

Detroit Lake Living

Spring Issue
Newsletter of the Lake Detroiters Association
May 5, 1998

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 - Mara Bergen 847-0568

Vice Pres - Gary Ask 847-7261

Treasurer - Gene Barnby 847-5164

Secretary - Judy Stowman 847-6570

COLA Rep - Sally Hausken 847-8032

Dick Campion, Bev Dobrenski, Harlan Holly, Gina
Blake, Ginny Imholte, Bob Nelson, and Clem TeVogt.

Mission Statement: The Lake Detroiters
Association shall have as it's overall purpose
promotion, education, beautification, and protection
of the water quality of Big & Little Detroit Lakes,
including waters running into and therefrom. This
nonprofit Association shall work to monitor and

report water quality conditions, as well participate as a
member of the Becker County Coalition of Lake
Associations. The Lake Detroiters Association
supports the city and county enforcement of laws,
ordinances, and regulations.

My Thoughts. by Mara Bergen. Your Board of
Directors met monthly throughout the past year. We
requested the Zitzow housing addition be annexed and
stormwater and sewer services be extended to
improve the water quality in the Pelican River prior to
it entering Big Detroit. This was acted on by city
council this winter. We are communicating with the
City and County regarding two road projects
scheduled for the year 2000 on North Shore Drive and
West Lake Drive. Your membership money is being
spent carefully on water testing, mailings, and future
beautification projects. Are you interesting in the
lake? Can you help by volunteering, and by spreading
the word to your neighbors who are not members.
Maybe you would be interested in serving as a board
member for the Lake Detroiters. Attend the annual
meeting on June 13th. Enjoy the summer, it goes by
all to fast! Winter, Spring, Summer & Fall...it's
always fun at the lake!

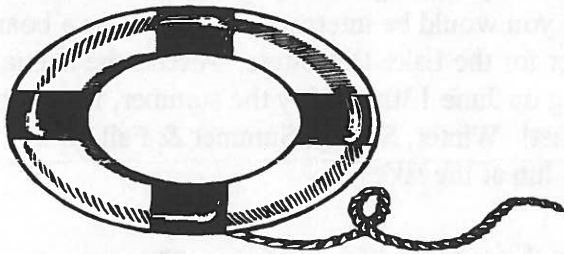
Water Level. by Ginny Imholte. The water level of
Detroit Lake is determined by the dam at Dunton
Locks. The city of Detroit Lakes, the DNR, Lake
Detroiters, and the PRWD have met to discuss the
water levels of Detroit Lake, flooding, erosion
problems, boating navigation, zoning setbacks, and
dam safety. Talks continue in order to develop a
long-range plan.

Tidbits and Updates.

Ditch 13 is the legal name of the Pelican River as it
flows into Detroit Lake from the city. Catch
basin/settling ponds treat storm water from the city
streets. Several new basins are being planned. The
newest basin is across the street from Lakeshirts in the
City Industrial Park.

Watch for the construction of a bike path from the bowling alley to Dunton locks along the river and under Highway 59. We may be able to bike to Dunton locks and picnic by the end of summer.

Weeds, Weeds, Weeds. The PWRD will start roadside pickup of lake weeds Tuesday, May 26 and then each following Monday throughout the summer around Big and Little Detroit Lakes. Place piles of weeds near the roadside, but not on the walk/bike path. Choose a spot that is accessible to a bobcat. Lawn clippings and garden waste should be hauled to a compost site. Only weeds will be picked up. In 1997 802 tons of wet material were removed from Detroit lakes, about twice that in 1996. The roadside pickup was slightly less than 1996. Contact the PWRD Administrator Dick Hecock for weed questions and concerns at 846-0436.



History or Landmark? by Mara Bergen. Some of you drive by this piece of lake history everyday. But, do you know anything about it? I'm talking about the Aquabelle houseboat which sits at 1292 South Shore Drive on the property of Frank & Judy Holland and Meryl & Dody Johnson. Their father Ralph Holland was on the Lake Detroiters board for years. The Aquabelle, which was built by Arlo Buland of Moorhead, actually cruised around the lake (originally powered by a 25 horsepower Johnson). It was Buland's lake home on water for several years. The boat had a generator for hot water and a gas stove. There was also a door in the floor that when opened revealed a glass bottom for viewing the lake. On strong windy days, the boat was pushed across the lake and took out Holland's dock on several

occasions. It only seemed logical after it was not used on the lake that Holland's buy it and have it placed on their property. It now is a darling guest house, which is connected to city water & sewer. Last summer it received new landscaping. History is well maintained and enjoyed by all who pass by. The Aquabelle lives on, our thanks to Holland's & Johnson's!

1997 Water Quality Results: A report to Lake Detroiters. The annual water quality report will be available at the annual meeting, or by calling Ginny Imholte. Pelican River Watershed District intern Rochelle Nustad compiled this years data and report. Nustad is a graduate student at NDSU. With record snowfall and already saturated soils, runoff, and nutrient levels were nearly twice those of 1996. Detroit Lakes water readings fall between the Mesotrophic and Eutrophic stages. Mesotrophic lakes are characterized by intermediate nutrient availability and biological productivity, with good game fish populations, moderately clear water, and moderate plant growth. Eutrophic stage lakes are nutrient rich and highly productive, biologically speaking. Eutrophic lakes are characterized by algae blooms and dense rooted plant growth; oxygen deficiencies and fish kills are common. Most long-term observers of Detroit Lakes water quality symptoms suggest that the situation has improved since the 1960's, especially in Little Detroit. We think this seems to be the result of improvements in sewage and stormwater collection and treatment which began in early 1970's.

TRAM by Ginny Imholte. The Ride Across Minnesota (TRAM) arrives in Detroit Lakes on Monday, July 27. The pavilion and park will be the headquarters for food vendors, displays, camping, and music. Bicyclists arrive late morning through afternoon. These riders come from all over the Midwest and stay one night in each sponsoring town on the tour. This bike tour travels with a semi-tractor-trailer containing showers and bathrooms. There won't be any bathing in the lake as

we see with We Fest. Are any Lake Detroiters interested in offering boat or pontoon rides on Little Detroit? This could be our contribution to promoting both the lake and the city as well as a thank you to the bikers who are raising money for Multiple Sclerosis. If you are interesting in becoming part of the flotilla call me, at 847-4236.



Your Dues At Work, by Sally Hausken. Three dollars of your Lake Detroiters membership dues go to the Becker County COLA, that is Coalition of Lakes Association. Should you come to a meeting to visit, or to join, you would be proud indeed at the work those \$3 are doing.

Twenty-six lakes are members, representing 2,300 people, so you see our voice counts on legislative concerns such as zoning, feedlots, personal watercrafts, septic tanks, water monitoring, wetlands and any and all other areas of water quality. Our current president, Phyllis Onsgard is a tireless worker, savvy to the legislative process and conscientious. Within COLA, there are three committees working issues: environmental, water quality, and communications.

I am just one representative of one lake. All representatives, or their alternates, try to be at the monthly meetings. You are cordially invited to any of their second-Thursday of the month summer meetings at 7 pm at the Detroit lakes Vocational Technical College.

Watch for the COLA News, due out near Memorial Day weekend. If you do not receive a copy, as ALL residents of Big and Little Detroit Lake should, please contact me at 847-8032. The Lake Detroiters are seeing to it that copies be sent to lake property

owners, whether they are Lake Detroiters members or not.

The Fishing Report from a Non-fisherman. by Gene Barnby. My wife and best friend would be better qualified to write this report than me. She is the fisherperson in the family. Unfortunately and fortunately at the same time our work has kept us so busy we haven't taken time to put in the dock, boat lift, and boat in water yet. While we live on the lake, it is tough to stick to priorities.

I spoke with Gary Huberty at the Dunton Locks Fisheries about past and present fish stocking. From 1992 through 1997, there have been 53,340 Walleyes and 10,730 Muskellunge stocked in Detroit Lake. Walleyes were not stocked in 1996 and 1997 so that their natural reproduction could be assessed. 50 Lake Sturgeon were introduced in 1997. For the fall of 1998, 50 Lake Sturgeon, 3,000 Muskellunge, and 37,900 Walleyes are scheduled for stocking Detroit Lake.

All this fish stocking brings in fisherman. A number of boats have been spending time just off shore of Little Detroit near the boat ramp on the public beach, and just a short distance out from the fishing dock near the Legion Club. Talking with "Red" at Early Bird Bait Shop, he indicated that fishing for pan fish has been fairly good in the shallows. Posters are up advertising the "Eagles Walleye Tournament" on Detroit Lake scheduled for June 13th, and 14th. Or try the new Detroit Lakes area "Hot line" for current fishing report at 1-800-443-1888.

Muskellunge? Sally Hausken had spoke with Bob Strand of the Bemidji DNR office regarding the stocking of Muskies in Detroit Lake. The Muskellunge is a popular gamefish managed as a trophy species in Minnesota by the DNR. Detroit Lake is the only Becker County lake stocked with muskies. They do occur naturally in Minnesota, and were historically in 33 lakes and three rivers. There have been increasing demands for trophy fish from

organized local clubs or chapters to expand the number of lakes with stocked muskies. The DNR has responded to this interest and now has muskies in 70 of Minnesota's 5,483 fishing lakes. Not all lakes are well suited for muskies, so lake selection is based on criteria that includes lake size, forage base, northern pike abundance, geographic location and public support. Muskellunge exhibit a strong preference for soft rayed forage that attain large size, like Cisco (Tullibee) which are present in Big Detroit. Because of their preferred food and natural tendency to exist at low densities, they can be an added "trophy bonus" to suitable waters without taking anything away from existing fisheries and use. The Detroit Lakes DNR Fisheries staff has initiated a monitoring and evaluation program regarding the muskellunge. Future stocking decisions rely on public support or opposition and netting tests conducted the spring of 1997, and again in 1998.

Beautification Plantings for the future. by Mara Bergen. This winter we brainstormed areas around the lake which are in need of beautifying, we came up with many. We chose three areas to start with to better channel our energy and money for greater impact. The city beach is in need of younger trees and was chosen as our first area to beautify. We will work with the city on variety selection and proper placement of trees to be planted next spring. Our second area to beautify is the East Shore Drive park along Highway 10. It lost most all of its trees over the last few years. And the third area to beautify is the public access on Highway 10. Matching grant money is available through the DNR Releaf program, and is being applied for.

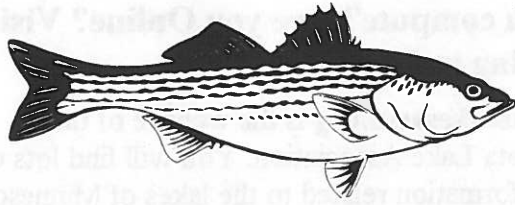


Partnerships to Benefit Big Detroit Lake.

by Ginny Imholte. The high bluff along south shore has been an ongoing problem for Big Detroit Lake. High wind and wave action continually erodes and undercuts the soils at water's edge. The weight of the high soils then causes the bluff to slough trees and soils to a stable angle and the process starts again. This natural phenomenon may be slowed by rip-rap or other appropriate erosion control. The PRWD applied for and received a \$12,500 State Special Project Cost Share Grant from the Board of Water and Soil Resources to alleviate this problem. The property owner puts up matching funds for this project. The Becker County Soil and Water Conservation District is the sponsoring agency with consultation with the Department of Natural Resources.

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.



Mercury Advisory. by Bev Dobrenski. Angling in Detroit Lake is great fun and "catch and release" is promoted. Since fish are low in fat and high in protein, keep some for those favorite fish fry meals. Most Minnesota fish are safe to eat, in fact our lakes are among the cleanest in the Great Lakes region. We can find some chemicals, mercury, PCB's, toxaphene, and dioxin in some lakes, Levels in Minnesota are usually low and there are no known cases of illnesses from these chemicals in our state.

There is a mercury advisory on fish from Detroit Lake. Since mercury binds to the flesh(meat) of fish, proper cooking and/or proper fish cleaning habits will not remove the mercury. Therefore, it is recommended that you follow safe consumption practices(see chart below).

Detroit Lake Mercury Advisory - Annual*

Women of child bearing age, and young children:

- one meal per week(8 oz.) of Blue Gills & Sunfish
- one meal per month(8 oz.) of Walleye & Northerns

Other persons:

- unlimited Blue Gills & Sunfish
- one meal per week(8 oz.) of Walleye & Northerns

Note* - if you eat fish from Detroit Lake only during the three months of summer, you can double the number sited above. This information is found in a "state wide" booklet and available free for the writing at, Minnesota Dept of Health, 121 East Seventh PL, Ste 220, Box 64975, St. Paul, MN 55164-0975.

Let's continue to work hard for a clean lake!

Jet Skis. by Bob Nelson. The Minnesota Lake Association feels strongly that any proposed new legislation regulating the use and operation of personal

watercrafts should not create unenforceable regulations or restrictions that penalize one group of operators as a result of violations by just a few. Currently the US Coast Guard classifies personal watercraft(PWC) as Class A inboard boats subjecting them to the same rules and requirements as any other powerboat. New hours of operation of PWC is 9:30 am (was 8:00 am) until one hour prior to sunset. You are to operate your PWC 150 feet (was 100 feet) from all water crafts, docks, waters edge, except for launching and exiting the waters. A pamphlet is available at the Driver & Vehicle Services office for Personal Watercraft Laws for Minnesota which are currently in effect. For more information call the MN DNR Public Information hot line at 800-766-6000.

Rules and Regs. If you chose to fertilize your lawn, choose a fertilizer with a phosphorus count of less than three(the middle number on the bag e.g. 20-0-0). Zero phosphorous fertilizers are available at local garden stores. Professional Lawn applicators are licensed by the City of Detroit lakes to follow these standards. Fertilizers may not be applied within ten feet of the lake or river. Please do not maintain a perfect grass lawn all the way to the lake edge. Bushes, trees, and natural taller grasses catch and utilize a significant amount of run-off before it can reach the lake.

To protect the lake from potash, phosphorus, and debris, the Pelican River Watershed District has ruled that all camp fires and fire rings must be at least 16 feet from the ordinary high water mark.

All weed rollers require a permit from the DNR.

TIP(Turn in Poachers) to report game and fish violations call their 24 hour hotline 800-652-9093.

The Pelican River enters Big Detroit Lake on the property of Bill and Gina Blake. Gina is a lake association board member and wrote an article about the river for this newsletter. You won't see it because I misplaced it. I'm so sorry Gina! It was great and we'll print it in the Fall Newsletter. Mara



Write to us, we are your lake association.

Do you know something of lake interest, let us know by calling a board member, or write:

Lake Detroiters Association
PO Box 1310
Detroit Lakes, MN 56502.

Or use e-mail to Mara Bergen at bergen@tekstar.com.

DNR Use the local DNR agents as consultants before planning work involving the 50 feet of property surrounding the lake. For information on what you can do, and when permits may be required, call the Detroit Lakes DNR Office at 847-1579.

Do you compute? Are you Online? Visit the following websites:

www.mnlakesassn.org is the website of the Minnesota Lake Association. You will find lots of great information related to the lakes of Minnesota. Also boating laws and regulations are listed at this site.

www.Waterlaws.com is a site sponsored by a law firm, but check out the monthly Waterguest and WaterVenture: a cyber visit to a different lake or stream each month.

www.dunnscamp.com/Natenv is the site for the National Environthon for High Schools(an environmental science competition.) Tamarac hosted the state-wide Environthon competition last May.

www.detroitlakes.com/waterwatch/waterwatch.html is an ongoing project about the Pelican River Watershed development and expanded by the Middle School eight graders.

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