

APRIL 2002 NEWSLETTER
Issue

April 25 Membership Meeting & Elections

It's been a long non-winter -- time to get together with fellow lake area residents and start planning for 2002 !! If you only get to one meeting a year, make it this one. Our spring meeting is on Thursday, April 25 at 7:00 PM at Independence City Hall on County Rd 90, just north of Highway 12. Topics include:

- Elections for the 2002-2004 Board of Director candidates
Secretary - Paulette Tollefson
Membership - Robbie Douglas
Water Level/Water Quality - Al Moen
Safety/Navigation - Steve Riley
- 2002 LSIA Budget approval
- Updates on our Water Level Control Project and many other topics

Coffee and cookies will be provided after the meeting. Come to socialize and to find out more about the Lake Sarah Improvement Association! For more information, please contact Paulette Tollefson at 763-479-2240.

Calendar

- 2002 General Meetings 4/25/02 (Elections), 7/25/02, 10/24/02
- 5th Annual July 4th Boat Parade 7/4/02
- 13th Annual LSIA Picnic 7/28/02

Wanted: Directory Updates

The 2002 Lake Sarah Area Directory was distributed in February to residents living near Lake Sarah. If you have corrections/additions to any names, addresses, or phone numbers in the directory, please notify Sue Mizell at 763-479-6602. We'll get them into the current mailing list and next year's Directory.

Needed: A Lion

Are YOU a member of the Loretto Lions, or do you know a member? Dobo's Café in Loretto makes very effective use of our watershed Best Practices placement each year. HCD, who works with LSIA with the content of the placement, suggested that we approach the Loretto Lions to sponsor the printing costs of the placemat. If you are a member (or know one), please contact Mary Lou Peterson at 763-479-6535.

Safety/Navigation Reminders

Just a reminder that the Water Patrol will be actively enforcing no-wake channel speeds, swimming raft requirements (100' maximum distance from shore and a permit), and jet ski regulations, as they did last year. While water skiing is permitted until one hour *after* sunset, jet skis are prohibited from operating one hour *prior to* sunset. To report violations of these or any other watercraft restrictions, please call the Water Patrol directly at 952-471-8528.

Water Level Control Project

By Steve Riley, Safety/Navigation Director, with Al Moen, Water Level Director

The Water Level Control Committee consists of Ron Jorgenson, Al Moen, Dick Tubesing, Ed Penney, Kim Jacobson and Steve Riley. The committee was formed by the LSIA Board in response to concerns of flooding and water level fluctuations on Lake Sarah. The committee's mandate is to study the problem, coordinate with HCD, DNR, Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission, the Cities of Greenfield and Independence, and develop a recommended solution for the LSIA Board's consideration and implementation.

The committee has found that the existing culvert was constructed by the railroad when the current rail bed was relocated to the northwest of the old railroad bed in the 1940's, which incorporated a 13' spillway under the trestle to maintain the lake level during periods of high water. To date, the committee has determined that the fluctuation of the lake level is largely a function of a restricted outflow at the northwest end of Lake Sarah. Calculations are being done by Dick Tubesing to determine whether the existing culvert is adequate in size to expeditiously drain the lake in periods of high water or whether the governing restriction is further down stream from the culvert at highway 92. Beaver dams and vegetation which block the existing culvert are another potential issue that needs a permanent solution regardless of where the limiting restriction actually is located.

It is not the intent of the committee to arrive at a recommended solution that would permanently lower the lake level. It is our intent to develop a recommendation that will result in a far more stable lake level and that during periods of flooding would more quickly lower the lake level to the ordinary high water mark. During periods of low water or high evaporation we also envision a method of capping the outflow entirely in order to maintain a stable water level and preserve Lake Sarah for navigation and recreation.

Please come to the April General Meeting for the latest updates by the committee!

Summary of No Wake Zone Ordinances

By Paulette Tollefson

Following are summaries of the legislation passed in 2001 related to no-wake restrictions for Lake Sarah. These were spotted in the Rockford News Leader public notices for Greenfield on March 18, 2002. This was joint legislation, so we assume similar summaries were published by the City of Independence.

NOTE: The first Ordinance is for the permanent no-wake zone in the channel. The second Ordinance is for a no-wake zone for the entire lake, which applies only in times of very high water, such as in the spring of 2001.

Summary of Ordinance Establishing Surface Use Restrictions for a Portion of Lake Sarah

On the 6th day of March, 2001, the Greenfield City Council passed an Ordinance establishing surface use restrictions for a portion of Lake Sarah. The Ordinance calls for a slow-no wake zone on Lake Sarah in the channel separating the northerly and southerly halves of the lake. The Ordinance provides penalties for violation of the slow-no wake zone. The complete text of the Ordinance may be reviewed at the Greenfield City Hall located at 6390 Town Hall Drive, Greenfield, MN 55357. Dated March 13, 2002. City of Greenfield, Krista Okerman, Administrator.

Summary of Ordinance Permitting a No-Wake Zone During High Water Levels on Lake Sarah

On the 19th day of June, 2001, the Greenfield City Council passed an Ordinance relating to the slow-no wake zone requirements on Lake Sarah. This Ordinance calls for the slow-no wake restriction when waters on Lake Sarah reach or exceed 980.7 feet above sea level. The complete text of the Ordinance may be reviewed at the Greenfield City Hall located at 6390 Town Hall Drive, Greenfield, MN 55357. Dated March 13, 2002. City of Greenfield, Krista Okerman, Administrator.

Tamarack Pond Problem

By Mary Lou Peterson

Mary Lou reported to the LSIA Board that the NURP ponds in Tamarack appear to be abandoned and have not been maintained since they were re-dug. At Harold Burrows' suggestion, Mary Lou checked with the Hennepin Conservation District and the City of Independence to see whether HCD can plant some native grasses around the NURP ponds. Carolyn Dindorf of HCD was supportive; Hennepin County may have input. LSIA will pursue plantings around the ponds.

Ice Cleanup News

By Brad Spencer

Good news! Brad Spencer reported that the cleanup done by departing ice fishermen is the best job in the last 5 years. Brad spent several hours of President's Day picking up scrap wood and cloth on the east basin of the lake, but he did not find large quantities left behind. (February 18 was a good cleanup day – before the snowfall, when the ice was quite soft.) Brad also scanned the west basin on February 23 (after the snow and cold returned), finding little except two 6x10" rag rugs and a large white towel frozen into the ice off Stony Point. They required warmer weather and softer ice for removal.

The scheduled Ice Cleanup on March 2 was cancelled due to concern that the ice would not be safe for vehicles by then. Phone calls were made to Ice Cleanup participants from last year, asking them to do informal sweeps themselves or with neighbors. Kevin Ward, Al Moen, and others went out, but did not find much. Thanks to those who cleaned up their own ice houses and who scoured the ice on their own. Boaters and swimmers will appreciate your efforts to keep Lake Sarah safe.

LSIA Audit Results

By Kevin Ward, Treasurer

Paulette Tollefson (President) and Harold Burrows (Vice President) performed the annual audit of LSIA financial records with Treasurer Kevin Ward. Kevin had already identified and corrected an error in the totals reported at the October General Meeting. All the accounting records were found to be accurate and complete. The Treasurer's Report for year-end 2001 shows that receipts were \$6375.20, disbursements were \$8704.19, and the ending balance was \$3424.76. LSIA also has two CDs for Lake Sarah Improvement Project activities.

Audit Statement dated February 19, 2002:

I have audited the financial statements for Lake Sarah Improvement Association (LSIA) for the calendar year 2001. In my opinion, the financial statements agree with the accounting records and, based upon my tests, appear to be correct. Signed by the Audit Committee: Paulette Tollefson and Harold Burrows (signed copy on file)

Shoreland Best Management Practices

By Dolores Ullstrom

In most cases, the best management practice (BMP) for shore lands is to retain existing trees and shrubs and grasses. For most of Lake Sarah's shoreline it is too late. Landowners have cleared away native vegetation and replaced it with lawn. All is not lost. If you are willing to put in time and can manage the cost, a 50 to 100 ft buffer strip of native vegetation can be reestablished.

BMPs allow for beach area and a dock. On a 100 ft lot, it is recommended that 75 ft be naturalized with native vegetation. That leaves 25 feet for a swimming beach and a boat dock. It is recommended that trails through the buffer strip to the lake and from shore into the lake be angled so that wave action does not cause erosion. There are lots of references available to help you in this project. Most of the information for this piece was taken from U of MN extension material.

Why is shore land vegetation important?

- Trees and shrubs control runoff and erosion.
- Roots trap and use precipitation that would otherwise run off.
- Roots increase soil porosity, allowing water to infiltrate rather than run off.
- Vegetation helps protect water quality by filtering out nutrients and pesticides that cause algae and excessive plant growth that age lakes prematurely.
- Trees and shrubs improve air quality by taking in CO₂ and giving off oxygen.
- They moderate weather extremes such as hot sun and strong winds.
- They offer habitat for wildlife.
- They provide privacy from the lake and adjacent property.

Why retain or replant native trees, shrubs and grasses?

- Native vegetation is adapted to our climate.
- Their root systems are many times deeper than grass roots, provide better erosion control and water-cleaning capacity.
- Native plants offer typical habitat for birds, butterflies, mammals, and fish that are indigenous to the area.
- They are more resistant to pests and disease.
- Exotic species may go out of control and crowd out native vegetation: examples of this are European Buckthorn and canary grass.
- Native species provide depth, color and seasonal interest.
- Taller vegetation discourages geese from coming onto your lot.
- Maintaining a shoreline of native plants take less time.

As Lake Sarah's water quality improves, so does your financial investment in your property.

There are many good references to get you started. *Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality*, co-written by Carolyn Dindorf, is one of the very best. It can be found at local bookstores.

Membership Update

By Mary Lou Peterson, Membership Director

Memberships: 121 households have sent in their dues as of mid-March, a good response for this early in the year.

Superior Garbage Services: 74 LSIA members are receiving the discounted service from Superior, another nice monthly savings. The next price drop comes at 75 enrolled. If you are considering signing up for the service, please send in your form now to help put us into the next discount level.

Educational placemats will be seen again this spring. Staff at the Hennepin Conservation District have been a great help with the watershed best practices information to be used in the layout. The placemats will be out in early May at Dobo's Cafe on Hwy 55 and County Rd 19 in Loretto.

LSIA Activities in 2001

By the LSIA Board of Directors

So what is LSIA all about? Here is a collection of our year 2001 activities.

- Constructed the second detention basin on Loretto Creek to trap incoming phosphorus.
- Participated in cleanup of debris left from ice houses.
- Printed a spring Best Practices placemat, used by several local restaurants to educate area residents.
- Reprinted our popular Best Practices flyer and sent it to the LSIA mailing list.
- Coordinated passage of No Wake Zone legislation with Independence and Greenfield.
- Worked with Water Patrol to enforce speeds in channel and on the entire lake during very high water.
- Formed a Water Level Control Project to analyze problems with lake outflow and to develop solutions; in progress.
- Conducted the Non-Phosphorus Fertilizer Program in spring and fall, with good participation.
- Surveyed eurasian watermilfoil levels and determined that past treatments of common areas are effective.
- Encouraged owners to treat their own shorelines, which reduces overall number of weeds in the lake.
- Monitored water clarity and lake level and provided data for the MN DNR's web site.
- Coordinated a group rate for trash removal service from Superior.
- Represented LSIA at meetings of Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Commission and Citizens Advisory Committee.
- Provided a Lake Sarah Area Directory and spring and fall newsletters for local residents.
- Helped Lake Sarah neighbors to socialize at the winter skating party, July 4 boat parade, and summer picnic.
- Held 3 LSIA membership meetings and published minutes to keep you informed and educated.

Lake Sarah History: Art Mielke Watches Resort Community Flourish, Then Die

By Dolores Ullstrom

Art Mielke lived on the western end of Lake Sarah for 38 years. His parents and later he and his wife owned Breezy Hill resort. The farm where the resort was located was split up; the house and remaining 20 acres were sold in 1974. Kimberly and Perry Buffie, current owners, purchased the property on North Shore Drive in 1997.

In high school Art used to trap a lot of muskrats around the Lake. He took them to Minneapolis to sell. He used the money to help purchase a new 1956 Ford.

Art remembers Frederick's Resort. It closed when he was 15 years old (1953). He also remembers that there was a Bud and Max's Resort located between Frederick's and Hillcrest Resort on what is now North Shore Drive. There was a round building near the railroad tracks (6475 North Shore Dr) on Bud and Max's land. Pop and beer were sold from this building. The Bowens owned Hillcrest Resort. They had lots of cabins.

The Lake Sarah souvenir map, copyrighted in 1946, (printed in the October, 1998 Mouth of Lake Sarah newsletter) was paid for by resort owners. It does not show Bud and Max's place. The Breezy Hills ad, located to the right of the map but not visible in our newsletter reproduction, shows Art's mother, Cora. She is holding a small dog on her lap. Art says that folks used to tease his mother because the dog's ears make it look like she is wearing a bow tie.

Ice Making Business

The Mielkes cut ice on Lake Sarah for many years. They furnished ice for all the resorts on the lake. They have a video tape, made from old movies taken by Art's sister, Irene, that not only shows how the ice cutting and storing process, but also shows the shore line and many of the buildings that were located on the property.

Herman Mielke, Art's dad, made the ice grippers that the men wore on their boots doing ice harvesting. Art recalls that great care was made to keep the process safe. No one ever fell into the icy water. With a long saw they manually cut almost all the way through the ice making rows after row of blocks. Later, when it was time to move a single block, a chisel broke through the thin layer of ice that held the block to the others. They started cutting when the ice was 16 inches thick. The ice usually got to be about 30 inches thick by the time they finished cutting. A record year was 38 inches. Each block weighted about 400 pounds. The ice was stacked in an ice house using a conveyer system. Eight inches of sawdust insulation was packed around the ice blocks.

On the video is a man named Jack. Jack first came to Breezy Hill with his new wife on their honeymoon when Art was 5 years old. After that they came out to the cabin every summer for two weeks. Jack taught Art how to shoot a 22 rifle. The two of them used to go duck and pheasant hunting together. When Art was nine years old, Jack taught him how to fly fish. Their friendship remained strong right up until Jack died.

Elm Beach Resort

The Sandlass property, on the south side of Sarah, was the site of Elm Beach Resort. When Art was very young, Elm Beach was owned by an elderly bachelor named Sam (last name sounds like Hinchmen). The resort consisted of one small building. Sam's cot was in the bar area. A kerosene space heater was used to heat the building. In summer Sam rented out boats. In the winter the building was a 3.2 beer tavern with a cigarette license. Elm Beach had an on-sale license, while Breezy Hill had an off-sale only license.

Art was about 7 years old when the Eppels, Bud and Bernice, bought Elm Beach from Sam. They added a house onto the bar for their living quarters. The Eppels did not have a food license, and serving game fish was illegal, but many fish

fries were held at Elm Beach. Folks came to socialize and to buy beer. About 10 p.m. on Friday night, the fish caught in Lake Sarah were fried, and patrons helped themselves. When they were lucky, a big pot of turtle soup was also served.

Freeway construction provides housing

Soon after they were married, Art and Judy Mielke moved their first house onto Breezy Hill property. The freeway system was being built and many homes needed to be moved to make way for the freeway. The Mielke's home was moved from near the site of the 394-494 interchange. Robert and Jane Lynch, 6325 Lake Sarah Hts Dr, also moved in their first home. That home is currently owned by Seth Victorsen. Maurice McKinley, who bought Breezy Hill from the Mielkes in 1974, was in the business of building fences along the newly constructed freeways. He used many of the resort's buildings to store his materials.

The end of an era

Art remembers a couple that came to Breezy Hill every year and rented a cabin for one month. They lived by the fairgrounds in St. Paul. It took one and a half hours to get from their home to Breezy Hill. Neither cars nor roads were as dependable as they are today. Art grew up with their children. When their youngest child was out of high school, about 1950, cabin rental costs started to go up, and the couple decided it was time for them to buy their own cabin on Forest Lake.

Growing prosperity gave many people the money they needed to buy their own boat and a small cabin. Having a cabin up north became the latest fashion. The mood seemed to be that a vacation wasn't a vacation if you didn't drive 50 or 100 miles to get there. The family owned resort business around the Twin Cities faded quickly. It got to the point where one could no longer make a living running a small resort like Breezy Hill. Development was quickly occurring. Taxes went from \$500 to \$2,000. New restrictions and regulations meant that life as he had known it was changing. People no longer wanted to see his cows in the lake. Fishing and trapping were not as good as they had been. Art and Judy decided to sell. They used the money from the sale of Breezy Hill to buy a dairy farm near Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. They now raise beef cattle.

History cannot be turned back, and maybe it shouldn't be. We have lost and we have gained in the process of change. Thanks, Art, for sharing your stories with us.

Photo: Art Mielke, former owner of Breezy Hill Resort

**Lake Sarah Improvement Association Board
2001 to 2003**

PRESIDENT 763-479-2240	2003	Paulette Tollefson (Spouse: Steve Hancock) 6225 Lake Sarah Hts Drive Rockford, MN 55373
VICE PRESIDENT 763-479-1900	2003	Harold Burrows (Spouse: Renee) 5135 Fern Drive Loretto, MN 55357
SECRETARY 763-479-2240	2002	Paulette Tollefson (Spouse: Steve Hancock) 6225 Lake Sarah Hts Drive Rockford, MN 55373
TREASURER 763-479-3169	2003	Kevin Ward (Spouse: Gina) 4516 Shady Beach Circle Maple Plain, MN 55359
MEMBERSHIP 763-479-6535	2002	Mary Lou Peterson (Spouse: Craig) 6804 Rachel Ridge Court Maple Plain, MN 55359
GOVT LIAISON 763-479-3292	2003	Dolores Ullstrom (Spouse: Gene) 4740 Lake Sarah Hts Circle Rockford, MN 55373
DNR LIAISON 763-479-3994	2003	Ron Jorgenson (Spouse: Mary) 4594 Shady Beach Circle Maple Plain, MN 55359
WATER LVL/QUAL 763-479-3040	2002	Al Moen (Spouse: Sally) 6205 Lake Sarah Hts Drive Rockford, MN 55373
SAFETY/NAV 763-479-3150	2002	Steve Riley (Spouse: Julie) 6235 Lake Sarah Hts Drive Rockford, MN 55373