

Crystal Lake Association

Since 1932, working for the preservation and
improvement
of Crystal Lake and its watershed for future generations.

Vol. No. 4-98

**Twp Bd to CLA: “If *you lake people* want
safety patrols, find a way to do it yourselves.
We on the Twp Bd don’t want to get
involved.” (3-11-98)**

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Marine Patrols

Since last July’s CLA annual meeting during which the membership indentified lake congestion and unsafe watercraft operators as their number one priority for the following year, the CLA’s Water Safety Committee has been working to negotiate a contract with the Sheriff Dept, County Commissioners and the DNR to bring regular patrolling to Crystal Lake on weekends and holidays between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

The Township Board has repeatedly reaffirmed its position that it does not want to get involved with this issue, citing financial and time constraints, and has advised the CLA (or “you lake people” as they like to refer to us) to act on our own if we want to bring this service to Crystal. (Note: If you are wondering what proportion of Twp taxes that CLA members pay, where our tax dollar are being used and why no tax dollars ever seem to be available for the welfare of the lake, stand by for future newsletters as the CLA begins to research this question.)

Current financial estimates for a Deputy to patrol our lake weekends and holidays (approx. 26 hrs/wk) for 13 weeks is roughly \$4000 for the summer; which the CLA has already committed itself to from its current savings. The problem we are still trying to resolve is finding a suitable boat for the Sheriff to permanently moor at the lake. (The sailing

club has already kindly volunteered a mooring position at its dock on a one year trial basis.) The DNR, as part of an existing grant used by other lakes, has agreed to reimburse the County for about 75% of the cost of a boat suitable for patrolling and for search and rescue operations. This one time expense is something we are struggling with currently. Initial estimates of the CLA’s share of a patrol boat range from \$2500 to \$4000 (which would require about a \$10 to \$14 donation per CLA member). The DNR’s deadline for grant requests is 4-30-98. We will update you prior to Memorial Day on our progress.

(Special Note: If you have any additional ideas regarding this issue of if you know of anyone, i.e. school teachers, criminal justice majors, etc., who might be interested in participating in this program by becoming trained and deputized, please contact Gerrit Bakker at 517-235-6614.)

New Zoning Ordinance

The Township Board has established a Zoning Committee to prepare an interim zoning ordinance for the township. They hope to pass the ordinance yet this spring or early summer. The quickness of the Twp Bd in this matter is driven, in part, by the threat of an outside corporation attempting to set up an intensive pig farm operation within in the township limits. The fact that they attempted to set up

down the road from the Twp Clerk was a major factor in the Twp’s desire for swift action on this issue. Highlights for CLA

For the second year in a row now, the CLA will again be funding and coordinating its annual goose roundup. This is a humane and DNR approved method of transferring families of geese to different, less populated wild life areas. A few years back, CLA members identified this as a priority issue intended to reduce bacteria contamination of the water and the threat of “swimmers itch.” While not completely solving the problems of water quality yet, the CLA Bd feels that this is having a significant impact on this annual problem. This year’s estimated cost of this program is \$ ___, or about \$ ___ per CLA member.

Lake Testing by Lab

Maintaining Crystal Lake’s water quality for future generations is one of CLA’s highest priorities. After a number of years without a water quality testing program, the CLA Bd feels it is appropriate to consult with an independent laboratory in Grand Rapids that specializes in lake and watershed management in order to determine the condition of our lake and to establish a baseline of data on our water quality. This will, in part, provide us with information on the impact of the DNR’s newly expanded access site and its resulting increase of lake congestion. We hope that the information obtained by this testing will help us to develop programs to further reduce “swimmer’s itch”, as well as programs to reduce pollution caused by petroleum and fertilizers. The estimated per year cost of this testing which will occur throughout the year is roughly

members include a proposal to require a 7ft offset from side lot lines for new construction on lake properties. Contact CLA Zoning Committee representatives Phyllis Vaughn at (\$600) or \$2 per CLA Member per year. (Note: If you would be interested in assisting with this testing program by volunteering to assist in the collection of periodic water samples, your help would be greatly appreciated. Contact Gerrit Bakker at 517-235-6614 for details.)

Arlene Turner Retires

CLA’s past efforts to bring a sewer system to our lake have paid great dividends in improved water quality since being installed. We also wish to thank the sewer system’s administrator, Arlene Turner, for the wonderful job she did over the years in administering our sewer system in an extremely cost effective manner. Unfortunately for all of us Arlene, a long time CLA member and resident of the sewer district, retired this past January. The Twp Bd decided not to advertise this paid position to the public and instead gave the position to their own Twp Clerk who is neither a CLA member or a resident of the sewer district. The CLA would have preferred that this position be filled by a lake area resident who might have had a greater vested interest in the success and efficiency of the sewer system and advises all of its members to notify us of any billing increases or problems. Under Arlene Turner’s conscientious administration, the sewer district operated with a budget surplus and was the envy of sewer districts throughout the state. We all thank you, Arlene, and will miss you greatly.

Message from CLA President, Chris Mason, re: Dues Increase

(Comments from Chris regarding the amount and item by item justification for a voluntary increase in membership dues increase)

Treasurer’s Report

(Comments from Buck)

517-235-3314 or John Bird at 517-235-4352 for further questions or input.

Goose Roundup

Member’s Comments

(Send your comments to Buck Last, CLA’s Secretary/Treasurer)

From Gerrit Bakker of 1999 Strait Tow:

“I would like to thank the members who elected me as a director last summer and to share some insights I have gained since then. Like many of you, I too am busy with work and life and never really appreciated what this organization does for its members. I foolishly thought it was about fireworks displays and the annual Fourth of July boat parade. But these are only the most visible issues. As outlined by the topics of this newsletter, this is an activist organization that I see as being the only true guardian of the interests of Crystal Lake. As I have painfully learned over the past 8 months, there is no one but “us lake people” to watch out for this jewel of a lake which we are privileged to enjoy.

At a recent Twp meeting I requested an update on the CLA’s request for assistance from the Twp on the issue of Marine Safety patrols. The Twp Assessor’s husband immediately responded “let’s get right to the point, *you lake people* just want money from us don’t you?” A Twp Trustee then added that “we don’t have the money to get involved with the lake, that’s up to *you lake people!*” And friends, this is not the first such encounter I have had. I can hardly begin to describe to you the disdain with which the majority of the Twp Bd views *us lake people*. And when I consider the hundreds of thousands of tax dollars that *we lake people* pay to this Twp each year, I find it amazing that we still must fund these vital projects with Association dues. Nonetheless, until we are able to change the attitudes of the Twp Bd members, I urge you to support the requested dues increase. Because ultimately,

“we lake people” are the only ones we can count on to guard the interests of our lake.

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