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“Time wasted at the lake is
time well spent.”

- Unknown

CRYSTAL LAKE PERCH LAKE POA

*A helping hand, compassionate heart;
A sunny smile, each do our part;
A kindly act, or worthy deed;
A tolerant mind, a friend in need;
A prayer each day, if these things done...
We’ll keep this “The livin’est Place Under the Sun!”*
-- Unknown

PRESIDENT’S REPORT – Marty Mulloy

Since our recent Spring Newsletter that was published in March, the Coronavirus has resulted in businesses and services across the State of Michigan being shut down. Throughout this chaotic, unprecedented series of events, our Roads and Lakes have been serviced with the same level of professionalism as they have been over the past decades. Below is Rick Applegate’s report on the state of our Roads and Bob Conn’s report on our Lakes – it is through their dedicated work we have excellent roads and beautiful lakes.

With the Township Offices shut down, the work in advancing our Special Assessment District (SAD) was postponed by the Township. Judy Moskus provides an update below on our status.

Your support of this initiative is as important as ever – presently we are substantially below the minimum level of contributions to support our lakes. Our Foundation President, Dave Vanderworp, provides some sobering numbers below. Your contribution is vital to our lakes, and your support of the SAD will help establish a consistent funding base to support the purity of our lakes going forward.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Summer Picnic and Annual Summer Membership Meeting. We plan to send everyone an electronic presentation of the material we had planned to share at the Summer Membership Meeting. You can expect an email with the presentation by July 11th.

We are assessing the status of our very popular Kid’s Fishing Day, Autumn Festival, and Chili Cookoff. More information will be forthcoming as the threat of the virus is assessed.

I encourage everyone to consider serving on the Lake Board – we have potentially a great deal of turnover, and we need new people to step up. Please send me an email if you are interested.

2020 BOARD MEMBERS

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VICE PRESIDENT

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skirkwood@gmail.com

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT, continued – Marty Mulloy

Lastly, I want to thank my fellow Board Members and all the volunteers for their contribution to our lake community. They have worked countless hours on everything from maintaining roads, digging water drainage reservoirs, cutting weeds, eradicating invasive weeds, nurturing wild life, balancing budgets, protecting the purity of our lakes, executing strategic plans, fostering communications, sponsoring fundraisers, hosting community events, teaching kids how to fish, promoting an environment for good fishing, and lastly, advancing the general well-being of our lake community. Their unselfish and tireless contribution over decades has saved our lake community literally hundreds of thousands of dollars and improved the value of our property and the pleasure we derive from living in such a beautiful Lake Community.

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Judy Moskus

The SAD formation has unfortunately been complicated by the fact of shut down of usual government functions by the current COVID-19 virus. To recap where things stand, in early 2020 the township board of trustees passed a resolution in favor of looking at the viability of an SAD for our lake management funding. That vote meant simply that they would begin the process, but it certainly did not guarantee establishment of the SAD.

The first public hearing was set for March, but because of the restrictions on public gatherings, that meeting was canceled. Please be reminded that the first public hearing for the proposed SAD is a critical part of the process. It is at this meeting that the township board either gives the process a thumbs up or thumbs down. Their vote is largely dependent on what they hear from the persons in attendance at the meeting.

Unfortunately, as of the preparation of this report, I do not have any information about when that first public hearing might be rescheduled. I am hoping that sometime in the next two months, but that remains to be seen. As soon as we get the date for the hearing, we will notify you by email, but you will also receive a notice by mail from the township. It is essential that as many of the supporters for the SAD as safely possible be in attendance.

Sad to say (pun intended) that perhaps our members got confused about when the SAD might take effect, and when funds from that process would be available for our lake management needs. Please recall that when discussing this earlier with all of you, my best guess was that, if the SAD was established, the assessment would be included in the December 2020 tax bills, making funds available to us for lake management in the summer of 2021.

In the meantime, we have been forced to continue our system of voluntary contributions for lake management expenses. That response was anemic at best. We do not have anything close to what we need to manage our lakes in

SECRETARY'S REPORT, continued – Judy Moskus

an effective way. If you have not donated, please do so at your earliest opportunity.

Again, given the situation with the township, if we are lucky enough to get the approval to start the SAD, funds may not even be available for the summer of 2021. Again we will find ourselves in a situation where we need your voluntary support to maintain our lakes and thus our property values.

Speaking of voluntary support, I and a couple other board members whose terms technically expire this summer have agreed to stay on for one more year to wrap things up that are pending. Speaking for myself, I can say that this is not completely out of altruism, but mainly due to the fact that no one responded to Marty's call to come forward and serve on the board. There is a distinct possibility that by this time next year many of us who are currently serving on the board will leave, putting the viability of this association in jeopardy. So to all of you who have any bit of civic mindedness, please consider serving.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Mike King

I would like to thank those who have paid their road and administration dues. We still have 10 out of 123 residents that have not paid their road/admin dues and 16 out of 28 residents that have not paid their administration dues. Administrative dues go towards our Insurance, taxes for our access lots, postage, internet fees for our WEB site, printing, any professional fees, our summer picnic, Octoberfest, P.O. Box rental, etc. As a reminder, please pay your road/admin dues before July 31 for the fiscal year 2019-2020. Liens will be issued on those properties that have not paid their road/admin dues after July 31.

We are presently over our projected budget expenses versus income so it is vital that everyone pay their dues. Last year we reduced the road dues by \$25, so having all members' current in their dues is important. The invoices for 2020-2021 dues will be issued in August and prompt payment helps prevent multiple notices being sent out and reduces the associated costs and time.

Once again, thank you to all who are current on their dues which provides the necessary funds to maintain our roads and wonderful lakes environment.

ROADS' REPORT – Rick Applegate

The Alitec is officially retired and proved to be a true workhorse for us to the end, but due to the Alitec's age and harder to locate replacement parts, it was sold this winter. The purchase of a newer maintainer in November is virtually the same with the 10 foot belly blade and front end loader to care for our 3.1 miles of roads and numerous projects. Storage of our maintainer in Dan Stevick's pole barn has proven to be a very good way to preserve our investment, and we thank Dan Stevick for working with us to store our equipment.

The roads can be extremely challenging for both snow plowing and sanding. Ice builds up due to shaded road areas and sunny areas that thaw making snow plowing a mess. These changing conditions make it tough to stay on top of. Salt can help as well as spreading some gravel or sand. We do the best we can.

Dust control will be applied at the end of June and again in July or August depending on the amount of rain we receive.

ROADS' REPORT, continued – Rick Applegate

The compost area is for Crystal and Perch Lake residents only! Please do not give the lock code to other people or contractors. I spend quite a bit of time keeping this area pushed back and grade the area so this is not an eyesore when you pass by the compost. Thank you for your cooperation!

Speed limit on our roads is 15 MPH. If you have guests, please let them know that there are kids and residents that walk our roads as we would appreciate everyone to watch their speed. If you see a delivery truck other than garbage or UPS that is flying down our roads let me know and we can try to correct this problem.

Projects that we have on our agenda are painting of the access gates and a special project to trench down both sides of the road from the boat launches up the hill to Kit Kelly's home, and to fill the trenches with larger stone to minimize erosion. This area has been an ongoing problem since the days when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock!

Our volunteers have dug out and replaced with gravel 2 tracks at the C. L. launch, cleared unnecessary branches and brush that encroach into our roads, followed up with some pick up of logs from consumers trimming, dead tree removal in different locations, hauling gravel to improve our roads and drainage issues, pole barn storage maintaining, constant care and maintenance consisting of replacement parts as necessary for our maintainer, fuel runs etc. etc. As volunteers, we put a whole lot of hours in trying to replicate those that took care of our roads before us. *A "Thanks" is all that we volunteers who take care of our lakes and roads ask for!* My co worker Terry Yamarino and I thank our road volunteers Dick Johnson, Chuck Hopkins, Gary Cripe, Tom Leiblien, Phil Webb and Tim Ostrosky for their help.

LAKES' REPORT – Bob Conn

Greetings lake brothers and sisters,

Summer is here, and the rain from spring has raised our lake levels to heights not seen in 10 years. With the heavy run-off comes a major nutrient load from farms, roads, yards, etc. With water temperature rising, so does the possibility of algae blooming. To date we have had spot algae treatments on both lakes. Crystal and Perch have had their first invasive Eurasian Milfoil spot treatments. Depending on how the lakes respond, there are two more treatments tentatively scheduled for July 13th and August 24th.

The spring water quality test was done for both lakes with report yet to be given us. PLM has agreed to test for Copper Sulfate with late July as the proposed window.

Fat head minnows were again stocked this spring at a cost of \$1000 for 24,000 minnows. These minnows are an organic approach to algae control and betterment of our lakes. This is the third year for this approach.

I will always encourage everyone to look for ways to reduce the amount of phosphates and nitrogen going into the lake. Household soap and shampoo, laundry detergent, carwash soap, chemicals in the yard, and so forth will run into lakes if we are not careful. We are very blessed to have such clean and clear water; however, sun penetration is not our friend when it comes to weed management. There may be a time when tinting our water is the best approach versus dumping large amounts of chemicals. Perch Lake could be a good candidate to investigate this approach.

LAKES' REPORT, continued – Bob Conn

In closing, I truly appreciate all of you and ask that if you have not donated to the lake fund to please do so. We have a great responsibility to take care of what we have been blessed with. Last thought to help keep a good perspective: this is not a swimming pool so we cannot approach the management of it like it is one.

I have included a great link that can help us understand algae.

<https://pondinformer.com/pond-algae-types-guide/>

Is Algae Bad for Ponds, Lakes & Fish?

Overall, algae is natural and should not be immediately treated as a pest, as it's often essential for proper and healthy ecosystem functioning. Aiding in water oxygenation and purification; providing food for fish, insects, and waterfowl; and offering spawning and shelter sites for fish, depending on the algae species, algae has a myriad of positive benefits. However, the point at which you should consider removing or at least controlling algae growth is when your water quality has diminished and/or you've noticed blooms or floating mats upon the water's surface. To do this, you can try manual removal (rakes, filters, vacuums, etc.), algae-eating fish species like otocinclus catfish or plecostomus, biologic controls that will naturally break down the algae, chemical means (again, these may have adverse impacts on the rest of your pond's residents as well), incorporating plants that will help to purify the water and soak up any excess nutrients that algae thrive on, or fully draining your pond and refilling it with fresh, clean water.

FOUNDATION

We, on the Foundation, are still expecting to get a Special Assessment District approval that will cover lake treatment costs. If and when that happens is still a matter of conjecture. In the meantime, the Foundation must still operate on the assumption that donations will pay for lake maintenance. We aimed for a donation goal of \$19,000 for 2020 to cover expected expenses. With the pandemic cancelling our spring and now our summer meeting, we have not been able to collect those donations that generally occur at those meetings. As of June 8th, we have collected \$14,475. If we were to have our usual other events, this may be enough to reach our goal. With the Covid pandemic, we are not sure that our other events will be enough to do that. We are looking for ideas that may help us reach out goals such as a virtual auction or a physically distanced golf tournament. Stay tuned for announcements about future fundraisers. Any ideas you may have would be helpful.

If you have donated, THANK YOU!!!! If you haven't, please mail your donations to:
P.O.Box 193 Somerset Center, MI, 49282

If anyone would like to join the Foundation, please contact Dave VanDerworp at
Vanscamp@Wowway.com

LIFE AT THE LAKE

The Fourth Annual **Kids' Fishing Day** will tentatively be rescheduled in August. Last year approximately 20 boys and girls participated in an experimental day to learn about the fish in our lakes, catch a variety of fish, enjoy nature, win prizes, share a delicious lunch, and make new friends. Once again, we would like to thank Nancy and Dave Vanderworp for opening their home and hosting the event. Additionally, thank you to Rick Applegate, Jeff Greep, Dick Johnson and Dave Vanderworp for volunteering to coordinate this event. Please check our lakes' website: crystalperchlakes.com for photos from past year Kids Fishing Day.

Our Lake community is sponsoring our Fourth Annual **Carp Harvesting Contest**. 36 carp have been captured to date this summer. Participants are awarded \$10 per carp and \$50 for the heaviest carp with the total winnings capped at \$750. As you may be aware, an over abundance of carp can devastate our lakes' vibrant and diverse fish population. Left unabated, carp could eventually be the lone species in our lakes. We started the carp harvesting initiative to protect our native species of bass and panfish. Over the past few years, we have averaged 35 carp per season – one large female carp can lay up to 300,000 eggs! Lastly, our goal is to minimize the expense of fish stocking. It is far better for the fish and more economical for them to reproduce in their natural habitats. The best way to achieve this objective is to provide a healthy lake with a minimum of carp destroying their fish beds.

SUSTAINABLE LAKE MANAGEMENT

<https://blog.nature.org/science/2015/10/15/why-everything-you-know-bluegill-management-wrong-fish-fisheries-panfish-fishing/>

Why Everything You Know About Bluegill Management is Wrong

Bluegills are prone to overpopulation. This is accepted knowledge among many anglers. If you don't catch and keep a lot of bluegills out of a pond, you'll often hear a fisherman say, the bluegills will overrun the place. You'll soon have a pond full of runty, stunted fish.

This is why the bag limits for bluegills are typically very liberal – it is not unusual to be able to keep 25 fish a day. It's the angler's duty to catch and eat as many as possible – keep the herd in check, if you will.

It sounds good, but current research suggests it's wrong. In fact, research conducted by Andrew Rypel, research biologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, suggests the opposite: that liberal harvest limits on bluegills actually decreases the size of fish.

“Fish Here Aren't As Big As They Used to Be”

Bluegills are often the first fish many anglers encounter (including me). They are common in farm and urban ponds. They're the fish kids catch with a Mickey Mouse rod, a bobber and worms.

In the spring, many anglers target them on their spawning beds, where the biggest males are often easy to catch. Bluegills are also popular because they're tasty. Anglers call them and similar-sized species – crappies, perch, other sunfish – panfish. They're the perfect size to fit in a frying pan.

Rypel and his colleagues in Wisconsin noticed something over the years: Anglers reported decreasing size of bluegills and other panfish. Of course, conventional angling wisdom would suggest the solution to

SUSTAINABLE LAKE MANAGEMENT, continued

this would be to harvest even more bluegills. After all, decreasing size is a sign of overpopulation.

Research tells a different story. Rypel analyzed size trends going back to the 1940's, and found that bluegills (and other panfish species) steadily declined in size over a 70-year period.

“The regulations are relatively liberal,” he says. “I thought one possibility might be that we were fishing them too hard. As we looked at the data, we found that evidence of bluegills becoming stunted because they were overpopulated was not as common as previously thought.”

Fishing pressure, particularly on spawning beds where bluegills are most vulnerable, can be intense. And that pressure may be decreasing the size of fish. In response to the trend, the Wisconsin DNR reduced the bag limit to 10 fish on 10 lakes as a test. Researchers, including Rypel, analyzed fish size before and after the regulation.



They found that fish size increased on average a half-inch on maximum size and 0.8 inch on mean size. That may not sound like much, but consider that a typical bluegill is six or seven inches, and a really large one is ten inches.

Rypel published the findings in the *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*.

A New Experiment in Bluegill Management

The next phase of the project is to implement new management strategies on 100 Wisconsin lakes. One third will have a reduced limit of 10, one third will have a reduced limit of 5, and one third will have a reduced bag limit only during the spawning season.

The management regimes will run for ten years. “We’re going to find out what different regulations can do for panfish size,” says Rypel.

The good news is that bluegill size rebounds when fishing pressure decreases. A study by Rypel in collaboration with researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, School of Freshwater Sciences found that the reduction in size was not likely due to a shift in genetics, as has been shown to be the case in some other prominent studies on fishing pressure.

Anglers have, in general, been reluctant to embrace size limit reductions. Rypel points out that the limit reductions may actually result in more meat harvested. That may seem counterintuitive, but it’s true. “As bluegills get bigger in length, they get exponentially bigger in weight,” he says. “So if you catch a few larger bluegills, you often get more meat than if you caught a bunch of smaller ones.”

There is still a lot biologists don’t know about bluegills. New research will likely call for more changes in fishing regulation, but Rypel acknowledges that science is only one part of fisheries regulation.

“Regulations are a blunt instrument,” he says. “They cannot account for all aspects of fisheries management. If they get too complicated, they become much more difficult to enforce. We want regulations that are easy to understand and easy to enforce. There are trade-offs. In this case, reducing

SUSTAINABLE LAKE MANAGEMENT, continued

the bag limit could help the resource tremendously while still meeting the expectations of anglers.”

And while the bluegill may seem an unlikely symbol for global fisheries management, what Rypel says applies to large commercial fisheries as surely as it does the local farm pond. Regulations are only ever partly about science, and they can never fully account for the complexity of a fishery.

The key for resource managers is to use sound science to create regulations that work best – for fish and for people.

“Bluegills have the opportunity to get bigger with a relatively minor shift in fishing regulations,” says Rypel. “Our research is providing the evidence that it benefits anglers, too. The findings seem counter-intuitive to many anglers, who have long believed that smaller bluegills was a sign of overpopulation. But perhaps our long-term studies can convince them that lower bag limits can mean better fishing, and bigger panfish fillets for the fish fry.”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Somerset Township Special Assessment Meeting (SAD) Public Hearing – TBD

Summer Meeting and Lakes Picnic – CANCELLED

Kid’s Fishing Day – Tentatively August – details to follow

Fall Meeting – November 7, 2020 from 10:00 to 12 noon (coffee and doughnuts at 9:30)

All lake meetings will be held at the Somerset Township Meeting Room. Coffee and donuts will be available at 9:30 with the meeting beginning promptly at 10:00.

Please refer to our website at www.crystalperchlakes.com to keep yourself up to date on all matters concerning our lake community.