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Servicing Lake of the Woods residents
since 1980!



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Lake Currents

Lake of the Woods Improvement Association

Great News! Special Assessment District for Weed Control Continued

By Roy Pearson, President of LOW Association

Lake of the Woods property owners have been paying an annual fee for weed control for the past ten years under a previously established Special Assessment District (SAD), which expired in 2014. The account balance, which can only be used for weed control, was at approximately \$140,000. The lake has responded very well to this program and the results have tremendously benefited all who use the lake. The LOW Board has been working to make sure that the benefits of this program continue.

The legalities of continuing the program, including the use of the existing funds, were researched. The matter was taken before the Hamilton and Decatur Township Boards for discussion and a course of action was determined. Two public hearings were held in each township to allow affected property owners to express comments or objections. All Lake of the Woods property owners received written notification of the hearings and they were published twice in The Decatur Republican. No objections were publicly made at any of the hearings which seemingly reinforces the acceptance of this vital program.

On January 10, 2015 both Hamilton and Decatur Township boards voted unanimous-

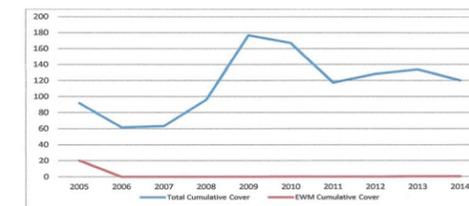
ly to establish a SAD for aquatic weed control for another 10 year period. The great news is that the existing account balance can and will be used to assist in paying for continued weed treatments so long as they last. This results in fewer fees being paid by lake property owners going forward.

For further clarification, some of the language of the newly established SAD states "The assessment amounts assessed against each property in the district will range between \$62.50 and \$125 per parcel." It also states that "The township board specifically reserves the right not to levy an assessment in any year or to levy a lesser assessment amount in any year that there are more funds in the special assessment fund than the

amount needed for that year's aquatic plant and weed control work and associated activities." Hamilton Township will not assess any fee during 2015 and Decatur Township will assess \$50 per parcel of lake properties and \$25 for other deeded access properties. Each year the amount to be assessed will be determined by respective township boards.

The swift actions taken by the townships are greatly appreciated by the Lake of the Woods Association Board. This is a good example of governmental bodies working together for the benefit of maintaining a healthy lake for the foreseeable future. If there are any questions or clarifications needed, feel free to contact any LOW Board member.

PLM's Spotlight on Lake of the Woods



Lake of the Woods has been one of the more successful management programs in regards to extended milfoil control. Most programs tend to experience a resurgence of milfoil at some point 2-3 years after treatment. Eight years of milfoil being virtually non-existent is quite uncommon.

Volume VIII Issue I

Winter 2015

Save the date:

Annual Meeting and Picnic

When: July 18, 2015

Where: Red Wolfe Park

Time: 1 PM

Hope to see you there.

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Online Boating Safety Classes

As announced at the annual meeting this past July, the Van Buren County Marine Division will no longer be presenting the instructor based classes.

Michigan now offers two online boating safety classes and exam: BoatEd.com and BoaterExam.com. Both courses stay up to date with Michigan laws governing boating and safe vessel operation with the boating handbook of Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Who May Operate a Boat:

Those less than 12 years of age:

- May operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 horsepower (hp) legally without restrictions.
- May operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 6 hp but no more than 35 hp legally only if they:
 - Have been issued a boating safety certificate and have it on board the boat and...Are directly supervised on board by a person at least 16 years of age.

- May not operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 35 hp legally under any conditions.

Those born on or after July 1, 1996, may operate a boat legally only if they have been issued a boating safety certificate and have it on board the boat.

Those born before July 1, 1996, may operate a boat legally without restrictions.

Who May Operate a Personal Watercraft (PWC):

Those less than 14 years of age may not legally operate a PWC.

Those 14 and 15 years of age may operate a PWC legally only if they have obtained a boating safety certificate and...

- He or she is accompanied on board by his or her parent or legal guardian or by a person at least 21 years of age who has been designated by the parent or legal guardian or...

- He or she is operating or riding the PWC at a distance of not more than 100 feet from his or her parent or legal guardian or from a person at least 21 years of age who has been designated by the parent or legal guardian.

Those at least 16 years of age and born after December 31, 1978, may operate a PWC legally only if they have obtained a boating safety certificate.

Those born on or before December 31, 1978, may operate a PWC legally without restrictions.

Even if not required by law to get the Michigan boating license, many boaters take the boat safety course in order to save on their PWC or boat insurance.

Do your part to make boating in Michigan a safe, enjoyable pastime! Become an educated, responsible boater by completing the boater safety course and practice what you learn.

2015 Free Fishing Weekends

Two days twice a year, families and friends can enjoy one of Michigan's premiere outdoor activities, Michigan Fishing, for FREE!

The 2015 Free Fishing Weekends are scheduled for this winter: February 14 and 15 and this summer: June 13 and 14. All fishing license fees will be waived for two days. Residents and out-of-state visitors may enjoy fishing on both inland and Great Lakes' waters for all species of fish. All fishing regulations will still apply.

For many, the annual Free Fishing Weekend has become a tradition - a time to get together and have some fishing fun. While some may find time to reflect while fishing, there are no limits to variations on a great theme!

So grab a rod and your family and friends, and let's go fishing!

Snowmobiling in Michigan

Michigan is known by snowmobilers nationwide for its unique combination of abundant and dependable snow, exciting terrain and extensive trail network. More than 6,200 miles of designated snowmobile trails are located throughout the state of Michigan forests, three national forests and many acres of privately owned lands. Michigan is one of only three states that offer a large system of interconnected snowmobile trails. Approximately 50% of the snowmobile trail system is located on private lands; 20% federal lands; 25% state lands; and 5% other public lands.

Registration and Trail Permits

A snowmobile shall not be operated unless the owner first obtains a certificate of registration, registration decal and an trail permit sticker. The certificate of registration must accompany the snowmobile and be made available for inspection upon demand by a peace officer.

Snowmobile Safety

Snowmobile safety training is recommended for all snowmobile operators. Modern snowmobiles are capable of high rates of speeds over snow and ice. With the countless hazards associated with operating a snowmobile, training is a crucial factor in safe and responsible snowmobile operation. Michigan Conservation Officers, in cooperation with schools, organizations and associations, take an active role in assuring that all of Michigan's citizens are given the opportunity to take a snowmobile safety course. The course emphasizes safe and responsible snowmobile operation. An online source for the Michigan snowmobile safety course is www.snowmobilecourse.com/usa/michigan

Come join the fun and share in the excitement of snowmobiling in beautiful Southwestern Michigan.



Now accepting PayPal

In a continually changing and electronic world, your Association has decided to make it even easier for you to renew your dues. We have added electronic payments to the website for your convenience.



We use secure PayPal as the payment processor. You do not need a PayPal account to pay via a credit card. Simply click the buy or donate button of your choice and follow the instructions (from PayPal) to submit your electronic payment. Our Secretary will follow up with an email confirming the receipt of your dues renewal.

It's time to renew your membership

It is time to renew your membership for 2015. The Lake of the Woods Association Board of Directors has announced that annual dues will remain at \$10.00 for the 2015 membership year.

Your \$10 for dues helps sponsor lake and community activities, such as the annual picnic, the 4th of July boat parade and the local fireworks display.

Additional benefits include the Lake of the Woods website that includes news, photos, calendar of events and lots of great information.

Please take a few minutes to review your renewal form and return it with any changes and your check or money order for \$10.00 in the enclosed self-addressed envelope or visit our website at

www.lakeofthewoodsmi.org and pay by PayPal.

To those of you who have been faithful members we thank you for your continued support, and we ask that you please encourage your neighbors to join the association.

As you can see, the Lake of the Woods Improvement Association is involved in many activities to help maintain the quality of the lake now and for future generations.

Please do your part by joining us with your membership.



(Tear Here)

2015 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Lake of the Woods Improvement Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 188 Decatur, MI 49045-0188

Please return this form with your membership renewal if paying by mail.

Below is the information we currently have on file for you. If it is incorrect, please note any changes.

Thank you for your continued support of YOUR lake association!

The suggested dues amount is again \$10.00 for this year