

LOW NEWSLETTER

September, 2006

Did you know...?

- Boater education is required for all persons between 12 and 16 years of age who operate a powered watercraft on Michigan waters.
- LOW safety marker buoys will be pulled from the lake on or about October 1 each year.
- If you are older than 17, you must purchase a fishing license in Michigan, and it must be in your possession while you are fishing.
- The Board voted in August to purchase 2 new no-wake buoys for the lake's west bay for 2007. The existing buoys have been severely vandalized. Please respect all water safety markers.
- The next Annual Meeting/Picnic will be July 23, 2007.

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Weed control program improves health of lake during 2006

“2006 has been a very good year for the health of Lake of the Woods,” reported Andy Broekhuizen, chair of the Association’s Water Quality Committee, at the July 22 annual meeting. He complimented the Professional Lake Management Company for their efforts on behalf of all lake residents.

Comments from members at the meeting focused on the visible, positive results achieved during the first year that PLM has handled the weed and algae control program.

Broekhuizen reported that the Special Assessment District 2005 tax netted \$44,700, with all bills for professional water treatment services

being paid. Legal fees from the Grovesnor Law Firm, related to the establishment of the Special Assessment District, were being deferred till 2007.

The Assn. advanced \$2240 to the Special Assessment District to cover State of Michigan permit fees and water quality testing prior to receipt of tax receipts. The SAD will reimburse those funds to the Assn.

Broekhuizen reviewed the 2007 and 2008 budget for weed control and projected that if all scheduled treatments are not applied there is the possibility of a decrease in the tax assessment, subject to Board review.

Ten days before the an-

nual meeting, PLM sampled the lake water for bacteria and found the E. coli count to be <1.0, with a total coliforms reading of 12. This showed that the lake water meets bacteriological standards for safe swimming.

Bacterial counts are expressed as the number of Colony Forming Units per 100 milliliters (CFU/100mL).

Current recreational water quality standards do not rely on Total Coliform counts, but the incidence of swimming-related gastrointestinal illness has been shown to increase at Total Coliform concentrations of 2,300 (CFU/100mL) and above.

Who may operate a boat in Michigan?

***Those 16 years of age or older** may operate any boat on the waters of Michigan.

***Those 12-15 years of age** may legally operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 hp

without restrictions. They may legally operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp only if they have passed a boating safety course approved by the Department of Natural Resources and have onboard

their boating safety certificate or are accompanied onboard by a person at least 16 years of age.

***Those less than 12 years of age** may legally operate a boat powered

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90 attend annual meeting/picnic on July 22

Smiles, laughter and neighborly fellowship dominated the LOW annual meeting/picnic held July 22 at the Red Woolfe Park. The good spirit was attributed to the positive weed and algae control results being seen from the first year of the Professional Lake Management program.

Members thanked the officers and Board of Directors for their efforts in creating and overseeing the lake's Special Assessment District. Minutes of the meeting will be available at the 2007 gathering.

In addition to the grilled fare and beverages provided by the Assn.,

those attending pot lucked delicious salads and desserts.

Thank you to Gary Douglas from *Timber Trails Campground* for donating and manning the grill used to cook the meat.

Following is a list of door prize donors from the Decatur/Paw Paw area. Please thank them for their continued support of the Assn. when you patronize their businesses.

**High's Marine*

**Do-It-Center*

**Decatur Lumber*

**Mousse Lodge*

**Super Wash*

**Mike's Barber Shop*

**Hayloft*

**McDonald's*

**Short Stop*

**Auto Supply*

**Coca Cola Co.—Mary Fisher*

**LOW Improvement Association*

**Edna & Larry Ralston*

**Marcia & Wayne Potter*

Why may operate a personal watercraft (PWC) in Michigan?

*Those **14 years of age or older, born after December 31, 1978,** may operate a PWC only if he or she has obtained a boating safety certificate. Those **born December 31, 1978 or earlier** may operate a PWC without restrictions.

*A **person who is 12 or more but less than 14 years of age** may operate a PWC only if he or she ob-

tained a boating safety certificate prior to January 1, 1999 or all of the following conditions are satisfied:

>The person is accompanied solely by his or her parent or legal guardian.

>Both the person and the parent or legal guardian have obtained a boating safety certificate.

>The PWC is equipped with a lanyard-type ignition safety switch and the parent or legal guardian has the lanyard attached to his or her person, clothing or life jacket.

>The PWC is designed to carry at least two people.

***No one less than 12 years old may legally operate a PWC in Michigan.**

Who may operate a boat in Michigan?

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by a motor of no more than 6 hp without restrictions. They may legally operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp, but no more than 35 hp, only if they are directly supervised onboard by a person at least 16 years of age.

They may NOT legally operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 35 hp under any conditions.

***Can I get my boater safety certificate online?**

No, in Michigan you must take a boater education program and exam conducted by an administrator, in a

classroom setting, in order to receive a boating safety certificate.

The Assn. sponsored Boater Safety Class, in cooperation with the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department held on June 17, 2006, certified 28 individuals. VP Larry Ralston facilitates this annual event.

Winners abound in lake sponsored activities

Congratulations to all the winners in the various 2006 Assn. sponsored activities. Thank you to all who participated and showed continued support for LOW events. Thirteen individuals participated in the 23rd annual **Bass Fishing Contest** held over Memorial Day weekend. First place with 5 fish totaling 12 lbs 9 oz was Luke Gritter; second place with 5 fish totaling 9 lbs 12 oz was Jake Forrest; and the largest bass award at 3 lbs 2 oz was Luke Gritter.

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There were 17 registered entries in the **July 4 Boat Parade**. The

Wayne Potter family won the first place \$50 gift certificate with "Hawaii, our 50th State." The John Neubauer family won the second place \$30 gift certificate with an "Independence Day Birthday Cake." The James Henk family won the third place \$20 gift certificate with "Super heroes, protecting us against terrorists." The Assn. extends a special thank you to High's Marine for donating half the total of the gift certificates.

The Board of Directors discussed the feasibility of holding the Boat Parade on the weekend preceding or following July 4, when the holiday falls on a mid-week day. Because

the Assn. cooperates with the total Decatur community observance of the holiday, and because the community holds the VFW Parade, fireworks and other events on July 4, the LOW Assn. will continue to sponsor the Boat Parade on the actual holiday.

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Marcia Ellis and Roy Pearson volunteered to create the Assn. Stick Person entry in the **Decatur Chamber of Commerce Stick People Contest**. Their "Clown on Bike" won second place as the funniest entry. Perhaps you saw this clown on display near the village Farmer's Market

Board of Directors membership sees one seat change

Thank you to Gary Douglas for his years of service to the Board. His most recent 3 year term ended this year, and he chose not to seek re-election. Replacing him is Roy Pearson, a Decatur Township resident.

Term expires 2007

Bill Kiss, 83686 Fritz Dr. (269-423-6592)

Roger Mattens, 46296 86th Ave. (269-344-5224)

Larry Ralston, 46948 West Dr. (269-423-8810)

Term expires 2008

Andy Broekhuizen, 82495 47th St. (269-423-7698)

Charlotte Martin, 47494 84th Ave. (269-423-8692)

Wayne Potter, 46412 86th Ave. (269-423-4801)

Term expires 2009

Joe Hillyer, 46597 Delta Dr. (269-423-8873)

Roy Pearson, 455 Austin Blvd. (269-978-4690)

Jan Roeder, 46211 Lakeview Dr. (269-423-9222)

2006 marine patrols were increased on LOW

President Wayne Potter reported to the membership at the Annual Meeting that his efforts to obtain increased marine patrols on LOW had been successful. Potter had met with representatives from the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department several times since taking office last year.

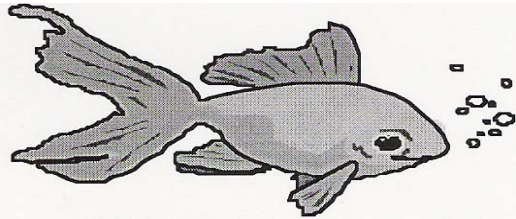
He indicated that patrols have improved over 2005, despite the limited number of officers available within the county. Our lake is being patrolled at times by a plain clothes (swimsuit) officer on a personal watercraft. Several large fines have been issued this year. The Sheriff's Department will provide a complete list of citations to be published in our January 2007 newsletter.

All members are urged to practice safe boating practices and to monitor the lake for those who do not. You may contact the VBCS Dept. at 269-657-3101 to report offenders.

**LAKE OF THE WOODS
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC**

Roger A. Mattens
Secretary/Treasurer
P.O. Box 188
Decatur, MI 49045-0188

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Geese create many challenges for lake

There are two opinions, regarding the geese population on LOW. You either love them for their natural beauty or hate them for their "unsolicited deposits" on your lawn.

The Board recently appointed Joe Hillyer as chair of the Waterfowl and Fish Resources Committee to research what can be done to control the nuisance factor of the geese and yet respect their environmental integrity.

Members should not feed geese. In Michigan, the goose hunting season is limited, and hunting around a residential lake is limited. The DNR has suggested breaking all but one egg in a goose nest to limit population growth, but scouting and screening the nests takes manpower and time. Please contact Hillyer if you have legal suggestions or to volunteer help with the committee.

CHECK OUT

the feature article entitled "Love My Lake...Lake of the Woods" by former LOW Secretary Charlotte Martin in the August 2006 issue of *The Michigan Riparian*. Charlotte did an excellent job telling this quarterly publication of the Michigan Lakes & Streams Foundation why she loves our lake. Thanks, Char!

LOW Association thanks

Craig & Kitty Morey

for maintaining
our website!

Officers remain unchanged for 2006-'07

The Board of Directors elected its three officers for the coming year at its August 6 meeting. There were no changes in the current leadership.

President:

Wayne Potter

Vice President:

Larry Ralston

Secretary/Treasurer:

Roger Mattens

Thank you for serving our organization!