership has lapsed in the past 4 years. A little reminder might go a long way to picking up those members whose expiration notice ended up in the dreaded “to do” pile.

Our members are very important people and we encourage you to get involved! Here are some of the ways you can volunteer:

- *Kid's Fishing Day on Sunday, June 25*
- *Distribution of our revised Handbook coming out this summer*
- *Fund Raising*
- *Helping with correspondence*
- *Attending our Annual Meeting in July (date to be determined)*

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me, or any of the board members, via email or telephone. Barb Kobberstad: bkobberstad@gmail.com or 231-256-8802.

A good day at the cabin begins with a sunrise and ends with a smile.

Water Quality Report by Hugh Farber



The general quality of the water In Lake Leelanau, based on last year's review, seems to be holding up well. There are always threats to assess to see if corrective or preventive activity is required. Among these threats are algae, both brown shoreline type, and blue-green, which can be generated more widely.

We have seen both algae types sporadically, with brown algae mostly an aesthetic issue on the North Lake but perhaps indicative of nutrient increase from onshore releases (septic systems, fertilizer, etc.) or unknown natural changes in ground water. At present research on Torch Lake, where this brown or golden algae is a big issue, is still ongoing. We are following their work closely.

The blue-green algae which occasionally is observed on this lake is potentially a source of toxic microcystins, which can be an issue if significant amounts are generated. At present, we are monitoring reports of observed algae and persistent foam on shore, which may be toxic.

IMPORTANT: The eyes of our many riparian owners and members are among our best sources of observation on shoreline waters as issues develop. To that end we would really like to encourage the reporting of all OBSERVED concerns. We are here to help.



Oak Wilt Prevention – It’s up to you and me!

*thanks to Kama Ross, District Forester
Leelanau, Grand Traverse and Benzie
Conservation Districts*



Oak wilt, a non-native vascular wilt fungus that is fatal to red oaks, is present and spreading in Northern Michigan. Symptoms of oak wilt include the rapid loss of leaves, typically in mid-summer, and the slow progression from infected red oaks to adjacent healthy red oaks from one year to the next. Oak wilt once established spreads underground through the interconnected root systems of red oak trees. New infections can also begin when beetles spread spores from infected trees to healthy trees that are pruned or injured during the spring and early summer. A newly infected tree will lose all of its leaves in mid-summer.



Figure 9. Wilt pattern in oak leaf.
disease to unaffected areas.

To help prevent new infections, property owners should refrain from doing any oak removal or pruning between April 15th and July 15th, when beetles move spores from trees killed last year. Last week, Kama Ross, District Forester for Leelanau, Grand Traverse and Benzie Counties, did field inspections with DNR Forest Health Technician, Scott Lint, of several suspected oak wilt sites in Grant and Green Lake Townships of Grand Traverse County. The oak wilt fungus fruiting bodies were found on trees killed last year, with the Nitidulid “picnic” beetles on them. The beetles will pick up fungal spores and transfer them onto a freshly cut oak 1 to 1 ½ miles away. This confirms that now is the critical time to not injure any oaks or create any way for the fungus to enter the vascular system of the healthy tree. In addition, it is important not to move any firewood from trees that have been killed by oak wilt because this can also transport the

Leelanau County had its third confirmed oak wilt site last summer and treatment practices are working toward containing the spread. Other surrounding counties have been battling oak wilt for a number of years, but vigilance is needed everywhere to keep losses from oak wilt to a minimum.

Residential treatment applications can be confounded by underground infrastructure, driveways, walks, gardens, property lines, and many other factors. However, high value residential oaks may be treated with an injected registered chemical that protects individual trees. The treatment needs to be repeated every two years. For homeowners, the injection costs for yard trees might be a viable option. Prevention is far cheaper but not always possible, as nature has a role. Oak wilt is here to stay in Michigan. Human activity will most likely move the disease into previously affected stands as time goes on, however, oak wilt can be successfully managed and the oak forest resource will remain a part of our forested landscape.

The DNR and Conservation District Foresters are trying to confirm and document the extent of oak wilt in Michigan. If you would like more information, or suspect you may have oak wilt and would like it confirmed contact the Michigan DNR Forest Health Program at (517) 284-5895 or DNR-FRD-Forest-Health@michigan.gov or the Leelanau, Grand Traverse and Benzie Conservation District Forester, Kama Ross, at (231) 256-9783 or kama.ross@macd.org.

Oak Wilt Pest Alert:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdard/OakWilt_3-14_453040_7.pdf



Report Suspect Forest Pest Infestations in Michigan

Email: DNR-FRD-Forest-Health@michigan.gov

Phone: (517) 284-5895

Midwest Invasive Species Information Network: www.misin.msu.edu

Learn more: <http://michigansaf.org/ForestInfo/Health/E3169-OakWilt.pdf> and
http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/howtos/ht_oakwilt/identify_prevent_and_control_oak_wilt_print.pdf

Don't Move Firewood!



Wayne's World

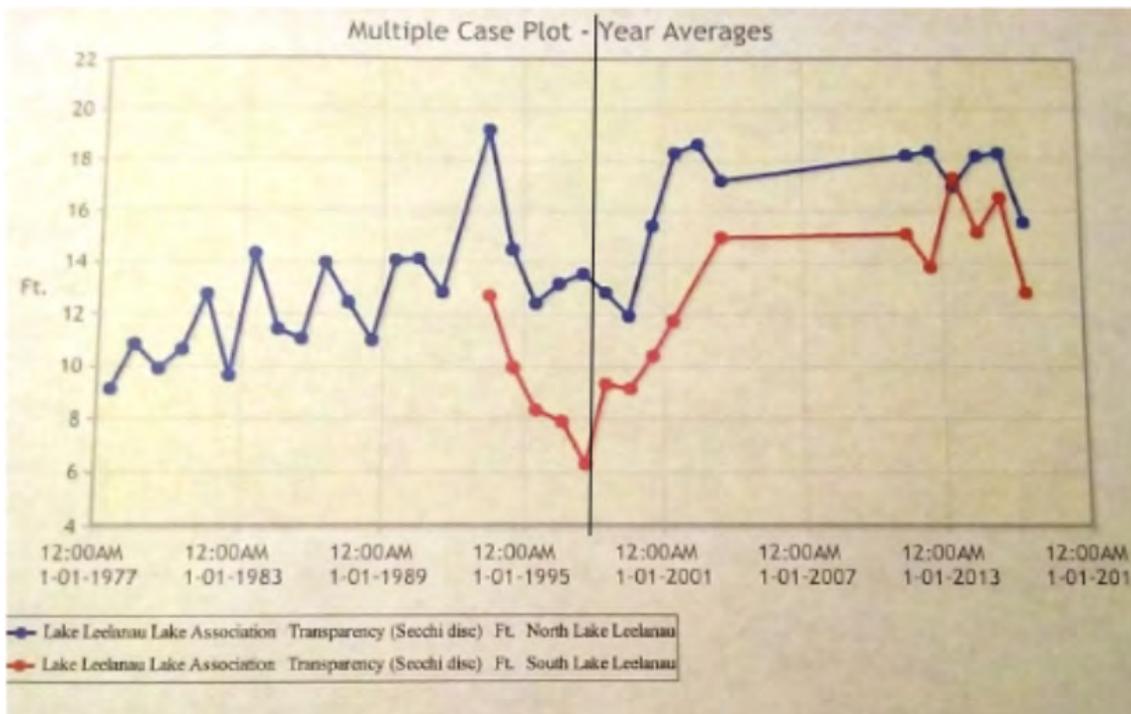
From the desk of Water Quality Consultant, Wayne Swallow



Historical Water Quality Trends

Volunteers have been collecting water quality data from North and South Lake Leelanau for many years. Measurements include: Secchi transparency (a measure of light penetration into the water which the normal person interprets as how far one can see down into the water), spring and late summer total phosphorus (the principal nutrient responsible for algae and weed growth), and chlorophyll a (a measure of how much algae is present in the water). The volunteers also measure dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature along a vertical profile from the water surface to near bottom.

We finally have a tool to allow analysis of that data to track trends in water quality. We are grateful to Cal Killen of Glen Lake who developed the tool. Over the next few newsletters we hope to discuss the historical trends and relate those to what we are observing on the lake today. For now here is just a glimpse of what has happened with water transparency from 1977 to 2016 in North Lake and 1995 to 2016 in South Lake. The transparency in South Lake is about two to three feet less that of North Lake. Most notable is that zebra mussels invaded the lakes in about 1998 (the vertical line). Note that the transparency in both lakes increased significantly after the invasion of zebra mussels. Each zebra mussel filters a little over a quart of water each day, filtering out the algae for food. This filtering process has had a profound effect on the lakes.



The first and most visible result of zebra mussels is that the water is significantly clearer. Clearer water doesn't necessarily translate to "high quality" water. This species has extirpated all of the native mussels. Doubtless you or your grandchildren may have suffered a cut foot from the sharp edges of these small mussels that attach to most any solid object on the bottom. Their filter feeding has changed the algal populations from one dominated by green algae and diatoms (good organisms) to one dominated by cyanobacteria, historically called blue-green algae, which are detrimental to the environment. One species of cyanobacteria, *Microcystis* sp. can produce microcystin, a toxin which can pose problems. The foam which collects along the shore in wave zones may contain high concentrations of this compound, so it is advisable to keep your children and pets away from the foam.

We are fortunate in that the phosphorus level in the lake remains low, reducing the potential increased cyanobacteria growth. That is one of the many reasons we stress maintaining your septic systems, refraining from fertilizing lawns, and creating buffer strips along your shoreline. Watch for more analysis of other water quality parameters in future newsletters.

Swimmer's Itch Control Efforts In Transition

Last fall's newsletter reported on the results of the 2016 efforts to control swimmer's itch (SI). In summary our consultant established a baseline snail infection rate and conducted bird surveys. The highest SI severity index (highest density of snails x highest percentage of SI infected snails) occurred at Warden's Point and the shoreline along Sunset Shores Drive where the narrows widens out to North Lake. Mallards dominated both North and South Lakes in the June and August bird counts, with a total of 143 on North Lake and 655 on South Lake. The common mergansers (the primary carrier of SI) totaled 37 on North Lake, with none being seen on South Lake.

Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership (MSIP) was successful in appropriating \$250,000 from the Michigan Legislature for SI control and research. A nonprofit organization was required as a clearing house to manage and distribute the appropriated dollars. MSIP hired the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council (TMWC) for that purpose. Susan Price is the MSIP contractor that will work with TMWC to handle the logistics of distributing the funds, along with seeking other funding and grants. MSIP and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) are currently working though how the distribution process will work.

Over the winter the principals of Swimmer's Itch Control (SICON) dissolved the company and now have established their own firms. LLLA has been in discussion with the contractors and MDNR about anticipated work for 2017. LLLA's intent for 2017 was to move forward to trap and relocate mergansers. We had a meeting on February 8 with the contractors and MDNR about permitting issues and anticipated plans. The MDNR was reluctant to issue new permits to trap and move mergansers with one year remaining on a current permit for SICON. We left the meeting cautiously optimistic that permits can be issued for the five primary lakes (Higgins, Crystal, Glen, Leelanau and Lime) by explaining that the revised program will not prevent the current research from being completed. We hope to have a decision from the MDNR by the end of March or early April about the permits. If we are successful the focus of the program will be to trap and relocate mergansers on North Lake, find and monitor nesting trees, and close off the nesting trees after the end of the season, providing the land owner agrees. Efforts will also be made to refine a new technique for monitoring "success" of SI control. SICON experimented with sampling water in 2016 to measure the presence and abundance of actual cercariae (the parasite causing SI) by measuring the cercariae DNA in the water. This new method showed promise and the contractors hope to better refine this technique. It is much less costly that collecting and analyzing snails.

Since all of the 2017 work is still in the planning stage it is difficult to predict LLLA's needs. There is one need that we are positive about: DONATE to the SI effort. Go to <http://lakeleelanau.org/membership/> and make your contribution. Beyond the financial needs we may need volunteers for several activities. Once plans are finalized for 2017 watch for requests via email.



A bad day fishing is better than a good day at work.

Lake Leelanau Lake Association
P.O. Box 123
Leland, MI 49654-0123

Parting Shot



Springtime by Mark Smith

Coming Events

13th Annual Kid's Fishing Day
Sunday, June 25th, 2017, 11:00- 3:00
Veronica Valley County Park

2017 Annual Meeting
When TBA .. early August
6:30-8:00, Leland Lodge

**12th Annual Legacy Circle
Celebration**
When and Where TBA

