

Christmas Lake Homeowners Association Newsletter Spring 2021

It's early April and already you have been looking out over an open lake for weeks. It's beautiful and refreshing to see, but somehow an ice-out date in March doesn't seem right. When I was a kid, we still had 3 feet of snow outside and 15 inches of ice on the lakes at the end of March, right? Harley Feldman currently maintains the ice-out records for the lake, which go back to 1887. They are available [here on our website](#). We had a March ice-out in 1910 and again in 1945. Since then, it has happened 9 times since 1987, and 7 times since 2000.

While we are looking back, I want to thank Steve Midthun for his work this winter grooming the lake trail. As with all things outside, it may have seen record use this year. It's a wonderful benefit for those enjoying winter on Christmas Lake. The roller pretty much wore out this winter after many years of service. Steve, however, is working on finding a new one for the Association so we'll be ready for next winter.

Finally, and though it is too late for this year, we need to pick up after our dogs when they are on the lake ice. We all know where the dog droppings go when the ice melts. Our household is due for a puppy around June 10, so next year this will apply to me again.

That's enough about ice, snow and winter.

CLHA Annual Membership Meeting

The CLHA board wanted to put together a physical (i.e. face-to-face) meeting of the CLHA members last year. The coronavirus prevented that from happening. This year we are giving up on a traditional, physical meeting and have set the date for a virtual CLHA membership meeting to be held on **Thursday, May 20 at 7 pm**. Please mark your calendars. A link to the meeting will be sent as we get closer to the date.

We are putting together the agenda for the meeting now. It will include, as usual, a review of our financial position, and a review of the health of Christmas Lake following on a lake survey completed last September by Blue Water Science. Joe Shneider has arranged for Dr. Nick Phelps, Assistant Professor and Director of the UofM's Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) to join us. The MAISRC studies emerging threats to aquatic systems at both the macro and microbial levels in the fields of fish health and aquatic invasive species (AIS). The MAISRC is conducting research on 11 problematic AIS species from A to Z (Asian carp to zebra mussels). More information about the MAISRC is available [here](#).

Let me know if you have any other topics you would like us to address.

CLHA Board of Directors Elections

The Board presently has 11 directors, with each director serving a 3 year term. This means that about one-third of the seats are open for election each year. This year the term is ending for 4 directors. I expect that all of most of these 4 directors will wish to be re-elected to the Board, but I, and the board, encourage members to consider running for a seat on the Board. Ten of the current 11 board members are men, and I think I can safely say we are all over age 50. We would like to see women and younger members seek a board seat. The board is strong and active, but it is also a fun group which enjoys taking on issues which protect the lake and improve our association. We have been focused on promptly posting the minutes of our board meetings on the CLHA website. They are available [here](#), and give you a flavor of the issues we discuss at our meetings.

Here are the current board members whose terms expire this year:

- Steve Midthun
- Roger Norberg
- Aaron Peterson
- Harley Feldman

If you are interested in running for one of these 4 seats on the, please let Kerri Hawk (kdhawkcpa@gmail.com) and me (todderickson33@gmail.com) and know. We intend to complete the election process prior to the annual meeting.

Proposed Amendment to the CLHA Bylaws

The Board has spent quite a bit of time in the last several months working on some proposed amendments to the CLHA bylaws. We started looking at this because we realized that we were not always working within the boundaries of our bylaws and felt the bylaws should reflect the way we work and act as a Board and as an association. Most of the changes are focused on the definition of a member, member voting rights, and qualifications of board members.

To amend the bylaws the Board of Directors must approve a set of proposed changes to the membership (which should happen soon), and the members then must approve the changes. Look for more information on the proposed changes soon. A copy of the present bylaws is [available here on our website](#).

Installing Docks and Lifts; Launching pontoons

Open water also means that we all want to get out boating again. We have three key service providers that have been regularly taking out and putting in the docks in the lake. They work with Roger Norberg, and others on the lake who help Roger, to schedule the work so the work gets done efficiently, and so that we can decontaminate their equipment before it enters the lake. Here are the three dock and lift servicers that work with us:

- Lakeshore Equipment Co.
- Tonka Lift and Crepeau Docks
- Hallin Boat Lifts & Dock

Aaron Peterson, a CLHA resident and member, last year put together a crew that has also put in and taken out done some docks, but he unfortunately is not in a position to offer services this spring.

Dock and lift service companies that use barges to install lifts and docks are working on lakes all around us, and they bounce from lake to lake. While compliance with AIS protocol for service barges is better understood, many providers are prone to short-cutting or ignoring decontamination in the interest of making money or expressing their own view on the subject. Quick transport of barges from lake to lake creates a significant AIS risk.

We are trying to balance stewardship of the lake with everyone's strong desire to get docks and lifts in place as early as possible. Everyone would like to be first and the available capacity from service providers is more constrained than ever. We could use more capacity from the provider network and our program benefits both the homeowner and service provider in terms of safety, convenience, and cash flow. We only use installers that have proven credentials in terms of service and quality, and also carry the necessary insurance. If you have a service provider outside our 3 that launches watercraft on the lake please strongly encourage them to work with us. At a minimum, **PLEASE** require that they understand our decontamination procedures at the landing and that they let us know in advance when they plan to launch. It only takes one rogue service provider to contaminate the lake for everyone.

You have already received an email from Roger about dock and lift installs this year. All dock and lift companies are slammed for work right now, as they are every spring. Many thanks to Roger for, once again, taking on this often frustrating and thankless but important task for the lake.

Roger's contact information:

Phone: 612.991.8910

Email: rnorber@me.com

Concerning pontoons, Doug and Sheila Punke continue to allow the CLHA to use his pontoon trailer to launch and take out pontoons (thank you Punke's). If you don't have your own pontoon trailer but rely on a third party to launch your pontoon in the spring, please make sure you read Joe Shneider's April 14 email on this topic which includes a link which allows you to pick a launching time and date. Someone (likely Joe) will meet your service provider at the public landing, transfer your pontoon from their trailer to our dedicated Christmas Lake only pontoon trailer, and get your pontoon on the water. It's a pretty slick operation.

As Joe notes in his email, the CLHA also has its own A-frame boat trailer for doing the same operation with most boats, including inboards. Again, please contact Joe to arrange a boat launch if you don't have your own trailer.

Joe's contact details:

Phone: 612.209.2075

Email: jshneider@icloud.com

Public Landing AIS Inspections and Decontamination

The CLHA has again contracted with Waterfront Restoration to perform AIS inspection and decontamination services at the public landing. The AIS risk is lower in the week or two following ice-outs, but this operation is already up and running, though hours in April can be limited by the weather.

This is the CLHA's single largest spend, but we believe it is our single largest risk. The DNR continues to do little to control the spread of AIS in Minnesota. We do have strong partners though with the City of Shorewood which provides key logistical and financial support, as well as financial support from the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and Hennepin County. You'll hear more about this at the annual meeting.

Memorial Day Fun Run/Walk/Bike

Yes, we can start thinking about Memorial Day. We will be holding the annual Fun Run (and walk and bike) on Monday, May 31. We will gather, as usual, at the cul-de-sac at the end of Christmas Lane, near Mill Street. Feel free to invite your friends and family. Training optional.

Thanks for reading this and for being a CLHA member. Look for more information on the upcoming annual meeting, and, well, just about everything in this newsletter.

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