

Dear Christmas Lake Homeowners,

Our annual meeting was this past Tuesday, May 6. Attendance was light, but we were competing with many local events and a Minnesota Wild game! We announced our dues for this year, and we really need each of your households to participate. Our dues for 2014 are \$300 and they are critical for us to be able to fund our AIS inspection program. I ask that you please pay your dues ASAP to:

Christmas Lake Homeowner's Association
c/o Harley Feldman
5635 Christmas Lake Point
Excelsior MN 55331

Last year, only about 3 of every 4 homeowners paid their dues and that is not enough for us to maintain our balance sheet without dipping into our reserves. We really need every homeowner to contribute to protecting our incredible lake for future generations. So please pay promptly and urge each of your neighbors to do the same. If anyone has questions about our dues, or is inclined not to pay to make a point, please call me at 612-209-2075 or write me at jshneider@visi.com.

I mentioned our incredible lake, and those are not hollow words. Just this week the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District announced lake grades, and once again, Christmas Lake scored an A, the highest grade. At the Annual Meeting, lake expert Steve McComas of Blue Water Science confirmed how special our lake is and showed data on how well it has been sustained over the past 50 years! You all know that our lake community is very special but very different than most lakes in the area... and we are all privileged to be a part of it.

That said, the ongoing threats from Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) were reiterated by Steve McComas. He applauds our aggressive AIS inspection program as a key way to stop the spread of new invasive species into Christmas Lake. But that program is expensive, and we really do need your financial support. As homeowners we only pay for 50% of the costs of our inspection program. The other 50% is funded by a grant from the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

Our boat inspections started Tuesday afternoon, May 6, and will run through the end of the boating season in late October. Please don't hesitate to call or write me if there are issues with the inspectors or the operation of the gate. Our homeowner's association is more involved with the management of this program this year, and we have a greater ability to ensure that the program is running well.

At the Annual Meeting, I also provided some updates on important bills being pushed at the MN legislature during this Un-Session. I didn't know this at the meeting, but later in the week the MN Senate and House Conference Committee agreed to move forward with AIS funding for the counties. It is highly likely to be approved by the full House and Senate and signed by the Governor this coming week. This is the most significant amount of money yet dedicated by the state for preventing the spread of AIS. \$10 million will be provided to the counties annually based on the number of public accesses and the defined number of parking spots in each county. That legislation didn't just happen. Your letters of support helped make it clear to our legislators that this was really important. But this legislation simply would not have happened without the great work of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR). I know of no other organization more closely aligned with the concerns of lake homeowner's than MLR. They are a great partner. I am proud to say that I contribute to them directly and so does our Christmas

Lake Homeowner's Organization. Please consider becoming a member of MLR if you aren't already. Their website is <http://mnlakesanddrivers.org>.

Also at the Annual Meeting, we reiterated our Board policy against the use of chemical treatments for lake weeds around your lakeshore and dock. Instead, we recommend either hand harvesting (using SCUBA divers who pull milfoil and other invasive weeds by the roots) or mechanical harvesting. There are a few local companies providing hand-pulling services, including our lake's own Milfoil Busters LLC (operated by Blake and Brett Szalapski), Lakescape LLC, and Waterfront Restoration LLC. We plan to have the mechanical harvester on the lake in early July. Please contact me if you aren't currently a customer of the mechanical harvester and want to be.

Our Fun, Run, Walk will be held as usual the morning of Memorial Day. It is always a great kickoff to the summer and provides a great opportunity to reconnect with your neighbors. Radisson Inn Road is slated to be closed for construction on May 19, so we are working with the City of Shorewood to understand the impact on our Memorial event. As soon as this is settled, we will send a notice.

The 4th of July Boat Parade and Dock decoration contest will be held as usual. The theme will be announced in the next few weeks.

One last point, some of you have not yet had your dock put it for the summer. Please be sure your dock and lift company is a DNR-certified Lake Service Provider. They should be pleased to show you their credentials. Certified LSP's have taken a DNR course to help make sure they do not spread AIS.

See you on Memorial Day if not sooner.

Joe Shneider
President, Christmas Lake Homeowner's Association