



Portage, Base & Whitewood Owners Association

Serving the Lakes Community since 1940

Fall 2020 Newsletter

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mark Teicher

Greetings:

First, regarding the Chain of Lakes Improvement Project, I am happy to say there have been no more threats of violence against any workers. As always, if you have a problem or concern whatsoever, you can call or email me, (248-420-9144, MarkLTeicher@aol.com),

Or contact:

- Lauren Koloski, Public Works Environmental Supervisor Manager (734-260-0446, koloskil@washtenaw.org),
- Theo Eggermont, Public Works Director (eggermontt@washtenaw.org),
- Evan Pratt, Water Resources Commissioner (734-222-6860, pratte@washtenaw.org)

There certainly have been many valid complaints and all have been answered.

Second, your PBWOA board is looking for 2 new directors. The Board meets once per month, presently on Zoom. Please contact me or any board member if you are interested. We are an active board.

Third, we are looking to host an Elders of the Chain Zoom conference this Winter. We plan on asking a panel of folks who have been around our chain of lakes for a while to answer some questions about the good old days, hear some stories and get some thoughts on changes in the chain. If you are such an elder, and would be willing to answer a few questions and tell a story or two, please contact me.

Fourth, the PBWOA policy is that any member who takes an educational class or webinar that will benefit our lakes and waterways, will be reimbursed for the tuition or fee for that class or webinar. Just contact the board first. Such educational opportunities include those with the Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership ([https://www.canr.msu.edu/michiganlakes/online-](https://www.canr.msu.edu/michiganlakes/online-learning)

[learning](https://www.canr.msu.edu/michiganlakes/online-learning)); Michigan State University Extension Service (https://www.canr.msu.edu/lakes_streams_watersheds/index) Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership (<http://midwestglaciallakes.org/resources/webinars>) and Michigan Lakes & Streams Association (<https://mymlsa.org>). Page #4 of this Newsletter gives information for an upcoming course through MSU.

Take care.

Mark

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A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR...

Jane Ollila

COVID EFFECTS....

The PBWOA Board recognizes that 2020 has been a most unusual and “stressful” year for all of you. We have continued to modify our methods of operation and have still been able to meet monthly – via Zoom meetings which we feel are effective although not optimal. Our Annual Meeting – for the first time ever was held in August – also via Zoom with approximately 40-50 members in attendance. We’re trying hard to “attend to business” and stay on top of lake issues that have come up. Please don’t hesitate to contact one of us if you have questions or suggestions.

Other Covid related events included the necessity to cancel a Lake Health Seminar planned for March and our August Pizza Party. Covid also affected treatment for the Chain of Lakes Improvement Project in ways you may not have thought of. The Governor’s early

restriction on boats in the water delayed access for the Lake Scientists to the lakes to assess for earlier treatment. They were also restricted throughout the summer to having no more than two people in their boats as they surveyed lakes. Prior years had allowed them to have a local resident or representative from Washtenaw County on board for more “eyes” and residents who have up-close knowledge of the problem. Covid also interfered with production and shipment of needed parts when there were equipment breakdowns. Progressive AE, our lake scientist mentioned having 2 or 3 of their boats out of commission waiting on parts and the new harvesting company had at least 2 of their harvesters sidelined waiting for parts.

We are hopeful all of you – our members – have survived and adjusted to this new way of life. We are also very hopeful that this too will pass and we can be back to “normal” very soon.

We normally meet via Zoom for now the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in attending or have information you would like to share – again, contact a Board Member for directions on how to join us.



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LIST  SELL  REPEAT

GET TO KNOW YOUR WEEDS: Starry Stonewort By Jan Arps Prundeanu

Starry Stonewort is one of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) that is being treated by our Lake Management Team. I attended the Michigan Inland Lakes Convention workshop: “An Update on Critical Aspects of the Forty Year Starry Stonewort Bio-Invasion.” (The PBWOA generously funds any member who wishes to attend educational programs throughout the year and we encourage members to be alert to educational opportunities highlighted on our web-site, emails and Facebook.)

Following are highlights from that workshop.

Starry Stonewort was introduced into our continent via the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1978. It was found near Belle Isle in 1983 and surfaced in our Michigan inland lakes in 2006. As of 2016, it is present in the lakes of 7 states and Canada. Of special interest is the fact that OUR area (Oakland, Livingston, Jackson and Washtenaw counties) has the highest concentration of Starry Stonewort IN THE WORLD. Starry Stonewort likes our temperature, our sunlight and our “quiet” waters. Shallow, irregular shorelines are also conducive to its growth. It is capable of “creating” good conditions for its own growth and can become a dominant mono-culture. It reproduces by vegetative fragmentation and is easily transported by watercraft and trailers. (It creates significant biomass that has been the bane of many Tamarack boaters.) It does have one positive quality – it releases “allopathic” substances that block harmful algae blooms.

Management of Starry Stonewort has been challenging. Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center presented the status of their research findings, which are in the early stages. The use of algacides (Copper based) and mechanical harvesting have proven somewhat effective, but the studies have been limited and some untreated lakes initially have shown greater reductions in biomass. The current general consensus is that over time, treated areas do better, but the researchers are looking for untreated lakes to serve as controls.

We welcome your questions, observations and concerns. Please direct them to me at: janarps60@gmail.com



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WHAT'S GOING ON AT PORTAGE LAKE???

It's exciting and noteworthy... if you're curious even a little after you read Craig Kivi's article please check out the website for more information with great historical pictures and ways in which you might become involved:

www.naturalshorelines.com

NATURE PRESERVES UPDATE

By Craig Kivi

Along the undeveloped far northwest side of Portage Lake, wrapping into Mud Bay, there is a series of small white signs that say "Private Property – Protected Shoreline Habitat." These signs identify two nature preserves. To the far North, the Louis P. Kivi Natural Shoreline Preserve consists of more than 1,200 feet of natural shoreline and 2 acres of attached wetlands. Nearer to Mud Bay, including "Silver Dollar Bay", and wrapping around into Mud Bay, is the Norman A. Wood Natural Shoreline Preserve, consisting of 1,525 feet of natural shoreline and 9 acres of attached wetlands. Louis P. Kivi and Norman A. Wood were conservation minded residents of Portage Lake as far back as the 1930's and are my father and great grandfather. I am longtime resident of Portage Lake and grateful affiliate of the PBWOA. Both of these preserves prohibit human contact, allowing research access only and are protected from human development forever.

Of far more importance are what these Preserves are and what they do. The Huron River Watershed Council sent scientific representatives to the properties to perform "Bio Reserve Assessments" which quantify how important the properties are ecologically and ultimately for humans. They rated both preserves very high and in fact on one preserve the wetland and shoreline itself was classified as "endangered."

The over 2,700' natural preserve shorelines, consisting of dirt, grass, trees, cattails, floating vegetation and bushes act as the major water filter for Portage Lake, removing algae, fertilizers, toxins and other pollutants that a sea-walled shoreline cannot remove. The attached several acre floating mat of vegetation "bogs", removes carbon from the air. The massive attached wetlands further prevent pollutants from reaching the lake, filtering the rain runoff before it reaches the lake, and filtering the water prior to it percolating through the soils and filling the aquifers for the drinking water we take from our wells.



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One could write a book on the benefits these preserves offer wildlife but we only have room to mention a few. From places to breed, raise young, feed, etc., the preserve properties are rich in depth and diversity for all kinds of wildlife in an undisturbed setting. Those who drive by the preserves slowly, or better yet stay long and drift closely by, will see Eagles, Osprey, Egrets, Kingfishers landing in the sparse dead tree branches of the tall shoreline trees and hear literally hundreds of different bird songs. There is no other place on Portage Lake where dead trees really even exist, much less stand away from development where these majestic predators repeatedly feel safe enough to rest while hunting. A real treat is to float in front of the Preserves near sunset and watch the thousands of different birds flock in to overnight there, bringing all their different songs with them.

The untouched shorelines provide fish spawning and rearing habitat, a place to live, eat and reproduce for turtles, frogs and all kinds of other creatures which cannot survive near the sea-walled fine cut grass lakefronts so common on Portage Lake. The Preserves are a necessary lake health offset to the otherwise high degree of development of Portage Lake shorelines.



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However, the Preserves are in danger. Over the last couple of decades, Portage Lake has seen a drastic increase in the number of boats, boat size and of late large, high energy wave generating boats. This has resulted in a much higher number of extremely high waves hitting the Preserve shorelines and a corresponding increase in damage to the Preserve shorelines. In many places the shoreline is lifting up with the waves “hinging” due to the soils being washed out from under vegetation. Recently, large chunks of shoreline have been torn off and have floated away. This year two large shoreline tree roots eroded and the trees fell into the lake.

There are two pictures on the website which show significant erosion over just 15 years. At this rate the small bay and an estimated 5-10 feet of shoreline may be gone in another 10-20 years. The rate of destruction is frightening, especially given these shorelines are such a critical health resource for the lake.

Because of this drastic increase in shoreline destruction, recently a very large project has been initiated by Michigan State University, DEQ/EGLE, and DNR to cooperatively design and implement a shoreline stabilization process for the Preserves using natural materials and methods used successfully in other lakes. We are currently in the permitting process for the Preserves shorelines and expect to have it soon. This is our only hope to keep the Preserves shorelines stable and the benefit they provide to the health of the lake intact and functioning.

Finally, I will leave you with this. From scientist to scientist there is mutual agreement that when it comes to the protection and improvement of the health of lakes and rivers, there is no action, nor better money spent or donated than for the purchasing, restoring and protection of huge sections of natural shorelines and attached wetlands forever from human contact, therefore allowing these wetlands and shorelines to do their job of cleaning the water we drink, depend on and enjoy.

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REGISTRATION OPENING SOON

Several of our members have taken this course and remarked about how beneficial it was. Remember that upon successful completion of the course the PBWOA will reimburse any member. This is a six-week online course from the comfort of home. You have 24/7 access to six online units with closed captioned video lectures, activities, discussion forums, quizzes and live chat sessions with classmates and MSU Extension experts

MSU Extension's Introduction to Lakes Online course

Save the date:

This popular online course will be offered again beginning January 19, 2021. Visit [Introduction to Lakes Online](#) today to learn more, and to sign up to be notified when registration opens.

	
<p>Stop and see us at the "Big Red" building on Little Portage.</p>	<p>Helping clients buy, sell, or improve their homes on the water.</p>