



Les Cheneaux Islands Association

Fall Newsletter

December ~ 2016

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Manager's Report

Mark Engle

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Weather and Water Level

The Les Cheneaux area has been experiencing warm conditions this fall. September, October and November have been quite moderate with slightly above average precipitation and no hard frost. After reviewing historical recorded temperatures for Sault Ste. Marie, September had 25 of 30 days higher than average temperatures and October had 20 of 31 days above normal. We experienced a few 50 degree days in mid-November, but the long range forecast for winter, 2017 is cold and snowy.

As of November 1st, fall colors were still part of the scenery in the area as leaves remained on the trees at least two weeks later than most years. A boat ride on a sunny autumn day was a fun, visual experience! The tamaracks, aspens and birches still showed their golden colors, but the winds of November have now taken care of the last remaining leaves. We certainly enjoyed the extended, beautiful fall season this year!

The Lake Huron water level (according to our dock) has dropped 6 to 8 inches in the past few weeks. The Corps of Engineers projection through March, 2017 shows a range of down a few inches to up a few inches, but still above the historic averages.

LCIA Property Inspections

LCIA property inspectors began bi-monthly inspections on September 15. Many LCIA members were still in the area, taking advantage of good weather to do close-up,

winterize and just to hang out during a time of peace and quiet.

After the first inspection of the season, inspectors reported finding many unlocked doors. Often that is due to cleaners, plumbers, caretakers, etc. still coming back to finish up winterization. We have informed the owners of the reports we received, but it would still be a good idea to follow up with your caretaker to verify that all doors are locked, windows closed, and the electric power breaker has been left on for the grinder pump (if you are on the township sewer system). Also, a visual check for dead trees (especially spruce trees) hanging over buildings or electric lines is a good thing to look at before winter sets in.

Unfortunately spruce budworm disease has impacted many trees in the area. Woodland Park Association is in the process of having several hundred dead/dying spruce trees cut down which drastically changes the landscape.

Aids to Navigation

The US Coast Guard has pulled the channel markers for the season. The LCIA buoys were left in the water later this fall which has been very helpful to boaters this time of the year. Steve Honnila and his crew at Viking Boat Harbor have completed the process of picking up buoys and will be checking them for necessary repairs and storing them for the winter. We sincerely appreciate the service Viking has been providing to the LCIA over the years. After Bruce Patrick retired as buoy tender for the association, Wayne Honnila took over

the job and now it has been in the competent hands of Steve Honnila for the past several years. Thank you Steve.

If you are still planning a late fall visit to the islands, please use caution while boating; late fall weather conditions can change very quickly, so be aware.

Fish & Game Report

Perch fishing was very good in late August through early October, then it seemed to slow down. Reports of good catches of perch throughout the islands were common. I was still catching some good perch around our docks but there were so many pike around, I think the perch were too nervous to eat!

Splake fishing picked up in late October/early November near the Hessel Marina with pike being taken as well.

Cormorant control in the Les Cheneaux ended on May 26, 2016 under a federal court order. The USDA, Wildlife Services Division under the direction of the US Fish & Wildlife Department had been managing the cormorant population since 2004. The Michigan DNR is actively attempting to get cormorant control reinstated in northern Lake Huron, but at this point, it is unknown if any action will be taken prior to spring, 2017. Our fish populations will be in jeopardy once more if there is no control of cormorants.

Duck hunting activity was noticeable this fall as migrating

birds use the Les Cheneaux as a rest area. Our area is very attractive to avid duck hunters as we have the marshes and bays, and room to hunt in an uncrowded environment.

The Upper Peninsula deer herd has been a big topic these past few years. The white tail deer population in the north country is lower than it has been for a long time. The tough winters of 2014 and 2015 and an increase of predators are the reasons for decline according to DNR reports.

Meetings

All members are invited and encouraged to attend the Board of Directors Meetings. Your input, suggestions and comments are always welcome. The dates, time and locations are listed below.

LCIA Board of Directors Meeting Dates for 2017

Wednesday, May 31, 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, July 6, 9:00 a.m.

Friday, Sept 1, 9:00 a.m.

(Location: Conference Room at Cedar Cove Assisted Living)

Annual Meeting

Thursday, August 10, 4:00 p.m.

LC Community School, Commons Room

Annual Dinner

Thursday, August 10, 5:30 p.m.

Community Center

Clark Township Update

Diane Patrick

Clerk and two Trustees quietly campaigned for their various positions. It is always nice to see our residents step up to the plate and run for public office. It can be challenging at times, wrestling with local issues and trying to come up with fair and equitable decisions. We were fortunate to have highly qualified candidates running for office. We are pleased to announce the following victories:

- * Supervisor: Gary Reid - second 4 year term
- * Clerk: Susie Rutledge - second 4 year term
- * Treasurer: Jason Sherlund - first 4 year term; previously serving as a Trustee
- * Trustee: Sarah Patton - first 4 year term; previously serving as a Planning Commissioner
- * Trustee: Pat Schuster - first 4 year term; recently relocated to Hessel, year round; formally a seasonal resident, active in government downstate.

The new officials will be sworn in on November 21 at noon, just in time for their first meeting at 7:00pm. Congratulations to all and a heartfelt thank you for all those who ran for office.

In other news the township passed the new fire truck millage. We'll look forward to seeing this much needed new firefighting equipment. Our local volunteer firefighters should be commended on an outstanding job protecting our valuable properties.

Thank you to all who serve!

Environmental Committee

Bob Smith, Chair

Here are a few photos to give you a feel for the work the Environmental Committee conducts each season to monitor our water quality and to address threats such as invasive species, especially Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM).

Neil Williams is shown taking a water sample on a cool May morning that is presently being analyzed for phosphorus and for algae levels at the Univ Mich Biological Station at Douglas Lake. Others who helped collect and process water samples from May through September this past season included: Mike and Laurel Jellison, Mary Baker, Lynn Wolters, Scott Myers and Barb Smith.

Although we haven't recently experienced the dense invasive EWM growth that was present in 2012, it is still growing throughout the islands. This wheelbarrow is full of EWM raked by Gerry VandeVusse from around his dock in Sheppard Bay. Gerry uses a special rake to control the EWM growth around his dock and performs the effort several times each season.

The aerial view shows EWM growing around Gerry's dock before his final raking in October.

In concert with LCIA monitoring, the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council plans to continue its work using a native fungus to control EWM next summer as part of their ongoing effort to manage EWM within the islands.



LCIA Annual Food Drive

Mary Baker

A huge **Thank You** to all of our members who generously donated non-perishable food items to the LCIA Annual Food Drive that benefits the Cedar Post Pantry in Cedarville !!!

I checked the trailer almost daily and took over 30 bags of canned goods, food, vegetables etc. to Cedar Post Pantry to stock their shelves! They are very appreciative of everything that was brought in to them. Also, thank you to John & Jeri Griffin for the use of their trailer again this year and for letting us continue to park the trailer at their office.

Thank you all so much !



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