



Les Cheneaux Islands Association

Fall Newsletter

November, 2018



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President's Message

Jim Keighley

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Let me start by saying what an honor it is to be selected President of the LCIA – thank you very much.

We all owe Dave Robertson a huge thank you for doing an excellent job as LCIA President for an extended term – he set a high standard to follow.

For those who don't know me, a quick introduction:

My wife Diane & I are retired and have been year-round residents of LCI since 2015, property owners since 1991 and began vacationing here in 1977.

After graduating from MTU, I spent 38 years managing Engineering for consumer product production around the world on Pampers, Tampax Pearl, Gillette Razors, Kraft Mac & Cheese, Oscar Mayer, Maxwell House, and others. I finished my career as VP of Engineering for Kraft Foods in the Chicago area.

Diane & I now live on Park Avenue (the white house on Snows Channel with the iron salmon on the gable). We are the ones fixing up Patrick's Landing, a five-year project (we hope).

I am on the Township Planning & Sewer Commissions. Diane is on the Hessel School House, Arts Council, and

Chamber of Commerce Boards.

E. James Mertaugh (past LCIA President) wrote in 1980:

"The Les Cheneaux Islands Association offers all who care about the Les Cheneaux area, both summer visitors and year around residents... an opportunity to work together for the betterment of our community... We work to benefit everyone who loves Les Cheneaux."

Our Mission Statement lists four Primary Purposes:

- ◆ **Property Inspections**
- ◆ **Navigation Buoys**
- ◆ **Water Quality**
- ◆ **Boating Safety**

We have strong member driven efforts supporting each of those that need to continue.

For the year ahead, my intention is to put some extra emphasis on the buoy program and membership.

The navigation buoys are essential for recreation boating safety and arguably the single most routinely visible of LCIA's efforts.

It is a tough job getting them in and out of the water before and after each boating season. Steve Honnila and Mark

Engle are working on improvements to get them in earlier in the season.

It is possible that the fair cost will need to increase on this essential program that benefits all member and non-member boaters.

While our current financial status is strong, the best defense against future costs going up is increasing our membership.

The strongest LCIA membership driver is your personal endorsement. You know firsthand how important our efforts are to the quality of life in LCI.

With the LCI real estate market picking up, please take every opportunity to sell your new neighbors or the next generation of your existing neighbors on that importance and becoming a member.

Please feel free to contact me about anything you would like to talk about.

Thanks,
Jim Keighley,
keighleyja@gmail.com
906-484-2369.

Manager's Report

Mark Engle

Weather & Water Update

Rain and wind are the highlights of autumn weather in the Les Cheneaux Islands so far. Air temperatures have cooled in October; some frosty mornings and a few snow flurries, but no accumulation yet.

The ground is very saturated causing trees to blow down during heavy wind gusts that have occurred several times in late September and October. Shallow rooted trees, such as spruce and cedar, are vulnerable to the current conditions. Depending on wind direction, some areas have been more at risk than others.

Great Lakes surface water temperatures were at near record highs in September but that changed dramatically to near record lows in October. Lake Huron is 2 to 4 inches lower than it was in September and 1 inch lower than a year ago. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' projection chart shows a slight downward trend for Lake Huron water level in the next 6 months. However, the long term outlook forecasts a continued above average level through next summer.

According to the Corps, many areas in the Great Lakes recorded monthly average 2018 air temperatures for June, July and August that were top ten all-time.

Needless to say, our weather has been quite topsy turvy in 2018 . . . It seems like this is the new normal.

LCIA Property Inspections

September 15 marked the start of LCIA property inspections for 2018/2019. Most of the problems reported thus far are a result of the windy periods we have experienced. Doors and windows blown open and trees and branches blown down have been common in the area. If you have listed a caretaker on the LCIA membership form, we call them if the inspector reports an issue that is not an immediate threat or safety problem. If there is no caretaker, or there is a serious occurrence or property damage, we contact the owner directly.

If you are part of the Clark Township sewer system, make sure to leave the electric power to the grinder pump on when you are closing for the season.

LCIA Aids to Navigation

LCIA buoys as well as the U.S. Coast Guard buoys have been pulled for the season. Thank you to Steve Honnila and crew at Viking Boat Harbor. Steve keeps track of the buoy inventory, repairs damaged buoys, if possible, and stores them for the winter. Steve reports the number of replacement buoys necessary for the next season and we typically purchase 12 to 20 buoys each year to keep the program up and running.

Fish & Game Report

Migratory flocks of waterfowl are flying over Les Cheneaux on their annual southern trek. Sandhill cranes, geese and ducks can be seen and heard almost continuously during the daylight (and sometimes nighttime) hours. The LCIs are a favorite stop over place for a variety of ducks which makes for excellent hunting for the enthusiasts who are willing to brave the elements.

The MDNR Fisheries fall assessment was conducted in the LCIs in late September. Using a research trawler, the DNR biologists set test nets in Hessel, Musky and Government bays in an effort to monitor local fish populations. The fish study is the longest running annual assessment research in Michigan. In general, the results for 2018 show a similar perch population to last year but researchers state there is room for more perch. The northern pike numbers are high, probably as plentiful as anywhere in the Great Lakes. Also, the report on smallmouth bass was encouraging as many large fish were found concentrated in Musky Bay in particular.

Proposals to reinstate double crested cormorant control in the Les Cheneaux Islands are on going. Several U.S. congressional hearings have been held in 2018 and at this point Natural Resources committees have succeeded in passing through the legislative process that 'could' lead to control measures in LCI. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is in the midst of an evaluation and assessment period to determine whether or not to issue permits to control the fish eating birds.

LCIA Board of Directors Meeting Dates for 2019

Wednesday, June 5, 9:00 a.m.

Monday, July 8, 9:00 a.m.

Friday, August 30, 9:00 a.m.

Community Room, Cedar Cove Assisted Living

Annual Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 4:00 p.m.

Commons Room

Les Cheneaux Community School

Annual Dinner

Thursday, August 8, 5:30 p.m.

Community Center

Clark Township Update

Jim Keighley

The Hill Island Bridge project is 100% complete including the fishing platforms! Remarkable to execute a project like that and only have a single 12-hour traffic shutdown.



The Cedarville Harbor project is underway. The foundation & slab are poured. Framing will begin soon. Plan is for the building and docks to be ready for mid-summer with the launch ramps & landscaping to follow. Plumbing stub ups for the bathrooms are in the foreground.



Youth Boating Certification & Water Safety Committee

Dave Robertson, Chair

Another safe boating season is coming to a close in Les Cheneaux. The area still saw a lot of water traffic around Columbus Day week, as warm weather kept many cottages open and a fair amount of boat traffic in the channels.

2018 featured continuation of historically high water, after the years of low water levels. The generally good conditions results in lots of traffic in even smaller channels and bays. As the Viking crew has removed the LCIA buoys, and the Coast Guard pulls the channel-navigational cans, all late- and early-season boaters must take extra care to avoid the shallows, rocks, and other hazards, when buoys are not in place to mark the hazards.

While this Committee focuses on boating safety, we also urge LCIA members to exercise caution after the lake gets hard; whether on snowmobiles, trucks, cars, and even snowshoes and skis. Our warming climate means that some LCI waters may not support “normal” winter uses, especially in those areas with prolific milfoil growth [yes, the weed still lurks beneath the surface]. Trucks and snowmobiles go thru the ice every winter. Warmer winters cause spotty ice conditions. Cold water rarely gives a dunked person a second chance.

The principal activity of the Committee continues to be facilitation of the water safety class, taught by Deputy Tom Sherlund. Two sessions are held each summer, Independence Day week and Boat Show week. In 2018, 34 students attended class, ranging from age 10 to 60+. Most students are 11 or 12. The class also is open to non-LCIA members.

MICHIGAN LAWS MANDATE BOATER EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION!! Boating education is required for all persons born after December 31, 1978, who are at least 14 years of age and wish to operate a boat or personal watercraft (PWC-jet ski) in Michigan waters. You must carry a certificate card when boating. Deputy Sherlund is certified to teach this course and to issue the certification card. He will not be favorably disposed, if you or your family member lack the proper certification card... and especially if your boat is not lit by dusk and/or lacks sufficient PFDs! Those are his primary pet peeves.

The LCIA sponsored class dates for 2019 are July 9 & 10, and August 6 & 7.

The Committee welcomes any new members, who wish to help our cause. Please contact Esther or me. Before long, it will be time to head north for summer 2019.

Happy trails and boating,
Dave Robertson, Chair
