



Shoreline News

Big Portage Lake Riparian Owners Association

June 2011

The President's Pen

Greetings to all.

Finally.... It's Spring and our lake is coming to life. As President of your Big Portage Lake Riparian Owners Association, I would like to welcome everyone back to the lake. As we look forward to another safe and fun season, I thank all of you for your continuing support of the Association and it's activities.

Your board will continue to be guided by it's mission statement and strive to bring benefit to all who enjoy Big Portage. Let us enlist our lake friends who are not currently involved in our project-work to commit in joining us to continue our goal of maintaining clean water, great fishing, water sports, beautiful shorelines and a healthy environment for all. We still have a job to do and as you read this newsletter, keep in mind where you can help. It doesn't take a large commitment or a lot of time and the benefits are worth the effort.

Let's be safe on the water. Please be aware of your surroundings when operating watercraft. Remember do not operate a watercraft , at speed, within 100 feet of docks, piers or the shoreline and within 200 feet of another watercraft or swimmers. In general, please be considerate and respectful of others. Have fun on the water, and please be safe.

The annual association meeting will be held at the Fire Barn on Saturday July 2. Social-time will start at 8:30 a. m. (coffee & donuts) and the meeting promptly at 9:00 a.m. Several important topics will be presented so please mark your calendars and enjoy making new friends or reacquainting with old ones. I think this will be time well-spent.

As always, if you have question, comment or concern, please contact a board member or post a message on our web site...www.bigportagelake.org.

Dale Ekkela,
President
Big Portage Lake Riparian Owners Association



BOARD MEMBERS – If you would like to serve on the board, please call Dale Ekkela 715-547-3297 or any board member. Everyone is welcome to volunteer. Board terms are 3 years - meetings are held just 3 times per year – Memorial Day & 4th of July & Labor Day weekends. No experience necessary. New people & new ideas are always appreciated and very important to the continuing stewardship of Big Portage Lake.

All of us could take a lesson from the weather.
It pays no attention to criticism.

TREASURER'S REPORT

By Alice Muehlethaler

2011 annual membership dues in BPLROA \$35 per year for family membership and \$20 per year for Individuals.
Thanks to all of **YOU** for supporting the Riparian Association.

As of 05/23/2011	
Checking Accounts	\$ 7,959.40
Savings Account	10,359.26
Grant Account	10,059.74
Fidelity Portfolio	14,370.57
Total Assets	\$ 42,748.97

In 2003, the Board set up the **Environmental Contingency Fund**. Donations made to this fund are specifically earmarked for protecting our lake from invasive plants and other catastrophic problems.
Contributions are most welcome to prepare for future needs.



LAKE MANAGEMENT - Project Update

by Jules Eberhardt



Our consultant, Onterra, is nearing completion of their analysis of the data collected from the field studies performed in 2010.

We expect to meet with them in the next few weeks to discuss the findings and the development of management actions that will support realistic goals consistent with what would be best ecologically for the lake.

Onterra advises that they have found no evidence of invasive aquatic plants and that our water quality is very good. They did find some environmentally sensitive plant species which are normally found only in high quality conditions. They are also completing an analysis of data from their shoreline assessment to see if we should be doing anything regarding shoreline protection or restoration.

We had a very good response to the stakeholder survey performed last year, with a 73% return. Not surprisingly, maintaining water quality is a primary concern as well as protecting the lake against aquatic invasives. Also, many people expressed a negative view of the state of our fishery. Survey results are being reviewed by Onterra for input to the planning process.

After the meeting with Onterra, a report will be prepared followed by a “wrap-up” meeting to present results and the management plan to all those interested. The target date is late summer/early fall.

**PROTECTING OUR LAKE
IS
EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY**



At the May meeting the BPLROA Board discussed possibilities for a social event - possibilities are being looked into and we are open to suggestions (*just call any Board Member or email at bigportagelake.org*)
More info to follow at the annual meeting - July 2nd at the Land O' Lakes Fire Barn

2011-2012 Board Members

Dale Ekkela	President	715-547-6804
John Alt	Vice President	715-547-3364
Alice Muehlethaler	Secretary/Treasurer	715-547-3532
Tom Gratz	Director	547-544-9788
Dawn Eckstein	Director/Newsletter	715-547-3207
Dan Johns	Director	715-547-3766
Dale Reilley	Director	715-547-6305
Jules Eberhardt	Director	715-547-3259
Jill Edwards	Director	
Keith Chapman	Director	715-547-3924
Dave Leifheit	Director	715-547-3780

Cut out and post by your house phone for easy reference

BPLROA WEBSITE:

If you have not yet visited the website, please do so... www.bigportagelake.org

Much time and effort has gone into the creation of our web site and the on-going maintenance and uploading of data of interest to our members. Continuing thanks to Ron Steiner - web master and everyone who has provided data for the site.

You can now read past issues of Shoreline News; a summary of past accomplishments and future plans; view a survey map showing depths and information on the lake itself; courtesy codes so everyone can enjoy their lake time even links to other Wisconsin website for information. You can see at a glance the boat monitoring schedule to plan when you can assist and much more.

Did You Know ↗

If you are interested in **Water Quality on Big Portage** you can go to a link on our BPLROA Website www.bigportagelake.org Go to Links from the Home Page, then choose Citizen Lake Monitoring. This goes to the UW Stevens Point Extension Citizen Lake Monitoring page. In the center column, down 7 paragraphs under News & Updates, choose Annual Water Quality Reports, which takes you to the DNR site. Choose Vilas County, then Big Portage Lake. We have reports for both the West Bay from Janet Rasmussen, and the Deep Hole from Forrest Muehlethaler. Prior years are available also, back to 1989, although there isn't as much detail on the earlier reports. If you'd prefer a paper copy, please contact Forrest.

Additional **BPLROA phone directories** are available for \$10. Call Alice Muehlethaler.

Boating season is here - fishing, skiing, tubing, pontooning, PWC, kayaks, canoes - we all share the waters of Big Portage. Please keep in mind the Courtesy Codes printed in your phone directories when out on the water. Stay away from the fishing boats and please don't stop to ask "how's the fishing?" With just a bit of common sense and courtesy we can all enjoy our lake time!

The DNR is very serious about the Clean Boats/Clean Waters program. There are some hefty fines for violations: \$189 up to \$400 for each offense. If you remove a boat with weeds that's #1 violation; drive off and that is #2. Go on public roads violation #3 and putting the boat in at another lake with weeds is a 4th violation. The fines go up for each one and should you be a violator again - the fines go up exponentially on future violations. **WATCH YOUR TRAILERS & BOATS!** If you need more information - contact Dale Reilley or John Alt.

History of Land O' Lakes - the book will soon be available. Our lake neighbor Jon Helminiak wrote the book and it will be released on June 6th. You can purchase a copy if you wish at the Historical Society or local stores. Congratulations Jon!

New Driveway Ordinance - The Town of Land O' Lakes passed a new ordinance affecting new construction and modifications to existing driveways November 2010. There is a \$50 inspection fee payable to the Town Clerk prior to the start of any construction and prior to the issuance of a building permit. There are specifications of 14 feet for minimum road surface width & width clearance & height clearance. Minimum grade is 10% Also, the grand fathered properties/existing driveways - Emergency vehicles may not be able to service your property in a timely fashion if they do not meet the new requirements. For more detailed information, contact the Town Clerk.

Dock & Wharves Registration - The DNR has extended the deadline for registering your pier to April 1, 2012. This new twist out of Madison is for owners of large piers. In 2008 a law set the size standards for piers within the state. It also created the registration process that grand fathered in most existing piers larger than the standard size. You can check out the process for registering your pier on the DNR website: www.dnr.wi.gov/waterways/recreation/piers. The bottom line is you will need a grand fathered permit IF your pier/dock is over 6 ft wide or has a loading platform that is over 8 ft wide.

ATV Trails on 65 miles of town and country in Conover, Phelps, Land O' Lakes and Eagle River. On Tuesday, May 10th the Eagle River Common Council discussed ATVs in the city and on the town and county roads. They decided to waive action on ATV routes within the city limits until they receive results from the townships. If you are against having ATV's running down Razorback, Rummels & West Big Portage Lake Rd, now is the time for you to send letters to the Town of Land O' Lakes Board...express your concerns. Every board member should receive a letter or a phone call or both, because each board needs a majority of votes to prevent ATVs from entering the Vilas area. If you live in any of these town you have a very strong voice. If you live outside these towns you also have a voice because once allowed into Vilas ATVs will spread quickly to all towns. Soon there will be trails. Please alert your network of friends.

Below are the correct names and contact numbers: One letter sent to everyone will work.

Conover

Steve Rhode, Chariman, 4342 Church Rd., Conover, WI 54519, phone: 715-617-7406

Geroge Champeny, 3686 Monheim Road, Conover. Wi 54519, phone:715-479-6373

Karl Jennrich, 4480 Church Road, Conover, WI 54519, phone: 715-479-2295

Land O' Lakes

Daniel Balog, Chairman, PO Box 660, Land O' Lakes, WI 54540, phone: 715-547-6034
Samuel Otterpohl, 7649 Palmer Lake Rd., Land O' Lakes, WI 54540, phone: 715-547-6714
Michael Stopczynski, PO Box 204, Land O' Lakes, WI 54540, phone: 715-547-3665

Phelps

Colin Snook, Chairman, PO Box 123, Phelps, WI 54554, phone: 715-545-2022
Steve Waier, 2676 Hwy 17, Phelps, WI 54554, phone; 715-545-3012
Donna Brand, 4793 Grosse Ln, Phelps, WI 54554, phone: 715-545-2868
Dorothy Kimmerling, 3933 Winding Trail Ln, Phelps, WI 54554, phone: 715-545-2236
Eugene McCaslin, 2695 St Louis Rd, Phelps, WI 54554, phone: 715-545-8328

Enough letters should at least get these towns to have a public hearing so their residents, especially those living along the routes can voice an opinion.

Boat Landing Repair

By John Alt

During the last couple of months there have been some major positive developments regarding the repair of the Big Portage lake boat landing.

Based on the precedent set by Black Oak Lake and Forest Lake in that the DNR had allowed those lake associations to allocate their lake association money to do the repairs to their boat landings, the DNR is allowing BPLROA to do the same and repair our boat landing.

In conversations with Land O' Lakes Town Board members, the Town Board will allow the use of Town equipment and expertise to help complete the repair project. New bids and estimates are being obtained for materials and some labor for the project. Funds have been allocated by the Big Portage Lake Association Board toward this repair project. Barring no problems it is expected the completion date for this repair project will be between mid-June to mid-July 2011.

THE BIRD FEEDER

By John Alt

We are almost there!. Only TWO \$20.00 donation certificates remain available of the original 30.

The Raffle will happen at the annual meeting on July 2nd at the Fire Barn and some lucky person will win the beautifully handcrafted bird feeder donated by Jim Tidwell. Thank you so much Jim!!!

Do not lose out by not having the opportunity to win. Get that checkbook out and send a \$20.00 check to your treasurer:

Alice Muehlethaler
5237 Gees Road
Land-O-Lakes, Wisconsin 54540.

The first two checks to arrive will be entered into the raffle and any additional ones (*after the first two*) will be contacted to see if they want the money to go into the environmental fund or have the check returned.

Only 30 tickets will be in the actual drawing.

Ya can't win without a ticket!!!!



A recent article from the WDNR addresses the coming 4th of July holiday and fireworks:

"The number of fires started from fireworks each year is staggering, when understanding that most occur during the short July 4th period. In Wisconsin, where firework use is highly restricted, most forest fires starts are in direct correlation to fire danger."

Since our area is still in the midst of a long drought period, it seems sensible that we take every precaution to avoid a fire. In Wisconsin, the following fireworks are **restricted** (*not to be used*) throughout the State:

- Bottle rockets
- Roman candles
- M-70's
- Firecrackers

Permits are given to towns for annual fireworks displays but are never granted to individuals. There are a few **unrestricted** (*OK to use*) fireworks allowed to be used by individuals:

- smoke producing devices
- fountains
- sparklers

PLEASE consider the risks of having fireworks - based on an 11 year average from the National Fire Protection Agency over 32,000 fires occur due to the mishandling of fireworks. Of this total, over 90% occur outdoors. Furthermore, over 3000 structures & vehicles are lost which leads to costing the general public over \$30 million dollars in property damage alone.

For a few moments of "ooh's and aah's...it could take 100 years to replace the woods surrounding Big Portage - the risk is too great for the reward.

Please do not use or allow guests to use fireworks on our lake. Make plans instead to go into the Land O' Lakes fireworks display which is one of the best in the area.

2010 Boat Landing Monitoring - Clean Boats/Clean Waters

By Dale Reilley

I would like to thank you all for your participation in last year's monitoring effort. We logged 350 volunteer hours at the landing. A detailed summary of all data collected on the Inspection Reports can be found on the DNR website:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/invasives/WatercraftSummary.aspx?project=22955884>

The 2011 season has begun. Once again, we are asking for your help in the fight against Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) through boat landing monitoring. This year we will rely on both email and a phone campaign to maintain the boat landing calendar. I will email you throughout the summer. Simply reply to me with a date/time you wish to volunteer and I'll enter that into our web calendar (<http://bigportagelake.org>) and confirm back to you with the information. John Alt will continue to call those without email.

I cannot over emphasize the importance of this monitoring activity. Although most boaters are aware, a fisherman from Slinger WI was inspected in early May on the landing and he'd never heard of AIS or Clean Boats Clean Waters or that it was **illegal** to transport weeds, lake water etc. from one lake to another. Opening Day - Memorial Day - 4th of July and Labor Day weekends are particularly busy times at the landing as are most of July and August weekends. So please contact one of us to arrange times.

Thank you in advance for your participation and please be generous with your time.

Dale Reilley - Dale.Reilley@gmail.com
715-547-6305

John Alt - Jondee9@aol.com
715-547-3364

