# 75 Years of Service To Lake Residents And the Detroit Lakes Community



# **The Lake Detroiter**

Dick Hecock, May, 2019

#### **Preface**

This <u>Lake Detroiter</u> is devoted to a review of the history of the Lake Detroiters Association, its antecedents, purposes, creation story, principal leaders, and accomplishments.

Since 1949, the Lake Detroiters Association (LDA) has communicated with its constituents through the use of Bulletins, Newsletters, Annual reports, Directories, "Lake Detroiters", and more recently, via Website, Facebook and Twitter media. Produced by many dedicated volunteers, these resources, together with a near-complete set of Board meeting minutes, comprise a comprehensive record of LDA's accomplishments (and frustrations). They have been utilized liberally, mostly without attribution, in preparing this 75th anniversary edition.

# **Acknowledgements**

As is usual in such endeavors, the project became more complicated and time-consuming than had been anticipated. It would have been much more difficult had it not been for the many LDA Members and others who came forward with various forms of assistance. In particular I want to mention Ginny Imholte, Steve Hansen, Bill Briggs, Laurie Olson, and Carl Oberholtzer, John and Candice Cox, and as always, Georgia Hecock.

Substantial materials have also been provided by the Becker County Historical Society; museum staff have assisted with research and provided valuable photographs to help place LDA's history in context.

In such a complicated undertaking there are bound to be mistakes – errors of facts and interpretation. I accept the responsibility for those, and beg your indulgence. I hope that they do not cause embarrassment or inconvenience.

# **Dedication**

This Lake <u>Detroiter</u> is dedicated to the founders of Lake Detroiters, its many long-term workers, the lakeshore residents, and the larger community with whom Lake Detroit has been shared.

### **Towards a Lake Association**

Detroit Lake was created about 10,000 years ago as the receding glaciers left thick deposits of gravel, sand and clay. Broken from the glacier, and imbedded in these deposits were large chunks of ice which, when melted, left depressions to become lakes, including Detroit, one of the larger ones? Forests grew up around the lakes. Wildlife entered the picture, and over thousands of years these lakes evolved to be the great treasures of Minnesota.

The lakes were impacted little by sporadic contacts with Native Americans. There were no significant changes caused by early contacts with European settlers, a few trappers and traders who mostly passed by.



The 1871 Survey of Detroit Lake and Vicinity.

After Minnesota statehood in 1858, and with arrival of the railroad a dozen years later, considerable economic and population growth came to the vicinity of Detroit Lake. The local population rose from a handful of settlers in the early 1870's, to 1500 in 1880, 2500 in 1900 and over 7000 in 1940.

Before 1900, most settlement was in Detroit Village which had grown straddling the railroad about a mile north of the lake. Few of the village roads reached the lake. Of note the Woods route of the Red River Ox Cart Trail system passed along the southeast and northeast portions of Big Detroit.

...reaching Detroit Lake at the mouth of Sucker Creek, half a mile south of the club house. A little before reaching the present site of the club house the road took to the gravelly beach of the lake, which it followed for some distance, and again took to the water's edge where it crossed the Pelican River....

Alvin H. Wilcox, Pioneer History of Becker County

It is known that land clearing for small agricultural plots, and the use of the forests for construction of village buildings took place throughout the area, including along the shores of Detroit Lake.

1880 saw the first modern legal plat of lakeshore property on Little Detroit's northwest shore. However, maps from that era show little in the way of road access. In 1888, a sketch indicates that Lake and Washington Avenues had reached Little Detroit, but Lakeshore Boulevard (later West Lake and North Shore Drives) does not appear.



Remnant of the St. Louis Club (RDH)

The early 1880's also witnessed the establishment of the St. Louis Rod and Gun Club, so named because the original owners were from Missouri. By 1895, the place went by the name of "The Clubhouse" and the property's ownership evolved to J.W. Smith, a Fargo entrepreneur. Accessed by horse and buggy, or later by a wood walkway leading to a temporary railroad stop a few hundred yards away, the facility and its main buildings were located in the vicinity of what is now the intersection of East and South Shore Drives. Mary Suhr whose grandfather was J.W. Smith, spent summers in a cottage near the facility and later described a rather large building surrounded by several associated cottages. There are reports of famous guests, including James J. Hill, and Theodore Roosevelt. Suhr, in a 1978 Detroit Lakes Record article, notes that guests and goods were serviced by twice-a-day mail-boats. The Club House was torn down in 1934.

The Clubhouse was important as the first commercial development on the lake. However, 1889 was of great significance in the life of both Detroit town and Lake Detroit. It marks the start of service by John West's Pelican River Navigation Company which, together with the railroad, enabled the rapid development of a lake-based tourist industry in the region



**BCHS Photo** 

The steamships which traversed the Pelican River system carried passengers, nearly all of whom had arrived in Detroit by train, from a city dock at the foot of Lake Avenue across Little Detroit then down the Pelican River through Muskrat and Sallie Lakes to Shoreham. The route was further extended to the Melissa outlet in 1891, and to Pelican Lake in 1908. In addition to the passenger transport business, the company also hauled freight. The Northern Pacific Railroad off-loaded freight to a dockage at West's Spur on the northeast shore of Big Detroit Lake. Freight was placed on barges propelled by a steamboat across Big Detroit through a sandbar channel, and onward to Shoreham, and beyond, to Pelican Lake.

In this manner, most of the early tourist business stimulated by the steamships largely bypassed Lake Detroit in favor of Shoreham on Melissa and Sallie, but additional lakeshore plats on Little Detroit's north shore, along Lake Boulevard (now West Lake Drive) appeared in 1884 and 1891 as lake shore development spread eastward along Little Detroit, finally reaching the Big Detroit's north shore in 1898. The land for the 12-acre City Park adjacent to Washington Ave. and along the lakeshore was purchased in 1907.

#### Impacts from the Steamship Era

To enable the success of his Pelican River Navigation Company, John West constructed a lock and dam to raise water levels in Muskrat Lake and the Pelican River, and dredged and straightened the river from Little Detroit to Muskrat. The lock and dam system provided nearly a five foot elevation differential between Muskrat Lake and Lake Sallie. Because the original elevation difference at the outflow of Muskrat to Sallie's is unknown, and because of channel deepening, and straightening in the Pelican River as it flows out of Detroit and through Muskrat, it is unclear how much the five foot dam impacted upstream Detroit's average lake level.

Yet the lake level certainly was changed somewhat from its pre-1880 (lower) levels, but it is not precisely known how much the lake level rose, and what the rise meant to the lake and its shoreline. Reports prior to the steamship era, indicate that buggies or even carts crossed the lake on the sandbar separating Big and Little Detroit. Also, some early pictures of Detroit's shoreline show more beach, and lower lake levels. Roots of trees close to the lake, most obviously along Lakeshore Boulevard (West Lake Drive), were exposed, apparently from an increase in water level which caused erosion of the shore material around the trees. Some contemporary reports also blame higher water levels for causing more ice-related shoreline damage.



An elaborate summer cottage on Lake Detroit about 1905. Notice the relatively steep beach, no longer present with higher lake levels.

Another change to the lake's natural condition resulted from the channel cut through the sandbar to facilitate boat traffic (The Pelican River Navigation Company needed such a channel to carry freight from a depot on the northeast corner of Big Detroit - near today's Overlook). In its pre-development state, the shallower and smaller Little Detroit was largely separated from larger and deeper Big Detroit. (In a 1941 Detroit Lakes Tribune article a local game warden suggested that without the channel Little Detroit was susceptible to winter fish kills.) With higher water, and the channel, Big Detroit waters were able to more freely flow to Little Detroit.



Big Detroit looking towards North Shore from East Shore, about 1900 (photo from BCHS)

#### **Automobile Era**

The 1900's brought automobiles into the scene, and greatly expanded access to area lakes, including Detroit. Summer cottages were built, roads and bridges built, and plats appeared as development extended around Lake Detroit. Not able to compete with automobiles, the Pelican River steamships ceased operation in 1918. The development of automobile-based resorts, cabins and camping facilities exploded during this period.



West Lake Drive Traffic (The white building is Lakeside Hotel).

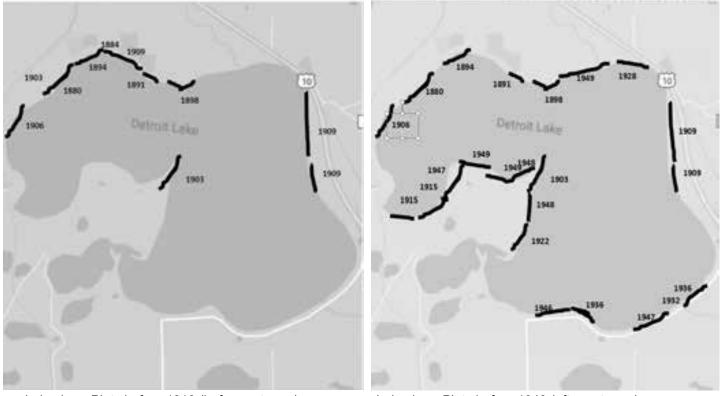


**Tent Camping** 



Cabins and Cars

The automobile also stimulated residential cottage development around Lake Detroit. These maps show the dates of plats filed on the shores of Lake Detroit. They provide an indication of rapid growth in speculation on lakeshore properties, though not all development occurred within plats, nor do the dates indicate that all lots within a platted area were developed.



Lakeshore Plats before 1910 (before auto era)

Lakeshore Plats before 1949 (after auto era)

With a few notable exceptions, this early cottage development was modest in terms of structure and shoreline disturbance, and the use of the developed properties was confined to the summer season. They had no indoor toilets, no heat; many were without electricity. Refrigeration was provided by ice-blocks delivered from the Fargo-Detroit Ice Company located on the northeast corner of the Big Detroit.



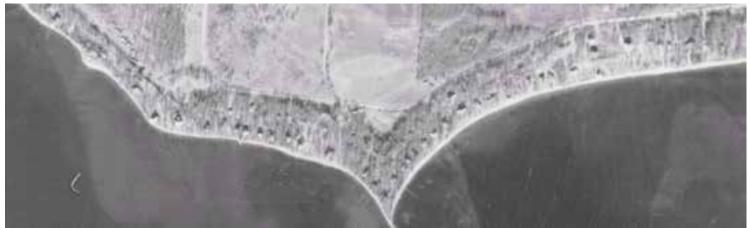
Source BCHS, RDH,

Even so, much of the early development was closely spaced, often on lots of 50 or 60 feet of frontage on the lake. Outdoor shallow pit toilets provided rudimentary sewage treatment.



Intensive Shoreline Development - North Shore of Big Detroit Lake in 1914 (BCHS photo)

By 1939 (when first modern air photos became available) there was intensive development along several sections of Lake Detroit shoreline, especially along the northern shores of Big and Little Detroit, and northwest shore of Little Detroit.



1939 Breezy Shore development on north shores of Little and Big Detroit (U of M Aerial Photo Library)

As the City of Detroit (Detroit Lakes after 1926) grew, its urbanized area spread. Certain manufacturing processes such as lumber mills and food processors, exercised no control over discharge of stormwater, or other waste materials into Lake Detroit either directly, or via the Pelican River into the lake.

Road access enabled residential development to spread gradually around the lake. Maps of 1904 showed no public road along most of the east shore of Detroit Lake, but the southeast shore was served, and a road crossed between Nason Bay and Deadshot Bay running northward along the west side of Little Detroit. The north shore of Little Detroit, and a small part of Big Detroit also had road access after 1910. A 1929 plat showed greater access to Big Detroit's East side (which by then had been mostly platted). The south shore of Little Detroit, and west side of Big Detroit still had no significant access. North Shore Drive did not cross the Pelican River until 1935. By the early 1940's road access was complete to all parts of Lake Detroit.

#### Some Important Events Preceding Lake Detroiter Association's Formation

- 1846 Woods Trail Section of Red River Oxcart Trail
- 1870 Official Survey of Detroit and Lakeview Townships; about 150 persons live in vicinity of area to become Detroit
- 1871 Northern Pacific Railway is completed to Detroit (then called Tylertown).
- 1872 Detroit Townsite Platted, straddling Northern Pacific Railroad; little access to Lake Detroit
- 1880 St. Louis Club Rod and Gun Club (aka St. Louis Club, (AKA Smithville, and The Clubhouse).
- 1888 Pelican River Navigation Company begins service from Detroit Dock to Shoreham; channel cut through sandbar
- 1890 Area population exceeds 2000
- 1898 Breezy Point Plat Filed (lots on either side of Allen's Point).
- 1905 Summit, Lake, and Washington are connected to Lake Boulevard (now West Lake Drive)
- 1907 City Park purchased (12 acres along Washington Avenue and fronting Little Detroit); land had previously belonged to city, but sold to developer for hotel construction. Hotel burned before completion.
- 1911 City plat shows Lakeshore Boulevard; Starting before 1911, and continuing to 1950, city's water supply is taken from Little Detroit Lake; area population exceeds 4000
- 1915 Pavilion Opens.
- 1916 Detroit Lakes Country Club developed
- 1918 Lake St. Clair drained because of accumulation of sewage odors near downtown Detroit; Pelican River Navigation Company ceases operations.
- 1926 Detroit renamed Detroit Lakes; Washington Avenue and West Lake Drive are paved routes carrying both Highway 59 and 34; stormwater from these pavements is drained to lake.
- 1929 First Detroit Lakes sewage treatment plant constructed; Minnesota, Lincoln, Roosevelt and Madison connected to Lake Blvd.
- 1930 Area population exceeds 5000
- 1935 WPA begins work on park's tennis courts and baseball diamond; city builds small dam at Little Detroit outlet to prevent sewage discharged to Pelican River from backing up into the lake.
- 1935/36 East Lake Drive (later called North Shore Drive) extended across Pelican River to Hwy 10; Cottages at Edgewater built
- 1937 Dunton Locks and dam rebuilt by WPA
- 1938 City moved Lake Boulevard (also known as East Lake Drive, now North Shore Drive) northward from next to the Pavilion to present location
- 1940 Area population exceeds 7500
- 1941 City's sewage treatment plant improved sewage discharged into a ditch to Pelican River
- 1943 -- Serious ice damage along north shores of Lake Detroit
- 1944 Detroit Lakes Property Owners Association established (LDA predecessor)
- 1945 "Green days" (algae blooms) observed
- 1948 East Lake Drive (now North Shore Drive) is paved
- 1949 DLPOA Ends, LDA begins
- 1950 Area population exceeds 8000

Sources: Becker Highway Department, Detroit Lakes Tribune and Record, Becker County Museum, City of Detroit Lakes

# **Growing Concerns**

In the 1940's the summer tourist visitors continued to increase, as did the resident population of Detroit Lakes, resulting in some conversion of seasonal cottages to permanent lakeshore homes. Thus there was both more extensive and more intensive use of the shoreland areas surrounding Lake Detroit. Pit toilets had been replaced by modern flush systems, with wastewater diverted to cesspools, often made of wood.

Close observers began to notice changes in the lake. Algae blooms became more noticeable; "green days" as they were called. There already had been instances of algae-related fish-kills on nearby Lake Sallie. In 1948 a study of nearby lakes by the Minnesota Departments of Health and Conservation confirmed the cause of algae blooms was due to excessive in-lake nitrogen and phosphorus levels.

Aquatic plant populations (always referred to locally as "weeds") became more of a nuisance to swimmers and boaters, especially in shallower waters.

By this time, most cottages were served by flush toilets. Outhouses and cesspools were largely eliminated in favor of more modern septic systems. But such treatments of waste were problematic, as drainfields around Detroit were in sandy soils, with some lying below the water table. Some locals began to notice that the lake was less clear. They also noted a correlation between weed-beds and the locations of near-shore septic drainfields

Special concern was focused on a dry milk plant located on Highway 10. Started in 1944, the plant had been allowed, by the city, to use the Pelican River as an outlet for its cooling water instead of routing its waste through sanitary sewer lines to the sewage treatment plant. The impact of this problem was exacerbated by occasional "boilovers" in which raw milk mixed with cooling water, discharged to the river and the lake. Occurrences were very noticeable to residents along the north shore of Big Detroit.

Storm sewers, serving many parts of the city, discharged directly to the lake, bringing sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants. Plumes of debris extending far into the lake could be observed after even moderate rainfall events.

Another detrimental factor, unsuspected at the time, but later found, was that the 1918 draining of the 900 acre Rice Lake about four miles upstream from Lake Detroit contributed to nutrient problems. Research has showed that such lake and wetland drainage projects subsequently generate high concentrations of nutrients during major runoff events.

More intensive development also elevated concerns about expanding boat and automobile traffic. The poor design of roads, especially those near the lake, as in the case of Lake Shore Boulevard (West Lake Drive) also was identified as a contributor to shoreline problems.

By the 1940's there was growing understanding that Detroit Lake was deteriorating. Its lakeshore owners, recreation users, and tourist businesses, which depended upon the lake's reputation for crystal clear waters, were ready to take action.

Adding to their concerns, summer residents felt that they were victims of discriminatory property taxes, paying for services which they didn't need (e.g. schools), and imposed by agencies over which they had no influence.

Finally, a series of high water levels possibly caused by poor management of the Dunton Locks dam resulted in increased shoreline erosion. This was noted especially along West Lake Drive where large trees were damaged because tree roots were exposed. The resultant degradation and siltation accompanying the erosion made swimming and boating difficult along that shoreline. Higher water levels were thought to promote ice-damage.

Indeed, a particular high water event was deemed responsible for substantial ice damage to the north shorelines of both Big and Little Detroit in late 1943.



# Citizen Advocacy and Creation of the DLPOA

The 1943 ice damage event led directly to the founding of the Detroit Lakes Property Owner's Association).

Following a February 11, 1944 *Detroit Record* newspaper announcement, on February 21, 1944 a group of concerned residents met at the Becker County Courthouse and formed the Detroit Lakes Property Owners Association (DLPOA) "to preserve and protect lakeshore property on Detroit Lake".

In particular, the meeting's solicitation proposed the organization was to address "severe shoreline icedamage" which had occurred in the fall of 1943.

Previously circulated proposed "Articles of Association" for DLPOA were adopted and the following officers elected: Chairman Joseph Allen, Secretary, Louise Halvorson, and Treasurer C.B.Connell. A few days later, at another Courthouse meeting on February 28, the proposed articles were accepted and bylaws adopted. Membership fees were to be not less than \$1, or more than \$5. Nine persons were elected as temporary directors.

The group set July 5, 1944 as the date of an initial full membership meeting. It is possible that such a meeting was held in July, but if so, another followed in August, as indicated by the Fargo Forum.

# Property Owners Perfect Their Lake Organization

The initial meeting of the Detroit Lake Property Owners Association was held at the courthouse on Monday evening, presided over by J. H. Allen as temporary chairman, Louise Halvorson, secretary, and C. B. Connell, treasurer.

The proposed Articles of Association were amended so as to permit voting by proxy when any member resides at a considerable distance from the community. An amendment was also adopted whereby the permanent directors, who, in turn, select the permanent officers, will be elected at the first regular membership meeting on Wednesday afternoon, July 5, 1944, at the courthouse.

A list of nine temporary directors were chosen to serve until that time, as follows:

Walace Reid, Maurice Hubbard, Geo. D. McCarthy, all of Detroit Lakes but owning property on the lakeshore. Frank Clark, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Mrs. Chas. Vogel, Fargo; Albert M. Anderson, H. P. Woodhouse, Detroit Lakes; R. B. Hanson, Fargo; Geo. B. Farney, Detroit Lakes.

As stated in a previous news story the purpose of the group formation is to work jointly for the improvement and protection of lakeshore property on Big and Little Detroit lakes.

From DL Record, March 2, 1944

Attention--Property Owners on Detroit Lake
Detroit Lakes, Minn.

An open meeting of all owners of property whose realty abuts on Big and Little Detroit lakes will be held to discuss water levels and other problems of social and economic interest.

High water levels are affecting all property. Please arrange to be present.

GRAYSTONE HOTEL---Detroit Lakes, Minn.

Friday, August 25 at 8 P. M.

Detroit Lakes Property Owners Association

4 Wed. Marsing, Aug. 13, 1944

#### **Towards Lake Detroiters Association**

In response to a Detroit Lakes Tribune announcement, on August 21, 1949 "nearly 50 lakeshore residents" met at the Graystone Hotel to hear the then DLPOA Vice President Charles Page call for a reorganization, election of new officers, and the transaction of "new business". No previous meeting minutes were available at that time, but a list of earlier dues-paying members was presented, as was a treasurer's report

DL Tribune, 8-11-49



At this meeting Ralph Holland emphasized the need for a "strong and active organization", nominating Otto Haakenstad as President. Dr. James Burrill was elected Vice President, and Ralph Baird as Secretary and Treasurer. A ten-person committee representing "each of five shoreline segments of Big and Little Detroit Lake" presented nominations for Directors, and the following were elected: A.C.Tomlinson, Ralph Holland, Tom Cox, George McCarthy, and Bill Humphrey. Annual dues were set at \$5.

A residual DLPOA treasury balance of \$10.76 was reported. A committee formed to consider changing the name of the organization, to update bylaws and develop articles of incorporation, and other related matters to be voted on at the next meeting.

A membership committee of 9 was appointed "to proceed at once to sign up property owners as members". Each committee member was assigned to recruit members from a segment of Big and Little Detroit lakeshore.

The president was empowered to name other standing committees to study the following topics and report recommendations "for any appropriate action" to the membership.

- 1. Water Level Control
- 2. Pollution of the Lake
- 3. Weed and Algae Control
- 4. Mosquito Control
- 5. Lawn Weed Control
- 6. Speed Boat Control

- 7. Speed limitation of Roads
- 8. Road Congestion on North Shore of Little Detroit
- 9. Taxes
- 10. Utility matters
- 11. Zoning Restrictions

(It is interesting that no mention was made of the shoreline ice-damage which originally motivated the formation of DLPOA.)

Those present professed a belief in having the new organization find common interests with other lake associations, and to collaborate with them, and with local governments. Similarly the group was inclined to reach beyond property owners and lakeshore properties to include in its membership renters, and landowners near, but not on the lakeshore.

At least one additional organizational meeting took place in the fall of 1949 (October 15), though little more was accomplished.

# Lake Detroit and Curfman (Deadshot Bay)

	Big Detroit	Little Detroit	Curfman
Area	2076 acres	941 acres	111 acres
Shoreline length	7.7 miles	4.8 miles	1.7 miles
"Mean" elevation			
	1434.5 feet	1434.5 feet	1434.5 feet
"Ordinary high	1334.3 feet	1334.3 feet	1334.3 feet
Fetch (maximum distance across water in one direction)	13,140 feet	9,620 feet	3,200 feet
Maximum depth	82 feet	16 feet	21 feet
Average Depth	18 feet	8.5 feet	11.4 feet
Volume	37,589 acre feet	8,003 acre feet	1,309 acre feet
% of lake area below	40%	90%	58%
Observed max	15 feet	16 feet	16 feet
Inlets	3	1	0
Outlets	1	1	1
Minnesota Ecological	Northern	Northern	Northern
	Hardwood Forest	Hardwood	Hardwood
Physical Classification	Summer and	Weak to no	Weak to no
	winter stratified	stratification	stratification
Main water source	Stream	Big Detroit	Groundwater
Trophic Classification	Mesotrophic	Mesotrophic	Mesotrophic
Minnesota Shoreland District	General	General	Recreational
Classification	Development	Development	Development

**Detroit's watershed** is fairly large, comprising about 25,000 acres, including the lakes themselves. Though it includes the City of Detroit Lakes, urban land uses comprise only about 8% of the total watershed acreage. Indeed, equal portions are in forest and cultivation, comprising about 75% of the total area. The remainder is largely wetland or drained wetland.

The watershed also is hilly, with about 40% of the area classified as having steep slopes (more than 15%). The lakes lie at about 1334 above sea level. Areas to the north are mostly less than 100 feet above that, but within two miles is Detroit Mountain which is almost 300 feet higher. Nutrients do flow downhill.

# **Lake Detroiters Emerges**

At a special meeting on January 28, 1950, approximately 30 members present or by proxy, voted unanimously to change the name of the DLPOA to Lake Detroiters Association, Inc. The Association ratified proposed bylaws and articles of Incorporation, and agreed to seek incorporation in the State of Minnesota. All funds, titles, and rights of the DLPOA were transferred to LDA

On March 4, 1950, another special meeting was held. Following inspection of the Articles of Incorporation which had been approved by the Secretary of State and duly registered in Becker County, those present unanimously and officially dissolved the DLPOA. Immediately following that action, the "Original Meeting" of the Lake Detroiters Association (LDA) took place at which time the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws were accepted by the new organization. Additional Board of Directors' meetings were held on April 22 and June 14.

The LDA's purpose as enunciated in the 1950 Articles of Incorporation, reveal both a broadly framed philosophy of scientific and educational purposes. and very particular avenues of inquiry and management.

#### ARTICLE II

The purpose of this corporation shall be the consideration by scientific and educational methods or otherwise, of matters pertaining to the common welfare of its members and the community surrounding the lake known as "Detroit Lake," including lands adjacent thereto in Becker County, Minnesota; and action in the form of any and all things necessary to the attainment of such desires of its members or cultural objectives as have the approval of a majority of legally voting members; including in such consideration and action such matters as the preservation and improvement of said lake and lands: the regulation of water levels;

the propagation and preservation of fish; the control of weeds and algae growth; the control of pollution and other sanitary conditions; the promo-tion and enforcement of game laws of the state; the regulation of water craft; the protection of homes and property of its members; the betterment of roads and highway conditions in the area; the control of common nuisances such as mosquitoes, noxious weeds and unnecessary noises; promotion of a cooperative spirit with-in the corporation, between the corporation and similar associations in the vicinity and between the corporation and local governmental units and citizens thereof; and the corporation is hereby authorized to acquire and own such real and personal property as may be desired to carry out its purposes and to do any and all business further-ing the purposes of the corporation and other acts or activities not inconsistent with the above and in the fur-therance of the purposes of the corporation.

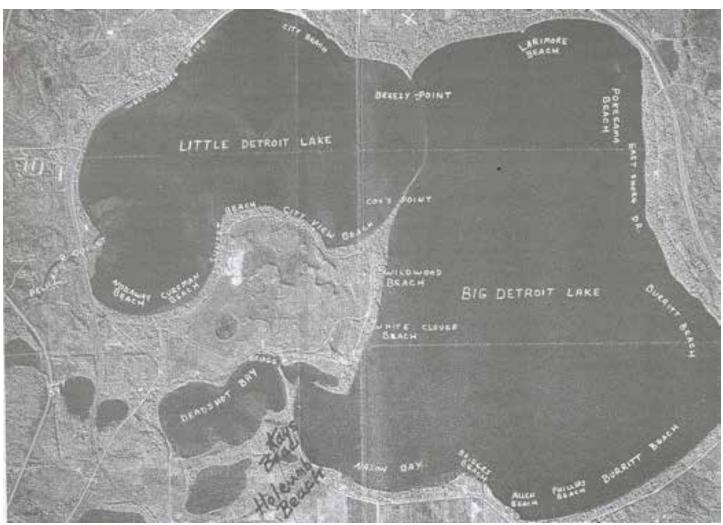
LDA's first annual meeting was held at the Pavilion on July 8 with 33 members attending.

The revitalized LDA quickly gained strength, and was served by numerous active committees. The membership committee developed a system of 25 zones (beaches) each assigned to a different committee member. As a result of the membership committee's work, by the fall of 1950 the glossy 23 page *Bulletin* reported a membership of 130 plus 20 "sustainers" (local businesses), and 6 Associate Members (not lake shore owners).

One attribute that seems to differentiate LDA from other nearby lake associations is that, from inception, it drew a significant share of its members from among permanent year-round residents. Though only a small portion of Little Detroit was officially part of the City in 1950, 55 of 130 members had Detroit Lakes winter addresses. In 1955 the ratio was 70 out of 145. And the "locals" tended to dominate LDA leadership positions. In 1955, all officers were from DL, and 7 of the 9 Directors, and 10 of the 12 committee chairs were as well. Many of these members were community leaders and businessmen, and not only played important roles in LDA but also facilitated productive interactions with the City. Sam Chesley, Tom Rogstad, Kent Rogstad, Henry Blanding, Byron Allen, William Taylor, Clem Tevogt, and Winston Larson are among these DL notables.

#### The Lake Detroiters' Association: 1950 to 1965.

As noted, after 1950, LDA organized itself around a set of committees reflecting the concerns of the times: water level, pollution, weed and algae control, mosquito control, watercraft, roads, taxes and utilities and zoning. A 25-person membership committee organized by zones (beaches), was activated, and throughout the 1950's membership was in the range of 100 to 145 members, with up to as many 32 sustainers, and 7 associate members (renters, and nearby residents who did not own lakeshore property).



Beach Names as used In 1950's LDA Bulletins

President and Vice Presidents mostly served one year terms, though the combined position of secretary/treasurer was sometimes carried over for two, or even three, years

During most of these 15 years, dues remained at \$5 annually for "active" members (lakeshore property owners), \$2 for associate members (renters and non-lakeshore owners), and \$10 for "sustaining" members (mostly local businesses). The dues were raised to \$10 for active members in 1964. The amount charged to those members participating in the weed spraying program varied from \$13.50 to \$20 per year. Mosquito control fees were between \$13 and \$16 per year.

Total LDA receipts for dues and spraying services varied considerably year-to-year, but \$2000 in total revenue was common. In most years receipts exceed disbursements.



Long Bridge, looking towards Deadshot Bay (Curfman), about 1960.

\*The original articles of association, incorporation, and bylaws of both DLPOA and LDA require voting members to be lakeshore owners on Lake Detroit. It is clear from early maps published by LDA, and by its membership rolls, that Deadshot Bay was considered a part of Lake Detroit. Nor did the reformulation of LDA Bylaws and Articles in 1985 treat Deadshot any differently. It was not considered that the State refers to Deadshot Bay as a separate lake called Curfman. This distinction later became more of an issue because Lake Detroit (Big and Little) has one state classification, and Curfman another, a circumstance which results in somewhat different zoning regulations for the two waterbodies. In 2016 LDA Bylaws were amended to make it clear that Curfman lakeshore residents were entitled to LDA membership.

Twelve committees published reports in the 1950 Bulletin, several describing an impressive accomplishments, such as

- development of a "boaters code"
- night lighting of Allen's Point
- improvement of channel light wiring
- recommendations for beautifying the city beach and highway 10 overlook
- study of physical and chemical means of weed control
- a proposal that the City Park Board build a weed cutting machine,
- implementation of an experimental mosquito control activity,
- a proposal to install a water level control dam at the Little Detroit outlet,
- the identification of a dry-milk plant as a major polluter,
- advocacy for road improvements, speed limits and bridge repairs

Annual Bulletins continued to published such reports from Committee Chairpersons (nearly all men!), until 1956.

One early thrust of the Association not explicitly mentioned in its Articles or Bylaws, was a concern with property taxes. The 1950 Bulletin contained a substantial report from the "Utilities and Taxes" committee about what was generally considered unfair taxation of lakeshore property. A remedy proposed by LDA was to alter the Districts of County Commissioners to group properties of lakes Detroit, Sallie and Melissa into the same District, with the expectation that such a move would provide more political strength to lakeshore owners on various matters, including taxation. This and other efforts to reduce lakeshore property taxes largely failed.



from LDA Bulletin, 1954

A continuing concern of LDA was the channel through the sandbar between Big and Little Detroit. The original channel had been dug (and subsequently kept open) with the help of horses and mules. In most years it provided less than three feet of depth, and even as late as the early 1950's, there are those who insisted that children walked across the lake on the sandbar, and that the depth of the channel was only "about up to our waists" – so say the informants. The original channel was marked by a few tamarack stakes. The 1950 bulletin reports improved sandbar and channel markers were deployed that season, and a single light appeared on the North Shore point (aka Allen's Point).

As boats and motors grew in size, the old channel became insufficient. There had been talk about enlarging and deepening the channel, much of it by Lake Detroiters and another local organization, the "Inland Lakes Boat Club". In the winter of 1953/54 a major dredging operation was mounted, as described in this article from the Lake Detroiters 1954 Annual Report. (Note the "membership dues" referred to were from Lake Detroiters' members.)



The sandbar's "island" was created from the dredge spoils.

Boating enthusiasts who operate craft on Lake Detroit will welcome the news that the channel through the sand bar, which divides the two lakes, has been widened, lengthened and deepened.

The new channel is 30 feet wide, 26 feet long and six feet deep. It will accommodate passage by any boat on the lake.

The Inland Lakes Boat club of Detroit Lakes sponsored the widening project. It was financed through donations from people whowatched the club's water shows last summer and from membership dues.

The widening project was carried out by Hjalmar Brolin and Wally Schultz. A heavy dragline was used in the work.

The city of Detroit Lakes will cooperate to provide better navigation between the two lakes by placing three lights on each side of the channel. Members of the Inland Lakes Boat club will also help. In former years, only one light marked the channel.

According to President Marlowe Baxter, the club is now investigating the possibilities of extending water travel down the Pelican river to the State Fish Hatchery on Lake Sally.

Another major early LDA initiative was the attempt to control luxuriant weed growth through the use of chemicals. LDA sponsored a weed-killing effort using sodium arsenate for several years



From 1953 Bulletin

# WARNING

This shore has been treated with a POISON to kill lake weeds. All persons and animals must stay out of water while this sign is standing. Do not use water for lawn sprinkling while sign is here.

PRWD

Clem TeVogt purchased the Detroit Launch and Boat Livery in 1948. He operated the business for more than 40 years, catering to the needs of boaters on Detroit Lakes, as well as to visitors to the lake. For many years he operated a tour boat "Miss Detroit" which advertised spectacular views of 26 miles of shoreline around Big and Little Detroit. Another Clem trademark was the speedboat ride. Acting on a recommendation by LDA in 1956 Clem was deputized by the County Sheriff so that he could help with enforcement of boating rules by controlling "wild boaters". TeVogt was affiliated with LDA's leadership in one way or another from 1953 to 1998.



Clem's Big Dock



Clem and his speedboat

Pictures from BCHS



from 1951 Bulletin



DL Tribune, 1952

# Count Me "In" -- Neighbor! INSECT CONTROL PROGRAM

To The Secretary, Lake Detroiters Association, Inc., P. O. Box 149, Detroit Lakes, Minn.

I want to participate in the Mosquito Control Program as outlined in the 1956 Bulletin.

My check for \$16 is enclosed herewith, because I realize that the Program must be organized well in advance of the actual spraying dates.

Member's Name	
Lake Address	,

NOTE: If you have not already mailed your 1956 membership dues, please add \$5.00 to your check!

# Please "Vote" On Matters Below

I am interested in the Spraying of my Trees early in the season and want further information on this additional service.

	162		
	No	(	)
ill serve as Cap			

my Neighborhood Group, if called upon.

I will do what I can to interest my neighbors in joining the 1956 program. - ( )

from 1955 Bulletin

Other LDA activities and accomplishments during the period included:

- Established reward for cottage theft information (1951)
- Urged city to upgrade stormsewer to accept milk plant drainage (1951)
- Rented rearing ponds for fish stocking (1951)
- Advocated for public beach improvement and re-routing of Highway 59 from West Lake Drive (1953)
- Worked with city to control water levels to prevent winter ice-damage (1954)
- Distributed copper sulfate for control of algae (1955)
- Worked with other lake associations on common problems, especially "unfair" taxation (1958)
- Advocate for land use zoning to prevent commercial development of lakeshore near residences (1954)
- Proposed restoration of navigation in Pelican River (1955)
- Supported Winston Larson's proposal to redo West Lake Drive Beach, including stormwater diversion (1960)

Yet it is well to keep in mind that for all LDA accomplishments of the fifties and early sixties, many of the same underlying and potent problems that brought LDA into existence, were not only still in play, but were growing worse at the end of the period. Algae blooms increased, nuisance aquatic plants (weeds!) proliferated, shoreline erosion grew worse, and water clarity continued to deteriorate. More and bigger boats created more suspension of sediments and nutrients in the lake. All this in spite of solid efforts and good intentions by LDA Directors and Committees.

At the same time, the period marked an increase in the understanding of the factors involved in these particular problems by the LDA, its members, directors and committees. A subtle change took place as it became clear that the problems they encountered would not be solved by treating the symptoms – rather they needed to deal with the causes. LDA became more sophisticated about lake dynamics, and the sources of nutrients and their roles in the "aging" of Lake Detroit. Towards the end of the period it became obvious that the more serious lake problems were to be solved not by poisoning weeds, but rather to reduce the nutrients that fed them. This conclusion led to a more science-based focus on links between shoreline development intensity, sewage disposal, stormwater runoff, and upstream nutrient sources.

In 1963 newly elected LDA President Tom Rogstad outlined his goals for 1964 (undoubtedly in part based upon the advice and support of his good friend and fellow LDA Director, Winston Larson).

- "Reconstitution of Rice Lake on the Pelican river to serve as a settling basin... to decrease fertility of the Pelican River as it flows to Detroit Lake"
- "Extension of City limits to the Ice House on the east and the Pelican River outlet on the west, so as to eventually replace the septic tanks (which are adding to the fertility of Detroit Lake) with sewer. along the whole of the north shores of Big and Little Detroit to allow for replacing existing septic system"
- 3. "To promote legislation to form a taxable unit of lakeshore property to provide a means whereby a concerted action can be taken to retard the natural aging of Detroit Lake"
- 4. "The reconstitution of the Pelican River navigation system"
- "To actively cooperate with and promote the planned lakeshore development undertaken by the city."

With the exception of #4, these all dealt with the addressing the underlying causes for the premature aging (eutrophication) of lakes through over-nutrification.



condition in Lake Detroit has been getting increasingly bad during recent years. It is worse in some locations than others, but is cer-tain to spread to all areas unless it is brought under control. Once a lake has a high concentration of dissolved nutrients, there is no practical way known for remov-ing them. They can only be lost over a period of years with the water running from the lake. It is vitally important, therefore, that as little artificial enrichment as possible be allowed to enter our lake.

Because the Pelican River is our lake's chief inlet for new water it is being watched for the inflow of nutrients by the Sanita-tion & Pollution Committee; and action in this regard is separately reported by them in this Bulletin.

The most common chemical treatment for algae bloom is found in copper sulphate (blue vitriol). This material is a poison and may be used only under the supervision of the State Conservation Department because it will tion Department because it will kill fish if improperly applied. Two other limitations are in the fact the treatment is fairly expensive and the results are quite temporary. To keep a lake rela-tively free of bad blooms during a summer season it is held that

\*Note: We are indebted to Dr. John B. Moyle, Aquatic Biologist of the State Department of Conservation, for much of the information contained in this report.

three treatments are necessary.

For the time being, at least, your committee does not recommend any broad scale use of copper sulphate in Lake Detroit for algae-bloom control alone; preferring to watch developments in this regard (including the possibility of some more effective treatment) and doing what it can to prevent any increased fer-tility of the water.

Another aspect of water conditions that had attention during the summer of 1950 was the prev-alence of "swimmer's itch," chiefly among children, and during the dog days. There was a common tendency to blame the situation on the algae which were a high content of the water at that time. However, according to good au-thority, this itch was more like-ly caused by the frequent occurrance of snails in the water. A treatment for the riddance of snails on a particular beach is the same copper sulphate mentioned above; with the same restrictions prevailing. Also, as a matter of practical interest, your commit-tee will be glad to inform you of a medical prescription that was found very effective last year in treating this particular afflic-

-Courtesy Minneapolis Sunday Tribune and Oz Black, Cartoonist

#### LAKE WEEDS

Growth of weeds in our lake is a problem of immediate and serious concern. Beaches and other areas which were practically free of weeds only 10 or 12 years ago are now heavily infested. Like the algae, this weed growth is sure to spread and has already made great progress along the shores of both Big and Little Detroit.

Excessive weed growth, such as that in Lake Detroit, is of little benefit to the fish and greatly restricts the uses and enjoyment of the lake. The growth today has reached alarming proportions and if allowed to persist will result

(Continued on Page 19)

Page from 1950 Bulletin describing conditions and causes of algae blooms on Lake Detroit.

# 1965-1980: Ups and Downs

This chapter in LDA's story began with an important success - after five years of planning, the rehabilitation of the Little Detroit shoreline along West Lake Drive from the Pavilion to the American Legion campground was completed in 1965. While LDA can hardly take credit for the City's project, the Association was proud to be an early supporter not only because it resulted in a magnificent beach, but it also redirected, away from the lake, stormwater generated by a large portion of the city. City Engineer Winston Larson, who conceived and implemented the prize-winning project, had been an LDA committee member since 1950, and board member since 1958. He used his connections to convey to the City the organization's strong support for the project.



#### **Restoring Navigation**

This was long a dream of certain members of both the Melissa-Sallie and Lake Detroiters' associations, and one of Tom Rogstad's 1964 presidential goals. In 1966 the re-establishment of the Pelican River Navigation System, took a step forward with the development of a tramway from Muskrat Lake to Lake Sallie. The tramway was seen as a temporary measure, the successful operation of which would eventually lead to full restoration of the locks. As plans to re-route Highways 59 and 34 from Washington Ave and West Lake Drive were developed, LDA worked with Lakeview Township, and the State, to ensure that new bridges would have sufficient elevation to permit the passage of boats through the Pelican River (the highway re-route was completed in 1968, but it was another twenty years before the tramway became a reality.

#### **Enter Pelican River Watershed District (PRWD)**

Another initiative which had been touted by Rogstad, was the search for a tax and administrative framework to address lake problems that was more suitable than existing governmental units – county, city and townships. In 1965 a delegation comprised of LDA representatives, Winston Larson, Rogstad, and Robert Irving, went to St. Paul to seek legislation making it possible to create a local government unit for purposes of "finding causes and solutions for lake eutrophication problems." They carried with them a draft bill, but soon learned that a **watershed district** created under the auspices of the State's 1955 Watershed Act would better serve their purposes, if the existing statute could be slightly modified. The necessary amendments were soon passed. A petition for the creation of the Pelican River Watershed District (PRWD) was presented, and the District was established in 1966.

On March 30, 1966 the Water Resources Board held a hearing at the Becker County Courthouse. The Director's report was presented and oral testimony on it and other matters was heard. At the May 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Water Resources Board, the Pelican River Watershed District, as previously defined and delimited by the Director, was ordered. The order specifically noted that addressing pollution would be central to the District's mission. It also noted that navigation, soil erosion, and fish and wildlife enhancements, would be other District purposes. *PRWD History*, 2016

Under the leadership of Tom Rogstad, now President of the PRWD, Winston Larson, the District's Engineer, and its attorney, Bob Irvine, all LDA-ers, and an Advisory Committee laced with other LDA members, PRWD commenced a research program through a series of grants. Researchers from NDSU and the University of Washington produced findings that had both local, and national significance, for understanding of lake nutrient dynamics: The District's plans were given a boost from a 1969 *National Lake Eutrophication Conference* held in Detroit Lakes. The meeting brought together from across the country some of the most knowledgeable limnologists, and other scientists and resource managers concerned about lakes.

Among the specific PRWD-directed projects during this period were

- Extensive surface hydrologic investigations conducted by the US Geological Survey (1968)
- Groundwater studies by US Geological Survey (1970).
- Research concluding that "weed" harvesting did not significantly reduce nutrients in Lake Sallie (1973)
- Research revealing septic system impact on Lake Sallie (1972)
- Watershed and point sources of nutrients (1978)
- Identification of impacts from improvements to the City's Waste Water Treatment System (1980)

#### LDA Superseded?

Meanwhile, LDA weed and mosquito control programs continued; and LDA allocated funds to deepen the channel through the sandbar between Little and Big Detroit Lakes. The channel had deteriorated since its 1953 work. More boats, larger, with more horsepower, provided the impetus for some work which was carried out in 1968.

Nevertheless, during the 1960's, LDA membership fell off and only a President and Secretary and four directors were identified in 1966. 1967 and 1968. . Membership reached a low of 57 in 1967, though rebounded somewhat in 1968. A survey of members in 1968 (number of responses unknown) showed widely divergent views on restoring the Pelican River Navigation Project, implementing a lake-wide sewer system, annexation to the City, and developing a weed control project.

The lack of consistency in member's attitudes may have discouraged LDA Directors. But several contemporary documents suggest that LDA officers and board members anticipated that the establishment of the PRWD would fulfill many of the functions previously undertaken by LDA, thereby lessening the reason for LDA's existence. In any case, for several years, only a few Directors were listed in minutes, and in 1968, no other officers except the secretary/treasurer were separately identified as the Board voted to reduce LDA dues. There are no records of LDA meetings for more than two years after May 1968.

In September, 1970, at a meeting attended by former LDA officers and directors, lake resident and local attorney Robert Irvine proposed a resumption of LDA activity. One of its purposes was to be "a lobbying agent for the Pelican River Watershed District". A full Board of Directors was nominated and elected. Among the new directors at that time was Dr. James Knapp who assumed the role of President. Curt Cherry was elected as Vice President, and Joan Swanson as Secretary/ Treasurer.

Within a short time several new committees were activated - pollution, census, public relations. Other committees were resurrected and members identified. Membership rebounded – to 103 in 1973, 111 in 1974 and 136 in 1975. Among the accomplishments associated with LDA in the early to mid-1970's were the following:

- Sponsored rearing ponds for re-establishment of a walleye stocking program
- · copper sulfate treatment of public beach areas
- establishment of water clarity monitoring under the auspices of a U of M effort
- harvest of 6400 pounds of bullheads
- acquisition and deployment of a weed-cutter
- Friend of Lake award established; first awardee was Kay Glover in 1974 for her lake clarity monitoring
- no-wake regulation in sandbar channel
- requested PRWD undertake sandbar channel improvement

About this time LDA began to be confronted with zoning matters. While there had previously been occasional official LDA objections towards commercial development of lakeshore in residential areas, members grew much more concerned by several condominium and trailer court projects. It is not surprising, because a 1969 count by Curt Cherry, showed there were then 532 residences on Big and Little Detroit, of which 427 were year-round (permanent residents), and 95 were seasonal (summer) residents.

The zoning encounters were complicated by the need to deal with both county and city regulations. By 1972, the City's regulations prevailed on all of the north shores of Detroit, while the somewhat less stringent County rules applied to the rest of the lake. Generally LDA was not eager to take strong action on these matters because of the risk of alienating some LDA members. The 1974 Directors adopted a policy which indicated that while LDA opposed zoning changes (to facilitate more intensive development), and variances in general, resistance to specific instances of such changes were to be left to directly impacted neighbors.

But the most critical issue confronting LDA, in the 1970's, was sewage treatment.. By the beginning of the decade, the existence of deleterious septic impacts on Detroit's lake water quality was generally accepted. That the majority of residences were year-round rather than seasonal exacerbated the effects of inadequate systems. Moreover, the *Statewide Shoreland Standards*, issued in 1971, imposed much more stringent regulations on shoreline septic treatment systems, giving lakeshore residents a stronger incentive to address sanitary waste management. An LDA survey in 1971 indicated strong support for a sewer system around Detroit Lake. LDA responded by focusing intently on the matter, and worked strenuously to develop an acceptable approach to dealing with the problem.

#### The LDA's 1971 Survey of Lakeshore Owners

368 in-person surveys conducted by high school students.(coordinated by Donald Hecock)

Some highlights of the results include:

- 268 responses were obtained from year-round residents; 100 from summer residents
- Of those residents not yet in the city. only 63 of 233 (about 24%) favored annexation.
- Approximately half of those with septic systems were located on the lake side of the residence
- Of those who responded to the question on when last their septic system was emptied, about 35% responded that it had been more than 3 years; about 20% said never.
- Over 100 responded that their well was within 50 feet of their septic system.
- Of those with wells, about 36% had them tested within last 2 years
- About 2/3rds were shallow wells.
- Only about 20% wanted LDA to resume mosquito spray
- About 75% of respondents favored development limits on lakeshore.
- Of those giving definitive answers 70% wanted a sewer system around the lake

Knapp was particularly dogged in his pursuit of alternatives, but was frustrated by rapidly changing regulations, the plethora of alternative organizational options, and the resistance of significant portions of the lake property owners to the costs. Also, three of four surveyed members opposed annexation by the City of Detroit Lakes.

Sewage systems were first raised as an LDA focus in the fall of 1970, and for much of the 1970's it appeared that a sewer district hosted by Lakeview Township offered the most acceptable opportunity for dealing with septic effluent that appeared to be impacting the lake. However, as the decade progressed, increasing amounts of Detroit's shoreline was annexed to the City, All of North Shore Drive and West Lake Drive were taken into the city and provided water and sewer services by 1972 (thus fulfilling another of Rogstad's 1964 Presidential goals), and parts of Shorewood Drive were added soon afterwards.

Nevertheless, early in 1979 the Lakeview Township option was still in play, and there was growing support to obtain a sewer system, around the rest of the lake, in part because of reports that weed growth and algae blooms had diminished along the Detroit's north shore after it was sewered. But a shift in Minnesota's Pollution Control Agency (PCA) policy that gave funding preference towards septic treatments and "cluster systems" was seen as a deal-breaker. Also the annexation of North Shore Drive properties as well as those along some shorelines on Little Detroit reduced the financial viability of the township approach. At LDA's 1979 Annual Meeting, though poorly attended, there was emerging evidence that annexation by the City, would be a preferred method of obtaining whole-lake sewage treatment.

	CHRONOLOGICAL DATA - SEWER SYSTEM
April 1971	Omigical gumunu unacentud to laboration
August 1971	Original survey presented to lake residents
ungust 13/1	Annual meeting - survey results
	232 favor of sewer system
	78 opposed to system 14 maybe
October 1971	41 no snewer
December 1971	Board met with Ramstad regarding formation of a sewer district
February 1972	Contracted Winston Larson to do a feasibility study
	Feasibility study data presented
March 1972	Open meeting concerning sewer system
April 1972	Town board meeting concerning sewer system
May 1972 . August 1972	Joint meeting - town board and Lake Detroiters Association Township meeting - Court House
February 1973	Township hired Wayne Ruona as liaison person
March 1973	Township interviewing engineering firms
May 1973	Township hired RCM, Inc., to do preliminary study
August 1973	Township presented information to membership at annual Meeting
September 1973	Preliminary plans presented to township board by engineers
October 1973	Application for grant funds prepared
January 1974	Township met with bonds broker
lay 1974	Funding not available until 1976 or 1977
lugust 1974	Annual meeting. Engineering representative presented information
	Township asked for vote: 34 - proceed without funding
	12 - proceed waiting for funding
	2 - opposed to system
September 1974	Open meeting on sewer system. Negative response to township wide sewer system
lovember 1974	Petition and information reviewed (to be sent to lake property owners)
ecember 1974	Petition mailed to property owners
anuary 1975	Second request regarding petition mailed
larch 1975	PCA announced release of funds. Third request mailed on petition

A chronology of LDA experience with pursuing a sewer system from 1971-1976, prepared by Dr. James Knapp.

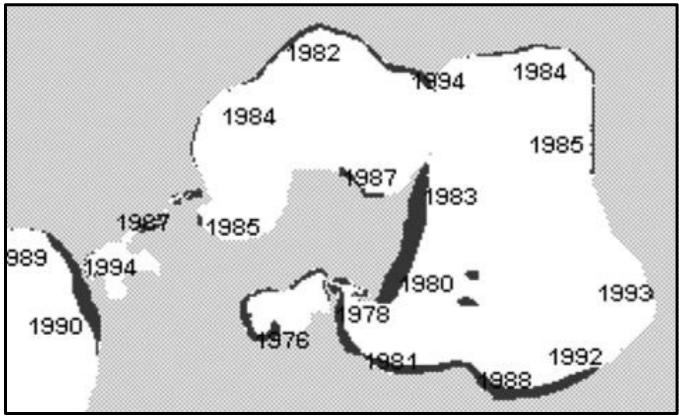
Soon after that annual meeting, in September 1979, Dr. Knapp resigned as president and member of the LDA board. At the 1980 annual meeting, in comments in response to his receipt the *Friend of the Lake* award, Knapp displayed his frustration over lack of progress on the sewer system, reminding the association that they had set out to provide an adequate sewer system, and the project "is no further along"; he further advised that "waiting for government aid was a mistake: a sewer system put in by the people ten years ago would have cost \$500,000, and would now cost \$2,000,000.

Knapp went on to push for City annexation of the subdivision in which he lived – that annexation, of a portion of the west shore of Big Detroit, took place in 1985

#### Other Important Events of the Period

Sometime in the 1960's, and from some unknown source, Curlyleafed Pondweed entered Lake Detroit. Its growth habit departed from typical lake weeds, as it seeds in the fall, grows profusely in the late May and June, and dies in early July. A deep water plant, its demise is accompanied by the release of long strands of plant material which accumulate in large mats, sometimes causing fish kills; The mats blow around the lake until coming to rest along some unlucky property owner's beach. This was the lake's first experience with Aquatic Invasive Plants.

An important event of the 1970's was the discovery of Flowering Rush in Deadshot Bay (Curfman). It was probably introduced by accident, likely as a nursery plant thought to be suitable for near-shore floristic displays. While its significance was not understood at the time, by the end of the decade the invasive plant had made its way into Nason Bay and along the "flats" of the west shore of Big Detroit. At that time few contemplated that Flowering Rush would become so widespread as to interfere with boating and swimming in many parts of the lake.



Spread of Flowering Rush, 1976-1994 (Source: PRWD)

## Annexation and More from 1980 to 1995

It is pretty clear that in the early 1980's LDA suffered from the loss of Dr. Knapp's efforts. At the 1980 annual meeting 21 persons were present. The main item of business (besides the FOL award presentation to Knapp) was announcement that the township had received a grant from the M PCA to do some studies that would assist in selecting an appropriate approach to sewage management for the lake. Rather than a sewer around the lake, the research seem aimed at guiding designers and engineers towards a project comprised of localized components, including onsite conventional septic and drain-field system, and clusters of such systems. Board members and many other LDA members were skeptical of this approach.

LDA was not without leadership at this time – Hill, Hillman, Hoover, Evans, Sanford, Robbins, Christ, Hamilton and Fritz were Board members. John Emery was a member for a while, and Clem Tevogt began his 18 years of service as a LDA board member in 1980 (he already had been active as a LDA committee member since the early 1950's). It may also be of interest that this period saw a significant increase in the roles of women active in the organization. In the 1970"s Joan Swanson was the only woman who served as an officer or board member (for 10 years as Secretary). In the early eighties Kathy Fritz and Mary Ann Evans joined the eight male directors. But male domination faded by the end of the decade, with the addition of Nancy Henke and Ginny Imholte, and, by the mid-1990's, the board (then 14 members) was comprised of 50% women.

LDA supported a number of continuing programs such as renting rearing ponds, stocking walleye, and improving channel markings.

Beginning in 1980 the MPCA conducted the plume studies of septic effluent being discharged to the lake. The results conclusively showed that septic systems were leaching nutrients to the lake.

Directors lodged a complaint with the City about "illegal landfills" along the Pelican River (1981), lobbied against the establishment of a public access on Deadshot Bay (1982), and opposed a sea-plane base on Lake Detroit (also in 1982). Directors considered, but took no action on a decision to stock Muskies in Lake Detroit in 1987. LDA lent support to a city plan to re-route traffic in the public beach area in 1990. In 1991 they also advocated for City annexation of Zitzow Addition. It was believed that the subdivision's failing septic systems were leaching nutrients into the Pelican River.

There is some doubt that the 1953 channel or the 1966 repairs had actually achieved the promised six foot depth. In any case, boats continued to grow in size, weight, and draft. There was probably some deterioration in the channel due to wave and ice action. By the late 1970's and early 80's, there were new pressures to widen, deepen, and lengthen the channel. This time the Pelican River Watershed District was called upon to undertake a project to solve channel problems. The project which also included some work on the Pelican River between Sallie and Melissa, was greatly complicated by new regulations prohibiting disposal of dredged material spoils in the lake. In the end, the excavated materials from the channel, were carried by barge to the Highway 10 public access to be hauled away for disposal. The project extended over several seasons, mainly because of contractor defaults; the channel, as we know it today, was finally declared complete in June, 1984.

In 1989, PRWD established a harvesting project for Lake Detroit, long advocated by LDA. At that time there had been such a project on Lake Sallie and Melissa for over 20 years, originally justified on the grounds of nutrient reduction by removal of plant mass from the lake. Research had shown that nutrient reduction was insignificant. The Melissa-Sallie project was reauthorized as a project to provide enhanced boating and swimming. These aims were main components of the Detroit Project as well, but control of Flowering Rush was added as a project purpose. Harvesting was expanded to include Dead Shot Bay. Roadside pickup of aquatic plant material was included as a part of the project.

#### Finally, a Tram

The tram which carried boats between Sallie and Muskrat lake was finally put in operation in 1988 as a result of prolonged efforts by the *Pelican River Restoration and Navigation Association*, a volunteer organization envisioning restoration of navigation along the whole of the original Pelican River Chain of Lakes waterway from Detroit to Pelican Lake. Among the leaders of that group were prominent Lake Detroiters' members Clem TeVogt and Tom Rogstad.

For 25 years prior to that opening, LDA had been actively promoting the project. As mentioned, in 1963 LDA president Tom Rogstad had called for restoring operation of the old locks to working order and began working with the City of DL to that end. In 1964, Lake Detroiters advocated improvements to the navigability of the channel by interceding with the City to remove the low-water dam at the Little Detroit outlet, and with MNDOT to make the new Highway 34/59 Pelican River culvert large enough for boat traffic. In 1965 it advocated with the County to ensure that the West Lake Drive (CSAH 22) culvert also was large enough for boat traffic. In 1966 LDA petitioned PRWD, the new watershed district, to establish a navigable route from Detroit to Melissa.

#### **Towards Annexation**

But sewage treatment remained a central and growing concern in the 1980's.

Whereas LDA's 1971 survey showed that only 24% of non-city lakeshore residents wanted annexation to Detroit Lakes, by 1982, LDA began actively pursuing annexation to the City of Detroit Lakes as a means of obtaining a modern sewer (and water supply) system. By 1987 A stated LDA goal was annexation by the City of Detroit Lakes of those parts of Big and Little Detroit that are not already annexed, for purposes of supplying sewer and water.

from LDA Newsletter, 1987

# DETROIT LAKE SEWER LINE EXTENSION

The most frequent question asked by property owners on the lake is, "What can I do about the weeds?" Approaches such as harvesting, chemical treatment or dredging are best bandaid approaches to the problem. These methods attack the result of the problem, not the cause. The weed problems on lakes are caused by nutrient enrichment of the lakes from sources such as agricultural runoff, lawn fertilizing and leaching of nutrients into the lake from septic systems. One pound of phosphate will fuel the bloom of 500 lbs. of algae. Until the nutrient enrichment of the lake is stopped or greatly curtailed, the weed problem will increase. Cutting down on the amount of lawn fertilizer used close to the lake and hooking all residences to a sewage collector system will be big steps in the right direction for overall lake weed control.

By the mid-eighties it was clear that the state-funded township approach was not a satisfactory solution to a majority of residents, LDA members or not. In part this was due to the increasing number of year-round residents who were prone to place a greater value on services other than sewage disposal – street maintenance, police, fire and water supply were often mentioned. Also the previous annexations, North Shore Drive, and portions of Shorewood, significantly reduced the financial viability of a township approach.

Sunset Park and Wildwood Beach along Shorewood Drive were annexed by the City in 1985. At the 1985 Annual LDA Meeting, City Manager Grabow was invited to discuss the matter of annexation. He laid out the alternative methods of annexation, and the relevant steps. A straw vote of those present favored annexation to the City by a three-to-one margin, though it is was understood that this result was not necessarily an accurate representation of the LDA membership of lakeshore residents as a whole. That the annexation/sewer issue generated strong interest is indicated by membership which reached, a then, record of 213 in 1987.

By the end of the 1980's, the city limits extended from the Holiday Inn westward along North Shore and West Lake Drives, and around Little Detroit along Shorewood Drive except for a portion of "the flats". Deadshot Bay, the South and East shores of Big Detroit remained in the township.

Though LDA leadership was convinced of the need for a whole lake sewer system to be provided by the City of Detroit Lakes, that did not mean that all members, let alone non-member lakeshore owners, supported that view. Citizen groups emerged that either favored or opposed annexation to the City of the remaining Lake Detroit shores. And of course Lakeview Township, fearing the loss of more territory and population was opposed to the notion that its territory would be annexed. For its part, the City (as Briggs notes) tried to maintain a neutral position. It did not seek to annex, but neither did it oppose specific annexation requests.

As the specific annexation proposal and petition emerged, it involved 841 acres which included all the remaining shoreline property along Shorewood Drive (and White Clover Rd), about seventy percent of the shoreline and nearby lands around Deadshot Bay, all of South and East shores of Big Detroit to and including the Overlook. The area contained 210 permanent (year-round housing units) and a population of 510.

An informal group of LDA Directors, including Clem TeVogt, Ginny Imholte, Nancy Henke, John Quam and Curt Cherry, laid out a plan for gathering the necessary pro-annexation signatures. The process took many months, and involved media from Fargo. Eventually, the annexation-favoring petition was signed by 264 of the 491 residents who were eligible to participate in the process. Opposition groups, including the *Clean Lakes Association, several businesses, and numerous residents* made various arguments against annexation, but especially raised doubts about the argument that failing septic systems were the cause of the lake's problems. MPCA presented the view that the annexation (and a whole lake sewer) would stimulate more near-lake development, thereby offsetting sewer project benefits. Strenuous objections were also raised about the projected tax and assessment costs that would be conferred by the City. Others objected to the annexation procedure, and called into question the legitimacy of the petitions.

#### **Former City Attorney Bill Briggs comments:**

There were multiple annexations over the years and they tend to blur together. Annexations began marching in relatively short stretches around the west and south sides of Little Detroit Lake as groups of lakeshore owners asked to become part of the city -- primarily to improve their sewer and water services.

The hearings were hotly contested and divisive with friends and neighbors being on opposite sides of the issue. Each time there was a new petition, the Minnesota Municipal Board had to go through the hearing process and troop up to Detroit Lakes to hold a contested hearing. The hearing board consisted of the Municipal Board plus two Becker County Board members appointed as ex-officio voting members for purposes of that hearing. Eventually, the Municipal Board became tired of the whole thing and the Municipal Board on its own initiative set up an annexation hearing to consider annexation of the entire lake. It failed.

The City's position during those times was to be reactive to requests for annexation but not to pursue annexation in the absence of a property owners' petition. As a result, the Municipal Board's hearing on a major annexation was a flop. As I recall, the City took no position in that matter and there was no significant organized support for it. The township, of course, objected to it and it all ended with a thud

It was a difficult time for property owners and I trust for members of the Lake Detroiters. People presented testimony about the need for sewer and water utilities and for a municipal effort to improve lake water quality. Others presented testimony about the cost burden being so high that they would be forced to sell. Some just did not want to be within the city and subject to its ordinances and land use controls and what were perceived to be a higher regulatory and tax burden. Some feared the city dog catcher would cause problems for them. I am sure that some Lake Detroiter members strongly favored annexation and some vehemently opposed it. I do not recall what the official Lake Detroiters position was at the time.

In late 1989, having obtained pro-annexation signatures from more than 50% of the property owners, the City proceeded to hold a public hearing on the matter. From there the proposal was turned over to the State Municipal Board which has the authority to grant or deny annexation proposals. In a somewhat surprising move in late 1990, the State Municipal Board, consisting of three Governor-appointed members and two from Becker County, rejected what they termed a "valid" proposal possibly because the City did not provide sufficient "base" for the decision.

A few months later, in March, 1991, the State Municipal Board met again and gave the annexation a preliminary approval by a narrow 3-2 vote. It is unclear what caused the change of opinion, and a final vote (4-1) authorizing the annexation occurred on May 31, 1991; the South and East Shores of Big Detroit were annexed to the City.

It took another 3 years before most of Lake Detroit's shoreland residents and businesses were connected to city sewer, except for a few exceptions allowed by the City. These exceptions were mostly accorded to residents who had recently upgraded and inspected systems. Even with these exceptions, it was an enormous achievement for which LDA could rightly claim an important role.

#### **COLA Arrives on the Scene**

In 1990, a significant new player emerged - the Becker County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA), was founded to address common problems of Lake Associations throughout the County; LDA board members Imholte and Henke were instrumental in its creation, and LDA was one of the original member associations. COLA was not only to have an impact on how lake associations grew and functioned, but the organization also was destined to change how residents and officials saw lake residents and lake problems

"COLA's goal is to assist in the proper development, improvement and preservation of lakes and their shoreland. COLA through its membership will identify environmental problems in area lakes. COLA will present association positions to government agencies and private individuals to bring appropriate action. COLA will provide its membership a direct link to county government where local land use decisions and policies are made. "

From 1st COLA Newsletter, August, 1991

COLA swiftly grew to 31 member lake associations, representing 42 lakes and with over 3000 lake association members.

Nancy Henke served as LDA's representative to COLA for several years, and as the organization's treasurer for most of that time.

One early programmatic emphasis of COLA was to help lakes establish their water quality monitoring program. Accordingly, LDA re-activated a clarity monitoring program in 1991, and in 1992 joined in a COLA chemistry monitoring protocol facilitated by state matching funds. In 1991 LDA board member Ginny Imholte assumed responsibility for carrying out monitoring on Big and Little Detroit Lake, a task which she continued for ten years.

Through a variety of mechanisms, COLA served to educate and inform. Annual Lake Festivals were designed to bring state and national experts to address lake association members, as well as state and local officials. COLA joined LDA in supporting "Waterwatch" an award-winning interdisciplinary middle-school curriculum project focused on lakes.

Sally Hausken served as LDA's representative to COLA starting in 1994, and as the organization's newsletter editor and executive committee member. For most of those years she edited quarterly 8-page newspaper-style publications distributed to 3000 lake association members, and dozens of state and local officials.

COLA was a key resource for lakes associations and their members. COLA officials became sufficiently knowledgeable to become influential, as participants and leaders of various committees, especially those involved with county planning.

#### **PRWD Redoubles its Lake Water Quality Focus**

Towards the end of this period, there occurred several important events involving PRWD. The first full-time administrators were hired to carry out PRWD programs in 1991, and 1993. In 1994 PRWD completed a five-year Diagnostic and Feasibility Study of Lake Detroit. This Clean-Water Act research identified many of the remaining sources of nutrients reaching the lake, including a significant source emanating from the accumulation of phosphorus-rich sediments in the deeper parts of the lake, referred to as "internal loading".

The results of the study and its recommendations for improving lake water quality were incorporated into the PRWD's 10-Year Management Plan approved by the State in 1994. The plan identified the major contributors to water quality problems in lakes, within its jurisdiction, including Detroit lakes.

incomplete treatment of sanitary wastes, especially septage
inadequately treated storm water effluent
nutrient enriched surface discharges to lakes and streams
nutrient enriched groundwater discharges to lakes and streams
removal of wetlands which serve as natural sediment and nutrient buffers
excessive aquatic plant biomass in lake littoral zones
channelization of drainageways, and drainage of wetlands which enhances sediment and nutrient discharges to lakes
existence of nutrient-enriched wetlands and lake-bottom sediments wherein nutrients are released under conditions of unusual runoff or anoxia

Pelican River Watershed District 1994 Revised Management Plan

The plan went on to identify the following specific management activities for Lake Detroit.

- improved stormwater runoff treatment, especially in the north side of Lake Detroit,
- a campaign to lower the use of phosphorus fertilizers,
- streambank and shoreline stabilization and protection,
- more education about helpful shoreline practices,
- enhanced water quality monitoring and diagnostic efforts,
- restoration of Rice Lake,
- · control of flowering rush.
- vigorous enforcement of shoreland protection regulations..

#### 1995 - 2009: Information and Influence

During much of its early history LDA described its organizational purposes and goals in fairly specific project terms – killing mosquitos, eradicating weeds, dredging and marking the channel, stocking walleyes, and more. (1964 stood as an important exception for outlining broader goals aimed at solving larger underlying problems as in the cases of obtaining annexation to deal with septic nutrient loads, and developing a more appropriate form of government.) By the mid-1990's, having finally achieved success in its 30-year quest to obtain sewage treatment of lakeshore properties, and with the PRWD gradually gaining strength and dealing with nutrient problems and aquatic plant management, LDA shifted its emphasis in the dual directions of educating its members and officials, and gaining greater influence with local agencies and officials. A 1998 Mission Statement reflects this broader more inclusive, and less specific, mandate for LDA.

#### **Lake Detroiters' Mission Statement**

The Lake Detroiters Association shall have as its overall purpose, the promotion, education, beautification and protection of the water quality of Big and Little Detroit Lakes, including waters running into and therefrom. This nonprofit Association shall work to monitor and report water quality conditions, as well as participate as a member of the Becker Coalition of Lake Associations. The Lake Detroiters Association supports the city and county enforcement of laws, ordinances and regulations.

#### Information

COLA played an important role in improving citizen's and official's understandings of lakes, lake processes, lake problems, and their solutions. And LDA was not shy about utilizing COLA acquired materials and programs to mount their own educational campaigns.

Drawing on various sources, but especially information gathered by COLA, LDA expanded its educational efforts to both its constituents and to the larger community. For much of this period, LDA distributed semi-annual newsletters, entitled "Lake Detroit Living" which covered a wide range of lake-related topics. These newsletters went to all members (which during this period varied in the range of 190 to 250), and to other shoreline residents and officials in the community.

A 2006 major undertaking was to create an expanded edition of the Lake Detroiter, one which included member directory information, as well as considerable amount of historic information about Lake Detroit and LDA activities.

Meetings featured speakers and experts providing information from PRWD, DNR, and other agencies. Information boxes were installed at public accesses to communicate with transient boaters about boating regulations, boatmanship, and more. Similar materials were placed in sporting goods and bait shops in the area.

LDA was also an avid supporter of an award-winning Detroit Lakes Middle School Program called "Water Watch", an interdisciplinary curriculum involving social and natural sciences, English and mathematics. The program involved lake water quality testing, research on water issues, and publication of a year-book. LDA was convinced the program not only informed students about important lake issues, but also provided their parents and local officials with new information. Besides giving funds to the program, LDA awarded Waterwatch a *Friend of the Lakes* award in 1998.

Individual directors and other association members assisted elementary schools, particularly 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Rossman in their annual Water Festivals.

Fall socials became a part of LDA's life for a few years, and the Board also promoted neighborhood gatherings on the assumption that such interactions were consistent with the Mission statement, fostering enhancement of knowledge among LDA members.

#### Influence

Involvement with other agencies and like-minded groups was also emphasized. A strong commitment to COLA was one. LDA directors and members occupied important positions on the PRWD Board of Managers and the City and County Planning Commissions. LDA directors Nancy Henke, Ginny Imholte, Duane Erickson, Judy Stowman and Mara Bergen all served terms on the City Planning Commission. LDA'ers Tom Oaks and Ken Christianson represented the City on the County Planning Board. Ginny Imholte had been a Manager of the PRWD since 1991. A past LDA president, she succeeded Sally Hausken as COLA Representative, was appointed to the City planning commission member, and went on to service on the State's Board of Water and Soil Resources. The deliberations of such organizations were routinely reported at Directors' and Annual meetings, and were summarized in newsletters to the membership. Annual meetings also focused on disseminating information on activities of COLA, Planning Commission, PRWD,

#### City Council Meeting.

The Lake Detroiters appeared at the April 4, 2000.

City Council meeting of Detroit Lakes to present several items. We discussed the importance of water quality. Sighting too many variances within the shoreland impact zone causes decreased water quality. We asked to have the Shoreland Ordinances updated or better clarified. Becker county has just completed this process.

Sally Hausken pleaded for the reduction of variances in relation to water quality. Ginny Imholte discussed Storm Water issues for the City of DL. We also asked for City Law Enforcement on the waters throughout the summer months. And suggested regular street sweeping schedules for the roads around the lake, which the Mayor commented that he too asks for this service each spring. Thanks! The council will be updating us as each item is addressed.

Report from Spring 2000 Lake Detroit Living

These multi-network connections helped the organization gain traction in its concerns about We-Fest lake bathers (1997) and the Annexation of the Zitzow Addition in 1996. Likewise, in the late 1990's, a city committee, which included LDA representatives, approved the Northeast Detroit Lakes Stormwater project which in 1997 resulted in the construction of five ponds to capture and filter storm sewer effluent before it reached the Pelican River and Lake Detroit.

The greater agency involvement put the LDA board in a better position to obtain answers to member inquiries, and to transmit member complaints to the proper authority. A 2003 survey of member concerns drew 146 responses, which assisted LDA's Board in developing general lobbying strategies. The board also responded to support specific member requests, the desire for improved street sweeping, complaints about storm sewers overflowing to Little Detroit, and illegal tree removal from a shoreline, as examples.

At the time of annexation and sewer/water construction, the city had granted temporary waivers to some lakeshore owners who had recently upgraded their septic system, or had other reasonable arguments for not immediately connecting to the system. The board kept pressure on the city to ensure that such holdouts were eventually attached, and over several years most were.

From 1998 LDA's Spring Newsletter "Lake Detroit Living"

Remember the Annexation? by Judy Stowman. With the annexation of the remainder of Big and Little Detroit Lakes several years ago, most residents on the lake opted to disconnect their wells and septic systems and hook up to the city water and sewer services. Now, four years later, 14 residences remain in non-compliance with the city ordinance governing septic systems within the city limits. City Administrator, Rich Grabow, indicates that although most property owners were given one year to hook up to the city system, there were several property owners who were given extensions of time because of recently installed systems. Those extensions have long expired, and letters have now been sent by the city to those property owners, as well as others who are not in compliance with the ordinance regulating septic systems, informing them that they have 90 days to comply with the city ordinance or face fines. Knowing the detrimental effects of antiquated, inefficient septic systems on the lake, Lake Detroiters will continue to support the strict enforcement of the ordinance regulating septic systems.

#### LAKE DETROITERS ASSOCIATION

Whereas, the City of Detroit Lakes and the civil engineering profession 30 years ago recognized the need and advantage of control of street storm water run off of the city streets into the Little Detroit Lake and:

Whereas, the control of negative environmental effects of such storm water run off are essential to protect the beauty and public enjoyment of our major community focal point and,

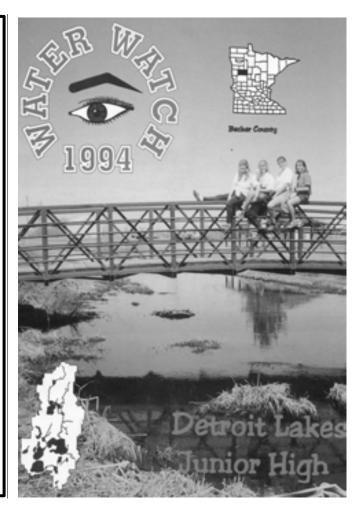
Whereas, improvement of existing conditions would add to the scenic beauty and attractiveness of public usage along with commensurate economic benefits and;

Whereas, no storm sewer or run off control exists from Legion Road to Munson Lake Road and beach erosion and lake pollutants are severely affecting lake water quality and;

Whereas, recent improvements on East Shore and South Shore have motivated significant investment by private property owners to enhance their property and provided increased property values that result in very significant real estate tax revenues to the city, county and school entities, therefore,

The Board of Directors of the Lake Detroiters Association by resolution endorse and submit to the City Council of Detroit Lakes a request for action to initiate a study and implementation of plans for construction of storm sewer and street improvements for the area from Legion Road to Munson Lake Road (County Road # 6). Present plans for resurfacing should be postponed pending engineering study. Legal study should be made to determine shoreline ownership and right of way boundaries. West Lake Drive is a county state aid road and is eligible for major financial participation by Mn/DOT. Transportation Enhancement Projects are now being solicited by Mn/DOT to establish bike paths, widening and striping road shoulders for bicycles, pedestrian pathways and other options. Planning and design should include shoreline treatments to prevent continued erosion and water quality decline and appropriate landscaping.

June 25, 1998 — Resolution passed unanimously by action of the Board of Directors at the meeting this date.





#### Citizen Survey Residents Advocate More Stringent Regulations

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# Regulations Change To Protect Aquatic Plants

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Regulations Cost, on Page 4.

# Detroit Lake Living

Spring labor Namedation of the Labor Detroitors Association

#### Annual Meeting:

You are invited to your lake association annual meeting Saturday, June 13, 1998.

Come to the Detroit Lakes City Administration building on Roosevelt Avenue at 9AM.

Join your lake friends for coffee, doughnuts and a brief meeting.

#### 1997-98 Board of Directors

President - Mars Bergen - 847-0768 Vest Princ - Gary Adt - 847-1294. Treasure - Gard Ramby - 847-4549 Saccessry - July Howtens - 847-8652 DOLA Rep - Sully Howtens - 847-8652 Dick Cargoon, The Orbertalds. Harlon Helly, Gine Blake, Gener Lebelde, Bob Nation, and Clem TaVoya.

Mission Statement: The Late Demoires Association shall have as it's overall purpose promotion, admiration, benefitiation, and personne of the water quality of ling 6 Links Detroit Lakes, to laiding words nothing this and therefore. The overprish Association that work to manters and report water sparks conditions, as well perimpers as souther of the Booker County Condition of Luky Associations. The Luke Detection functioning supports the sity and county inflavoration of laws. or financias, and regulations.

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#### Tidbits and Updates.

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City Industrial Park.

#### **LDA Supports Projects Too**

LDA invested heavily in education and influence, but did not entirely abandon projects or project support. In 2001, LDA helped plan the conversion of Dunton Locks to a fish-friendly Dunton Rapids, and paid 50% towards the cost of improved sandbar channel markers and lighting. LDA also investigated various activities and projects. For several years the possibility of silt-removal was studied. That idea was abandoned due to restrictive regulations and costs.

In the late 1990's, high water damaged shorelines, and led many property owners to invest in major rip-rap projects. LDA provided reliable information to members on shoreline repair regulations and procedures.

Shoreline damage from ice along West Lake Drive

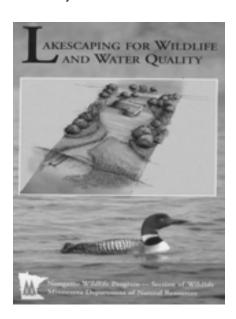


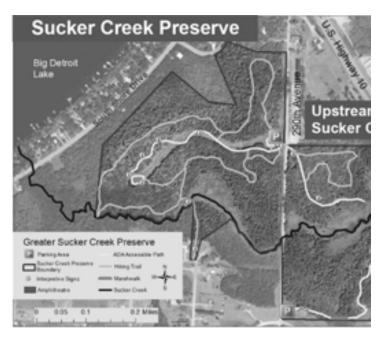


The high water situation in the 1990's also led LDA to revisit a long-standing concern about mis-management of the Dunton Locks dam. Little action grew out of the complaint, and the matter became moot when, in 2001, the dam was replaced with a Dunton Rapids to permit fish passage for spawning purposes. Detroiters were assured that the new structure would not worsen the high water problems. In any case, water levels could no longer be managed under the new arrangement.

Photo by PRWD

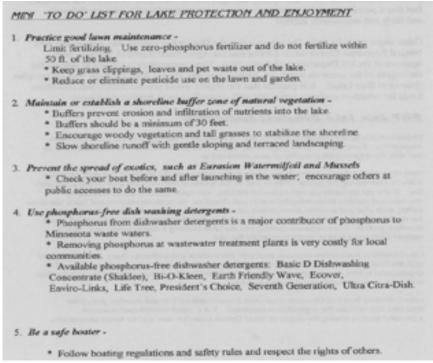
In the late 1990's the Association embraced the concept "Lakescaping" which was popularized by a DNR publication that offered advice about lake-friendly vegetation management. For several years LDA participated in COLA's "Restore the Shore" program - trees and shrubs were made available for inexpensive purchase by members for shoreline plantings. LDA also donated trees to a beautification project on the City Beach, and supported an "Adopt a River" program for the Pelican River.





With LDA member's Sally Hausken's leadership and persistence, LDA gave strong support to the creation of Sucker Creek Preserve, a 64 acre tract which included a portion of Sucker Creek. The parcel contained important upland and wetland ecosystems deemed important to maintaining the flow of high quality water to Big Detroit. LDA assisted with project promotion and fundraising, both for the purchase of the property, and for its development as a nature park. The first portion of the park was acquired by the city in 2001, an additional 52 adjacent upstream acres were added later. For her service to Lake Detroiters and her work on the Preserve, Sally received the Friend of the Lake" award in 2003.

LDA also continued to support various community programs and services such as the Chamber of Commerce Fireworks Display, Pavilion restoration, Becker Dive and Rescue Team, public beach beautification efforts, community gardens, and more.



2003 spring newsletter

## **Zoning issues**

LDA generally favored more restrictive zoning regulations, and consistently advocated against variances and zoning changes which increased the intensity of lakeshore development. The organization generally avoided taking positions on specific cases, sometimes redirecting attention to the broader issue. Nor did its efforts always bear fruit when it did. Faced with a proposal to expand docking facilities at Long Bridge Resort, LDA was unsuccessful in its request for the city to develop a dock policy. In 1998, confronted with proposed improvements to West Lake Drive, the LDA Board failed to get a study of stormwater management along the roadway. In 2005, LDA objected strenuously to the process whereby re-construction of a cabin within 24 feet of the lakeshore was allowed. It did achieve success from an objection to a Big Detroit zoning change that would have converted some single residential to multi-residential.

#### Weeds and AIS

Lake Detroit weed harvesting grew from 520 tons in 1995 to a peak of 1820 tons in 2002, with LDA representatives' participation on a committee that set annual harvesting priorities. A decline began in 2003 as a result of changing DNR policies, and the realization that harvesting was an ineffective means of Flowering Rush control, and probably facilitated its spread. Not coincidentally, also In 2003, PRWD began experimenting with chemical treatment of Flowering Rush. By 2006, harvesting was restricted to removing floating weeds, and cleaning the City beach. Harvesting project funds were re-purposed to support chemical treatment. The popular road-side aquatic plant material pick-up continued.

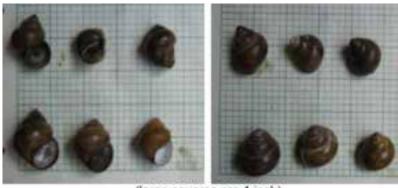
There had always been skeptics of the DNR's preferred method of Flowering Rush control – harvesting. Many LDA members believed that the use of the harvesters was creating more problems than it solved. Subsequent research showed that indeed the harvesters were at least somewhat responsible for spreading the plant, and this finding together with a change of DNR policy, and a strenuous public relations campaign ("Crush the Rush") led by LDA members, led to discontinuation of harvesting and the start of experimentation with herbicide methods of control in 2002.



Nason Bay Flowering Rush Herbicide test site, 2003

About this time, there was growing awareness and fear about other Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Lake Detroit residents were already well-aware of the damage caused by Flowering Rush and Curlyleafed Pondweed, and Mystery Snails had appeared in 2005. But the lake had escaped the greatly feared Eurasian Milfoil infestations plaguing other Minnesota lakes. However, when Zebra Mussels were discovered in nearby Pelican Lake in 2009, the understanding of the potential impact of additional AIS impacts quickly escalated.

## **Mystery Snails**



(large squares are 1 inch)

RDH

Flowering Rush increasingly interfered with boating and other recreational activities. Nevertheless, as suspicions mounted that harvesting equipment was actually spreading Flowering Rush, harvesting was slowed, then stopped. However, State regulations and permitting requirements discouraged wide-spread use of chemical and manual methods of control. LDA joined with other citizens to protest restrictions in the *Crush the Rush* campaign. In 2008-9.



LDA

## A More Aggressive PRWD

In 2003, PRWD had issued new regulations which significantly increased restrictions on near-shore activities, as well as on runoff from large-scale developments. The regulations also gave special attention to variances that were granted by City and County. Additional measures, related to runoff management, were often required in such cases..

In 2004, PRWD developed another 10 year plan. This plan set both District-wide goals for monitoring, regulations, phosphorus control and education, and additional specific goals focused on Lake Detroit:

- A. Manage the Rice Lake area, and its associated wetlands, in such a way as to reduce bio-available external phosphorus loads to Big Detroit. It is anticipated that such an improvement would reduce summer algae blooms, and improve clarity for Big Detroit, and may have some advantage to Little Detroit as well.
- B. Investigations of Big Detroit's internal loading problem will continue with the expectation that some amelioration of that situation may be possible. Reduction of present or future internal loadings would reduce summer algae blooms and improve clarity for Big Detroit, may also have some advantage to Little Detroit.
- C. Attempts to control exotic aquatic plants and other nuisance aquatic species will be evaluated and, working with DNR, Lake Detroiters, and the City of Detroit Lakes, an aquatic management plan will be developed. Herbicides and other measures will be considered as a full or partial replacement for mechanical harvesting. It may be necessary to re-formulate Project 1-C to ensure that it provides a useful administrative mechanism for continued aquatic plant management.
- Untreated urban stormwater discharges, including overflows from existing treatment systems will be further reduced by adding additional treatment and upgrading existing facilities.

It is noteworthy that first among these was, yet-another, restatement of Rogstad's presidential goals 42 years earlier. In 2008 the PRWD actually began acquiring easements for re-establishing Rice Lake.

#### Other Events Affecting Lake Detroit, 1995-2010

- Stocking of Sturgeon began (1997)
- Lake Detroit list as "impaired" for Mercury (1998)
- High water levels cause severe shoreline erosion (1997, 1998, 2005)
- Minnesota imposes greater restrictions on the use of phosphorus in lawn fertilizers(2002)
- Mystery Snails appear in Detroit (2005)
- Highway 10 Overlook Restoration Project (2008)
- Zebra Mussels found in Pelican Lake



April 26, 2009

## Dear Representative,

I represent about 400 tax-paying property owners on the shores of Detroit Lake in Becker County. We are greatly concerned about the presence of Flowering Rush, and Curty-leafed pondweed, two invasive species which already have interfered with the recreational uses on the lake replaced native aquatic vegetation in some areas. If untreated, these plants have the potential of greatly diminishing the values of the lake and our properties.

We are not satisfied with the response from Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources to our problems. Though not a problem of our making, the DNR has provided little financial or technical assistance to address the problem. Indeed, the DNR's Management Plan, formulated in the 1990's has made the problem worse. Moreover, the agency has increased restrictions on control efforts and has made it much more difficult to obtain permits for these efforts. Also, the agency has threatened to greatly increase the fees for such permits.

While we believe that the State should assume more responsibility, including financial, to control invasives in public waters, we recognize Minnesota's current financial problems make that unlikely. However, we do urge that the State should reduce the barriers for local efforts to deal with invasive problems.

- Permit fees should be eliminated for all aquatic invasive treatments. Eurasian Milfoil and Purple Loosestrife are exempt from permit fees, but other invasives are not. Given DNR estimates for permit fees in 2010, the cost of acquiring a permit for Detroit (about \$40,000), will exceed the treatment costs.
- 2. The requirement that riparian consent forms be obtained should be abolished in the case of invasives. This is the only instance in which the DNR unequivocally defers to riparian landowners regarding the public waters of the state. The requirement runs counter to other laws dealing with nuisance species (for example, farmers and other landowners must control thistie on their land whether they want to or not). In the case of Detroit Lakes, since Flowering Rush is a shallow-water plant, nearly every one of the 400 riparian landowners must be contacted, and must agree to treatment. This effort adds enormous amounts of time and expense to the efforts to deal with invasives. Failure to obtain all signatures may greatly reduce the efficacy of treatment efforts.

We urge you to consider helping to change these conditions so that we can move forward with control efforts that are effective and affordable.

Dick Alsop, President A similar letter was sent to State Senators, and a City of Detroit Lakes Council resolution with similar content was sent to state officials. It is worth mentioning here, again, that women comprised half the Directors' positions after the mid-1990's. Several women assumed important leadership roles –presidential terms included Ginny Imholte (1995 to 1997), Mara Bergen (1997 – 2003), Judy Stowman (2003-2004), and Gina Blake (2004-2005). Knapp (with 10 years as President), TeVogt, Fritz, Evans Swanson, Hillman, all had extended periods of LDA Board service, in the 1970's and 1980's. The number of long-serving board members greatly increased in the 1990's. TeVogt finished his 48 years of LDA service in 1998; Imholte, Bev Dobrinski, Blake, Bob Nelson, Judy Stowman, Sally Hausken, all began lengthy terms before 1990.

During this period LDA membership reached a record high of 230 in 1997. The Association's dues were raised to \$25 in 2000.

Death took long-serving key figures in the history of Lake Detroit and Lake Detroiters – Winston Larson in 2002, Tom Rogstad in 2004, James Knapp in 2008, and Clem Tevogt in 2010.

In 2008, Directors began consideration of restoring "Beach Captains" to stimulate interaction, increase membership and improve communications among members.

LDA ended the decade as a healthy and vibrant organization. It focused on providing information about water quality and water quality processes which impact Lake Detroit as well as to residents of the larger Detroit Lakes community. It advocated for measures which improved water quality in the lake, and promoted the adoption and consistent enforcement of zoning laws, regulations and policies. It had a heightened concern about AIS problems. And, through other organizations, it exercised significance influence in policy, legislative, and management decisions. It continued a long tradition of supporting lake-friendly projects.

# Why Join Lake Detroiters?

You are invited to join Lake Detroiters' Association. If you haven't already joined us, please read on to see why it is important to do so, and why the organization is worthy of your support and membership.

- You protect your property values by protecting your lake
- You have a voice in your concerns regarding the lake
- You voice will be heard at the City Planning Commission, the Pelican River Watershed Diustrict, Becker County, and the Becker County Coalition of Lakes Association.
- You have available to you a variety of free information such as shoreline landscaping, erosion control, water quality, and more

Established in 1943, Lake Detroiters' Association is one of the oldest organized lake groups in the area. It is dedicated solely to maintaining the quality of life in and on the waters of Big and Little Detroit Lakes.

If you are fortunate enough to live on the lake, you have inherited a responsibility to maintain and oversee these beautiful waters and shoreline. As more vacationers and boats use the lakes each year, and as more intensive development takes place in and around the lakes, the impact on water quality is evident. There are more weeds,

more shoreline erosion, more sediments into the lake, and a host of other issues concerning the lake.

Lake Detroiters' concerns itself with these issues and addresses them. It works closely with the Pelican River Watershed District, the City, the MN DNR, and the Coalition of Lake Associations. The organization is here to represent the land owners of the lake shores – without your membership and input, representatives voices cannot be heard.

Lake Detroiters' Board meets once a month from April through November. These meetings are open to the public.

A lake directory was published in 2006 and copies are still available. It contains property owners' information as well as historical articles, guidelines for shoreline landscaping, building/remodeling rules, and much else.

A spring newsletter is sent to each of the 600 lakeshore property owners. Help us to maintain a strong organization to help and know our lakes.

Lake Detroiters' Association membership is open to every lakeshore property owner on Big and Little Detroit Lake, Deadshot Bay (Curfman) and others with property within 1000 feet of the these waterbodies.

from 2009 Newsletter

# 2010-2019

At the beginning of the period, and following five years as Dick Alsop Presidency, LDA underwent a re-calibration of its mission and engaged in a strategic planning effort led by President Howard Hansen. As a first step, in August, a new, greatly shortened, mission statement was adopted:

# "To promote the protection and enhancement of Detroit Lake."

A short time later, at a special Board meeting, a matrix of strategic goals was developed:

2010-2011 LDA Strategies							
Financial  Develop Budget  Explore Non Profit Status  Establish membership revenue target	Membership  Target = 250 Members  Develop Class fee structure  Develop feeder system – succession planning						
Programs  Review Bylaws  Establish Beach Captains  Improve Communication  Web Development  Education	Relationships\Education  Targeting Tactics  Legislative  City\County						

These efforts helped to guide LDA considerations and programs over the next several years.

### **Reaching Out**

2010 also saw Lake Detroiters provide substantial help towards successful passage of a 1% increase in the Food and Beverage Tax with the understanding that a significant portion of the resultant revenue would be used to support Flowering Rush control measures. LDA efforts were rewarded with an annual payment towards the chemical treatments that led to lake-wide control of this invasive plant, and later to assist in the control of Curlyleafed Pondweed..

With the experience gleaned from dealing with Flowering Rush, Curlyleaf Pondweed, and more recently, with Mystery Snails, LDA and its membership Became increasing aware, and alarmed, that Lake Detroit would fall victim to more invasive species.

Accordingly, in 2011 and 2012 LDA joined in co-sponsoring two statewide AIS summits held in Detroit Lakes. Reports from several legislators and other state leaders, indicated that these summits directly led to enactment of 2011 and 2012 legislation which greatly tightened regulations to combat the spread of AIS.

Watercraft and water-related equipment can be thoroughly inspected (visually and <u>tactilely</u>) for Aquatic Invasive Species anywhere in the state by a consveration officer, licensed peace officer (Sheriff Deputies and Police) or a certified inspector.

Inspection includes full examination of watercraft and may result in the requirement of removal, drainage, decontamination or treatment to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species.

Law enforcement officers, Conservation Officers and <u>certified inspectors</u> can prohibit individuals from launching watercraft if the operator refuses to allow an inspection or refuses to remove/dispose of any Aquatic Invasive Species. (<u>Refusal to allow inspection or follow a removal order may result in civil citation and or a one-year suspension of watercraft license.</u>)

Water related equipment (includes portable bait containers) leaving public waters must be drained and all vegetation removed along with drain plug out for transport. In addition, watercraft must arrive at access with drain plug out, all water drained and no vegetation; failure to do so means that operator is in violation.

All bait containers must be drained before leaving access. Suggestion: bring water and a cooler to transfer bait.

Mobile inspection stations may be utilized for certified and thorough watercraft inspections to ensure Aquatic Invasive Species compliance.

A watercraft owner must obtain and display a DNR aquatic invasive species rules decal on a watercraft. After August 1, 2014, failure to display would become a petty misdemeanor violation.

Lake Service Provider permits are required which include training, examination and permit fee. Persons working for a permittee must also complete training.

Water related equipment (dock/lift) that is removed from infested waters may be stored on riparian (owner's) property for the winter (or repair) to be returned only to the same water from which it was removed.

ompliance with aquatic invasive species inspection requirements is an express condition of operating or transporting water related equipment in Minnesota.



from 2012 Lake Detroiter Newsletter

In 2011 LDA embarked on a volunteer inspection program. After training, the inspectors were deployed to various popular public access points on Lake Detroit. By 2012, LDA with special donations from some members, and support from the City and PRWD, instituted and administered a watercraft inspection program for several seasons. The program continues, but is now administered by the County, using state funds

The two summits greatly increased LDA visibility in the region and across the state. During this period LDA enlarged its focus to actively track regional and state issues, an effort which new Board member, Barbara Halbakken-Fischburg, was especially committed. She was able to influence emerging AIS legislation (2011, 2012, 2014) In her capacity as board member on with the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations (MNCOLA), and Minnesota Lakes and Rivers (MLR). Barb Halbakken-Fischburg became LDA president in August 2012.

Also in 2012 the DNR established a statewide AIS Advisory Committee to which Barb Halbakken-Fischburg and PRWD Administrator Tera Guetter were appointed. The Committee makes recommendations for improvement to the DNR's AIS program, and offers an opportunity for view exchanges on AIS issues and impacts among citizens, lakeshore property owners, boaters, municipalities, businesses and non-profits.

2012 legislation also provided funding for a University of Minnesota AIS Research Center. PRWD Administrator Tera Guetter was appointed to the Advisory Board which offers guidance on research directions. The same legislation also extended, expanded and increased penalties for AIS offenses. 2014 saw additional state AIS funding, including money directed, through the county, to assist in paying for a continued Lake Detroit inspection program.

President Halbakken-Fischburg, as well as others from LDA, continued to be involved and monitor local organizations and decision-making bodies, especially the Detroit City Planning Commission, COLA and PRWD. LDA Joined the Chamber of Commerce in 2011. 2012 saw formation of a County-wide AIS task force, among whose membership LDA board members were prominent. In 2012, LDA held an AIS community meeting to which attendance approached 100.

The LDA President's contacts brought state officials, legislators, and scientists to annual meetings and other community gatherings.

In 2016, LDA organized an early detection program for Zebra Mussels. PVC tubes were distributed to 65 LDA members to hang in the lake attached to a dock or boat lift. The strategy centered on an idea that early detection of yearling mussels might lead to successful treatment. Unfortunately in 2016, adult Zebra Mussels were discovered in Big Detroit at several places. The age and distribution led to the conclusion that treatment was not an option. The spread of Zebra Mussels has been dramatic, though spotty. By the end of the 2018 season, large populations were found in many locations resulting in various impacts on equipment maintenance and recreational activities.

\_\_\_\_\_In the fall of

2016, Moriya Rufer, an aquatic biologist, who monitored Zebra Mussel populations and their impacts on Pelican Lake, made the following predictions:

- It is unlikely that there will be noticeable populations in 2017; in 2018, and especially 2019 the infestations will become obvious. After about five years population increases will level off.
- Because zebra mussels remove algae from the water, it seems likely that Big Detroit will see a significant increase in clarity, especially after several years. Clarity is not so likely to increase in Little Detroit because it is a shallow lake (also clarity is already somewhat higher in Little Detroit).
- Aquatic plants may be found in somewhat deeper waters because increased clarity allows more sunlight penetration.
- Increased clarity may also make game fish more skittish some anglers have switched to night fishing. Game fish may be slower growing because the plankton they eat will have to compete with zebra mussels for food.
- Along sandy shores, zebra mussels will impose less of a nuisance because they tend to attach to hard surfaces. In sandy beaches, they are sometimes found in "clumps" attached to each other. They can be removed with a rake in the same way as mystery snails and clam shells.
- On more rocky shorelines, probably including the Sandbar between Little and Big Detroit, zebra mussel populations may prosper; swimmers/waders may need foot protection.
- Boaters will want to remove their boats and lower units of engines completely from the water to protect them from damage –
  e.g. raise the lifts.
- PVC Irrigation intakes do not seem to be so attractive to zebra mussels wipe every 2-3 weeks.
- It is important to keep in mind, according to Moriya, that each lake responds to zebra mussel infestations differently. Also, there are lake-to-lake genetic differences among zebra mussel populations.

# Let's

# CRUSH THE RUSH

# AND TAKE BACK OUR BEACH!!

Join the Detroit Lakes Area in the Fight ......

Flowering Rush has invaded our city beach. We are asking citizen volunteers to come and work/support this community effort!

WHERE: Meet at Pavilion Beach Area

WHEN: Friday, September 19th from 3PM to 5PM

2:30PM Coffee/cookies - Info session by DNR & Pelican River Watershed

3PM Flowering Rush removal in shallow water up to 2f feet

5PM Pizza

BRING/WEAR: (MARK YOUR TOOLS!!)
Aqua Gloves

Old tennis shoes/hip boots/chest waders Garden fork and/or rake Detroit Lakes

KDLM & KRCQ will have any weather related updates by Noon Friday

Flowering Rush is an exotic non-native invasive perennial plant that primarily grows on shoreline or shallow depths of infested lakes to a height of 2-4 feet. The rush-like dense, stiff and mostly erect stems emerge above water when not disturbed by watercraft. The triangular shaped stem may be topped with a cluster of light pink flowers. The root system can grow to be a massive underground rhizome formation.

NOTE: It is important to remove all root fragments

QUESTIONS: Call - 847-4236 or Email - lakedetroiters@gmail.com





Imolte photo

# **Control of Flowering Rush**

As previously discussed, in 2008 a group of local residents, including many LDA members and officers, called for a "*Crush the Rush*" to focus attention on the need to eliminate flowering rush from the public beach. Citizens of all ages showed up to help remove the plant by hand. A confrontation with DNR officials about regulations limiting hand removal ensued. But, the effort attracted widespread attention and support from the LDA members and other local citizens and local government officials. There could be no doubt that more aggressive approaches to controlling flowering rush were desired

The theory which had driven mechanical attempts to control Flowering Rush was that repeated harvesting would sap the plant's strength. Mechanical harvesting and hand-pulling were the only DNR-approved control methods. There was widespread, and growing, concern that these methods were insufficient to control the plant. From 2002 PRWD began very limited herbicide testing to control the plant. The DNR resisted widespread use of chemical control measures. Results of the herbicide tests were mixed. The "Crush the Rush" efforts, and other public relations and lobbying efforts by LDA and others led to a summit in St. Paul which brought together scientists and resource managers from across the country to forge a plan for a herbicide-based approach to Flowering Rush control.

In 2010, armed with irrefutable research from nationally recognized scientists, including the Army Corps of Engineers, PRWD was allowed to begin aggressive lake-wide treatments to control Flowering Rush. The efficacy of these treatments was closely monitored by outside researchers. These scientists also mounted companion studies to show that the Flowering Rush treatments were not damaging to native aquatic plant populations. The research showed that effective control was obtained, and that the treatment did not damage other plants.

LDA members loomed large in bringing Flowering Rush under control by 2015. Herbicide treatments continue under strict supervision of DNR's Section of Fisheries has statutory responsibility for aquatic plants in Minnesota.





2009 2012

One outgrowth of the Flowering Rush saga, was a movement to develop some overall guidance on future aquatic plant management. With input from LDA, DNR and the scientific community, Aquatic Plant Management Plans for Detroit and Curfman were developed by PRWD and accepted by DNR Fisheries. The following are the plan's general strategies:

- identify "operational test sites" for in situ experimentation with treatments for submerged FR sites; arrange for evaluation by professional.
- Identify and treat major isolated areas of homogeneous offshore Curlyleaf Pondweed infestations as resources permit
- 3. Undertake "lake-wide" treatments of submerged and emerged FR as treatment and research outcomes dictate
- Seek to after Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Rules to enhance riparian owners' ability to manage current, and curtail new, FR infestations through hand-removal.
- 5 Develop additional criteria to be used by riparian owners to manage infestations of natives and exotics to facilitate reasonable shoreline use and boat access
- Partner with City of Detroit Lakes to manage public beach swimming and boat-launch areas through existing chemical means in order to offset social/recreational and economic impacts
- 7. Protect native plant communities, especially emergent plants, such as Bulrush
- 8 Modify District Project 1C as needed, to reflect changes implicit in this plan.

Under the auspices of this plan, Flowering Rush "control" measures continue, and chemical treatment of Curlyleafed Pondweed commenced in 2016.

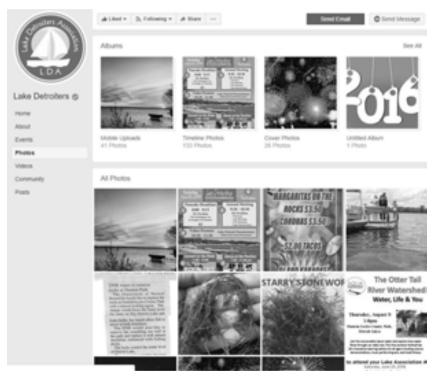
All of these AlS control efforts have been encouraged and strongly supported by LDA. AlS control efforts are sustained, in part, by funds from the City of Detroit Lakes derived from the passage of the Food and Beverage tax which LDA helped to pass. A significant additional source of funds is generated by PRWD assessments on lake shore properties as well as PRWD's establishment in 2010 of a special District-wide Lake Management Project. This project is used to raise funds for AlS prevention and treatment on Lake Detroit and elsewhere.

## **Towards a More Efficient Organization**

The LDA Directors sought to improve various aspects of the organization. E-mail became a prominent form of communication among board members, and others, after 2010. Also in 2010, LDA inaugurated its first website, and updated it in 2014. LDA's Facebook page had 2100 "followers" by 2017, and one photo received over 4000 "likes"...

LDA's bylaws were reviewed in 2015, and while it was recognized that they were due for a thorough overhaul, only minor changes were made to clarify membership definitions and to shift the fiscal year to a calendar year basis. The Articles of Incorporation were given greater attention, and revised to clarify LDA's claim for 501c4 non-profit IRS status.

In 2017 attention was given to revision of the committee structure and specific committee charges. The Board also contemplated the development of a policy to guide LDA's involvement in zoning actions, but no action was taken. Following an in-house audit, recommended changes to financial management were adopted.



Lake Detroiters Facebook Page (2019)

# 2017 LDA Committees and Committee Charges

Lake Protection and Use Committee will investigate and make recommendations concerning planning, programs, and regulations impacting lake and lake use.

Shoreland Protection Committee will investigate and make recommendations about conditions, regulations, public use areas, development proposals in the Shoreland Zone.

Aquatic Invasive Species Committee will investigate and make recommendations about preventing and managing AIS infestations

Government and Community Affairs Committee will investigate and make recommendations about how LDA can expand its involvement and influence in governmental and community organizations.

**Operations Committee** will investigate and make recommendations concerning the functioning and proper conduct of LDA

Marketing and Member Outreach Committee will assume responsibility for organizing and advising the Directors on membership, events, fund-raising, and youth programming

Examples committee interest to include water quality and watercraft monitoring, recreation safety and rules, fish-stocking and regulation, lake management options and plans, harvesting and lake vegetation plans, channel maintenance, water levels,

Examples of committee interest include activities, plans and regulations impacting protection, restoration and development of Shoreland, the creation and management of public uses areas. private accesses.

Examples of committee interest to include education and management strategies for current infestations (FR, CLPW, MS, ZM), prevention strategies for possible new infestations;, .

Examples of committee interest to include assessments of the efficacy and promotion of different types of involvement types (observers, committee-work, memberships, petitions, partnerships, funding, etc.) in local, state government agencies and other organizations (C of C, COLA, MLR, etc.)

Examples of committee interest to include bylaw revisions, officer and director recruitment, corporation compliance and tax status, association history, strategic planning, communications (website, Facebook), awards (FOL), and financial audits.

Examples of committee interest/action to include planning annual meeting and related events, beach-captain program, the member directory and newsletter, logo wear and other fundraising, youth program development

#### LDA LOGOS THROUGH THE YEARS



Logo adopted in 1950, and used until 2009



Used sporadically, 1999-2000



Logo Adopted in 2010

### **LDA Beach Captains**

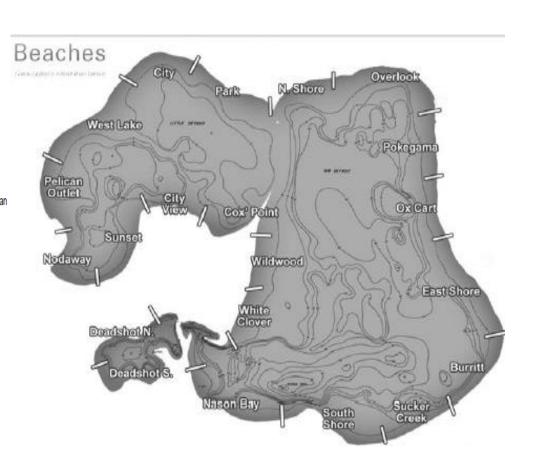
In 2010, the concept of utilizing Beach Captains to interact with and recruit members from among lake residents was resurrected. The concept had been employed to good effect in the 1950's, and the idea had been suggested as a postage-saving and member-increasing strategy on several previous occasions. After two years of careful planning and recruitment, the Beach Captain approach was finally implemented in 2012 season.

Lake Detroiters has adopted the Beach Captain approach in order to facilitate interaction and communication among lakeshore residents and their LDA officers and board members. This approach enables a face-to-face contact between representatives of LDA and residents.

Numerous volunteers have been willing to serve as Beach Captains.

Park Beach - Sue Hesby North Shore Beach - Bob, Maxine Nelson, Dick Hecock, Dennis Fuhrman Overlook Beach - Kim Green Pokegama Beach -Ox Cart Beach - Karen Hagen, Cheri Bergren East Shore - Judie Cherry, Carl Fingalson Burritt Beach - John Emery, Maureen Karsnia, Nancy Henke Sucker Creek Beach - Mike Chadinha, Mona Streyle South Shore Beach - Ginny Imholte, Patty Corwin Nason Bay Beach - Mary Green Deadshot Beach North - Colin Gedrose Deadshot Beach South - Cookie Friesen White Clover Beach - Jack Chivers Cox's Point/Wildwood - Curtis Jundt, John Cox City View Beach - Carol Bergren, Julie Raphael Nodaway Beach - Ruth Also Sunset - Laurie Olson and Mike Metelak West Lake City Beach - Dick Alsop West Lake Legion Beach - Jim Langemo Pelican Outlet Beach - Brad and Deb Wimmer

City Beach - Lyle Dahl



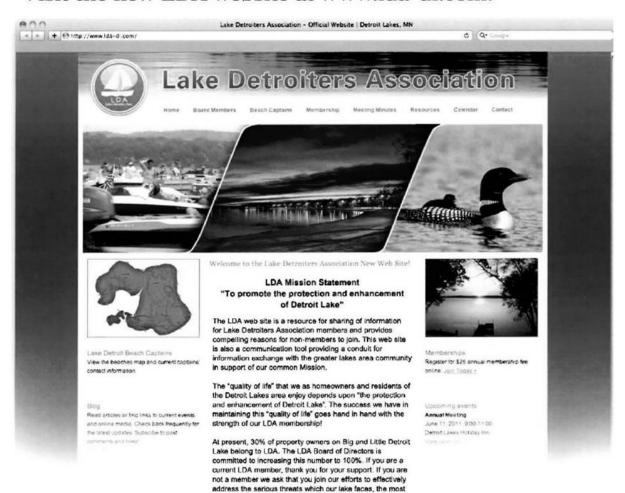
It is hard to underestimate the impact of the introduction of the Beach Captain program seen as, not only a member recruitment device, but as a mechanism for expanding influence of LDA among lakeshore residents. In addition to the leadership from President Halbakken-Fischburg, key players in developing and nurturing this successful program included Carol Bergren, and later Linda Wiedmann. From a corps of 34 in 2012, the group expanded to over 50, then settled at its current level of 64. Beach Captains were assigned 10-15 neighbors, to which they distributed 700 material-laden packets containing information about the lake and the notice of LDA's annual meeting. Beach Captains were encouraged to solicit memberships, collect dues, and update names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.



Hecock, Wimmer, Bursik, Strehle, Olson, Wiedmann, Halbakken-Fischburg, Disse, Cherry Solheim,

LDA's Directors, Fall, 2017

# Visit the new LDA website at www.lda-dl.com!



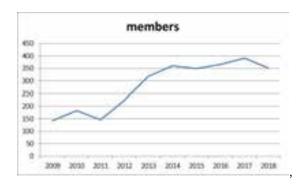
critical of which is Aquatic Invasive Species. Join today

Welcome Aboard!

2019

### **Membership Growth and Influence**

The Beach Captain approach had much to do with rapid membership growth during this period. While LDA had seen as many as 230 members (in 1997), membership in most years before 2010 had been in the 125-175 range. From 140-180 members at the start of the period, the full implementation of Beach Captain program in 2012 led to over 300 members, in 2013 and almost 400 in 2017.



An additional outcome, thought to be associated with the development of Beach Captains, has been creation of a cadre of members who were more informed about LDA as well as lake issues. Informal Beach Captain orientation sessions provided opportunities to meet other Beach Captains, discuss problems, ask questions, and vent frustrations. Also there is little doubt that interactions between the Beach Captains and their neighbors had the effect of increasing attendance at annual meetings which grew into the range of 200 after 2015.

#### Some Setbacks

During this period there was rapid growth in the number of resident watercraft on Lake Detroit. Some part of that growth is attributable to expansion of boat slips by commercial enterprises, as well as by planned unit developments which obtained lake access for non-riparian properties. There also was a significant increase in the intensification of shoreline development in the form of docking systems and boatlifts. In 2014, LDA formed a committee to study the matter and make recommendations to the Association on possible responses. Meetings were held, but unfortunately the committee made little progress and the effort was discarded.

LDA continued an informal policy of monitoring zoning administration and occasionally making recommendations about specific actions contemplated by the City's Community Development Authority or the Planning Commission. In most cases LDA comments urged the rigorous enforcement of existing regulations, and especially denial of variances. This approach was thoroughly tested in 2015 when developers proposed the construction of a hotel at the foot of Washington Ave, across from the Pavilion. The project required 5 variances, to which LDA strenuously objected. Changes to the waterfront, lack of consistency with the City's comprehensive Plans, the precedents set, and the lack of fairness (to other commercial or private developers) were other tenets of LDA objection. The project went forwarded. One positive outcome was a Shoreland Ordinance overhaul that tightened the variance process, offered mitigation measures to accommodate special development situations, and generally stiffened lake protection requirements. LDA members participated in this 30 month process.

LDA had advocated for navigation restoration on the Pelican River since 1963. In 1988 the Dunton Tramway began operation, continuing until 2014 when it ceased operation due to needed repairs. The county sought donations for the repairs, and in the discussion that followed the LDA directors were divided about the issue. One concern was the tram's potential to spread AIS. The LDA eventually opposed the tram's re-opening, as did the City of DL. However, Sallie residents continued to pressure the County to restore the operation, which occurred in 2016.

In her eleventh year of service as LDA Treasurer, Renee' Alsop died unexpectedly in the fall of 2015. She and husband, former President, Dick Alsop were awarded status as Friends of Lake in 2016 by a grateful Association.

## On-going programming

Through this period LDA continued to provide support for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks, *Muskies Unlimited's* spring cleanup, Water Carnival Parade, the Pavilion restoration project, and Sucker Creek enlargement. The organization provided sponsorship and organizational leadership for training of Service Providers (those companies which provide in-water services, such as dock installers, lift-sellers). LDA engaged with the DNR on a planned upgrade of South Shore Public Access (2011), and the proposal of a new north shore public access (2012). LDA provided a major (\$3500) commitment to repair the Highway 10 Overlook in 2016.

LDA donated surplus logo wear to "Let's Go Fishing", and distributed 500 water bottles during the Ice-Palace festivities of 2018. Also in 2018 several LDA members assisted local high school teachers in resurrecting the Water Watch program which focused on the conditions in Sucker Creek.

#### **Innovations**

Not only was programming at annual meetings expanded by the presence of authoritative speakers from outside the region, but starting in 2012 the gatherings were supplemented by invited exhibitors, and breakfast hosted by the local *Knights of Columbus*. LDA Logo wear went on sale in 2013, both as fund-raiser and as a means of improving the visibility of the organization. Annual Newsletters became more elaborate and colorful, and served to provide a broad range of information to members about the lake, and the community.

# **Last Words**

Today LDA officers and directors, and indeed all of the members of the organization, have a much more complete understanding of the complexity of water quality problems and the great need for careful stewardship to protect the lakes. There are new organizations, including PRWD and COLA, which have parallel or overlapping interests with LDA. Looking to the future, LDA has a recognized a common interest with these and other agencies and has joined forces with many. LDA officers have actively participated lobbying efforts that have led to better Aquatic Invasive Species prevention programs, including applying state funds to support local inspection and education programs.

It is noteworthy that LDA has taken an explicit position that lakeshore residents share the lakes with non- lake residents, fishing groups, tourists, and others, and seeks to cultivate with all such groups mutually beneficial lake stewardship efforts.

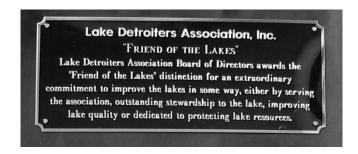
Much has changed since LDA's early years. There are many more lakeshore residents, and as before, a large proportion of these are permanent residents. However, instead of retreating to Fargo for the winter, many seasonal residents go to Florida, Arizona or Texas. The shoreline is more intensively developed – homes, outbuildings, landscaping, docks. There are many more boats, a recent count indicated over 800. Lakeshore properties are almost all served by sewers. Regulations impose greater restrictions on shoreline modifications, but at the same time flexibility has been incorporated in these regulations. "Green Days" are mostly a gone, and declines in water quality have been halted. "Weed problems are somewhat diminished, but lake water quality has improved in some ways, and deteriorated in others.

Yet many of the current lake problems resemble those faced by LDA founders. Today LDA's mission is "to promote the protection and enhancement of Detroit Lake" and, though those founders did not put it just that way, most of that work focused on what they perceived as the prominent problems of the day. Their active committees included watercraft safety, fish populations, sanitation and pollution, lake levels, and weeds and algae problems. Current LDA interests and projects easily fall in one or the other of those categories, and it is likely that future ones will as well.

Finally, there have been scores of LDA members who have participated in leadership positions in the organization, as Directors, Officers, Committee Chairs, Committee Members. Some stand apart for the lengths of their commitments. Clem TeVogt with 48 years of service, including 7 as President leads the pack. Jim Knapp served 9 years as President. Tom Rogstad and Winston Larson both had more than 25 years with the organization. Here are lists of long-serving officers and directors. But it is well to remember the many others who played important roles.

LDA Leaders						
(in descending order of years of service						
Director	Officer					
15+ years	5+ years					
Clem <u>TeVogt</u>	Clem <u>TeVogt</u>					
Tom Rogstad	Tom Rogstad					
Winston Larson	Renee Alsop					
Joan Swanson	Jim Knapp					
Ginny Imholte	Curt Cherry					
Curt Cherry	Joan Swanson					
Laurie Olson	Judy Stowman					
Dick Hecock	Laurie Olson					
	Mara Bergen					
	Gary Ask					
	Gina Blake					
	Bob Nelson					
	Ginny Imholte					
	Barb <u>Halbakken</u>					
	Erling Hill					

# The Friend of the Lake Award



In 1974, the Board of Directors, on behalf of the Lake Detroiters Association, began to select **individuals** who were deemed to have contributed significantly their service to the organization or to the protection of the lake. For example, the first recipient, Kay Grover began a clarity monitoring program on Big Detroit Lake, and in 1977 Joan Swanson completed 14 years as secretary of LDA. Tom Rogstad was acknowledged, not only for his service as President of LDA, but for his role in the creation of the Pelican River Watershed District. Winston Larson was honored for long service as LDA board member, but also for his many contributions as City Engineer, which had impacts on our lakes, including his work to create the Miracle Mile City Beach.

# Recipients

1974	Kay Grover	1995	Morrie Estenson				
1975	City of Detroit Lakes	1997	Tom Oaks				
1976	Tom Rogstad	1998	Waterwatch				
1977	Joan Swanson	2000	Dixie Johnson				
1978	L. T. Lechter	2001	Erika and Christian Tigges				
1980	James Knapp	2002	Mara Bergen				
1981	LD. Hillman	2003	Sally Hausken				
1982	Don Klomstad		Judy Stowman				
1983	Winston Larson		Carol Bergren				
1984	Kent Freeman		4 Dick Hecock 6 Dick and Renee Alsop 7 Judie Cherry 8 Pelican River Watershed District				
1990	Ginny Imholte						
1991	Nancy Henke						
1992	Mark Giehl		Barb Halbakken-Fischburg				
1994	Clem Tevogt						

On three occasions, *organizations* have been honored as recipients, the *City of Detroit Lakes* in 1975 for its attempts to improve lake water quality through sewering (North Shore Drive) and stormwater control. In 1997 the *Waterwatch Project*, was given the award for its work to focus a Middle School interdisciplinary curriculum project on lake issues. In 2018, the Board selected the *Pelican River Watershed District* as recipient of the award for its 50 years of efforts to improve lake water quality for area lakes, including Detroit and Curfman.

# **LDA History Project**

## Minutes (numbers refer to dates)

8-Jul

7-Jul

Mar

1949

1950

1951

28

Apr

22

19

May June ANNUAL July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

21

4

15

In 2006 the Board began to assemble documents related to the Association. It was possible to obtain many of the records, though there are a few gaps, especially in the late 1980's. This is a significant loss because these were the years during which the annexation battles were fought, leading to the sewer system around Lake Detroit.

Currently the Museum (Becker County Historical Society) has a file containing original copies of annual LDA Bulletins and Newsletters from 1950-1956, 1961-62, 1996-2004 and from 2006-2019. The Museum also has originals or copies of Board of Directors' Minutes and Annual Meeting Minutes as displayed in the adjacent table.

These minutes also are available at the museum in digital files.

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1952	26						23-Aug	26	23				
1953			14				22-Aug		8	5			
1954							31-Aug	31	7				
		40	10		4.4								
1955		12	19		14		6-Aug	2,30	20				
1956					20	23	18-Aug		4,25				8
1957	19,26			13	25	15	24-Aug	21	24				7
1958		15	22		3,31		16-Aug						
1959		7		11		20	29-Aug		15				
1960		6	6		7		30-Jul	_					
		0	0	45.00	-				-				
1961				15,22			25-Jun		5				
1962				28					4				
1963				27		1	3-Aug			?			
1964	25		7			12	5-Sep	31					5
1965						19		11		4			
1966	25					13	6-Aug	11	-	_			
	25						6-Aug	11	6				
1967													
1968					8								
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1970											5	2	7
1971	4	1	7	5	3	3	21-Aug	6	2	13	4,28	11,19	6
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1972	3	7	6	3	1,22	5	14-Aug	10	11	11	2,16	6	
1973	8	12	5	2	7	4	25-Aug	9	6	10	1	5	3
1974	7	4	4	1	6	3	3-Aug	1	9	30	14	4,25	16
1975	6	3	3,31	21	5	2	26-Jul	7	4	8	5	3	1
1976	5	2	1	5	3	7	21-Aug	12	2	13	4	1	6
	3	7		4	2	6	30-Jul	11	-	6		7	5
1977	$\overline{}$		7	4				11	_	_	3		_
1978	9	6	6		1	5	29-Jul			11	2	6	4
1979	8	5	5	2	7	4	28-Jul			10			
1980					14	11	2-Aug	2			8		
1981	14		12			10		25					
1982	28				13		31-Jul				22		
	20			4.0									
1983				12	13	22	30-Jul				26		
1984					16	27	31				11		
1985			30										
1986													
1987													
1988								_					
1989													
1990													
1991						15	15-Jun						
1992									1				
1993	30								_				8
	30					F 10	16 1	25	_		17		•
1994						5,18	16-Jun	25			17		
1995													
1996					13		10-Aug	10	29	19	12	7	
1997				17			14-Jun	17	21	18		20	
1998		19	19	16	21	25	13-Jun		20	17	22	19	
1999	21	18	18	15				15		16	28	18	
	21				10	1.0	10-Jun	_	17				
2000		17	23	20	18	14		20	17	21	26	16	
2001	24	15	15	19	17		23-Jun	19	x		20	15	
2002				20	16		8-Jun	18	15	19	17	21	
2003		20	20	17	15		7-Jun	17	21	18		20	
2004		19	18	15	20		12-Jun	15	19	16	21	18	
2005			24	27	19		11-Jun	28		15,22	13	10	8
			24							15,22	15	10	•
2006				27	18		17-Jun	20	24				
2007				24						20			
2008				25									
2009	14			24				24	28				10
2010	14						19-Jun	22	12	9	14,29	11	12
		4.0	47	4.4	10.00	_					_		12
2011	13	10	17	14	12,20	9	11-Jun	14	11	9	12	10	
2012	21		8	12	3		9-Jun	12	9	13	11		
2013			14	11			15-Jun		8	18,19	10		11
2014			13	10		12	14-Jun	10	4				11
2015			12	9	7	11	27-Jun	9		10		12	
2016	1.0	11								_	10		0
	14	11	10	14	12	9	25-Jun	-		13	13	10	8
2017		27		13	17	8.17	17-Jun	1	10	14		9	I

RDH, May, 2019

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