

SYLVAN & OTTER LAKES

www.sylvanotter.org

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

2015

Mission statement: The Sylvan Otter Lake Association (SOLA) is a non-profit organization, comprised of volunteers to improve our lake community and protect the quality of our lakes for its safe recreational use. SOLA's main focus is to provide the best quality lake environment for all who use both Sylvan Lake and Otter Lake by managing weeds and wildlife.

Bird Flu - Don't feed the birds! The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced the state's first confirmed cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza this month. Avian influenza or better known as the bird flu represents the most serious threat to domestic poultry production in decades. **Due to this outbreak, the DNR has canceled all goose round ups for the remaining of this year.** Because of the bird flu epidemic, it is in your best interest not to interact with any birds. More information at http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10371_10402-356642--,00.html

The weeds in our lake! Over the past 30 years, SOLA has made major strides from the days of sitting in Gino's Restaurant stuffing newsletters and going door to door collecting funds to treat the lake. We have greatly increased our donations and improved the management of weeds with earlier treatments while keeping the contribution as low as possible.

When we post the yellow signs, letting you know when we will be spraying for weeds, I can always expect a few phone calls. Here are some of the questions and facts about treating the weeds. **What is the schedule for spraying the lake?** We spray based on two factors, 1) how much money we have in our account and 2) when is the optimal time for the weeds to be treated. **Our first treatment is the most expensive, averaging \$ 18,000.00.** We do not have a specific date every year when we spray. (Please remember, no matter what day we pick to treat the lake, it will always conflict with someone's plans.) Weather is the biggest variable in the equation. The more sunny days, the more weeds. The warmer the water, the more algae. Various weeds grow at different rates. Some areas of the lake need treating sooner than later. A major rain storm in the forecast could cause the treatment to wash out of the treated area.

How safe are the chemicals we use to treat the lake? The chemicals we use to treat the weeds are effective and safe, if used as directed. Let's use the chemical named "Reward", which is one of the more powerful chemicals we use, as an example. When applied at the prescribed rates (2 gallons / surface acre), a 150 pound person would need to consume around 5,000 gallons of water that was just treated or approximately 500,000 gallons of the treated water within 10 days, to be considered a lethal dose.

Why do we post signs on the entire lake even though we may not spray in your immediate area? This is just in case you go to another part of the lake that we have treated.

How far away should I swim from those areas? For 24 hours after we spray, you should stay 100 feet away from those areas.

Not pleased with the water quality in your area? If weeds are bad by your home and it is not an area used by a majority of the lake residents, it may not be a financially sound decision to spray in that location. We would love your assistance to collect donations in your area. If you collect the funds needed, we will spray your area. Contact Phil at 586-822-2817. I will be glad to discuss this matter with you.

“NO WAKE” zones. Boats within 100 feet of shore and in all canals must be “no wake”.

Thank you to the following lake residents who have volunteered their time to improve our lakes:

- Lou Schimmel – Vice President of SOLA.
- Al Payson - Wildlife Management, who along with the DNR, removed 118 eggs from 29 nests.
- Shelly Eddy –Treasurer of SOLA.
- Jeff Ignatowski –Web Site Design (and maintenance) for SOLA.
- Phil Thomas – Water Ski Course (permits and maintenance).

E 15 gasoline: The Michigan Boating Industry Association (MBIA) is **warning boat owners against using E 15 gas in their boats**, which can cause damage to your motor, cause fuel tank corrosion, increase pollutants and decrease overall performance. E 15 may also void your manufacturer’s warranty. The MBIA cautions to not use any gas blended with more than 10% ethanol for boat motors. Even when using E 10 gas, it is recommended that you use an ethanol marine fuel treatment additive, especially during winter storage.

Donations by the numbers. The following numbers are approximates / year. **We send out 1,500 newsletters. We receive an average of \$ 30,000.00 in donations. We average around a 70% donation rate. We spend \$ 26,000.00 on weed control. One third of the donations which are received, arrive after August. Your donations have dropped 8% the past few years. We need an additional \$ 10,000 per year to be totally effective. That is only 133 more donations.**

Donation Schedule for Sylvan and Otter Lake Association. If you are:
LAKEFRONT, CANAL FRONT, OR BOAT OWNER Due: Minimum of \$75.00
RESIDENT OR ONLY HAVE BEACH PRIVILEGES Due: Minimum of \$25.00

SOLA does not issue beach tags or boat ramp keys anywhere around the lakes. Contact your homeowners or beach association as to how you can get beach tags and ramp keys.

Treasurer's 2014 Report:

Beginning balance	\$ 7,406.00	
Donations	\$ 30,785.00	
Weed control and permits		\$ 28,084.00
Postage costs and printing fees		\$ 1,287.00
Wildlife management programs		\$ 320.00
Web site host, misc. fees		\$ 199.00
Total expenses		\$ 29,890.00
Ending balance	\$ 8,301.00	

Please mail your TAX DEDUCTIBLE \$75.00 minimum donation today.

Make checks payable to:

**Sylvan / Otter Lake Association
P.O. Box 136
Keego Harbor, MI 48320**

Links on key topics regarding our lakes community at - www.sylvanotter.org.

If you have any questions or comments, contact me at: phillip.russell.thomas@gmail.com or 248-682-2894.
Thank you and have a safe summer on the water,
Phil Thomas
Sylvan Otter Lakes Association President