



Deer Tales

Deer Lake Improvement Association Newsletter
Fall 2015



President's Message

Summer has wound down and fall is upon us. The boats and docks have come out of the lake and most of the leaves have fallen off the trees. Change is always ahead and we have experienced some recent changes that are noteworthy. In August Verizon Wireless erected the cell tower that has been a hot topic of conversation for the past year. Many of you were in favor of the tower because of poor cell reception at your lake home. Others were not in favor of disrupting the natural view on the horizon of the lake. Whichever camp you were in, the ultimate result is that the tower has been built and is here to stay. While the promise of increased cellular coverage will benefit everyone on the lake, there are those who would forego cellular coverage to maintain a remote appearance.

We will continue to experience change in and around the lake as residents come and go. We are always striving to maintain an accurate listing of lake residents and appreciate any help you can provide. If you have recently moved to the lake, or if your contact info has changed, please drop us a note via the website (www.deerlakewi.com) and let us know who you are and where you live. Please include an email address and phone number so that we may occasionally contact you with important information about Deer Lake.

This summer we cancelled our final Music on the Lake event because there was a thunderstorm predicted for that evening. We contacted the National Weather Center to get the most accurate information and based on their forecast at 3pm that day we decided that it would be an
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2016 Event Calendar

A calendar of all events will be published next April/ May. Please look for it on the website or Deer Tales that will be available in the spring.

Upcoming events for 2016:

- Welcome Back to Summer at Deer Lake Party
- Fireworks
- Boat Parade
- Music on the Lake
- Light Up the Lake
- Pontoon Party
- Flagstad Farm Family Picnic
- Festival Theater Night

Welcome Back to Summer at Deer Lake Party

The 2016 "Welcome Back to Summer at Deer Lake Party" (formerly know as "The Spring Party") will be a family affair this year. We have chosen to hold the event at Wild Mountain, 7 miles North of Taylor's Falls, so that ALL ages can come and meet other Deer Lake families and enjoy the rides and water park, followed by a picnic. If water rides aren't your thing, then just come to the picnic and meet some new families and welcome back old friends. This is a great way to kick off another fabulous summer at Deer Lake! Expect to see your invitation in the mail in May!



Water Quality in Deer Lake this Past Summer

Many have commented that the water clarity this summer is not as good as other years, and there are more aquatic plants in the lake. Though the cause is not certain, it is most likely the result of the early ice-off this year in addition to the record number of downpours that have occurred. The early ice-off gives the aquatic plants a longer growing season while the downpours increase the amount of runoff which carries phosphorus and sediment into the lake.

As a resident of the lake, the following is a list of things we can do to improve the water quality of the lake:

- 1) Utilize resources provided by the Deer Lake Conservancy to minimize runoff from your property into the lake. Runoff can add nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants into the lake, causing water quality declines – even if you don't fertilize! Slowing down runoff helps that water soak (infiltrate) into the ground. Water that soaks into the ground is less likely to damage lake quality and recharges groundwater that supplies clean water to the lake. Runoff can be minimized by restoring the lake shore with native plants and directing runoff into infiltration areas such as rain gardens.

- 2) Do not disturb native aquatic plant growth. The native aquatic plants provide habitat for fish and wildlife and protect water quality. A diverse native plant community provides the best habitat and defends against invasive species getting established. Plants also provide a place for zooplankton to grow. These little organisms actually eat algae in the water.
- 3) Minimize the use of all fertilizers and weed and feed products, and do not use fertilizers containing phosphorus. Fertilizer applied to the lake shore runs into the lake during rains especially the downpours we have experienced this summer. The same way these fertilizers cause your grass to grow faster, they also cause aquatic plants to grow faster and are detrimental to our water quality.
- 4) Minimize disturbance to aquatic plants and lake sediments by obeying a no-wake zone within 100 feet of the lake shore. This is a Wisconsin law and jet skis are restricted to a no-wake zone within 200 feet of the lake shore. When lake sediments are stirred up, they bring nutrients to the surface and reduce water clarity.

Over the past several years, we have seen improved water quality in Deer Lake due to the efforts of the Deer Lake residents, the Deer Lake Conservancy and the Deer Lake Improvement Association. However, we will still see ups and downs in the water quality as a result of factors outside of our control. Keep in mind that healthy native aquatic plants are critical to a healthy lake and clear water.

Joan Leedy
Environmental Committee Chair

The article "Deer Lake Tales—A Look Back at Deer Lake", is made possible by the residents of Deer Lake who are willing to share their stories with others.

If you have pictures, stories, memories, etc. that you would be willing to share with others please feel free to email me, send me mail, or phone me. Any stories/information would be appreciated.

Send Information, questions, and corrections to:

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Deer Lake on the web and facebook!

If you have not visited the website www.deerlakewi.com, you should! We have a great deal of information available there about the DLIA and the Deer Lake Conservancy. There are many resources for lake residents and info on things you can do around your property to aid in keeping Deer Lake clean.



Our Facebook page continues to get quite a few visitors (search Deer Lake, WI on Facebook). We try and keep relevant postings on the Deer Lake page and anyone is welcome to post to the page. Drop by and visit one of these two places on the web where you can learn more about Deer Lake.

Deer Lake Tales— A Look Back at Deer Lake:

Original Dam Owner:

By Sue Shelton



Creek with no dam

My grandparents (Henry and Amy Johnson) bought their first lot on the east end of Deer Lake in 1931 for \$225 (50' lakeshore). Two years later they bought the creek lot for \$112.50, which was unbuildable—but had a nice beach (no dam existed at that time). My dad (Wesley Johnson) said that every weekend they came up it was different—one week the dam was up and the next week it would have been torn down. Eventually the DNR settled the question and built the dam in 1941. The DLIA now controls/owns the dam. The dam still works fine, but looks somewhat different today as age has led to rusty loose rails, and there are no longer rock berms on the east side of the dam.



Original Wooden Bridge

The wooden bridge across the creek on Mirror Waters Street was designed and built by my father, a civil engineer, and neighbors all contributed to the cost of materials. A brand new bridge was just built in 2015, replacing the previous bridge which was built in 1993. The bridge allows people to get to their cabins, handles foot traffic and is the jumping off place for those netting minnows below the dam or those just interested in exploring the creek. As kids we used to walk the creek through the cow pasture carpeted with forget-me-nots to the highway, we'd pick up the creek again behind the Deer Lake school. Grandpa always told us the creek went to the Balsam Branch the Apple River the St. Croix River the Mississippi River and then to the Gulf!

A few years ago a marriage proposal even took place there with lighted votive candles lining the road and decorating the bridge! The names were never known but the curious would love to know who they are!

Dam when new in 1941

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unnecessary risk to the band to continue with the performance that evening. These are difficult decisions to make, however, had we waited and the band had come all the way out to the lake we would have had to pay for their performance even if we were unable to get them out on the water. It is a difficult decision and one we do not make lightly, but first and foremost in our mind is the safety of the band. We appreciate everyone's understanding and we know what a disappointment it is when the performance does not go on as planned—we were disappointed too!

We will continue to try and provide a variety of entertainment in and around the lake with our Spring Party, Fireworks, Music on the Lake, Fourth of July Boat Parade, Pontoon Party and Festival Theater night. There is also the annual Flagstad Farm Picnic hosted by the Deer Lake Conservancy. I hope you all have a wonderful winter at Deer Lake or wherever you are!

Tom McBride, President
Deer Lake Improvement Association

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