

**POTTER'S LAKE NEWSLETTER  
MAY/JUNE 2002**

**SUMMARY – MAY 4 SPECIAL MEETING**

A Special Meeting of the District was held Saturday, May 4. 35 homeowners attended the meeting. The following was presented:

**Public Launch**

The ramp at the public launch will be replaced after Labor Day. The ramp will be unavailable for a period of time when the construction begins. Residents will be notified of the project schedule as that information becomes available. The parking lot will be striped as part of this project, with a total of eight parking spots, one of which will be reserved for disabled parking. In addition, a wheelchair accessible bathroom facility will be constructed, as will a boarding pier for those launching boats.

**Watershed Issues**

The 31-acre marsh area on the south/west side of the lake has still not been surveyed. Once the survey is completed, the District can approach the County regarding the fencing of the area and can begin conducting work weekends to remove a duck blind and some of the garbage from the area. A plant survey of the marsh area has been conducted to determine which plants and trees should be kept and which should be removed, most notably purple loosestrife.

The District is monitoring the development of the Sokol Camp property. The District is still pursuing the triangle-shaped property along Miramar and Stone School Roads. The District is interested in the property to control run-off from the fields. The Commissioners, in addition to looking at the purchase of the property, will also look at ways to work with the DNR and others to slow down or eliminate the run-off in accordance with regulations on non-point source pollution.

A property at the end of Spleas Skoney Road, adjacent to the marsh area, has become available and might also be beneficial for the District to own. A MOTION was made, seconded and approved to authorize the Commissioners to pursue the purchase of the property, including the use of District funds to conduct an approved appraisal of the property.

**What Is A “Watershed” Anyways?**

**A lake is really nothing more than a basin that collects water from the surrounding area. For Potter's Lake, our 162-acre lake is actually part of a watershed that is 400 plus acres in size. What that means is that the surrounding areas – farms, roads, residential development, and the like – all affect the water quality. Poor land use and pollutants a mile or more away can affect our lake. By the way, Potter's Lake is also part of a larger watershed as well, known as the Honey Creek and Sugar Creek Watershed.**

### **Water Quality Issues**

A survey of the aquatic plants will be conducted again. It appears as though weed harvesting will not be necessary again this year. If that turns out to be the case, it will be five seasons since the District last launched the weed harvester. Spot treatment using chemicals may be necessary. Residents were reminded that both harvesting and chemical treatments to control aquatic plants are done with the approval and under the direction of the DNR. DNR will soon adopt a revised aquatic plant management program requiring lake districts and others to develop a plan, submit an application fee, and obtain a permit before addressing aquatic plant issues.

Buoys will be placed in late May. The cables have been replaced with a higher quality material, so there should be fewer breaking free this year. Residents were asked to contact a Commissioner if they see a stray buoy.

Information about nitrate-free fertilizers for use in the watershed will be made available on the District's website at [www.potterslake.org](http://www.potterslake.org).

The Lake is not scheduled to be shocked this year. The Lake was not been stocked last year but has been stocked two times in the past few years with Northern Pike.

A "field trip" and/or guest speaker on shoreline buffer plantings will be arranged. The removal of shoreline buffers in favor of suburban lawns destroys the habitat of song birds, ducks, turtles and, where the plants are underwater, some bass and pan fish. If you want good fishing and wildlife, consider attending this program when it is offered. Details will follow soon. You can also find information on the website at [www.potterslake.org](http://www.potterslake.org).

### **Safety/Ordinances**

A proper **MOTION** was made, seconded and approved to recommend to the Town of East Troy that the boating and skiing regulations on the Lake be modified as follows:

Skiing (and similar activities) from 8:00 a.m. to sunset Monday through Friday, excepting holidays. Skiing from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and holidays. *Additionally, a speed limit of 10 miles per hour shall apply for all boats operating before and after skiing hours on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays.* (Modified language is italicized.)

When the proposed modification has been approved by the Town as expected, we will let you know. In the meantime, why not operate your boat as if the ordinance were already in effect?

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting of the District, Saturday, August 31. The Annual Meeting will be held at Town Hall and immediately followed by a picnic for District residents. We're still hoping to have a revised set of bylaws for approval by the Annual Meeting. Remember, under the Wisconsin Open Meeting law, items brought up at the Annual Meeting during the open comment period may not be immediately acted upon. If you have items you'd like to have considered for the meeting, please contact a commissioner.

## **BOAT PARADE/LIGHTING OF THE LAKE**

The Boat Parade will be held Thursday, July 4 at 5:00 p.m. The Lighting of the Lake will also be held July 4<sup>th</sup>, beginning just after it gets good and dark, about 9:15 p.m. More details are enclosed.

## **POTTER'S LAKE WEBSITE**

Stop by the District's website at [www.potterslake.org](http://www.potterslake.org). The site has been very well received, both by District residents and others who have surfed their way to our site. You'll find all sorts of useful information about our Lake and links for lake living. And don't forget to bookmark the site and stop by often as we'll be making changes often.

## **E-NEWSLETTERS**

About twenty residents are now receiving this newsletter electronically. For now, we are telling sending the text, sending a Word document attachment, and including a link to the website. You can print the newsletter from any of the three formats. We'll probably soon make an Adobe Acrobat version available, but the files can be large and not everyone has downloaded Acrobat (it's free!). *If you'd like to receive your newsletter electronically – and we can send more than one copy per household – let us know by sending us an e-mail to [mail@potterslake.org](mailto:mail@potterslake.org).* Receiving your newsletter electronically saves us time and money, so we really appreciate your making this transition.

## **A CHILLY HISTORY**

We're trying to put together a history of the patterns of ice movement on the Lake. What we're looking for specifically are the dates the Lake froze over and the dates the ice came off the Lake in each of the past few years. If you have this information, please contact a Commissioner.

## **BAIT STICKERS – STOP “HITCHHIKERS”**

Attention fishermen. Did you know that one of the more common sources for introducing non-native plants and animals in our lakes is the disposal of bait? If you would like to help our Lake, contact Robin G. Goettel, Communications Coordinator for the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program. Robin can provide you with more information about bait disposal and also provide stickers you can bring to local bait shops warning others of this problem. Robin Goettel can be reached at 217/333-9448 or [goettel@uiuc.edu](mailto:goettel@uiuc.edu).

## **PREVENTING BOAT THEFT**

More than 27,000 boats are stolen each year in the U.S., most under 20 feet in length, and most right along with the trailer. The following suggestions could help protect your boat:

- \* Use a trailer tongue lock or secure the trailer to a fixed object like a tree.
- \* Store your boat indoors or in a well-lit location.
- \* Keep records with the serial numbers for your boat, motor, and trailer.
- \* Engrave your name in a hidden area on your boat, motor, and trailer.

## **SAFE FUELING TIPS**

- \* Use only approved containers for transporting gasoline.
- \* Fill portable tanks off the boat.
- \* Make sure the boat is clear of any passengers.
- \* Turn off the engine and all electrical devices (including the blowers).
- \* No smoking or open flames!
- \* Do not top off. Leave room for expansion.
- \* If there is a spill, wipe it up immediately.
- \* After fueling, run the blowers for several minutes.
- \* DO NOT start the engine if you smell fuel.

## **RULES OF THE “ROAD” – QUICK REVIEW**

If a boat is approaching you from your right bow (12:00 to 4:00), that boat has the right-of-way. YOU must change to accommodate them.

If a boat is approaching and overtaking you from your stern (4:00 to 8:00), that boat has the responsibility to avoid you.

If a boat is approaching you from your left bow (8:00 to 12:00), YOU have the right-of-way. That boat must change to accommodate you.

If you are approaching another boat “head-on,” bear to the right to make the pass.

If you have to make a course change, make the first move BIG – 30 degrees or more – so the other boat has a clear idea of your intentions.

NEVER assume another boater knows these rules or will follow these rules. Drive defensively!

A full-blown boating safety class is available on-line at [www.boatus.com](http://www.boatus.com).

## **DON’T DRINK & DRIVE!**

Research shows that out on the water, a person can become impaired with just a third to a half of the alcohol it takes to become legally intoxicated on the road. Why? The “roll” of the water, vibration, engine noise, sun, wind, and spray, all of which speed fatigue and impairment. Combined with a reduced level of confidence compared to driving a car, alcohol and boating just don’t mix.

Of course, alcohol affects vision, balance, and the ability to process information. Physical reactions are slowed. Coordination is impaired. In the water, alcohol can affect a person's ability to tell up from down and can cause a person to stay in cold water longer, possibly causing hypothermia.

If you drink, let someone else drive the boat and stay out of the water.

## **WALWORTH COUNTY LAKES ASSOCIATION**

The District continues to be involved in the Walworth County Lakes Association, learning from other lakes in our area. One of the recent activities was to inventory information and practices on the County's lakes through the use of a survey. The results will be shared at the next meeting. We'll also be sharing statistical information about our lakes to see whether a high algae count, for instance, is isolated to our lake or may be a trend across all of the County's lakes.

Also at the next meeting, Walworth County zoning officials will be present to discuss their role in the building process and the restrictions that exist in and around shoreland areas.

As mentioned earlier, the Association is also looking to organize a "field trip" to one of the shoreland buffer planting demonstration sites.

Finally, the Association has been a helpful resource to us as we uncover new materials to use to provide you and others with information about lake quality issues. The new signs at the public launch on the removal of aquatic plants from your boat and trailer, and the bait stickers mentioned in this newsletter are both the result of our participation in the Association.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES & REPORTING SAFETY CONCERNS**

If you wish to report an emergency on Potter's Lake, call 911. If you would like to report a non-emergency safety concern or a possible violation of an ordinance, contact the non-emergency number at (262) 642-3700.

Remember, you can also point out safety concerns to neighbors and fellow boaters. Many people who visit Potter's Lake are, despite the signage at the public launch, unaware of our special rules – skiing hours, counter-clockwise direction, and no doubles on weekends. A friendly reminder goes a long way! After all, you could be helping to save the other boater from a warning, a citation, or maybe even an accident.

And don't forget to make certain that your guests are aware of the rules on Potter's Lake. Keep a copy of the rules handy, stop by the public launch, or visit the website and you'll find the rules posted there. The biggest problems tend to be the operation of a boat at a distance of less than 100 feet and a personal water craft (PWC) at a distance of less than 200 feet from other boats, piers, buoys, etc. Also, failure to have required safety devices on board – flares, fire extinguishers, and an adequate amount of the proper flotation devices.

## **LIKE IT OR NOT, MEET YOUR NEW NEIGHBOR**

Seems we have a beaver living on Potter's Lake. There will soon be pictures of the little critter on our website. Several small trees have been dropped along Mirimar. In addition to learning more about beavers, you can also find helpful hints for protecting your trees by visiting the website. Here's one of those tips....

Paint your tree trunks with a mixture of 20 ounces of masonry grade sand per gallon of exterior, latex paint or, for smaller areas, about two-thirds cup of sand to one quart of paint. Stir the mixture often and paint from the ground to a height of about four feet. The paint can be clear or color-matched to the trees. Avoid painting young trees (less than about six feet tall) as this may be harmful.

## **CONTACTING A COMMISSIONER**

You can e-mail us at [mail@potterslake.org](mailto:mail@potterslake.org) or visit us at our website, [www.potterslake.org](http://www.potterslake.org) and send a message from there. You can also send us correspondence to P.O. Box 808, East Troy, Wisconsin, 53120. Your elected commissioners are:

Karen Winkelman (99-02)  
Chairman  
(262) 363-4930

Tom Jordens (00-03)  
Treasurer  
(920) 625-3294

Jeff Beiriger (01-04)  
Secretary  
(262) 642-8742

Your appointed commissioners are Roy Lightfield (Walworth County) and Clayton Montez (Town of East Troy).

**HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!**

