



# Clearwater Lake

## Property Owners Association

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## 2020 Fall Newsletter

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### Save the date:

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**Saturday, June 5, 2021:** 9 AM Annual CLPO Meeting at Corinna Town Hall

**Saturday, August 7, 2021:** 10:30 AM - 1 PM Annual CLPO Picnic: Lower level of the Annandale City Park



*Looking for Starry Stonewort on Clearwater Lake*

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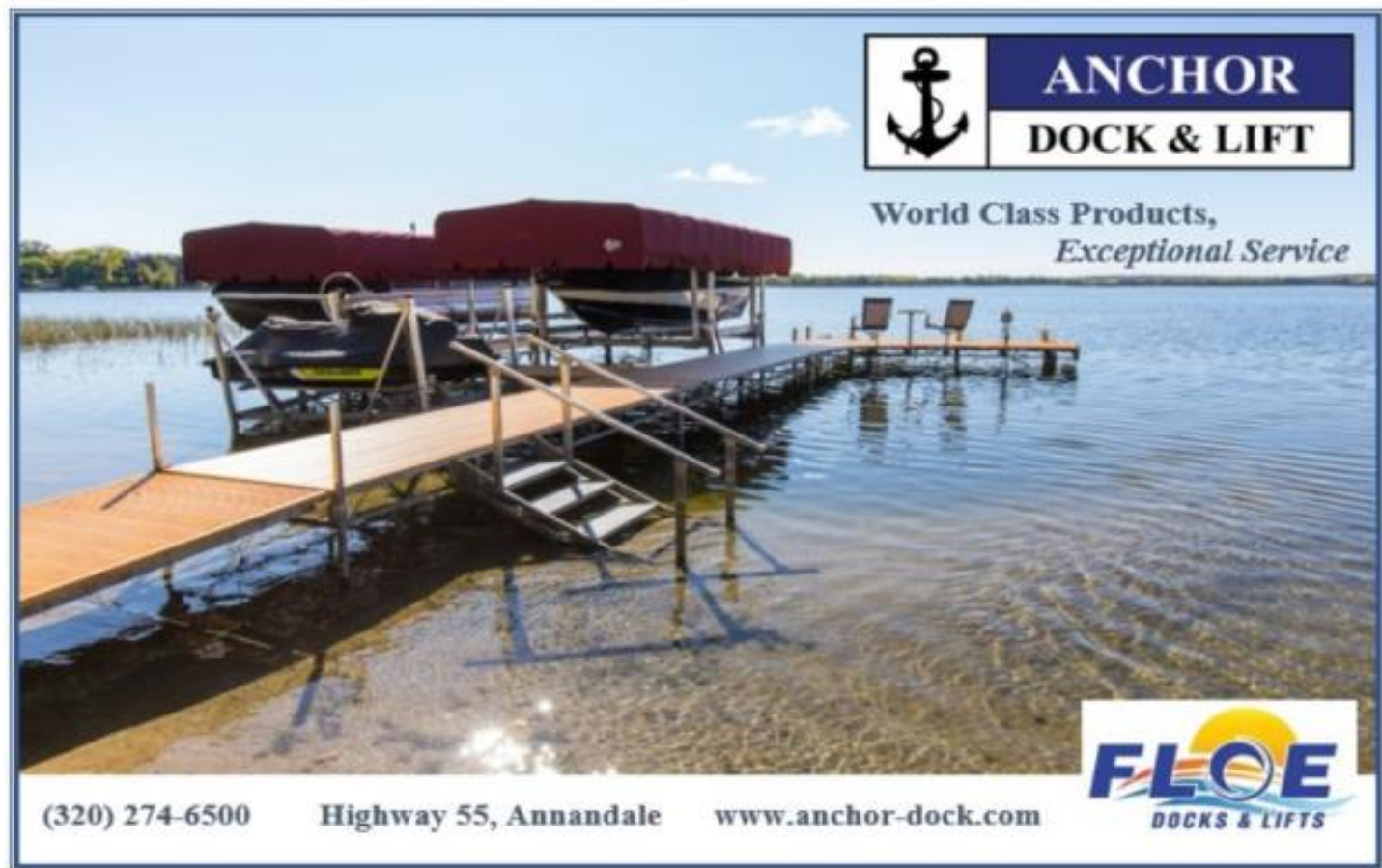
### Membership:

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Thank you for all that have already paid their lake association dues for 2020. We currently have 184 paid members out of 545. We're down slightly from last year as we had 216 paid members at this time. (We ended the year with 226 paid members.) You can review the mailing label to verify if we have received your dues for 2020.

**We encourage everyone on Clearwater Lake to become a member to help maintain and protect the lake!** 2020 Dues are \$50 and you may pay your dues via check (a Dues form is attached) or online at our website at [www.clpo.org](http://www.clpo.org). All donations are tax deductible. If you pay on-line, you will complete our membership renewal first before being transferred to PayPal to complete the payment portion. You can use your PayPal account or check out as a guest and enter your credit card information. Upon completion, PayPal will issue you a receipt. Please remember that all the activities of the Lake Association benefit everyone!

Also, please make sure we have your current contact information, especially your email address. We send many updates throughout the year and it helps us to save on postage. To update your information, please complete the membership form attached and check the box that your information has changed or send us an email at [clpomn@gmail.com](mailto:clpomn@gmail.com) with that information. Thank you!



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## A word from our president... Jim Kutzner

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It's Fall! Bring in the plants, rake those leaves, and... the big boat haul-out! This has been a crazy and challenging year. We're trying to maintain the lifestyle and activities we love, but there's this pandemic holding us back in so many ways. Fortunately, humans are adaptable when we have to be and we're finding ways to adapt our daily grind to the new realities. Technology is a great help but humanity is required. Having a lake to recreate in and just get away (and be socially distanced) helps a lot. But we look forward to something we can call normal. Unfortunately, there are some activities where we may never return to what we call normal but we will adapt and find a 'new normal.'

Within CLPO, the new normal – at least for now – has begun. We now conduct our Board meetings via Zoom and we're getting good at it. We held an Annual Meeting virtually and we work with other organizations virtually. The human touch isn't there, but then neither is a virus. Fortunately, some of our lake activities have not been affected by the pandemic, especially the rake tosses at the ramps, the underwater searches, and the water treatment at the sandbar for the Fourth of July. In 2021 we will continue with our work, follow the news, and take action appropriate to the situation.

Here are a few of the things we have been doing this year:

**MAISRC Showcase:** Minnesota has a unique resource not found in most other states. The Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) was established in 2012 by the Minnesota Legislature "to develop research-based solutions that can reduce the impacts of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota by preventing spread, controlling populations, and managing ecosystems; and to advance knowledge to inspire action by others." MAISRC is headquartered at the U of MN's Saint Paul campus, but its work extends across the entire state, and MAISRC coordinates with other bodies such as the Minnesota DNR, the US Geological Survey and the University of Montana.

This past month MAISRC conducted its seventh annual public event called 'Showcase' where their past work presented, current work is reviewed, and future work described. Showcase is open to the public, if you are interested be sure to mark your calendars for next August and check the MAISRC website for details ([www.maisrc.umn.edu](http://www.maisrc.umn.edu)). In previous years this was a two-day in-person event at the MAISRC facilities, but due to the pandemic this year, the event was expanded to be a three-day virtual event. The in-person lab tours were out, but the online replacement sessions were especially valuable. Projects extend wide and far and this year the presentations included updates on zebra mussel management, controlling phragmites, and research on starry stonewort.

There is an early promise of a potential treatment for zebra mussels. The research is in the early stages, but the early results are promising. Low-dose copper solutions are being tested in Minnesota lakes with the goal of finding a practical solution to address this invasive species, and they are coming up with initial positive results. The test treatment areas are small and one question is whether the treatment regimen can be scaled up to large bodies of water (such as the entirety of Clearwater Lake). More to come in 2021.

Phragmites (pronounced frag-MIGHT-ease) is an invasive plant that is invading our wetlands with incredible speed. Until recently, I was only vaguely aware of this plant. But over the summer, I paid a lot of attention to every wetland I drove by and I quickly realized that this plant is all around us. Once you become familiar with the mature tops waving in the breeze, they quickly stand out and it becomes obvious how invasive it has already become. MAISRC is looking into not only the best treatment but also the best overall approach to management.

Another project we are pleased to see on the front burner at MAISRC is a deep dive into how AIS affects property values. While simple logic would seem to say that AIS should negatively affect values but this needs to be demonstrated. A few years ago, there was a presentation at another lake event where a researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that his analysis of local Wisconsin lakes showed on average that each AIS species will reduce property values by 8%. CLPO took a local look at this question in 2018 and 2019, comparing data on home sale prices and days on market of both Koronis and Clearwater Lakes. Our sample sizes were far too small to be called a survey, but based on the limited results, we saw there continued to be a belief that AIS will drive down values. We are delighted to see that MAISRC has taken this project and we look forward to the results.

MAISRC has a number of very useful videos on YouTube from previous Showcases and on their ongoing research, and the videos from this year's Showcase will be posted very soon. You can find their YouTube site by searching for 'MAISRC' or 'U of MN AIS Detectors.'



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**Starry Trek:** Another major project spearheaded by MAISRC is the annual Starry Trek. For the fourth consecutive year, volunteers were sent to assigned lakes on Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup> to look for starry stonewort. The volunteers went to assigned ramps, tossed in double headed rakes, and then checked what came up. The volunteers were primarily searching for starry stonewort, but any other suspicious plant or animal was also reported. Of the sixteen lakes in Minnesota where starry stonewort has been found, four of those discoveries took place during Starry Trek. This year starry stonewort was discovered in nearby Carnelian Lake and the DNR and the Stearns County AIS Committee are already deep into addressing the infestation.

Starry stonewort is not spread by wildlife, it is spread by humans. In every one of the now 16 lakes in Minnesota where starry stonewort has been found, it has been found at a ramp, and in most cases, it has been found only at a ramp. Starry Trek volunteers don't have to go out in boats; instead they toss rakes from the docks at the ramps. The volunteers first gathered in the morning at a regionally assigned location to be trained and they got to hold the plants in their hands. Then they went to their assigned ramps, collected any suspicious AIS, and then returned to the starting point to report their findings and turn in any suspicious samples. Those samples are then sent to the DNR for analysis and determination. This is a very inexpensive but very effective approach to addressing starry stonewort. If you are interested in participating check with MAISRC at their website next early summer or contact us and we'll get you connected. For more information on starry stonewort see <https://www.maisrc.umn.edu/starrystonewort-research>.

**Eurasian Watermilfoil Project:** This old Clearwater Lake project first begun in 1990's has finally been closed. As previously reported this old project was to address the milfoil problem in Clearwater. But the way it was written under the old water laws, the funds could only be used to treat Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM). The Clearwater River Watershed District's (CRWD) attorneys advised us to create a new project rather than try to rewrite the rules of the old project. In past years the annual cost of treatment of EWM was in the tens of thousands of dollars, but more recently the EWM has declined in the lake. We did not treat for EWM last year because we couldn't find enough of it in sufficient concentration to warrant a permit to put chemicals in the lake. We even verified that through an independent third-party investigation. We did treat some EWM this year, but it was very little and we will spend less than \$5000. In response to the legal advice from the CRWD the CLPO conducted a petition drive in 2017 to create a new AIS project with more latitude in how the funds

can be spent, including possible spending on future EWM treatment. That project was approved and it began last year. The final action of the old EWM project finally occurred in September when the final EWM fund balance of over \$64,000 was transferred to the new AIS Project and the EWM Project was closed. It's still our money; it just sits in a new account where we can spend it on treatment of any AIS, including EWM or starry stonewort.

**Hybrid Milfoil:** Hybrid Milfoil (HWM) is a cross between Native Watermilfoil and Eurasian Watermilfoil. We are concerned because reports from MAISRC and other lake associations and their contractors indicate that HWM can be more resistant to the 'traditional' chemical treatments. The concern is that should HWM become entrenched in a lake, it may be much more difficult to eradicate than was EWM. Last year we had a few suspect samples that were sent to the University of Montana and fortunately they were found to not be HWM. This year no suspicious samples were found during the lake-wide aquatic plant survey conducted in July.

**CLPO Annual Meeting:** We did hold a virtual Annual Meeting in early August that was lightly attended. Had this been a normal year we would have met in person in early June followed by our annual picnic in August. We held out hope for both, but alas, the pandemic ruled: the picnic was cancelled and the meeting went online. Like everyone else we will follow the news and the guidelines and assess our situation next spring on when and how to hold an annual meeting and whether to hold the picnic.

**CLPO Board Election:** Because of the pandemic and the need to hold our Annual Meeting virtually we conducted the election by mailed ballots immediately after the August Meeting.

We saw two Board members depart following the completion of their terms. **Dean Flygare** has been a CLPO Board member for years and his connections to the community have been a great benefit to this organization. **Wes Nelson** served us very well in his term in a variety of activities. We very much thank them both for their service and we wish them well in the future.

We welcomed three new Board members to the team: **Marci Segner, Sarah Braun, and Brian Tommerdahl**. Each one brings different experiences and skills that can help CLPO as we plot our future. Welcome to the Team!

**Clean, Drain, Dry!!!:** We keep saying and writing this – why? Here's my elevator speech answer:

Lake Koronis has a \$3M starry stonewort problem. That's the rough estimate to clean up the lake. Well, they don't have \$3M, so they do what they can to pull together about \$200K a year to harvest and treat starry stonewort. But with respect to the infestation, that amounts to basically 'treading water.' (pun not intended)

Lake Sylvia spent about \$30K last year to almost eliminate starry stonewort, and the most recent underwater search found absolutely nothing. No one there is declaring final victory since a fragment may have gone undetected, but this is the greatest of news. They will remain vigilant.

What's the difference? Lake Koronis was infected before anyone had even heard about starry stonewort and it was out of control before they realized it. The team at Koronis is good and they've been working lake issues for decades, but no one knew what starry stonewort was. It has a similar appearance to chara, a native plant that is abundant in many lakes including Clearwater. By the time the problem and its size were realized they had a huge problem. The Sylvia people learned from Koronis' unfortunate circumstance, that being, if you have a problem jump on it immediately.

So, we here on Clearwater are also going to learn from Koronis. We will remain vigilant. That's why we have teams of rakers to search the ramp sites every couple of weeks. That's why we hire a professional diver to search all the ramps a few times a year. Both are cheap, but very effective exercises.

But the best way to avoid starry stonewort in your lake, is to stop it from getting there in the first place!

And that's why we ask everyone to:

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## **Fish Report: by Tim Isle, AIS Committee**

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In regard to questions about the fish populations in Clearwater Lake. Joe Stegwig, of the DNR, provided a wide variety of information regarding the current, as of last year, and the historical details of our lake's fish. One of the most important pieces of information was that the walleye numbers have been down for several years. Historically, Clearwater Lake was stocked with 1.5 million walleye fry on an even year basis. But due to the declining walleye population on Clearwater, from 2014 to 2019, Clearwater Lake was stocked with 1.5 million fry each year. In 2019, an additional 55,900 walleye fingerlings were stocked in Clearwater.

For more detailed information on our walleye and our other fish populations, as well as the survey methodology used to establish these numbers, please go to the CLPO website at [https://clpo.org/lake/lake\\_data.asp](https://clpo.org/lake/lake_data.asp)



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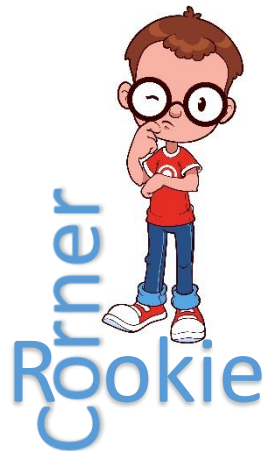


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## Rookie Corner: by Paul Pattee, CLPO Board Member

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As Summer 2020 passes into memory and the falling leaves offer us a reminder of what is to come, it's time to explore another conservation topic. This time around, we'll look at the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations (MN COLA) as an integral, if not integrating, part of our conservation effort. But first, a comment . . .

The use of acronyms in government is pervasive and distracting, if not outright confusing. In our last article, I tried to point out the difference between the CRWD (Clearwater River Watershed District), a governance, taxpayer supported organization as different from the CLPO (Clearwater Lake Property Owners), a membership-donor supported lake association. In other words, being a taxpayer helps fund the CRWD, but does not sustain the CLPO. Such acronyms are here to stay and need to be accurately digested to understand, appreciate, and advance the collective effort that goes into preserving our Minnesota waters.

Minnesota has over 11,000 lakes, 104,000 miles of rivers and streams, and 13 million acres of surface water. The non-profit group Conservation Minnesota, through its subsidiary Minnesota Waters, was tasked with facilitating a collaboration between Hubbard County COLA and Becker County COLA the result of which was the formation of Mn COLA in 2011. Okay, got it? Again, COLA stands for Coalition of Lake Associations of which there are many in our state. MN COLA was formed as a volunteer organization to preserve, protect, and improve Minnesota waters through advocacy, education, and the sharing of best practices amongst all lake associations (COLAs). Mn COLA has a Board of Directors with each member serving a 2-year term including our own CLPO president, Jim Kutzner. New members are welcome as individuals, lake or river associations, coalitions, watershed improvement districts and other alliances. Mn COLA is ready to assist groups in any part of Minnesota wishing to form an association and will function as an "umbrella organization" for the advancement of common interests and concerns. The goal for MN COLA is to be an advocate or clearing house for all state groups in dealing with state government, including help with the all-important grant application process, while acting as a premier source of information in support of best practice principles.

In some of my reading, I came across a research paper published in September 2017 by a graduate group out of Concordia College. Although the study was conducted after the formation of MN COLA in 2011, the study of Minnesota lake associations highlighted the complexities and challenges facing water conservation organizations. They identified over 500 lake associations, contributing \$6.25 million annually toward the preservation of Minnesota waters. Most lake associations had between 100-400 members and a volunteer board of 10 or more board members. Collectively, at the time of the study, lake associations were found to contribute 1.2 million volunteer hours annually in conservation activities including AIS inspection, meeting attendance, water quality testing, and community education outreach. It was believed that the top 3 challenges facing associations included inadequate member participation (i.e. need far exceeded the available human capital when it came to gifting time & effort), associations not being heard or taken seriously by the DNR, and the aging population of lake property owners . . . should I be offended? Perhaps, but if true . . . Anyway, the report concluded that Minnesota's lake associations play a crucial role in protecting and managing Minnesota's lakes with the recommendation that there be more communication and collaboration between policy makers and lake associations . . . enter MN COLA and what they're all about.

None of this works without the support of MN COLA and a variety of other sources including the Clearwater River Watershed District, the DNR, Wright County Soil & Water, Stearns County Environmental Services and, of course you . . . our members, sponsors & contributors. The sustained support of the Clearwater Lake Property Owners association, through participating memberships & donations, are every bit as important as state grant funding in our conservation effort. Consider becoming a CLPO member or make a donation by using the link <https://clpo.org/donate/>.

Before closing, a big "shout-out" to our newly elected board members: Sarah Braun, Marci Segner, and Brian Tommerdahl. Thanks for volunteering your time and talent in advancing our own conservation effort through the CLPO.







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## Lake Property Weed Control

Many have inquired about who to contact in regards to have their lake weeds commercially treated. It does take some time to get through the permit process, but there still is time to apply for permits. Below are the website addresses for additional info. You can also find the links on our website under AIS.

DNR approved Aquatic pesticide companies:

[https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/fisheries/apm/commercial\\_aquatic\\_pesticide\\_applicators.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/fisheries/apm/commercial_aquatic_pesticide_applicators.pdf)

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## **Aquatic Invasive Species Update 2020, by Tim Isle, AIS Committee**

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This past summer, the focus of our aquatic invasive species initiatives continued to be focused on identification, prevention, and treatment. It is safe to write that while there are still some final details to be completed as we wind up the summer, this summer's aquatic invasive species work has been productive in each of those areas.

In regard to identification, AIS Consulting was hired to do an aquatic plant survey of the littoral areas (those areas of the lake that are 15 feet and less in depth) of the lake. Since Clearwater Lake is relatively shallow and the survey points were 100 meters apart, AIS Consulting conducted aquatic plant surveys at 854 different points on the lake in the exact same spots as they had conducted the plant survey in 2017.

A few highlights of the survey included the following:

- The maximum depth at which aquatic plants were found increased from 15 in 2017 to 17 feet in 2020.
- 27 different aquatic plants were found in 2020, up from 25 in the 2017 survey.
- In 2017, only 82% of the surveyed areas had aquatic vegetation and in 2020, 94% of the areas surveyed had aquatic vegetation.
- Chara was found on 72% of the surveyed areas and was the most abundant species with coontail at 17% being the second most common vegetation found.
- In regard to our aquatic invasive species, curly leaf pondweed (CLP) was found in 3.4% of the areas sampled (9.4% in 2017) and Eurasian water milfoil (EWM) was found in only .4% of the surveyed areas (1.1 % in 2017).



Please realize that the point intercept survey is not designed to provide a minute level of detail and there are areas where it is possible that there may be smaller localized aquatic vegetation that creates problems for navigation.

To see the complete results of the 2017 and 2020 point intercept survey, please go to the CLPO website at <https://clpo.org/> The survey details are [https://clpo.org/lake/lake\\_data.asp](https://clpo.org/lake/lake_data.asp).

Starry stonewort (SS) is the most pressing aquatic invasive species threat to Clearwater Lake. In addition to the ramp inspectors (See Mark Bertelsen's article regarding this valuable tool) and the early detection of the species is extremely important in order to contain its spread. In order to locate it as quickly as possible when it enters the lake, we have CLPO members who volunteer to throw rakes near the landings to see if there is any sign of the SS. Additionally, the CLPO has contracted with Blue Water Science to do scuba/snorkeling as well as rake tosses to check for SS at our landings/launches. The year's final (September 30<sup>th</sup>) SS search by divers and rake searches from Blue Water Science, did not find any SS in the four landing areas that were surveyed.

The two invasive aquatic plants in Clearwater Lake, EWM and CLP were both treated chemically in 2020. The CLP treatment consisted of three sites with a total 27.3 acres and took place in late April when the water temperature was close to 50 degrees. This is the first year that CLP was treated on Clearwater Lake. We also treated EWM but only 2.24 acres. The success we have enjoyed in treating EWM is demonstrated by the fact that five years ago, we were chemically treating over 70 acres of this plant.

As our home owners realize, the invasive zebra mussels are still very prevalent on Clearwater Lake. As mentioned above there are very early but positive results in the effort to ridding lakes of these creatures. The scientists' efforts continue to focus on a practical solution to control this invasive mussel.

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## 2020 AIS Public Ramp Inspections: by Mark Bertelsen, V.P.

Fall is quickly closing in and Public Boat Ramp Inspections on Clearwater Lake will be finished for the season by Mid-October at both Bobs Bay and Black Pool locations. As most of you are aware, your CLPO board of director's work closely with both Stearns and Wright county in order to procure grants to help fund these inspections along with contributions made by **your** lake association. 2020 has been a record year in both funding and inspection hours provided on the lake. Starting in May, Inspectors have been on duty at our ramps Friday, Saturday, and Sundays throughout the Summer. Additional inspection hours were added on Holiday weekends to cover Mondays. We also tested inspections on Tuesday and Thursday to collect data on boat traffic for possible future years. In total, we plan to have completed 1,790 hours of ramp inspection by October 18<sup>th</sup>. As we finish this year, I have been notified that our Stearns county grant application for 2021 is due by the end of October. Here is to another good year of protecting our lakes.

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## CLPO Social Media: by Brian Tommerdahl, CLPO Board Member

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Social media is a modern source of communication and education. Recently CLPO established accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Facebook has been up for several months, Twitter for a few months and Instagram more recently. Our goal for Clearwater Lake residents is to inform, educate and entertain. What does Invasive Cattails or China Mystery snails look like? How many Loon pairs are nesting? Where is Lenny and Lucy Loon on the lake today? When will the Tundra Swans return? How are membership dues spent? Answers are within our social media pages. It is our hope the more you know about the CLPO, our lake, nature activities, your neighbors and volunteers, the more likely we will preserve Clearwater Lake for future generations.

**Like our pages.** There are direct links to these on the bottom of our homepage at [www.clpo.org](http://www.clpo.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ClearwaterLakePropertyOwnersAssociation/>

Twitter: [@lake\\_clearwater](https://twitter.com/lake_clearwater)

Instagram: [CLPOA](https://www.instagram.com/CLPOA)

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## Talents

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We are always looking for volunteers to help with misc. items throughout the year. If you have a talent and/or resources you'd be available to help the CLPO with at some point, please let us know. Send us an email, talk to one of the board members or note it on the Membership form. Thank you!



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.50¢ Wings

**Wednesday**  
Bingo starts at 6:30pm

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Beer & Pizza Night  
\$20 for 42 oz. light tap beer & 2 topping pizza  
\$22 with Specialty tap beer

**Friday**  
Free Meat Raffle starts at 6:30pm

**Saturday**  
Lions Charitable Meat Raffle starts at 6:30pm

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\$4 Bloody Marys, All day

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## CRWD: by Rebecca Carlson, District Administrator

What is the Clearwater River Watershed District?

The Clearwater River Watershed District (District) has been collecting water quality data on Clearwater Lake, one of the most pristine lakes in the watershed, since 1981. Preliminary 2020 data shows that this trend in excellent water quality is continuing with average phosphorus measuring 19 ug/L in West Clearwater Lake and 20 ug/L in East Clearwater Lake.

The District is a governmental agency with the mission "to promote, preserve and protect water and natural resources within the boundaries of the District in order to maintain property values and quality of life." It was formed in 1975 with the purpose to improve water quality in the Clearwater Chain of Lakes.

Our District is nearly 160 square miles of lakes, streams, wetlands and working lands. A Board of Managers, made up of residents within the District, oversees staff, sets the budgets, and implements projects and programs in the watershed to improve water quality.

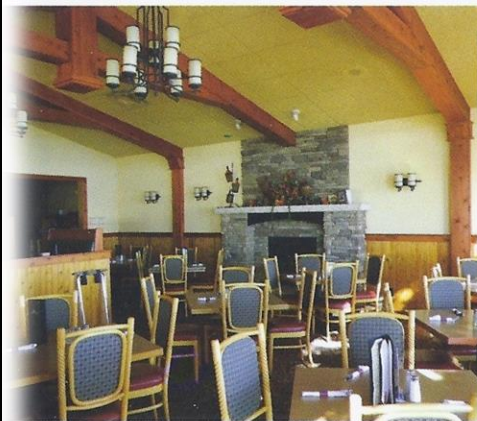
Collecting water quality data drives much of the work because the information provides direction on the best projects and programs to protect and improve water quality.

The District also works directly with residents and lake associations by managing aquatic invasive species, bogs, supporting shoreline buffers for lakeshore residents and targeted fertilizer applications for agricultural landowners, as well as through educational programs in area schools. Volunteers in the District collect rainfall data, measure and record water level, and serve on our Citizen Advisory Committee.

Would you like to learn more about the CRWD and your lake? Or would you like to find ways to volunteer? We have lots of information on our website – [www.crwd.org](http://www.crwd.org) – and you can always reach us by email at [admin@crwd.org](mailto:admin@crwd.org)



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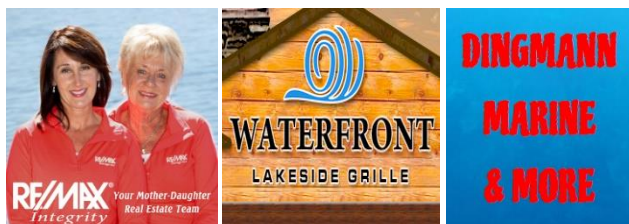
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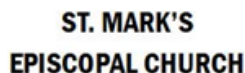
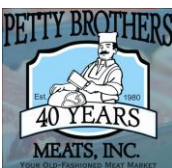
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**2020 Dues Paid:**



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**Officers:** President: Jim Kutzner  
Vice Pres: Mark Bertelsen  
Secretary: Joy Carlson  
Treasurer: Jeff Golden

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[mbertelsen34@gmail.com](mailto:mbertelsen34@gmail.com)  
[joycarlson@remax.net](mailto:joycarlson@remax.net)  
[treasurer@clpo.org](mailto:treasurer@clpo.org)

**Board Members:** Tim Isle, Mark Wilkins, Wendy Nelson, Liz Leitch-Sell, Paul Pattee  
Sarah Braun & Brian Tommerdahl

**AIS Committee:** [t\\_ilse@yahoo.com](mailto:t_ilse@yahoo.com)  
**Membership Committee:** [markclpo@comcast.net](mailto:markclpo@comcast.net)  
**Communication Committee:** [clpomn@gmail.com](mailto:clpomn@gmail.com)

**\*\* Don't forget to Join or Renew your membership - Thank you! \*\***





# Clearwater Lake

## Property Owners Association

PO Box 476  
Annandale, MN 55302

### 2020 CLPO Member Form

Please encourage your neighbors to do the same and join. We have made a big difference in the lake quality in the past 15 years and will be able to continue in the years to come if we get your support. Thank you!

2020 CLPO Annual Membership Dues Payment: \$50.00

Yes, I'd like to give an additional donation: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Total: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Check the box if you'd like to have the additional donation kept anonymous: ☐

Check the box if your information has changed and needs to be updated: ☐

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Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Lake Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email Addresses: \_\_\_\_\_

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Online dues payment is available at [www.clpo.org](http://www.clpo.org)

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2020 CLPO Dues Payment: \$50.00

Additional Donation: \$\_\_\_\_\_

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\*\* CLPO is a 501(c)(3) Organization. All dues and donations are tax-deductible. \*\*