LCIA
LES CHENEAUX ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

SPRING NEWSLETTER May, 2023

PROTECTING

INSPECTING

CONNECTING

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Financial Manager
Esther Engle

Secretary / Social Media Manager
Sydney Meadows

A Message from LCIA President, Paul Tabor

The ice is finally gone!

The skies stay lit past 9:30 at night; LCIA Buoys are being positioned; lots of boat traffic on the Bays; Pike Season opened and the boat traffic increased proportionately; docks are being pushed around in front of barges everywhere; college kids are back from school and grabbing their summer gigs; cottage shutters are beginning to come down; the grass is growing and some folks are already wearing shorts. So however you want to qualify it . . .

Spring is here!

We have a full newsletter for you. And each committee report provides some great and important information. A few of the highlights that we ask you to note as you read through today . . .

Our "100 New Member" campaign is officially off and running and we are asking for your participation in helping to bring-in a family member or LCI neighbor. As with many organizations and businesses, our operational costs have gone up and we are making every effort to avoid increasing membership dues to cover those higher costs. Instead, we are looking to increase our membership by about 15-18%. All help appreciated.

Speaking of membership dues, our tech team has been hard at work to make the membership payment process a breeze. While your annual member contribution of $50 is not due until July 1, we are only a few weeks away from launching our website revisions. The changes will allow easy sign-up for new members and will allow one-stop-shopping for existing members who want to pay their annual contributions/dues, donations and property inspections quickly and easily in a single transaction.

Please join me in welcoming Deborah Baker as the interim Communication Committee Chair. Deborah will be officially recommended for the position at this year's annual meeting. Deborah has a great team behind her who is already working on brochures, stickers, clothing and maybe even a new burgee!

After 22 years at the LCIA Environmental Committee Chair, our own "Lakeside" Bob Smith has decided to retire from his position to put more time into the LC Watershed Council. Bob has done so much for the Committee, Association and community over those years. In true form, he has agreed to help us transition to new committee leadership and has been actively driving our 2023-2024 missions. If you know of someone who would like to participate in our Environmental Committee efforts, please let us know

Don't miss the Social Committee's calendar of events for the season. We have a lot of fun things scheduled for the Spring and Summer that center around you. And finally thank

you in advance for your membership, contributions and donations. It is because of you that LCIA can work to toward the betterment of our community.

Stay safe and enjoy Springtime in Les Cheneaux.

MANAGER'S REPORT
Jim Keighley

Inspections will be wrapping up in mid-May – it was an uneventful season for inspections. We have 5 inspectors covering 370 properties twice a month weather/ice permitting (168 of those are island properties). Our average wage cost for each inspection is $3.35.

Navigation hazard buoys will be placed in May. About 122 buoys will be placed. 6 whites and 1 red will be replaced this year (about 60).

Placement plan is:

- Coryell to Hessel by mid-May.
- Prentiss to Coryell, south Hessel/Mismer Bay before Memorial Day weekend.
- Remember this is placing buoys on navigation hazards

  - so high wind conditions affect when the buoys can be safely and accurately placed.
- Storms and boat impacts can move buoys. If you think a buoy has moved during the season, call Jim Keighley at 906-484-2369.

Water levels (from Detroit District; Missions; Great Lakes Information; Great Lakes Water Levels; Water Level Forecast; Monthly Bulletin of Great Lakes Water Levels (army.mil):

- The predicted Lake Huron water level peak (July) is 4 inches lower than last year. That would be 4" above the historical average peak, and 1.5' above chart datum.
    - That prediction has an uncertainty range of +8/- 6". That means it could possibly be a few inches higher than last year or a bit lower than the historical average for July.
- Our water levels are primarily impacted by precipitation in the Upper Great Lakes basin. Evaporation and inflows/outflows are also factors.
- USACE predictions of water levels are only made 6 months out because of uncertainty around precipitation, so level predictions always include a range around them to reflect that uncertainty. That range gets larger as the prediction moves from 1 to 6 months out.

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE
Deborah Baker

December 26, 2022 marked the 100th anniversary of LCIA. We are now on to the next 100 years while keeping focus on the goals and dedication of the last. The communication committee is working diligently to help our membership and community understand all the great things that LCIA does. Having recently rebranded LCIA for its next millennium with a beautiful new logo created by our own Rachael Bentley, the Communication committee is now working on LCIA communication brochures, branded apparel, stickers and maybe even a branded burgee! But we are also committed to helping our LCIA Membership Committee reach our goal of bringing 100 new members into the association. Controlling our cost and dues are paramount to our success and with your help we will not only hit, but exceed our goal. All we ask is that you help us spread the word by mentioning or reminding prospective members of all of the benefits thatLCIA brings to themselves and the community as a whole.

Protecting - Inspecting - Connecting

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Anne Royan

The three (3) Pillars that support all LCIA missions and goals are PROTECTING, INSPECTING and CONNECTING. But our missions and goals are only realized when we are all "working together for the betterment of our community". As Eugene Mertaugh stated in our purpose statement. . . "These are not the concerns of any single, small, self-interested group: they are matters pertinent to all of us. In an effort to curb the impact to the association and our annual dues caused by rising costs and to increase the effectiveness of our missions the membership committee is focused on increasing membership by 100 new members before May 2024. To accomplish this, LCIA is focused on promoting our connection with individuals who reside in and around the Les Cheneaux Islands. We invite current members to help with this goal by reaching out to family members, adult children, friends and neighbors to join the association.

With summer fast approaching, we know that social schedules fill up quickly. So please mark your calendars and help spread the word for two GREAT membership events

YOUNG ADULTS MEET & GREET:

Wednesday, July 5th at 5:30 p.m. - Tipper Room (Old Bumpas)

The intent of this get together is to connect with our Under 40 neighbors and explain what LCIA does in and for the community. So if you know anyone in this age group who might be interested. . . please bring 'em! All are welcome for Hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION:

Thursday, July 20th at 5:30 p.m. - Tipper Room (Old Bumpas)

As implied, the intent of this get together is to welcome all new 2022-2023 members as well as any prospective members and to explain ways to get involved within LCIA. So if you know of anyone interested in joining LCIA or who has joined LCIA this year. . . please bring 'em! All are welcome for Hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

Both events will provide an opportunity to learn more about the LCIA, including ongoing projects and future goals. Everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing you there.

SOCIAL COMMITEE

Linda Sheperly

2023 LCIA Calendar of Events

Spring Board Meeting - Hessel School House - May 26 - 9:00 a.m.*

Fourth of July Parade - Downtown Cedarville - July 4 - 11:00 a.m.

Young Adults Meet and Greet - Thursday - July 5 - 5:30 p.m. at the Tipper Room

Summer Board Meeting - Hessel School House - Friday - July 7 - 9:00 a.m. *

Frog Fest - Snow's Heritage Park - Saturday - July 8 - 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

New Member Reception - Thursday - July 20 - 5:30 p.m. at the Tipper Room

The Annual Business Meeting - Cedarville High School - Wednesday - August 2 - 3:00 p.m.

LCIA's Annual Picnic at The Hessel School House - Wednesday - Aug 2 - 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

Fall Board Meeting - Hessel School House - Friday - September 2 - 9:00 a.m.*

****All LCIA Members are welcome to attend board meetings in person or by Zoom***

*****Ticket needed to attend. Tickets on sale after July 15th.***

FISH & GAME COMMITTEE

Mark Engle

Michigan DNR, Fisheries Div. conducted their annual assessment netting in the Les Cheneaux Islands last October. A final report on the assessment will be provided by David Fielder, DNR Fish Biologist, at the 2023 Lake Huron Fisheries Workshop which will be held on May 4 at the Clark Township Community Center. Fielder did give a general overview shortly after their fall assessment was completed. A very high number of northern pike were caught in the DNR nets; quite possibly the largest count in the 52 year history of the study. The smallmouth bass population is also very healthy and it seems that largemouth bass have been on the increase in recent years. Yellow perch have rebounded to some extent since cormorants devastated the perch population in the late 1990's and early 2000's. It does appear that several years of good perch reproduction has resulted in good numbers of 6" to 8" fish. (It's still not the good old days.)

The ice fishing season, though relatively short due to late freeze-up and early break-up was productive especially for splake and lake trout in Hessel Bay. Late winter saw a large influx of rainbow smelt which attracts hungry predator fish, which attract hungry fishermen/women. Michigan DNR Fisheries planted 30,000 splake at the Hessel Marina on April 24. Splake have flourished in the Les Cheneaux waters and are now a target for many anglers. Splake are a hybrid cross between speckled (brook) trout and lake trout.

The local deer herd had a fairly easy winter to endure. The whitetails I have seen look healthy and vigorous. They need to be vigorous because on April 20th, a mature cougar was spotted just north of The Green Thumb Garden Center. All you cat lovers could put some "kitty litter" on your porch for a close look at a big cat!!

YOUTH BOATING COMMITTEE
Paul Tabor

AHOY! Calling all young sailors – **BECOME A CERTIFIED BOATER - FREE OF CHARGE**

The Les Cheneaux Islands Association continues its annual sponsorship and promotion of the Cedarville - DNR Boater Safety Education certification courses. This two-night class is conducted by Mackinac County Sheriff Marine Division deputies and offers a wonderful way to educate yourself and your children on waterway safety. The main purpose of the boater safety course is to provide safety-minded knowledge and training to create responsible boaters. Topics covered in the course include general boating and water safety, navigational rules, causes and preventions of crashes, operation and fueling techniques, as well as environmental concerns and reporting responsibilities.

Did you know any motorized boat operator born after June 30, 1996, is required by law to pass an approved boater safety course and to carry a boater safety certificate?

Did you know boater safety certification is also required for all PWC operators born after December 31, 1978?

Attending and satisfactorily completing this course will provide DNR certification that satisfies the above requirements. There is no age limit to register, but children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. And adults are welcome too!

A complimentary PFD from LCIA and the Trip Abnee Memorial Water Safety Fund c/o The Les Cheneaux Community Foundation will be given out at the end of the second night to each student who successfully completes the certification course. The Les Cheneaux Islands Association has promoted these courses for over two decades and in the process, we are proud to have awarded over 1,000 PFD's to local area youth whom have been certified through these courses.

There are two sessions available this summer . . .

Boater Safety Education - **Session #1: June 27 th & 28 th 6:00pm-9:00pm both nights**

This session is available on-line for registration now!

Boater Safety Education - **Session #2: August 8 th & 9 th 6:00pm-9:00pm both nights**

This session will be available on-line for registration in June!

To attend one of these sessions, each student must create an account with the Michigan DNR and register for the course through the DNR website. There is no fee for doing this and parents can set-up accounts for each of their kids. DNR account set-up, course selection and class registration can be reached at the following link: http://michigan.storefront.kalkomey.com/sign_in

Setting up an account with the Michigan DNR provides access to many safety and educational related courses throughout Michigan. In addition, the DNR logs and stores all DNR certifications. Hence, lost or damaged certification cards can be easily replaced. To assist you in setting up a DNR account(s) and registering for the DNR Boater Safety Education Course, we have created and posted below a step-by-step process for easier navigation, on the next page.

YOUTH BOATING COMMITTEE REGISTRATION

Paul Tabor

Michigan DNR Boater Safety Education

DNR Account Creation

DNR Course Selection

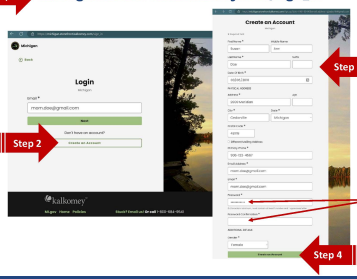
DNR Class Registration

A waterways safety certification course
promoted by the Les Cheneaux Islands Association

"working together for the betterment of our community"

Michigan DNR - Account Creation

Step 1 michigan.storefront.kalkomey.com/sign_in

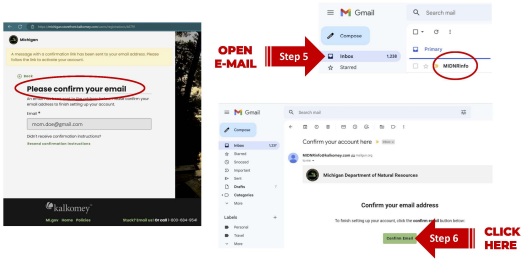


Complete all information for the **STUDENT:**
Name
Date of Birth
Home Address
Phone (parent's phone # is OK)
E-Mail (parent's email is OK)

Over-write the auto password and add your own password

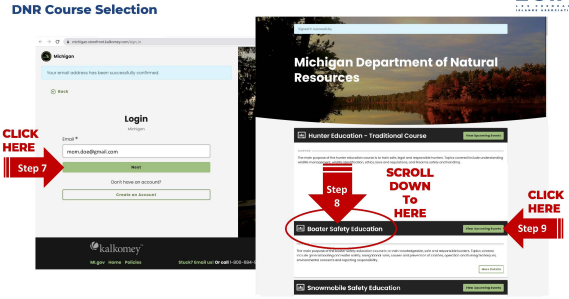
Michigan DNR - Account Creation

DNR Account Creation



Michigan DNR - Boater Safety Education

DNR Course Selection



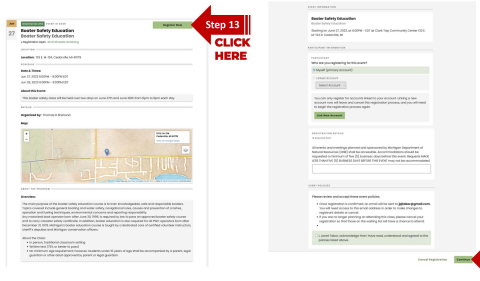
Michigan DNR - Boater Safety Education

DNR Course Selection

NOTE:
The August 8th-9th course registration will be listed on the DNR site in June

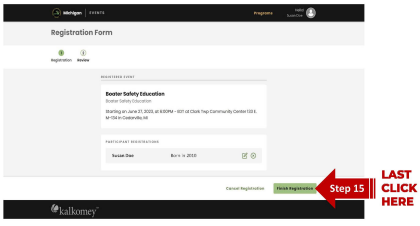
Michigan DNR – Boater Safety Education

DNR Course Registration



Michigan DNR - Boater Safety Education

DNR Course Registration



TOWNSHIP LIASON
Jim Keighley

From the Township Supervisor's Office (the Township is VERY active on improvements on many fronts).

- The new Fire/Rescue Boat is expected to be in service by May pending an upcoming sea trial and delivery from Parry Sound, Ontario.
- A new culvert will be installed at the A Street Road End at Islington ramp; Krohmiller. The current culvert has collapsed.
- The grant proposal to purchase the Neal property as part of the Hessel Marina expansion has been submitted.
- A Recreation Passport Grant request has been submitted for improvements to the Leopold Dock in Duck Bay. Repairs are most needed where the dock connects to the shoreline.
- A grant proposal is being prepared to create a snowmobile path from M-134 to the Cedarville Launch Ramp. The trail will include a bridge over Pearson Creek. Currently, Pearson Creek is not freezing over consistently, forcing snowmobilers to seek alternate routes to get to the launch ramp. A formal trail and bridge will be safer for snowmobilers and road traffic in the area.
- Efforts are underway with the USFS to allow completing the hiking trail around the perimeter of Government Island. Currently only the north half of the trail and a midpoint crossover are approved for trail maintenance.
- The Leopold Park bathroom will be operational this summer.
- EGLE permitting work for the Peek-a-Boo Trail is still in process. EGLE determined there were more wetlands on the trail path than they initially thought.
- The Township closed on property for Hessel Launch Ramp off-site parking (north side of M-134). Currently that off-site parking site is a combo of Township owned land and private property borrowed for that use.

From the Township Clerk's Office:

- There is no May election in Clark Township this year.
- There is an election on August 8 th for:
    - Ambulance service/EMTs millage proposal of 1.0 mil for years. The current millage is 0.6 mil.
    - Sewer grinder replacement millage proposal (amount tbd). Many of the current 600+ grinders are 30 years old – 10 years beyond their predicted service life.
- The State is granting $3.6M for replacement of all sewer grinders; controls, forgiving 50% of the grant, and loaning the other 50% to the Township at 1.88 percent interest for 20 years.
- The debt service costs are planned to be covered between the millage proposal and sewer rate increases.

From the Chamber of Commerce:

- Fireworks will be on July 3 rd
- July 4 th parade will be on the 4 th
- Car Show is August 11 th, as always, the Friday before the Boat Show
- Boat Show is August 12 th, as always, the second Saturday in August

MARINE COMMITTEE
Steve Honnila

The purpose of the LCIA Marine Committee is to ensure the navigable waterways of the Les Cheneaux Islands are well identified. To help fulfill this purpose, the LCIA Marine Committee annually identifies potential waterway hazards and then places ATON's (commonly recognizable system of aids to navigation) in the Les Cheneaux waterway to identify these hazards. Knowledgeable boaters will quickly recognize these ATON's which are positioned to help them avoid the hazards. Providing safe water activity is the ultimate goal of the LCIA Marine Committee.

As the LCIA Manager Report points out, it is looking like this year the water levels will be lower than last year. At the time of this writing, the water level is 5" lower than this time last year. We are currently 4" above the long term average, but 33" lower than the record high for this same time period (2020). Predictions are for the water level to be approximately 6-8" higher than the long term average by June.

With the lower water levels, we should all be mindful of underwater hazards that may be lurking just below the water's surface. So that end, we are about half way through the process of installing the LCIA Navigational & hazard buoys for the season. Our plan is to have all buoys in place prior to Friday May 26 and the Memorial Weekend.

The buoy launch and placement plan is as follows:

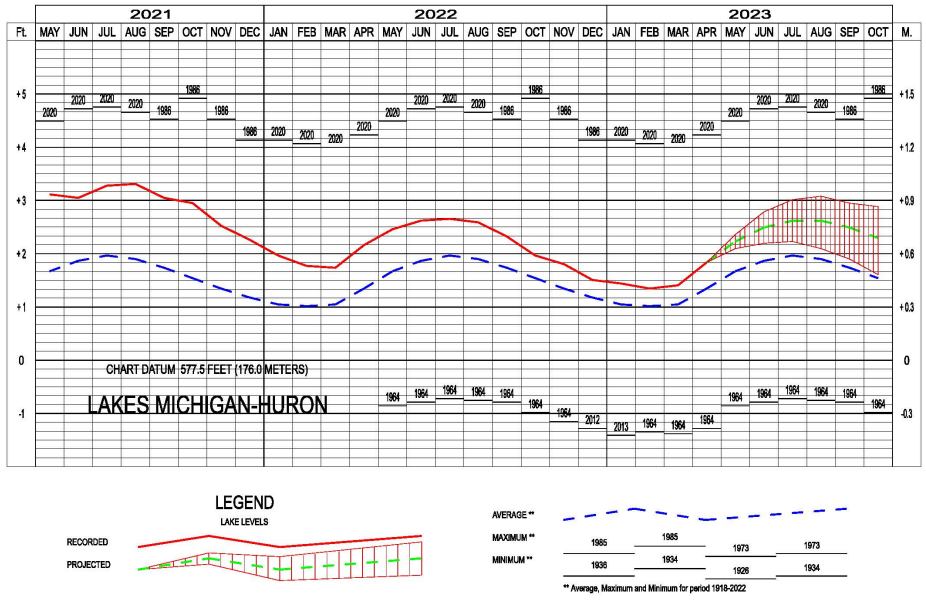
- North side of Island No. 8 and west to Cedarville Bay - Completed
- From Cedarville Bay to Urie Bay - Completed
- Mddle Entrance and west past Dollar Island to Mill Pond (just west of Hessel Marina)
- Mismer Bay and south through Wilderness and Marquette Bays
-Coryell Island and east through Boot Island, Strongs Island and into Prentiss Bay

Several of the buoys, chains and shackles are in need of replacement this season. And with the lower water levels, more underwater hazards could be marked. As a result, LCIA has made the following procurements:

- (16) white shoal markers
-(300 ft) of 5/16" galvanized chain
-(15) shackles

It is our sincere hope that as a result of the LCIA Navigational Hazard Buoys, you have been able to avoid costly marine repairs or worse, injuries. hitting a submerged rock with an aluminum prop can cost well over $100 to fix while lower unit repairs can cost thousands. And while it only costs $50 a year to be a member, it's your "Additional Donations" that help us cover the cost of annual buoy maintenance and replacement. Please consider that when making your annual contribution to LCIA.

LAKES MICHIGAN-HURON WATER LEVELS - MAY 2023



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
Bob Smith

The purpose of the LCIA Environmental Committee is to keep our membership aware of the status, issues and concerns associated with the Les Cheneaux Islands recreational water quality as well as the diversity and resilience of our coastal wetland environment Les Cheneaux Islands PFAS/PFOS – "Forever Chemicals" Update:

PFAS/PFOS* concerns have recently been highlighted in National and State news. The LCIA Environmental Committee has been working with the LCI Watershed Council to better understand the levels of PFAS/PFOS in the LCI fish which many residents and visitors catch and eat.

*PFAS is a family of Per; Poly Fluroalkyl Substances. These are industrial activity pollutants often described as "forever chemicals". PFOS and PFOA are the most common PFAS species found in the environment. PFOS is Perfluorooctane sulfonate or Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid. PFOA is Perfluorooctanoate or Perfluorooctanoic acid. PFOS is the trace chemical found in fish.

In recent discussions with Dave Fielder of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Brandon Armstrong of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), the LCIA Environmental Committee learned that the DNR and EGLE have been conducting LCI specific monitoring of PFAS and PFOS levels throughout the state. Dave was kind enough to review and explain their most recent test findings for the Les Cheneaux Islands area.

Key Discussion Take-Aways:

1. While LCI fish do contain PFOS, the concentrations are so minimal, that EGLE uses our fish as their reference standard for other water bodies.

2. The data shows fish caught in LCI are all well below the 300 parts per billion (ppb) "Do not eat limit" set by EGLE.

EGLE's Test Data: (NOTE: Some columns have been collapsed for ease of presentation):

Location Year Species Avg PFOS (ppb)

- Carp River 2018 a Rainbow Smelt 15.7
- East of Bois Blanc Island 2019 Lake Herring 6.0
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2016 Lake Whitefish 4.7
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2016 Bluegill ND b
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2016 Bluntnose Minnow 5.5
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2016 Yellow Perch ND
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2021 Yellow Perch 11.0
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2021 Rock Bass 79.8
- Swan River 2021 Chinook 4.8
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2021 Yellow Perch 57.6
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2021 Golden Shiner 16.8
- Les Cheneaux Islands 2021 Bluegill 155.0
- De Tour 2021 Rainbow Smelt 142.3

a. Collected in 2018 by a resident for personal consumption and stored in a freezer. Lengths and weights were not recorded. Provided to EGLE FCMP in 2021 for contaminant analysis.

b. ND = Non-detect (&It;0.25 ppb)

* Analyzed as a whole fish composite sample of 10 to 20 individuals to assess impacts to fish-eating wildlife.
^ Analyzed as a headless and gutted composite sample of 20 individuals

Additional comments from discussion with Dave Fielder on the data above:

- EGLE uses LCI's data as a reference point for comparison to the St. Mary's River (an "Area of Concern"), generally meaning the LCI is the "clean" standard for comparative purposes.
- PFOS is the main reporting metric because PFAS generally takes the form of PFOS once in fish.
- EGLE will continue sampling in 2024 and include Pike, Bluegill and Smallmouth. Yellow Perch will not be included in the 2024 sampling because they were recently tested and found to have very low levels of PFOS . . . and there isn't much year-to-year variation expected.

EGLE's advisories for fish consumption can be seen on pages 16/17 of their article at this link:

https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Folder2/Folder70/Folder1/Folder170/MDCH_EAT_SAFE_FISH_GUIDE_-_UPPER_PENINSULA_WEB.pdf?rev=eb1c5bf6f431489cab3d1c18e6e808a5&hash=577673B20651E617BC0E7555522A077C

^ current advisories for Lake Huron and waters near Les Cheneaux. Note that the EGLE advisories are driven by Mercury and Dioxins levels and not PFOS levels.

LCI Summer residents, is your "2023 List of Things to Take to the U.P." all set? (You know, the list you started last year!) While all vacationers plan ahead, Islanders seem to have a few extra points to consider. While Hill Island and Island #8 have roads the other 34 islands of Les Cheneaux are accessible only by boat—that is reality in our "Land of Water." Foremost for everyone is transferring people and supplies from the mainland to their island destination.

You might be heading to a tent, cabin, cottage, or lodge—even a work in progress. Most places have electricity, gas or electric heaters, or fireplaces to make life easier. If and when power goes out, what is your "Plan B?" Flashlights? Batteries? Phone chargers? Generators? Sometimes you do your best with what you've got! Calling power suppliers and reaching out to a neighbor are two things that are very helpful while waiting for power to be restored.

Food for the stay? Well, what did you pack? Island living tends to be casual, so family meals, picnics, and gatherings with friends and neighbors can be as fancy as you want. For a change of pace, it is nice to take a trip to the mainland to local stores, restaurants, and ice cream shops! If you have fishing gear and a license, you might enjoy "catch of the day."

If families share time at cottages, there are probably plans in place for who, what, when, where, and how their arrivals and departures are set. Experience helps refine routines, including the responsibilities of opening and closing the living quarters, and making sure to leave grounds and docks orderly. Non-motorized watercraft will hopefully have orange Coast Guard ID tags in case they get loose. And, whatever the boats need in terms of fueling, maintenance, and covers will be ready for the next group. Private, leased, or shared docks all have limited space, so pre-planning and courtesy with boats, vehicles, and trailers help assure that everyone gets a great start.

In the Eastern Upper Peninsula, we appreciate the many local businesses and their vital work with and for boaters: maintenance, parts, fuel, docking, sales, and storage. As Coast Guard buoys are in place, channels are marked to guide boats with regard to water depth. Plus, LCIA markers call attention to shoals and hazards such as large, submerged rocks.

Whether or not people were in Scouting (being helpful, courteous, kind, etc.) preparedness goes a long way for successful Island trips. Responsibilities for knowing the whereabouts of family members and pets; line-tying that will make sure your boat stays at the dock; bonfire safety; alertness to everything on the water; and being stewards of the land and water are essential.

Enjoying the sunrises, the sunsets, and the amazing night sky with family and friends, we understand why generations of people have come to know the beauty that surrounds us in Les Cheneaux!