

SWAN LAKE NEWS

Swan Lake Association, Inc. Newsletter

July 2021

Annual Meeting of Members of Swan Lake Association, Inc.

The Annual Meeting of the members of Swan Lake Association, Inc. will be held:
Wednesday, September 8, 2021 - 6:30 pm
Portage Public Library Bidwell Meeting Room
253 W. Edgewater St., Portage Wisconsin

For the following purposes:

1. To read and approve the minutes of the last Annual Meeting;
2. To present reports of officers and committees;
3. To elect three directors of the Board of Directors--two with affiliation to the South, one with affiliation to the North; The terms of Jill Pogorelec (S), Mike Meikle (S) and Jim Watson (N) are expiring. (Jill Pogorelec was elected by the SLA Board to replace Betty Gast in October 2020. That "term" is to be re-elected in 2021.)
To "officially" elect the 2020 slate: Bob Barth (S), Don Sabey (N) and Vicki Vogts (N).
4. To transact unfinished business and new business as may properly come before the meeting. A nominating chairperson has been named to search for and present names of persons interested in running for the three positions open in 2021 for the Board of Directors. Anyone interested in one of these three-year terms, please contact Dorothy Rebholz at 608-742-4589.

SLA WEBSITE

by Vicki Vogts

Is there a Slow No Wake warning on Swan Lake this weekend? I just moved to Swan Lake and would like to be a SLA member - who do I contact? When is the next SLA annual meeting? A section of my pier floated away in high water, did someone find it? I would like to read an old issue of the SLA newsletter, where can I get a copy?

These are all questions that residents on or near Swan Lake may have and don't know where to go to get answers. Go to the Swan Lake Association website: <https://swanlakeassnportage.com>

Our website has information on:

*Home Page:

- Informational Blog
- Lost & Found
- Calendar of Events
- Columbia County Water Safety Ordinances
- Contact Us Information

*Lake Management

- Swan Lake Maps
- Clean Boat, Clean Waters
- Wisconsin Dept of Natural Resources website

*Resources- Local Links:

- Portage Golf Club
- Saddle Ridge Golf Course
- Rendezvous at Saddle Ridge Restaurant

*About SLA:

- Bylaws
- Past Newsletters
- Membership Info
- History of Swan Lake and Photos
- Board of Directors Contact Info

*Lake Recreation:

- Boating
- Fishing
- Water Sports

*Portage Boat Club

- Portage Chamber of Commerce
- Pardeeville Area Business Association

If you have information that you feel should be on our website, please contact us. This is YOUR website so let us know how we can help you!

WATSON WATCH

by Jim Watson, Swan Lake Association President

By running down and up the Fox River everyday with the boat and air cooled "mud motor" starting June 19th last year, we were able to avoid two Slow-No-Wake periods. The storm in late August that dumped 12 inches of rain in about 45 minutes, on top of 2 inches that fell three days before, coupled with the 8+ inches that fell upstream of Pardeeville each of those storm events, arrived at Swan Lake at once and created a huge flood. Slow-No-Wake was not avoidable as downstream weeds were no longer the problem. The old railroad grade near Portage acted like a dam with the only passage for the water being through the old, narrow wood trestle bridge. That flood level has only been surpassed by the 2008 flood in June. The storm last August also had high winds so there was much damage from them besides water damage. Boats, hoists, piers and many trees were twisted off by rotating winds.

Considering all the big rain events in recent decades, and more and more frequently the last several years, the spring of 2021 has been super dry. I think I heard this early part of June is the driest it has been since 1882. Since January 1st and this spring, we are close to breaking many records for heat and lack of precipitation.

The lake was already low after the ice and snow melted and then it dropped to where bare mud was showing along our shorelines and piers. This is the level people complained about it as being too low in the 1960's-1970's. It was typical back then for the months of August and September, not April and May. This year it was hard for some people to get their big boats to their pier or on a hoist. The water did rise at the end of May and should not be a problem at the current level.

A ride downstream on the Fox in April in a very small boat (which still got stuck on the shallow spots down river) allowed for a view of a white sand river bed with hardly any vegetation in the channel. It was the same as in the lake when many weeds die out at the end of the summer. So with no weeds obstructing the river flow, the few small rainfalls in April and early May did cause lake levels to rise as much as 6 to 8 inches. But, then the level would drop in a matter of a few days.

As it was last year, by the last week of May any little rain would cause a rise of a few inches in lake level. But it would not go down even though there was no rain. This year there was 0.8 of rain on May 28th and three days later should have been the peak rise from that. However, the lake kept going up an inch per day! We had already started running the down and up routine with the mud motor to knock a path through the solid mat of weeds in many stretches. The lake level reached to within 8 inches of the Slow-No-Wake mark.

Then when the river path was clear of weeds, the lake level went down ½ to 1 inch per day. This all depended on the number of back and forth trips we traveled clearing weeds through the bad spots.

As of June 10th, there were 15 inches of room in the lake to reach the Slow No Wake mark. We probably don't want to take it too much lower or some people will have trouble getting their boats off hoists. I would prefer keeping the level down lower for more room. But, at least we know if the water goes up too high from a typical June thunderstorm or two, with a relatively clear Fox River channel, the water won't stay up for long.

We now have several volunteers to take turns making daily trips on the river or even more if needed. Other than the noise of the motor, it is a pleasant trip. There are not many biting insects this year (so far) and the scenery is nice with a lot of birds and other wildlife. There is an eagle nest with two young eagles watching as you drive by nearly right under their tree. The first few days the adult eagles were not too happy with the commotion but I do keep a pair of hard hats in the boat if needed! They are used to it now and pay little or no attention to the boat.

The ice fishing season was disappointing again this past winter. The fish did not seem too active where we could get to them. For the first half of the winter the ice was not to be trusted without probing with safety equipment. We stayed with the few spots we knew were safe. Later when the ice was thick enough to travel, heavy snow covered it and soaked up water through every little crack until much slush was hidden under the snow. That gets messy and an ATV gets stuck even with chains on the wheels. And, no matter how nice the snow looks on top, you do not want a snowmobile to get buried in that slush!

For several years even the spring and summer periods have been off and on, not so great for panfishing. Could this be due to all the heavy rains, wildly fluctuating water levels and temperatures? This spring started out hot in April, record heat most of May, and June so far has been blistering (other than two cold nights). The stable sunny, warming weather brought many fish up into the shallows. Very clear water allows you to see into the lake with polaroids--like looking into an aquarium.

It is easy to locate the white circles where bluegills spin to fan out their nests. I'm having some good days catching them, 8 to 9 inches and some bigger, providing very tasty fish fries! There is not much sign of crappies or walleyes so far, but a few people have caught some nice perch which are also a fish fry favorite.

Yellow bass (stripers) are swarming in the shallows. There are huge schools of them piling into the spawning bluegills. They are just harassing them and likely stealing freshly laid eggs from the nests. They are eager to bite, put up a good fight and many people like to cook them up too. It is best in warm weather to put them in a cooler right away with a lot of ice and water. Then, when filleting, keep only the top part of the fillets above the "mud line."

With the water as clear as it has been, I do more looking than casting. It is always amazing to see the numbers and variety of fish in Swan Lake.

INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK FOR SWAN LAKE

by Melissa Waldvogel and Alison Veldkamp

Summertime, sunshine, sandbars, snow cones and Swan Lake! We created an Instagram page and a Facebook page where you can share your photos of your Swan Lake adventures and activities. Follow us and share your pictures to us @ swanlakewisco on Instagram and Facebook.

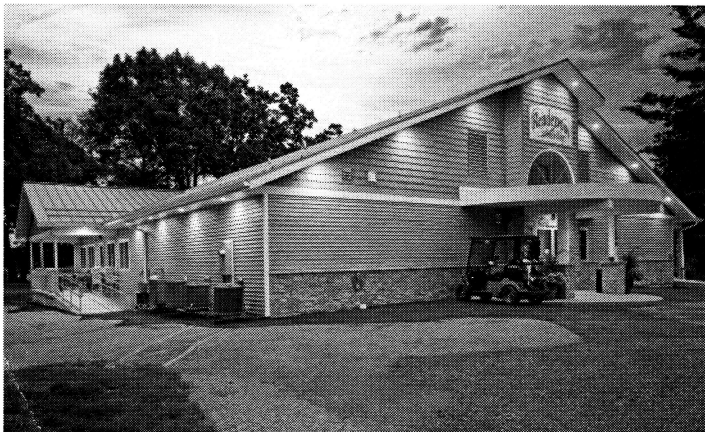
PORTAGE GOLF CLUB NEWS

by Mark Braska, PCA Professional and General Manager

The 2021 golf season is in full swing!!!! We are off to a fantastic start with the golf course in excellent condition and golfers coming from all over to play our championship golf course. Over the winter we were able to make some much needed improvements to our golf course and the clubhouse locker rooms. Most noticeable is our new bridge and we appreciate the hard work and time that Bill Illinski (Pody) put into this project. The pro shop is fully stocked with more merchandise than in the past. Recently we brought in a line of Ryder Cup shirts and pullovers that have the red, white and blue colors with USA on the chest. We hope to see you out here soon. If you haven't been out here for a while we know you'll be impressed and enjoy your day golfing and afterwards relaxing at the Northshore overlooking Swan Lake.

--- Phone: 608-742-5121

SADDLE RIDGE GOLF CLUB and RENDEZVOUS AT SADDLE RIDGE



If you are looking for a fun golf outing or want to have a delicious meal, call 608-742-2181 for information and reservations.

DUES/MEMBERSHIP for SLA, INC.

Swan Lake Association, Inc. dues are \$10.00 for the fiscal year, July through June. The date on your mailing label indicates the year in which dues have last been paid. Checks payable to "Swan Lake Association, Inc." may be mailed to SLA, Inc., PO Box 182, Portage, WI 53901. This newsletter is periodically sent to property owners in the Swan Lake area and to people who rent boat slips at Saddle Ridge and the Portage Golf Club who are currently non-members. There are two classes of membership: (1) Individual, consisting of either an individual or entity; and (2) Joint, consisting of a husband and wife, family, or joint owners of a single parcel of real estate. Each individual or joint membership shall have one vote. Members shall designate affiliation with either the north or south side of Swan Lake.

THIS N' THAT

by Dorothy Rebholz

We've been enjoying all the birds who make it back to Swan Lake. On a recent pontoon boat ride we saw an osprey on the pole in the wetland and then saw another osprey circling above over the bay. When we got to the east end an eagle flew into the trees to the right of the inlet where they have a nest. Further examination with high powered binoculars revealed two eagles sitting in the tree by the nest.

There are more purple martins nesting in our houses that are on a pole in the water than we can ever remember. They are often flying around making all kinds of purple martin sounds soaring in the air and flying into the house. Purple martins do not stay in the area very long. After nesting and by early August many are already on their way south as far as Brazil.

Kudos to Dawne Pafford whom I have seen picking up trash along Country Club Road. Dawne told me she considers the north shore area her "back yard" so she is just trying to keep it as neat as possible.

THE TRADITION CONTINUES

by Don Sabey

During the early to mid 1960's Norman Hinkley, who had a cottage on 1st St. just west of the Portage Country Club, decided to start a tradition in his neighborhood which most of us have seen in rural central and northern Wisconsin communities. Mr. Hinkley was a band director at Portage High School (later in Green Bay) and had a unique artistic talent with an extremely legible handwriting. Using these qualities he decided to erect large poles containing the names of the families owning properties in his neighborhood.

Each board was hand cut and names hand painted onto the board. Two poles were eventually installed--one at the intersection of Country Club Road and W. Northshore Dr. and the other one at the intersection of W. Northshore Dr. and 2nd St. I believe Mr. Hinkley may have cut all the boards and hand painted the names onto the boards himself, but I assume he did have help from other neighbors when it came to installing the poles into the ground. Over the years many names have changed often with changes made on the sign poles by the various individuals who were the new owners of properties. The poles also have been knocked over by Mother Nature, but the tradition of having the poles in place has survived.

Jumping forward some 55-60 years, Mark and Jane Showers have taken on the task of keeping Mr. Hinkley's tradition in our neighborhood. Mark and Jane have decided to not only replace the original two poles with updated names, but also will be installing two other poles which will show the names of property owners on Country Club Road, Dietz Dr. and East Northshore Dr.

Mark and Jane are cutting the new boards (approximately 130), staining them, engraving the names using a laser and then putting on a sealer to hopefully allow them to better survive the winter weather.

The first pole, located at W. Northshore Dr. and 2nd St., has been completed with numerous voices of appreciation and applause of a job well done. There will be a slight delay in installing the two poles on Country Club Rd. as the company which owned the laser decided to sell the one which was used and will be purchasing a new one. Once this acquisition is finalized, hopefully soon, the name boards will be completed and the new poles will be erected.

Mark and Jane have never requested to be compensated in any way for any of their financial outlays nor their hard work. But, if you see them out walking early in the morning a nice "thank you" will be appreciated and if you are so moved any other show of appreciation would be nice.

If you don't happen to know the Showers, they own one of the cottages on the gravel road on 2nd Lane (Skunk Island).

Mark is a tall fella, I'm guessing about 6'4" and quite the former basketball player. He can usually be seen wearing shorts and a white baseball hat. Jane is a retired bank executive but still keeps her foot in the door and remains on the board of directors of her former employer. Jane is also one of the three daughters of Ron and Nola Nordeng who are long time residents of our neighborhood.

Many thanks also go out to the Watson families who have allowed the pole at 2nd St. to be installed on their property and to Jim Watson who cemented in the pole to make sure it stays in place for a long time! THE TRADITION CONTINUES-----!!!!



Mark and Jane Showers working on the signs



Sign at 2nd St. and W. North Shore Dr.

RESPECT FOR FELLOW BOATERS AND NEIGHBORS

We continue to hear concerns about the following:

HUGE WAVES from boats: Just a reminder to all who have boats that create the huge waves that roll from one shore to another, if an accident is caused by your huge wave, you can be held liable. Also, the waves cause severe erosion to the shoreline.

LOUD MUSIC, partying late at night: Noise easily travels over the water to other areas of the lake. Please be respectful of neighbors! The warden has said the place to call with a complaint is: COLUMBIA COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER (Sheriff's Office) at: 608-742-4166.

DAWN TO DUSK yard lights: Extremely bright yard lights take away the night sky that many people who live on a lake desire. The intensity is also magnified by the water and by snow and ice in the winter. A big thank you goes out to some of the south shore residents who have discontinued their dusk to dawn lights.

Boats with "Stadium" lights at night: The boats that carry people with these bright lights as they look for fish in the shallow water near shore and piers continue to annoy people who live near the water. Jim Watson has encouraged these "fisherpeople" to fish with their spot lights along the many feet of undeveloped shoreline on Swan Lake.

NORTHSHORE RESTAURANT AT THE PORTAGE GOLF CLUB

by Chad Kruswicki

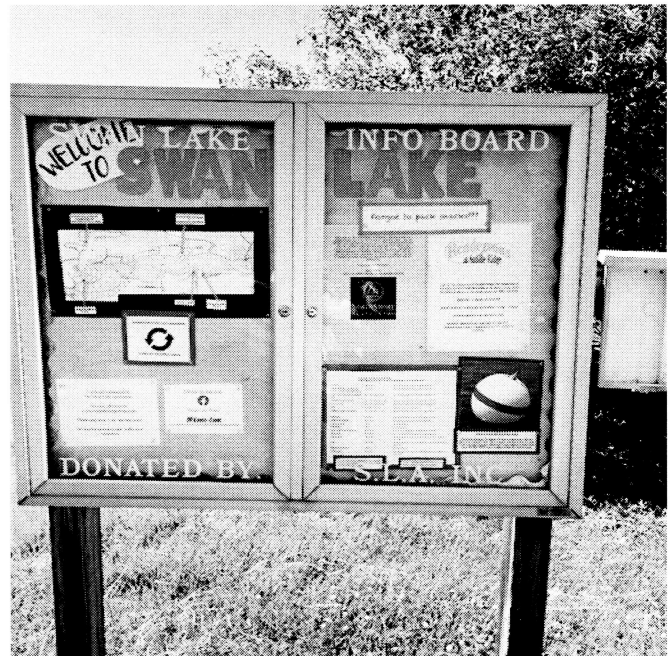
Summer started early this year! It's been a fantastic start to the golf season and the restaurant has been very busy. The Northshore staff would like to thank everyone for their continued support for which we are extremely grateful! We are having a customer appreciation day on July 31st starting at 2 pm, featuring the band Best Practice and free food! Donations are being accepted for the Feathered Friends Sanctuary and Rescue.

Thanks and have a great summer!

-- Restaurant phone: 608-742-3553

PUBLIC BOAT LANDING SLA SIGN

Jill Pogorelec updated the Swan Lake Association Information Board at the Public Boat Landing. She contributed a picture of the information on the board.



SLA Sign Board at Public Boat Landing

2021 BOAT CLUB EVENTS

The Steak Fry dates are July 17 and August 21. The cost is to be determined. Also, the Pancake Breakfast is Sunday, August 1st. Tickets are \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children under 10.

Mike Proebstle reports they are working on improvements on the grounds. They had to move their floating piers when the water was shallow in the spring.

