



*Les Cheneaux Islands Association*  
*Spring Newsletter*  
*May 14, 2021*

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***From LCIA President . . .***  
***Mike Patrick***

***Just a short note to all the LCIA members :***

Spring is in the air, but temps have been on the chilly side.

Water levels are down around two feet which means beach erosion won't be as bad as last year. However, the water is still high, so please be mindful of other property owners and watch your boat wakes.

Our first board meeting of the year took place yesterday morning, May 14, via Zoom. Below is our meeting schedule for this season. Meetings are open to the membership, and we welcome your input.

At yesterday's meeting the board discussed whether we can safely hold an annual dinner this year. As you will remember, last year the dinner was cancelled due to the pandemic and restrictions. This year's dinner is scheduled for August 12 and the Social Committee has reserved the Community Center, lined up Karl's Cuisine as the caterer and a speaker from the Soo Locks. After discussing Covid concerns and feeling more information is needed regarding Michigan's restrictions, etc., we decided to hold a special meeting on June 18 to make a final decision on whether or not to hold the dinner this year, as well as the appropriate venue and format. So, stay tuned and we will let you know. We are planning to hold the Annual Business Meeting again in the Commons Room at Les Cheneaux Community Schools on Thursday afternoon, August 12 at 4:00 p.m.

Be safe in your travels—can't wait to see all of you!

**LCIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING DATES FOR 2021**  
***(All LCIA members are welcome to attend.)***

FRIDAY, MAY 14, 9:00 A.M. (THIS WILL BE A ZOOM MEETING)

FRIDAY, JULY 9, 9:00 A.M. (LOCATION/ZOOM, TO BE DETERMINED)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 9:00 A.M. (LOCATION/ZOOM, TO BE DETERMINED)

**ANNUAL MEETING**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 4:00 P.M.

COMMONS ROOM, LES CHENEUX COMMUNITY SCHOOL

**ANNUAL DINNER**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 5:30 P.M.

CLARK TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER

## *Manager's Report*

*Mark Engle*

### **Ice—Water—Weather**

Ice conditions in the Les Cheneaux Islands changed rapidly this spring. Ice-out occurred earlier than at any time in memory; walking on ice became trying to walk on water in 2-3 days.

The US Army Corps of Engineers report shows Lake Huron to be 15 inches lower than it was a year ago. April 2021 Lake Huron water level was nearly the same as April 2019. Projections for Lake Huron are a rise in level over the next several months, but not exceeding the 2021 conditions.

We have already experienced fluctuating water levels along with periods of strong, steady, windy days and nights. Small craft warnings have been the norm of late, including several days of virtually no boat traffic in the islands.

The following are quotes from the Corps of Engineers websites: "In recent years there have been more Octobers with higher precipitation, while in July precipitation has been lower in recent years. Evaporation during July and August has shown an increasing trend in the last three decades. Runoff in April has shown a decreasing trend since 1950."

### **Property Inspections**

The winter of 2021 was difficult for inspectors of outlying locations due to poor ice. Much effort was required but inspections were carried out in spite of some rough travel conditions. There have been no reports of security problems. The main issues during property checks continue to be fallen trees/limbs from dead or dying spruce and balsam trees along with some doors and windows blown open as a result of the windy conditions we've experienced.

Another reminder regarding the green 911 emergency property identification signs: Please post in a visible location. If you live on an island, please attach the sign to a dock post or in a location visible from a boat or snowmobile. Also, the white LCIA \$500 Reward sign should be posted in a visible location to help substitute or new inspectors identify residences.

### **Fish & Game**

Some good catches of perch were taken in March in Government Bay, Musky Bay and Hessel Bay. Splake have become a popular target for ice fishermen in Wilderness Bay and Hessel Bay. There have been some great splake taken by boat this spring for those fishermen who can tolerate snow flurries, wind and cold water.

The early spring thaw and lack of deep snow is a benefit to the local deer herd. The white tails appear healthy and ready to dine on fresh flowers and the lawns that are now green rather than white.

There have been several moose sightings in the regions, especially between Cedarville and De-tour, and near Caribou Lake.

### **Docks**

Many of us have had dock issues the past several years due to high water and surges in water levels. Dock contractors are extremely busy; if you need work done, be advised to make arrangements as soon as possible.

## *Water Safety & Youth Boating Certification Committee, Spring Report*

*Dave Robertson, Chair*

Committee Members: John Griffin, David and Lindsay Morrison,

After the Covid-19 mandated hiatus in boating certification classes, we return for 2021, BUT in a new location. The 2021 Youth Boating Safety and Certification Classes will be held on **July 6 and 7** (Tuesday and Wednesday), with the second session on **August 10 and 11** (Tuesday and Wednesday). All classes run from 6-9pm. The new location is the **LES CHENEAUX COMMUNITY CENTER**, 101 W. M-134, Cedarville, MI 49719. Please wear a mask. The room will be set up to ensure distancing.

As always, the classes are FREE and taught by Marine Deputy, Tom Sherlund. Adults are welcome, in addition to younger boaters. Successful participants will again receive the exclusive LCIA Life Jacket. Register for the class by calling or texting John Griffin: 906.298-1694 or by e-mail to [johngriffinrealestate@yahoo.com](mailto:johngriffinrealestate@yahoo.com)

Recent photos of the area show the water level down significantly from the past year. I leave it to the locals to say how much lower. Given the dry winter and spring, plus the lack of ice and drought in the west and southwest USA, the outlook is for even lower lake levels. That means rocks, which were submerged in recent years, will again seek out your propeller or keel. Even after the LCIA buoys are set in place, be careful and enjoy boating in the Les Cheneaux Islands in 2021.

*From LCIA's Historical Committee Chair,  
John Griffin*

The Historical Committee is proud to announce three new members:

Charles Fels of the Les Cheneaux Club

Carol Rye Duncan, who grew up above the Hessel Grocery and author of 'Tied Up With String.'

Valarie Wolters of Coryell Island

We look forward to hearing from them in future newsletters about the LCI history they have gathered and experienced.

***A summary of predicted Lake Michigan and Huron levels based on a 2020 engineering study by Baird Engineering. R Smith with J Keighley ed. 6 May 2021.***

The full report: “Prediction of Lake Levels on Lakes Michigan-Huron and Erie: Baird Report III” was developed for the Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation. Authors: Qimiao Lu & Robert Nairn. 10 March2020/12676.101.R1.RevC.

**Summary:** In their 2020 report to the Georgian Bay Great Lakes Foundation, Baird lake level models are reported to predict levels of Lakes Michigan-Huron and Erie with a ten-year accuracy. Lakes Superior and Ontario were not included in the study because their levels are regulated whereas the three middle lake levels are not.

In short, the report predicts Lakes Michigan and Huron to now be entering a period of decline through 2035 at which point the lake levels will be as low, if not lower, than the record 2012-2013 low.

When studying models for complex natural systems such as changes in lake levels it is wise to keep a few things in mind:

- \* These types of models cannot be validated
- \* Models make assumptions about factors not known
- \* Published numerical outputs should include the error and confidence levels.

As the famous British statistician, George Box, put it: “All models are wrong, some are useful”.

Data sets used in developing the 2020 Baird predictive models were:

- \* Three lines of evidence were used:
  - Historic Lake Levels from 1850-2016
  - Paleolithic levels derived from beach records dating thousands of years
  - Dendrology (tree ring) chronologies dated back to 1600
- \* Harmonic analyses: Four *Quasi Periodic Cycles* (QPC) were referenced:
  - 160 yr cycle driven by sunspots
  - 30 yr cycle based upon precipitation
  - 11 yr cycle based on sunspot frequency
  - 4 yr cycle based on North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) and El Ni’no Southern Isolation (ENSO)
- \* The major drivers of these cycles appear to be NAO & sunspots
- \* Derived models are claimed to predict lake levels at 10-year intervals with reasonable accuracy
- \* Uncontrolled variables considered:
  - Consumption/removal of Lake water
  - Human induced climate impact
  - Precipitation different from expected

While multiple variables were considered in the Baird models, one uncontrolled variable not identified was the volume of water discharged, or withheld, from L Superior into Lakes Michigan-Huron. During times of high water, the excess water discharged exacerbates high levels in Lakes Michigan-Huron. Similarly, during times of lower lake levels, the volumes withheld in L Superior magnify the low water levels in Michigan-Huron.

The full Baird report can be viewed by searching the title provided at the beginning of this article. It can also be accessed by logging into the Watershed Council website at: < [lescheneauxwatershed.org](http://lescheneauxwatershed.org) >