

SYLVAN & OTTER LAKES

www.sylvanotter.org

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

2017

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.

The effects of a warm winter: In an article in the April 2016 Oakland Lakefront magazine the negative effects of a warm winter to our lakes was discussed. Most of last winter, our lakes did not totally freeze. More sunlight reaches the bottom of shallow areas and warms the water earlier than usual which promotes weed and algae growth. Therefore, we have had to treat several areas of the lakes earlier to control weed growth and algae blooms. So far this season we have had weed control expenses in excess of \$ 20,000.00 and it is only June. The amount spent to date is about two-thirds of our annual budget.

Donations by the numbers: We send out approximately 1,700 newsletters to residents who have lake privileges. There are approximately 600 homes around the lake. We have almost a 70% donation rate, which generates on a yearly average about \$ 28,000.00 in donations per year. We have been tracking donations by house number since 1996. As mentioned above, our expenses continue to rise so we are forced to treat weeds in the areas that benefit the majority of residents. We are also forced to reduce or discontinue spraying in areas that have low or no contribution to the general funds. If the weeds are bad in your area and the funds are not available, we need your help to collect donations from your neighbors. Our goal is to have more residents contribute instead of raising the suggested donation amount.

Privately pay to have additional weed treatments: SOLA does the best they can to eliminate weeds based on available funding. We will continue to treat the areas used by a majority of boaters, skiers, fisherman and swimmers first and then concentrate on the areas that will minimize the spreading of the weeds as our next priority. If you wish to pay to have additional treatments in your area, contact Phil at 248-682-2894.

Phragmites: Phragmites is an invasive reed that is growing and taking over our wetlands. The plants can grow up to 15 feet tall not only blocking your view but also limiting the growth of cattails and other important plants. They are very difficult to get rid of as their root system can spread out as far as 10 feet. Pulling up the plants results in broken root fragments that sprout into more plants. The best way to rid an area of these plants is to use an herbicide called glyphosate directly onto the plant in August and September at a cost of around \$ 60 – 100 / acre and it may take several years. This will add to the cost of weed treatment for our lakes

Mosquito repellent: There have been a lot of warnings about mosquitos in the news lately and in the June issue of the Oakland Lakefront Magazine they report that repellents that contain DEET or

(diethyltoluamide) were found to be effective overall. They also reported that Cutter Lemon Eucalyptus had comparable effects to those containing DEET.

Be wary of non-motorized water vessels: A lot more people are enjoying paddle boarding and kayaking on the lakes these days. Some of these people are paddling just off shore and they can be hard to see. Keep an eye out for them as you enjoy your leisurely boat cruise around the lake.

Wakeboard boats: Wakeboard boating continues to grow in popularity with the advent of wake surfing. Wakeboard boats produce very large wakes for wakeboarders and surfers. These larger wakes are causing more erosion of our shore line. In addition the wakes can cause issues for kayaks and paddleboards. **Remember the operator of a boat is responsible for its wake.**

“NO WAKE” zones. Boats within 100 feet of shore & in all canals must travel at no wake speed.

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.

Donation Schedule for Sylvan and Otter Lake Association If you are:

LAKEFRONT, CANAL FRONT, OR BOAT OWNER	Due: Minimum of \$75.00
RESIDENT WITH BEACH PRIVILEGES	Due: Minimum of \$25.00

Treasurer's 2015 Report:

Beginning balance	\$ 8,300.00	
Donations	\$ 33,845.00	
Weed control and permits		\$ 33,530.00
Postage costs and printing fees		\$ 1,208.00
Wildlife management programs		\$ 330.00
Web site host, misc. fees		\$ 151.00
Total expenses		\$ 35,219.00
Ending balance	\$ 6,926.00	

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

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.

Sylvan Otter Lakes Association web site - www.sylvanotter.org. Keep up on all of the latest lake information. Get access to links on key topics regarding our lakes community.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at: phillip.russell.thomas@gmail.com or call me on my cell at 586-822-2817 or at home at 248-682-2894.

Thank you and have a safe summer on the water.

Phil Thomas

Sylvan Otter Lakes Association President