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Taken from the magazine Cottage Life, December 1988

Say "the cottage" to almost any Michigander and memories rush forward like waves: the screech of gulls,

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or the squeal of old oarlocks; falling asleep to the rhythm of the surf, or waking to a chorus of frogs; sand in the sheets, or fish scales in the sink. Mostly, though, they're memories of family, because here in the Great Lake State, the cottage is a tradition that's handed down from one generation to the next. Such an extraordinary part of life in West Michigan deserves to be promoted with an exceptional show.



Magician Lake News Newsletter of the Magician Lake Improvement Association January 2009

From the Desk of the President

In my mind, the winter newsletter message always brings thoughts of reminiscence over the past year. Thinking back, the summer was a bit cooler than usual, but what a glorious fall we had. The colors were deep and rich and the days mostly sunny and clear lasting until after the first week of November. Patchy frost took out the impatiens, but the roses, mums and geraniums soldiered on well into November. Now our gardens are well bedded down in anticipation of a heavy blanket of snow.

The loon has made its way back to Magician Lake on his way south, the geese have gathered in huge flocks, and just last week our "Winter Eagle" perched himself on top a tree on the little island as he watched and waited to devour his prey of little diver ducks. Nature is always in constant change at Magician Lake. There may not be the hum of boats as in the summer, but there is always plenty to observe and reminders that "mother nature" remains in charge. Hopefully, there will be some articles in this newsletter or on our website (www.magician-lake.org) to assist you in passing on to the next generation the joy of living on a lake. We wish you and your family a happy, joyous and environmentally conscience 2009.

Sincerely,
Charlotte Poole
MLIA President

Fish Stocking In Magician Lake

Magician Lake receives fish stocking from state hatcheries on a recurring schedule of normally every 2 years. The last stocking was of Walleyes in November of 2006. At that time 293 Walleyes of an average length of 16 1/2 inches were planted in our lake. It was unusual that fish of that length would be stocked by the state and it appears these fish were producing eggs in rearing ponds but in their mature stage they were to be released and Magician Lake benefited from this.

In 2002 Magician Lake received 22,668 Walleyes of less than an inch long and in 2004 there were 21,650

See Stocking on Page 3

Freshwater Fish Struggling

About four out of 10 freshwater fish species in North America are in danger according to a major study by U.S., Canadian, and Mexican scientists. The number of species of fish populations in trouble has nearly doubled since 1989 and one biologist called it "silent extinctions" because few people notice the dwindling populations deep in American lakes, rivers, and streams.

The biggest cause is degraded freshwater habitat, both in quality and quantity of water for fish to live in. Invasive species crowding out native fish is also to blame. Many of the species in trouble or already extinct, are small minnows and darters whose absence is little noticed, but play a vital role in the food chain. Some vulnerable fish are staples of recreational fishing and the dinner plate. This study was reported in the September issue of the *Journal of Fisheries* by U.S. Geological Survey researchers.

Perhaps this also has an impact for our freshwater lake right here in southwest Michigan as we attempt to replenish fish in Magician Lake.

State and federal officials have banned the transporting of fish and bait among lakes and require the cleaning of boats, jet skis, and fishing equipment, which helped to limit the spread of the virus in 2007.

However, now the threat seems to be continuing. "Guys will go and fish Lake Michigan, and within a week they will be on another big lake," reports Steve Robillard, Illinois Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologist. "There's a chance of it getting in there and affecting walleye fisheries or other game fish."

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Magician Lake Survey Results

On the questions regarding home use, less than 50% are year-round. 30% stay 4-6 mos. and the rest, primarily weekends, with a week thrown in here or there. The most frequent answer for # of occupants was only 2.

Which one of the following describes how you boat? 60% of you have a motor boat. 27% have a PWC, but topping the list; pontoons, 66%.

Do you belong to a beach association? M.I. = 6, Curran Beach = 6 Rainbow = 4 West Bay = 1

81% of you read the Riparian Magazine. Does this mean we will stop harping about fertilizer use in the newsletter? Probably not, but read and believe. Eurasian milfoil has shown up in the channel and will be treated this spring. This is a serious threat to our lake's quality and you identified just that with your responses to the following section of the survey:

PLEASE INDICATE WHICH LAKE ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU

- 76%__The spread of invasive species, i.e. cabamba and Eurasian milfoil, zebra muscles, fish virus, etc
- 45%__Water quality affected by fertilizer or pesticide runoff or other means
- 33%__Development along the shoreline
- 25%__Quality of fishing, decrease of large fish or number of fish
- 56%__Poor recreational boating manners, dangerous boat handling, large wakes
- 55%__Poor enforcement of boating laws
- 24%__Over-crowding of the lake from the public access site
- 36%__Lack of understanding by lake residents as to how their use of the lake can adversely affect it

80% want MLIA to write letters and attended meetings regarding local issues.

41% think we should contract for extra patrol hours with the Cass County Marine Division and 44% thought we should limit fishing tourney activity.

A large number, 70%, would support an effort to persuade the state legislature to disallow dockage on public accesses and road ends.

Getting fuel for your boat? All of us are hauling gas in, in cans, from the gas station. Only one member had an alternative and had arranged to have the man who puts their pier in and out to take the boat to the station and fill it up.

Most thought our water quality is good but not as good as in the past. Read a more "in depth" analysis of the survey on the web site.

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Update to Agumentation Project for Crooked Lakes -

After reviewing the study done by Tritium Hydrological Consultants they (DEQ) are going to accept Tritium's conclusion that if Crooked Lakes Association pumps 800 gal./per minute or less, that this will not have a negative effect on Magician Lake or the surrounding lakes and wetlands. The DEQ will post a draft permit on their calendar and this will be open for comments for the next 20 days. If anyone wants to call Mr. Kamron Jordan related to this permit, he invites phone calls at (269)567-3565."

This permit had not been posted on the DEQ Calendar when this newsletter went to press. It is expected to be posted in two weeks around January 19, 2009. You can access the calendar at www.michigan.gov/deqcalendar.

Stocking from Page One

fingerlings of 1-3" planted in the lake. Both stocks of these fish coming from eggs produced in the Muskegon River. The number of Walleyes to be planted in a lake is 50 per acre. Magician Lake is scheduled for another stocking of Walleyes in 2009 or 2010. While 2008 would have been the normal year for stocking, the supply of eggs has been limited in recent years due to a virus (VHS--viral hemorrhagic septicemia) in Great Lakes waters.

VHS is believed to have arrived in the Great Lakes in ballast water of ocean-going ships. To prevent the spread of this mortal disease to inland fish, only eggs that are produced in waters that do not have direct access to the Great Lakes can be used in hatcheries. Walleyes are selected for Magician Lake because the lake does not have sufficient shoreline that has gravel for Walleye spawning. Other species of fish (bass, perch, etc) were stocked into Magician Lake in the 1940's and studies showed that the number of fish surviving in the lake was based more on the amount of natural habitat to sustain the specie rather than the number put in the lake and these other species could reproduce in sufficient numbers. The surviving quantity of stocked fish will diminish greatly due to natural events such as preying fish, birds, animals and environmental issues where habitat is destroyed or disturbed.

For further information on fish stocking in Cass County and the state go to: <http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/default.asp> Then put in name of county, lake and years for which you want history from 1979-present. Also see stocking history on <http://www.Magician-Lake.org> website.

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ML+SA Seminar - Region Three

On October 24, 2008 the Region 3, Michigan Lakes and Streams Association met at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence, Michigan. Here we heard three speakers relating to the use and protection of our lake resources.

1. Howard and Charlotte Poole from Magician Lake offered a book talk suggesting materials that might be found in a "Riparian's Personal Library". Materials ranged from scientific, to pleasure reading books both for adults and children that a lake front property owner might find useful. Other suggestions also included magazine titles, and Internet web sites for information related to water and protection of that resource. Visit <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~poole> for a list of books and websites.

2. Scott Brown from the Jackson, MI presented a talk on "Inland Lakes Management Techniques and Successes". He listed 10 things to do in order to better know and understand basic watershed management. Things like lakescaping for wildlife and water quality, learning to identify invasive species, pollution sources, basic lake science, fish habitat, and communication with lake stakeholders.

3. Mr. Paul Sniadecki, VP of Eagle Lake Improvement Assn, Edwardsburg, MI, spoke about "Keeping Your Zoning Ordinances and Township Master Plan Out of the Riparian Twilight Zone". He brought us up to date on Michigan's Planning Enabling Act of 2008, which requires a Master Plan Review of our area every 5 years along with citizen group input and interests. He suggested that we all should be concerned with view preservation and setbacks of homes, storm water runoff, phosphorous ban, wetlands preservation, geothermal issues, pier length and numbers, weeds, anti-funneling and keyholeing, motor boat operations with speeds and safety, and township ordinances pertaining to lakes.

He strongly suggested that a member from every lake association attend township planning and zoning meetings to make sure our voices are heard. MSU will also be conducting a Citizen Master Planner Course this winter in Cassopolis. If you are interested in that course call the Agriculture Extension Office in Cass County (269)445-4438

Many good ideas were presented to approx. 30 people who attended from our three county area (Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren). It is always good to meet and greet people from other lakes in our area and exchange ideas with them as well as with outside parties