



A MESSAGE FROM OUR LOFA BOARD PRESIDENT

Hello Lakeside Neighbors! Around this time last year everyone was wishing that the Covid-19 impacts would be over, and we could return to normal life. Maybe 'normal' life, or whatever we used to consider normal, is still a bit illusive as turmoil in the world continues. But we all can make the best of what we have. Be kind, be tolerant, and fortunately for us, an escape to the lake to relax and enjoy nature and time spent with family and friends is always revitalizing.

This past month we were saddened by passing of Jack Schuett, who was a LOFA member and the LOFA Treasurer for many years. Jack was a great guy and will be missed. Our condolences to his family. With Jack's passing and Randy Roets' departure to Trude Lake, we have openings on the LOFA board. Please feel free to volunteer, and also remember that LOFA members are welcome to join us at our board meetings so we can all share thoughts and/or concerns. We, as lakeside property owners, have a vested interest when it comes to preserving the quality of our lake and surrounding watershed. We're all neighbors, so don't be strangers!

I always manage to sneak in a brief reminder on our stewardship duties for the lake (I know...I know – it's like a broken record, but it always bears repeating). Continue to be diligent with checking our boats, trailers and gear, as well as our guest's equipment, for any clinging vegetation or invasive species and get them removed and disposed properly. Keep septic systems in good working order, don't over fertilize lawns or gardens, and protect the vegetative buffer on the lakeshore. The water quality and life web in and around our lakes depends on us minimizing our impacts. The more we strive to maintain the water quality the easier it may be to address future issues that may be presented to us, such as the potential invasion of curly leaf pondweed that is now upstream in the Turtle River watershed.

As I look out the window this morning at First Black Lake, the winter has seemingly been extended. The lake ice is still almost three feet thick, and snow depth in the woods remains over my knees. However, the eagle is in her nest sitting tight on eggs, the trumpeter swans have returned to the ice-free spots on the channel, and the geese are vocalizing that spring is on the way. I actually saw my first robin too this morning. Let's share their optimism!

Looking forward to the summer fun ahead. —Jan Tesch

Zach Wilson to speak at the May board meeting



Join Iron County Land and Water Conservation Specialist Zach Wilson on May 29 at 11:00 (after the board meeting) to learn about Water Quality and Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring. Zach will be discussing the latest information on the Turtle River curly leaf pondweed occurrences and spread, as well as proper monitoring techniques for Lake of the Falls.

2022 Meeting dates

Board meeting Sunday, May 29 at 10:00 am
Annual meeting Sunday, July 31 at 11:00
Board meeting Sunday, September 4 at 10:00 am

Meetings will be at Beaver's Resort,
4720 Lake of the Falls Road.

Annual Picnic

Mark your calendars! Our annual picnic is set for Sunday, July 31 at Beaver's Resort. The general membership meeting will start at 11:00, followed by a picnic at 12:00. Thanks to our good friends at Beaver's Resort for hosting our picnic again this year! Tent setup will be on Saturday morning and we can always use volunteers to help with that. Details will be in your email and on the website as we get closer to the day.



Elections

Four positions will be up for election in 2022: President, Secretary, and two at-large directors. We will hold elections at the annual meeting. Consider becoming a board member! It's a great way to get to know your neighbors and keep up with what's going on around our lake.

Help for Rice Lake in their fight against Curly Leaf Pondweed

LOFA members have all received an email in the last few weeks from the Rice Lake Association asking for help with this year's battle against Curly Leaf Pondweed. CLP is an invasive species that has taken over Rice Lake, has been found in the Turtle River and parts of Pike Lake, and threatens to invade Lake of the Falls. Left unchecked, it spreads quickly and forms heavy mats that prevent the growth of other species, severely alter the habitat for fish and other wildlife, and make the water difficult for boating or swimming. It matures in early spring and can only be controlled by hand-pulling during the time after it emerges but before it starts to reproduce. Typically, that is the first two weeks in June. Last year volunteers, coordinated by the RLA, harvested over 40 tons of weeds, but they must continue the effort every year if they hope to get it under control.

The specifics of what they are asking for can be read at lakeofthefalls.org, ricelakeassociation.org, and on our Facebook page. Briefly, they need boats and people to come to Rice Lake and, using rakes on long ropes, pull the weeds out of the lake bottom by the roots. Other volunteers will paddle the Turtle River between Rice Lake and Pike Lake and hand-pull patches of weeds, and there will be weed-pulling in areas of Pike Lake, too.

Support services are also needed including folks to help serve lunch for the crews, donations of food and bottled water, and monetary donations to help pay for equipment and professional services. The RLA has a link to their GoFundMe page on their website.

Please do consider coming out and lending a hand. Volunteer on Rice Lake's website or by contacting RLA President Bob Kary at treboryrak@gmail.com or 217-369-3855, and check out the Rice Lake Curly Weed Pondweed Pull 2022 group on Facebook. Details, updates and weblinks will be available on our website.



Plants on your shoreline protect our lake

A "shoreland buffer" is an area of native plants along your waterfront that extends from the waterline inland at least 35 feet. This planted area holds the soil in place to prevent erosion and absorb and clean runoff water before it flows into the lake. Buffers provide natural beauty and more habitat for an amazing variety of wildlife. And fallen trees left in the water can provide spawning areas for fish and shading for shallow-water plants and animals.

How we maintain our lakefront properties has a tremendous impact on the health of our lake. To create the best habitat for fish and other wildlife, we can take simple steps like maintaining buffer strips on our shoreline and limiting the nitrogen input from fertilizer. Less nitrogen from your lawn fertilizer will help reduce the amount of vegetation growing in the lake, and is one more line of defense against excess algae growth and the dreaded Curly Leaf Pondweed. And better habitat for fish = more fish for you to catch!

The Iron County Land and Water Conservation Department's Shoreline Restoration Program offers advice and cost sharing for people who want to improve their shorelines. Call Heather Palmquist at 715-561-2234 for all the info.

Fish count form

We are still counting fish in Lake of the Falls in an effort to better understand the numbers and health of our fish populations. LOFA Vice President Bill Dalpiaz worked with our local DNR Fisheries Biologist Zach Lawson in 2019 to come up with a Fish Count Form which is available in paper form at the public boat landing on Many Rock Road, or can be accessed online at lakeofthefalls.org. It's easy to enter whatever information you have about the fish you're catching, and the information can give us feedback about past fish stocking efforts, and help the LOFA Board make decisions about future stocking.

Subscribe to our website

LOFA's official website is filled with information about our lake and the surrounding area, association news, the Fish count Form, a photo gallery, and you can even pay your annual dues and make contributions to the Association while visiting our site. Don't miss a single news item! Subscribe by filling out the form at the bottom of the homepage and you'll be notified every time there is a new post. And, while you're at it, join our active group on Facebook—just search for "Lake of the Falls." See you online!

LAKE ENHANCEMENT FUND

Thanks to these LOFA members who donated to the Lake Enhancement Fund in 2021:

Chet & Sookki Bach, Kevin & Linda Collins, Bill & Nancy Dalpiaz, Jeff & Holly Gawlik, Gary Graf, Jim & Kathy Hannemann, Dan & Christine Hergarten, Arch & Judy Johnson, Tom & Debi McTavish, Cindy & Mike Moriarity, David & Boni Paugel, Musky Point Resort, Floyd & Terry Roberts, Don & Stefanie Rossner, Ronald & Joan Sable, Fred & Joan Sass, Jack & Diana Schuett, Andrew Schuett, Dave & Di Sino, Charles & Patricia Spittler, Tom & Jan Tesch, Terry & Amy Thayer, James & Nancy Thornton, and Jeremy Wehrmann.

