

MAY 2006 Silver Lake

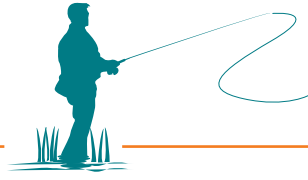
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION *Caring for the future of the lake*

ARE YOU READY FOR SUMMER?

As your family begins your summer activities, please remember to do it safely. Here are some reminders:

- Never swim in the middle of the lake without a boat accompanying you! On two occasions last summer we saw swimmers who were swimming far from shore or other objects, and were very difficult to see. A boat traveling fast could have easily missed seeing them and the result might have been fatal. Having someone accompany them in a boat would have kept other boaters at a safe distance. The other option is to just stay near shore, dock or swim raft.
- Don't follow or cross the path of skiers, wake-boarders or those tubing
- Keep a close eye on children who aren't strong swimmers
- No swimming at the boat launch (a child drowned there a few years ago)
- Alcohol and boating don't mix, designated drivers work on the water too
- Have and use navigation lights at night
- Use life jackets and floatation devices as required by law
- **The biggest danger - young people with lots of power but not enough maturity to handle it responsibly.** Parents, please know what your kids are up to on the lake.

Let's all have a fun and safe summer!!!



LIGHT YOUR TORCHES

Let's all get in the swing of summer by lighting our torches over the Memorial Day Weekend. If you don't have torches and haven't started your tradition this would be a good year to begin. They can be purchased at any garden shop. Then continue to light them throughout the summer; especially during future holiday weekends. Have a wonderful, safe summer on the lake.

"Regatta on Silver Lake"

IT'S REGATTA TIME AGAIN!

- **Tuesday, July 4th**
- **Launch time - 3:00 p.m.**
- **At the public landing**

July 4th is coming soon - time to get your thinking caps on and come up with a great theme for your parade entry...

Last year we had Big Yellow Fish, Wedding Parties, Tiki Huts and Christmas Trees, along with many great patriotic themes - it just keeps getting better and better so plan on joining the festivities ... whether you decorate or not - you're guaranteed to have a great time!

(Remember to identify your boat with a last name & a number - call Nancy Knight for details, questions or suggestions @ 943-9487. If you'd like to be a judge or will be taking pictures - she's the one to talk to.)

Submitted by Nancy Knight, social committee

FISHING CONTEST

The 4th annual SLIA fishing contest will be held July 4th. Meet at the beach next to the DNR boat launch for a 7:30 AM start. Last year's event was cancelled due to bad weather, twice. That means twice the prizes this year! The contest is free to all SLIA members and \$20 to non-members which includes membership in SLIA. No need to register, just show up at the launch. If you have questions, call Kevin Gagnon at 943-5226. See you on the 4th!

NEW to SILVER LAKE or SLIA?

Are you new to Silver Lake or have you lived on the lake for a number of years but never signed on as a SLIA member? Either way, your welcoming committee representative is eager to meet with you and educate you about SLIA and about the lake itself. For a small slice of your time, learn how you can benefit the lake environment, play safe and improve your property values. Looking forward to making a neighborly Silver Lake connection with you this summer!

Your Welcoming Committee,

Please Call Robb Raetz @ (231) 943-4358

CHAIRMAN'S COVE

Spring has sprung and we are seeing more docks and boats in Silver Lake. As you read the news and talk to residents of other Michigan Lakes, you can appreciate how serious a problem Eurasian Milfoil can be, and the expense it can lead to if not properly treated in the early stages. Fortunately, some of our SLIA Board members have been active in arranging for the treatment of Silver Lake.

As boat traffic increases, let's all make a special effort to remember boating etiquette in order to keep Silver Lake a safe and enjoyable lake for our recreation use. Have a great summer!!!!

Dick Bogard

Chairman - Silver Lake Improvement Association

Water Sports Activities on Silver Lake - Summer 2006

AUGUST 9

Wakeboard Clinic with 2004 World Champion Andrew Adkison

Spend the day with Andrew in a 2006 X-Star to take your riding to the next level. The clinic consists of 2-3 wakeboard sets with professional instruction, and possibly a chance to watch Andrew ride. Everyone is welcome from beginners to the already accomplished.

JUNE 24

Silver Lake MasterCraft Demo Day

This is your chance to see the MasterCraft advantage, and why they continue to be the leader and innovator for inboard boats.

TBD

Slalom Clinics with pro skiers

Action Water Sports will offer professional instruction for slalom skiers looking to improve their skills. Pro skier Wade Cox and others will give you world class tips on how to progress on your slalom techniques. Whether you are shortening the line in a slalom course or just starting out, this is a great way to get tips to use for the whole summer.

All activities sponsored and run by Action Water Sports, call for further information.

231-943-3434

www.actionwater.com



SLIA BOARD OFFICERS

President, Dick Bogard	943-4845	dbogard@cherrycentral.com
Vice President, Robb Raetz	943-4358	rbratz@juno.com
Secretary, Pat Adams	947-5502	paa123@chartermi.net
Treasurer, Janet Wheeler	943-4443	janet41@charter.net

BOARD MEMBERS

Russ Adams	943-5502	rsa123@chartermi.net
Vicki Bush	943-8533	vlbush@chartermi.net
Peter Haddix	943-8825	plharch@chartermi.net
Bill Helke	943-4779	wehelke@aol.com
Nancy Knight	943-9487	waynelknight@aol.com
Cathy Kuhn	946-8789	ckuhn6427@aol.com
Jim Lievens	943-3757	jlievens@worldmagnetics.com
Barb VanderZouwen	943-4595	coachbarb@chartermi.net

WHO DO YOU CALL?

If you see a life threatening or dangerous violation, call 911. For other marine violations, call the Sheriff's Dept./Marine Div. @ 922-4514. You need to have the boat number and a description of the driver would be helpful. For violations at the launch site, call local dispatch 941-1911.

■ BITS FROM THE PAST...Reflections ■

This space has been reserved for the thoughts and reflections of people who have spent many years at the shores of Silver Lake. As I was contemplating whom to interview next, I realized that my thirty-eight years might qualify. Additionally, it might be helpful for people to have a sketch of some of the challenges that have been a part of Silver Lake's history.

My first glimpse of the lake was at sunset as I toured a rental house on its bank. I was hooked. There is something about a body of water that is very therapeutic and uplifting. It is a magnificent resource that we share, but one that requires some stewardship.

The first challenge that I recall was the damage caused by high water. When roads were built all the way around Silver Lake, its natural drainage systems were blocked. As a result, the lake level rose and houses were flooded, as well as septic systems. Not only was property damage a concern, but also the resulting pollution of the lake threatened its quality, along with property values.

The Silver Lake Improvement Association (SLIA) consulted experts, both political and scientific. A plan was devised to regulate the lake level by pumping excess water into a stream that feeds into the Boardman River and, eventually, into Grand Traverse Bay. It was complicated and involved having an official mean lake level established. The pumping times are regulated in order to mesh with the water temperature of the river. Water quality is monitored in order to protect the ecology of the watershed. So, there are times when you can witness the pumping system in action. The water is pumped under US 31 and emerges beside Sawyer Road, near Cox Distributing Company. The latest battle there has been critters building structures that clutter the drain, but the Grand Traverse County Drain Commissioner monitors that and his crew removes debris, as needed.

The political action that was needed to accomplish the lake level system is another story. A special assessment district to pay for the system had to be created, requiring the gathering of signatures. Because Silver Lake straddles both Garfield and Blair Townships, both were involved, as well as Grand Traverse County. The SLIA spearheaded that effort, with its members going door-to-door. Many people were grateful for the effort. But, others were adamantly opposed. I had one woman say to me, "It would be good for the lake to become polluted so that my property taxes go down." After hundreds of hours of collective and individual discussions with property owners, the system became a reality and continues to function, protecting Silver Lake from the damage caused by human changes to its natural drainage ecology.

While the lake level problem was a monumental challenge, other issues continue to develop. The invasion of Zebra Mussels, an exotic and prolific species is here and apparent to anyone who looks into the water to witness the little shells clinging to rocks, docks and anything that isn't moving at a good clip. They entered our lake on boats and trailers that were contaminated from other bodies of water. If boats and trailers are not washed, Zebra mussels catch a ride and spread. Having a public boat launch increases the risk, with more day users putting in. However, odds are that some Silver Lake residents are also carriers.

Effort is required to protect a resource that gets as much human contact and use as Silver Lake does. We are fortunate that we have the ability to equip ourselves with knowledge. Knowledge truly is power in protecting the lake. We are also citizens of a democracy, enabling us to use our collective clout to tackle problems as they arise and to even prevent some issues from becoming problems. The key is to have organization and to maximize our individual power by banning together to access and use the powers and funds of our many levels of government. That is where the SLIA comes into play. It has a history of solving problems and tackling issues. Much is at stake with the quality of Silver Lake and our property values. It is in our best interest to become involved or someone else will fill the vacuum of our abandoned power.

Another concern is the potential sale and development of large tracts of vacant land that are currently on the market. How that land is used could drastically affect the use and pressure on the lake.

As I look out at the lake as I finish this article, I am reminded that my first glimpse of Silver Lake was addictive. The changing face of the areas on its shores does not necessarily bode well for it. We must be good stewards so that we and others in the future can continue to enjoy it. I want to continue to be amazed by things I have seen through the years, such as the Silver Lake Ski Club and its ramp. Their feats were amazing. I remember my neighbors pulling seventeen skiers at once behind their boat. They and those on shore were thrilled at their success. I want to continue to watch the skiers in their wetsuits, the tranquility of those fishing, the splashing of kids, adults and dogs, the wake boarders and their flips, the sea plane taking off and landing, the kayaks cutting their paths, the many species of birds passing through, the ice skaters, and the sunsets. Ah, those sunsets....

I have traveled pretty extensively, from Peru to Iceland, but there is no place like Silver Lake, in all its seasons. Let's all keep it a special place. *(Submitted by Vicki Bush)*

EURASIAN MILFOIL MANAGEMENT EFFORT

At the 2005 annual meeting, Chuck Hathaway who lives on the East side of the lake, said he found what he thought might be Eurasian Milfoil in front of his house. Follow up determined he was absolutely right.

Eurasian Milfoil is an exotic species that has infested the Great Lakes as well as many of Michigan's inland lakes including many lakes in our region of the state. Uncontrolled Eurasian Milfoil will crowd out native plants and grow so thick as to ruin swimming and boating in a lake.

Silver Lake Improvement Association (SLIA) subsequently contracted with Professional Lake Management (PLM) to survey the lake for Eurasian Milfoil, determine the extent of the infestation, and recommend what should be done to control the weed.

PLM surveyed the lake on September 12, 2005. The only Eurasian Milfoil found was confined to a small area just south of the public boat launch. Since weed surveys are an inexact practice, other patches of the weed could exist in the lake and simply have been missed in the survey. Past experience on other lakes suggests that once Eurasian Milfoil is established it is never completely eradicated.

The report from PLM recommended using the herbicide triclopyr to kill the Eurasian Milfoil. The report also recommended follow up surveys each spring and fall to identify other patches of Eurasian Milfoil early which would minimize control effort and expense. Expenses would include:

Spring and fall surveys	\$1000
Initial triclopyr treatment	\$600
Follow up treatment (only if necessary)	\$200
DNR permit	\$200

The costs were beyond the capacity of SLIA to handle on an ongoing basis and would be inequitable anyway since less than half of the folks living on the lake are SLIA members. So we approached Blair and Garfield Township supervisors about the possibility of creating special assessment districts to assess riparians for the expense of weed control. The supervisors felt that expenses at this point are so small that it makes more sense to pay the expense from general fund revenues than to incur the high cost of creating a special assessment district. Subsequently both the Blair and Garfield township boards acted to approve the expenditure.

As now planned, treatment of the Eurasian Milfoil will occur late May to mid-June of 2006.

The townships asked for petitions requesting weed control signed by at least 25 riparians be provided as provided for by state law. Thanks to: the Helkes, Wheelers and Vicki Bush for circulating the Blair petition and Dick Bogart, Jim Lievens and Chuck Hathaway for taking care of the Garfield petition.

The DNR permit requires written permission to treat with herbicides from all property owners. Those permissions were collected by Chuck Hathaway who found the Eurasian Milfoil in the first place. Thanks Chuck for your efforts..



Silver Lake
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 2133 • TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49685-2133
www.mlswa.org/slia-930

SLIA COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Monitoring/Exotics	Russ Adams947-5502
Fisheries	Kevin Gagnon.....943-5226
Social	Nancy Knight.....943-9487
Membership	Janet Wheeler.....943-4443
Communications	Pat Adams947-5502
Township Liason	Peter Haddix943-8825
Rules/Grant Writing	Chuck Fricke.....943-8868
Welcoming	Robb Raetz 943-4358
Web Site	Wayne Knight 943-9487
Drain	Jerry Wheeler..... 943-4443
Sediment Reduction	Dave Fashbaugh... 943-8543