

In This Issue

- President's Corner
- 2021 Calendar of Events
- Meet a Gravel Laker
- Summer Events Recap
- Letter to the Editor
- Gravel Lake Ski Team
- Paid Membership Listing
- Emergency / Legal Fund Update
- Random Facts and Stats
- SIBZ Comic



President's Corner

Gravel Lake was not quite the same this year as we adjusted to Covid-19. Though things were different this summer, I did notice some silver linings.

Membership meeting and Board meeting attendance via Zoom was the best it has ever been. Our first membership meeting had over 75 participants (often representing more than one viewer), whereas our in-person meetings average around 40-50 attendees in total. Board meeting attendance was close to perfect with an average of one absence per meeting, versus our 3-5 absentee per meeting average. (Continued on page 2)



President's Corner (continued from page 1)

While we had to cancel our 4th of July Paddle Boat Regatta and Kids Games, the Fun Run / Walk around the lake more than tripled in attendance and we had great participation in our post-Taps boat parade. Despite Covid-19, we held a safe Garage Sale and Market Day, as well as a responsibly planned Halloween event. Through our Michigan Lakes & Streams Association network, I hear of other lake associations cancelling most or all of their events and meetings, but the GLA showed how adaptable we can be!

Other successes came in the form of work we could still accomplish. We've created and funded an emergency / legal fund to help protect us from lake-wide, external threats, we've built and presented a Q&A document on our potential boat wash project (there's still more to do and answer), and we've had our most successful year ever in fundraising from paraphernalia sales. Thanks to our tireless fundraising committee, Carlie DeSimone, Jen Micheli, Janice Pinkos, and Suzanne Reed, we hosted five sales and generated almost as much profit as the Poker Run!

Thanks for another great year!

Craig DeSimone GLA President



MI 49065 --



2021 Calendar Of Events

Date

Event

Sunday, April 4 Faster Saturday, April 10 Board of Trustees meeting Saturday, May 1 MLSA Conference Saturday, May 8 MLSA Region 3 meeting Sunday, May 9 Mother's Day Board of Trustees meeting Saturday, May 15 Monday, May 31 Memorial Dav Saturday, June 12 GLA Membership meeting and Picnic (tentative) Saturday, June 19 Community Sale (Garage Sales and Market Day) Sunday, June 20 Father's Day Saturday, July 3 GLA Fourth of July activities Sunday, July 4 Fourth of July (observed Monday) Sunday, July 4 GLA Fourth of July activities Satrurday, July 10 Board of Trustees meeting Saturday, August 7 Poker Run (tentative) Saturday, August 21 GLA Membership meeting @ Rinaldi's pole barn (tentative) Monday, September 6 Labor Day Saturday, September 11 Board of Trustees meeting Saturday, September 25 MLSA Region 3 meeting Saturday, October 9 Board of Trustees meeting Monday, October 11 Columbus Day Saturday, October 16 Halloween @ GL (tentative) Sunday, October 31 Halloween



Join the GLA Facebook Group!

Join the Gravel Lake Association Facebook group! It is an excellent way for us to connect with our fellow lakers. Important lake-related information is posted there frequently, including weed treatment dates, when the newsletter is available, event info, lost-and-found info, announcements, recommendations, and surveys where you can voice your opinion. People also post pictures from around the lake, even in the winter!

Meet a Gravel Laker

You know them. We all know them. You have seen them at every lake function, every meeting, and nearly every day on the water. Some call him the "Ski King", and you can now call her a Sandy Beach trustee. Need more clues? Well, he is an organizer of the Paddle Boat Regatta, and she can be found herding the family's three ducks into their coop in the evening. By now you should have guessed that I am talking about Michael and Jen Micheli!

These full-time Sandy Beach residents have been married for nearly a decade and have two amazing young daughters, Serafina and Josephine. After meeting through mutual friends right here on the lake, they fell in love and never looked back. They knew they wanted to live at the lake full time, and in 2009 they found the perfect place on the channel. Their love of the lake can be seen throughout their home, and through decades of photos from Michael's family.

Before the Michelis found their home on the channel, Michael's family had a long history on the southern shores of Gravel Lake. Before Michael was born. his parents, Ron and Betty Micheli purchased a lake house on Gebhard Beach, and later moved to Willow Beach. They enjoyed years of boating, swimming, and entertaining on the water. Michael and his two sisters, Lauren and Ashley, made tons of friends, stayed out too late, and put hundreds of hours on their boats as they grew up on the lake. During this time, Michael and his family commuted from their home in McHenry, Illinois, in a Suburban with no air conditioning. After completing college in Chicago, Michael got a job at WakeSide Marine in Elkhart, Indiana. At WakeSide, he gets to do what he loves- help people find the boat of their dreams.

The daughter of a farmer, Jen grew up in New Carlisle, Indiana. She went on to Indiana University to earn a bachelor's degree in physics with a minor in math. She also received an associate's degree in radiation therapy. Today, she leads the Department of



Meet a Gravel Laker (continued from page 5)

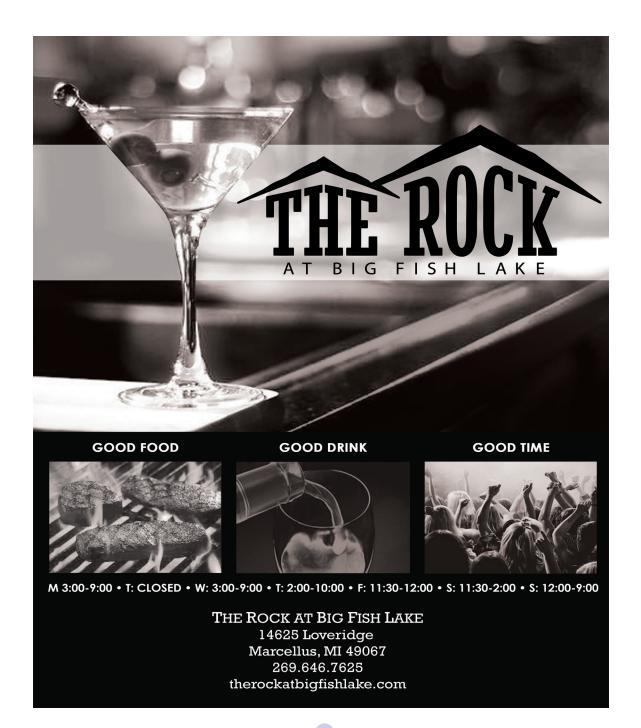
Radiation Oncology at Elkhart General Hospital. In 2005, her friend from high school, Ashley Melton (whose family lake house is on Chamberlin Beach), invited her to spend some time on the lake, so Jen loaded up her boat and dropped it in on Gravel Lake. Soon, she caught the attention of a guy with long, blond hair, wearing board shorts. Her love for him turned into a love for the lake. After moving, getting married, and fully immersing her life in this lake, she has become a fixture in the community. She is a trustee for Sandy Beach and is proud to be able to answer any questions about channel water quality and weed control.

Mike and Jen have built an extraordinary life here. Their two daughters have free range of an amazing shoreline, love swimming with their friends, and are learning to ski and wakeboard before most children their age. Fearless and happy, you can see their daughters jumping from their rope swing into the water, raising their Indian Runner ducks, or sliding down their giant slide on the hillside. When Michael and Jen aren't busy on the lake, you can find them helping out at her family's farm, traveling around the globe, and spending time with their extended family and friends.

"I never thought I would end up on a little lake in Michigan, but this has truly been an amazing place to live and raise a family," says Jen. Her background in science and leadership makes her passionate about the health of our lake, and comes into good use as her recent appointment to Fundraising Chair of the Gravel Lake Association. She is taking her involvement to heart by running for the Lawton Board of Education, as well. You will find her name on the ballot this fall. As busy as she and Michael are, they still find time to spend together. Their favorite thing to do is load up the kids and take a few slow laps around the lake. Make sure to say hello or wave them in for a cocktail the next time you see them cruising the lake.

Emily Garrett







Summer Events Recap

The Fourth of July looked a little different this year, but it was still a blast! Turnout was great and feedback was fantastic! Some Fourth of July events were cancelled due to safety concerns, but hopefully they can return next year.

The Fun Run

This year we deviated from the usual 2-mile course and instead had participants make their way around the whole lake. Lots of people participated! There were a record number of race participants, and they could choose any way they wanted to get around the lake. People were running, walking, biking, some had dogs, some had costumes, but one thing was certain, everyone had a great time. The people on the sidelines had some fun as well! There were water guns, cheering squads, mimosa stands, and more! A huge thanks to all of the volunteers, participants, and especially to Eric Herchenroether and his family for organizing this event and making it so fun!

Boat Parade

The Boat Parade kicked off immediately after Taps on Saturday, July 4th. The theme was Fourth of July. It was great to see the Boat Parade brought back to life. In years past it was a contest, but this year we kept it simple and did away with the contest part. The event still had a great turnout!

Garage Sales and Market Day

Much thanks to Linda Vitkauskas and Maria Lowe for planning the GL Garage Sales and Market Day, and to Jim McGreal for creating the map. Thanks to all who participated, whether you were buying or selling!

Poker Run

After a very difficult decision, the Poker Run was cancelled this year. It didn't feel right to solicit prizes and ask businesses for money when our small business community was struggling. Safety was also an issue. The good news is that the Poker Run is (tentatively) scheduled for August 7th of next year. It's never too early to start thinking of dock themes!

A huge, and sincere thanks to everyone who participated in or helped to organize these events.



Letter To The Editor

For the past couple of months, I have received complaints and concerns from people upset with folks who operate golf carts or ATVs on the streets around Gravel Lake in a reckless manner, or in locations where they are not permitted. During a recent Gravel Lake Association meeting (09-12-20) this was discussed at length and I was asked to do some research and prepare this article.

Some of the complaints that I've heard involve speeding and reckless driving, sometimes by people obviously too young to be operating a "motor vehicle" on a street. The other main complaint is regarding people moving and damaging private property to make room to drive their golf carts or ATVs where they shouldn't be driven anyway.

I have personally seen golf carts overloaded with young people, some sitting in positions where one bump could throw them off. I think we can all agree that nobody wants to see anyone get hurt. Every time I see a golf cart or ATV on Shaw Road, I cringe at the thought of what a car going 55 mph or faster would do to a golf cart or ATV and everyone on it—and we all know how fast vehicles travel on Shaw Road.

In one complaint, private property, which consisted of two large planters put up by the residents, had signs attached that clearly stated that they were private property and asking people to please respect that. Both planters were repeatedly overturned and pushed out of the way, dumping the dirt and destroying the signs, so people could drive by on golf carts or ATVs. That is simply disrespectful of peoples' private property.

And anyone who thinks I'm criticizing only young people is wrong. Recently there was a golf cart, driven by an adult female, parked while her rider, an adult male, saw fit to push the planters out of the way. When confronted, the adult male jumped on the golf cart and the driver sped away.

One of my neighbors on Huff's Landing/Gravel Lake Drive, which is a private driveway and not a street, saw some young people operating a golf cart in a reckless manner on our private driveway. He asked them to stop, but they sped away. They then came back at midnight screaming obscenities at him from their golf cart as they again sped past. He was able to track the golf cart down the next day and contacted the owner, who apologized and said that the offenders were his grandkids from out of state who would probably not be invited back to Gravel Lake.

In another situation, ATV riders destroyed a field near Gravel Lake owned by a Gravel Laker, with crops growing on it, apparently just for the sheer joy of destroying someone else's property. Again, according to the person whose property was destroyed, it was done by "visitors to Gravel Lake". I think common courtesy dictates that when someone invites anyone up to enjoy our beautiful lake, they are responsible to see that their guests behave in an appropriate manner.

We have a sign at the entrance to the Huff's Landing private driveway (the side by the channel) that says "Walkers and Bikes Welcome", and we truly mean that. Walkers and people on bicycles are absolutely welcome. My family and I walk around the lake regularly, and we always enjoy it— allowing people to use our private driveway to complete their own walks is wonderful. We've met many new people and made new friends. But the operation of these motorized vehicles has gotten out of hand.

A long, long, time ago, I used to be a young person, and with ten kids, our family wasn't fortunate enough to have either a house on a lake nor a golf cart, and I can imagine how much fun either of those would have been. But I think that when having fun, safety should also be considered.

As I said, at the direction of the Gravel Lake Association, I was asked to research the law regarding golf cart operation on streets, and according to the Michigan Vehicle Code, 257.657a "Operation of a golf cart on a village, city, or township street or state highway", the following applies:

Letter To The Editor (continued from page 10)

(5) A person shall not operate a golf cart on any street unless he or she is 16 years old and licensed to operate a motor vehicle.

(6) The operator of a golf cart shall comply with the signal requirements that apply to the operation of a vehicle.

(15) A golf cart shall be operated at a speed not to exceed 15 miles per hour, and shall not be operated on a highway or street with a speed limit of more than 30 miles per hour except to cross that highway or street.

(16) A golf cart shall not be operated on a highway or street during the time period from $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before sunset to $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after sunrise.

The Gravel Lake Association only has so many ways to address these complaints: we can do it this way, by educating people and asking for their voluntary compliance and courtesy; or we can contact the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office and request that they come out and initiate some type of enforcement action.

I am now retired, but I was a cop for 36 years, and I know that the VBCSO has many more important things to do.

I also don't want to see anyone receive a citation or some other form of consequence, so on behalf of the Gravel Lake Association, we would really like to see people obey the law and respect their fellow Gravel Lakers' property.

Thanks very much,

Dan McDevitt Huff's Landing Trustee



Gravel Lake Association

-- P.O. Box 531,

Lawton, MI 49065 --

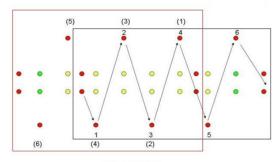
www.gravellake.org

Gravel Lake Ski Team

Most of us are sleeping in on the weekends at Gravel Lake, but not the Gravel Lake Ski Team! They are setting their alarms early to get the good water. Slalom skiing is best done with flat, calm water, which means these gentlemen are frequently checking their weather apps for little to no wind in the forecast, and they are getting a jump start to avoid other boat traffic. They also take caution when driving to avoid creating unwanted waves. They avoid power turns, which send rolling waves down their path, as well as encourage a natural shoreline to promote absorption of waves onto shore.

The team consists of a good-hearted group of guys of varying ages, but all have the love of skiing in common. A fraternity has formed in the mornings out on the lake, making this group even more special, all the while contributing to the uniqueness of our lake. The goal is simple: to get in as many days on the water as possible, and whoever has the most fun wins.

If you or anyone in your family is interested in slalom skiing, all you need is a boat (preferably



8 BALL COURSE *Numbers in parentheses are if travelling from right to left through the course.





Gravel Lake Ski Team (continued from page 12)

an inboard), a ski, a multi-section ski rope, a life jacket, ski gloves (optional), a driver, an observer, and a willingness to get in the lake and give it a go! The GL Ski Team encourages anyone with interest to try, and to not hesitate to approach them for advice-or even a pull!

To run the course, enter at the north gates following the yellow boat guide buoys. (See diagram for further clarification).

This video link will give you some helpful tips: https://youtu.be/aLA3rqpFqog







www.gravellake.org

Thank you to the families mentioned on the following pages for their support of the Gravel Lake Association. Continued support through dues payment allows the association and its volunteers the financial backing to provide its residents with a quality lake community we're all proud to be a part of. The families listed with an asterisk gave additional donations to fish stocking or the overall fund - Thank you! Don't worry if you have not paid your 2020 dues yet, there is still time. You can pay online at our website, www.gravellake.org, or use the form in the back of this newsletter.

Thanks again for your support!





Paid Membership Listing

Here is the Paid Membership Listing as of October 9, 2020. An asterick inicates that there was an extra donation made to either fish stocking or to the GLA.

First Name

Tim Deb Beebe /Jane Mark Tim & Lynn Patrick Ellen Paul & Vicki Jeanette Cox & Terri Craig & Missy Frank & Pam Diane & Ken Mike & Jen Shirley Doris & David Victor & Pam Bruce & Penny Steve & Sheila Jim & Arlene Patricia Covert, Priscilla & Mark Dean Christine Jim & Nancy Frank & Virginia Tim & Elizabeth Larry & Connie Kevin & Tammy Harry & Vicki Cottage Laura Sylvester & Sarah Chris & Stacey Ed & Phyllis Thomas & Lauren Doreen & James Anna & Gilbert Charlotte

Last Name Bainbridge Barker Beebe Bounardj Carlos Crowley DeSimone Enright Fletcher/Patnode Garvey Jensen Jeske Levan Melton Poyser Rockwell Rogers Seehausen Seput Vennergrund Wunderlich Zwartz Keene Lalone Laski Martin Murphy Oxley Oxley Puttkammer Voqt Ayala Beck

Beach

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Paid Membership Listing (continued from page 15)

William & Mary Herb & Lory Gerry Jen & John Ronald & Mari Mark & Perri Alice Sheri Mark & Brenda Tom & Irene Joseph & Stephanie Craig & LaShel Gary & Laura John Couitcher & Cindy Doug Dale Denny& Judy Ron & Susan Phil & Mary Therese & Dan Jon & Heather John & Debbie Pat Steve & Monica Jean Bahnsen & John James Paul & Mary Dan & Marilyn Jim & Elizabeth Dennis & Lynn The Roesch Family Robin & Tim Matt & Kristi Sherman & Billie Nancy Joe & Kathy MaryBeth Gaspar & Steve Ken & Susan **Rich & Derith** Mike & Marge

Cleary Eggers Enright Ferrucci Frick Gordon Jennings Kurtyak Locicero Logan May Mencl Mencl Monte Murphy Raab Rinaldi Schuld Stade Svrlinga Walter Carollo Deren Hermanson Howell **McDevitt** McGreal Morkunas Rusthoven Betts Biss Boender Cunningham Dmitrovich Eberly Garrison Heuring

Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard * Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard Gebhard * Gebhard * Gebhard * Gebhard * Gebhard Gebhard * Gebhard Gebhard * Gebhard * Gebhard * Huff's Landing Huff's Landing Huff's Landing * Huff's Landing * Huff's Landing * Huff's Landing Huff's Landing Huff's Landing * Huff's Landing * Idle Ease * Idle Ease Idle Ease * Idle Ease * Idle Ease * Idle Ease Idle Ease * Idle Ease *

Gebhard *



Paid Membership Listing (continued from page 16)

Mark & Susan Jim & Patti Beverly & Jim The Jacques Family Victor & Darlene Mark & Jane Donald Jane Steve & Janice Jim & Shirley Jesse & Jeannette Ed & Tina Mike & Mark Jackie Tom & Kathy Annette & Ralph James & Nicola Sandy Vox & Rosie Tom & Karen William Kendall Kent/ Richard Josephine/ Rose Wayne & Marilyn Ken & Marysue Ed & Diane Stephen & Roberta Wayne & Mary Chip Ed & Lois Harold & Karen Jered & Jaime Ray & Diane Brian Susan & Julie Sue James & Sharon Terry & Judy David & Mary Sharon Rudnick & Martin Hunter Jabaay Jacques Kapercev Kehlenbeck Mateyack Nedvar Pinkos Prichard Samolczyk Smith Spohn Valasek Zwartz Airgood Bryne Cechota Fernandez Fernandez Forward Goepfrich/Lord Greenwood Hochsprung Jandacek O'Neill Roussel Van Schovck Anderson Anderson Baker Barber Bergman Betteridge Bjork Braglia Brocker Brown Bukacek

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Paid Membership Listing (continued from page 17)

Mike & Joanne Mark & MaryBeth Kevin & Mary Kevin & Kristine Kathy & Mark Sheila Chris & Amy Susan & Scott Larrv & Terrv Todd Fric & Rachael Margot Warren & Nancy Holly & Todd Terry & Fran Mike & Tracy Erwin & Betty Pat Keith & Michelle Paul & Cathy Gary & Vickie Dasher & Maria Mark & Tina Jennifer & Tim Jen & Michael Paul & Ann Rick & Monica John & Sue Rich & Jane Jessica & John Rav & Suzanne David & Melissa Bob & Linda Dan & Carol Ken & Marilvn Don & Jeanne Andrew & Kathryn Robert & Jean Lezley & Joe

Clifford Custer Davis Donegan Drew Edwards Fewell Forcash Grembowicz Harrison Herchenroether Hornblower Humble James Jones Jurusik Kellv Klauer I alone I awrence l eisten lowe Mahanv McDonald Micheli Motter Nicola Orr Phelan Placzek Reed Rhoades Schlueter Schroeder Schroeder Smith Stefo Storm Sugden





18

Paid Membership Listing (continued from page 18)

Amy & Jeff Matt & Alexis Christopher & Linda Fran Art & Mary Mark & Leslie Mark & Crystal Gail David & Susan Jack **Richard & Debra** Rick & Donna Deborah Trish & Tim Greg & Marianne Frank & Jane Tom & Karen Paula Gregorica/ James Steve & Elena Tom & Virginia Mark & Elizabeth Karen Triplett & Ann Bob & Nancy Lonnie & Sheila Mark & April Bart & Shelley Moon Peter & Beverly John & Joann Nicole & George Wynne Ken & Linda Peggy Lockwood & Terry Lamar Judy Weis & John Dale & MaryAnn Nick & Sara Greg & Donna Marty & Kathy

Swalec Tokarsky Toso VanMeter Welcome Williams Witteveen Baker Bartock Bogner Bridgham DeRosa Dorsey Fallon Garrett Gordon Huber Jilek Kozlowski Mattox Mayer Mc Bride Meskimen Nelson Paulik Richards Rimes Rucinski Small Stamos Stemler Vitkauskas Bontrager Brooks Caskey Engle Felus Graham Heneghan

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Gravel Lake Association

-- P.O. Box 531, Lawton, MI 49065 --

Paid Membership Listing (continued from page 19)

Tom & Darla Stephen & Suzanne Tom & Heidi Mary **Richard & May Britt** Mark & Melanie Steve & Barb Jim & Donna Kyle Carole & Al Dean & Denise Grant & Linda Elaine & Sean **Darrell & Grace** Cassie David & Sue Dave John & Mari Jo Jim & Jane Danny & Annette John & Patti Joe & Kelly Randy & Sherri Ken & Laurie Lori Bernie Krueger & Marion Ann John & Mary Ann Michael Kelly Patterson/ William & Pat Michael & Mary Pat & Ann Eric & Michelle Judy Sherri & Dave Daniel & Anne Mike & Sue Monte & Sue Ken & Sue

Kelliher Kopetski **Kussurelis** Malinauskas Moore Osborn Otolski Rau Rau Roeder Schroeder Vankerk Walsh Wilson Beebe Bibbee Brown Calacci Cerney Dorkin Faustino Hartman Hess Johnson Komorowski Krzyszkowski LaForge LaMonte Mattax Metz Murray Murray Nitz Quick Ries Robison Sadowski Swindeman Wojtanek

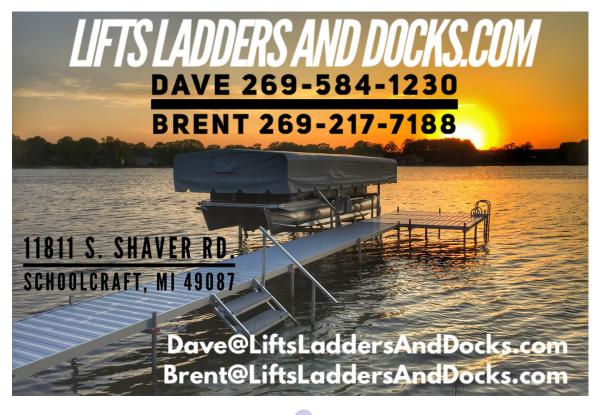
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Emergency / Legal Fund Update

The GLA Board of Trustees voted to earmark funds for our emergency/legal fund. The intent of this fund is something like a "rainy day" fund that will allow the GLA to act quickly in case we must respond to a legal challenge or a major water quality project. Other lakes in the area have had issues with the expansion of their DNR public access site, lake lots (and adjoining acreage) being used for large housing developments, and run-off from concentrated farming operations, to name a few. The GLA is now prepared with a fund of \$40K. A majority vote of the trustees will be required to approve usage for lake protection efforts and a super majority would be required for usage outside of the fund's intent. Fund balance will be maintained via donations and budget surpluses (at the discretion of the board).





Random Facts and Stats

Board of trustees Facts:

- Number of Trustees: 14
- Length of trustee term: 3 years
- Board of trustees quorum: 5 trustees
- Most beaches have 1 trustee, two beaches have co-trustees (shared responsibility), and one beach has 3 trustees (Sandy)
- Board meetings per year: 5 + 2 membership meetings (~1.5 hours each)
- Non-voting members: 3 (Secretary, Editor, Internet-ops)
- Most trustees devote extra hours beyond board meetings (e.g. fundraising, research, newsletter, social events, fishery management, aquatic invasive species management, etc.)
- Trustees that are Executive Officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer

GLA Community Facebook Group Facts:

- Number of members: 1,332
- Gender: 61% female, 39% male
- Most common age groups: 25-34, 35-44
- Top cities represented: Lawton (MI), Chicago (IL), Kalamazoo (MI), South Bend (IN), Tinley Park (IL)
- Most popular days: Monday, Saturday



Random Facts and Stats (continued from page 22)

Membership 2019

232 Memberships
\$7,988.98 dues
\$1,843.43 fish stocking donations
\$528.48 extra donations
21 more paid members in 2019 than in 2018

Membership 2020 224 Memberships \$10,719.50 dues \$2,278.97 fish stocking donations \$562.31 extra donations 26 paid last year that still have not paid this year

GLA Membership Info 2020 Fundraising profit \$4,279.30 versus 2019 Poker Run profit \$5,067.32





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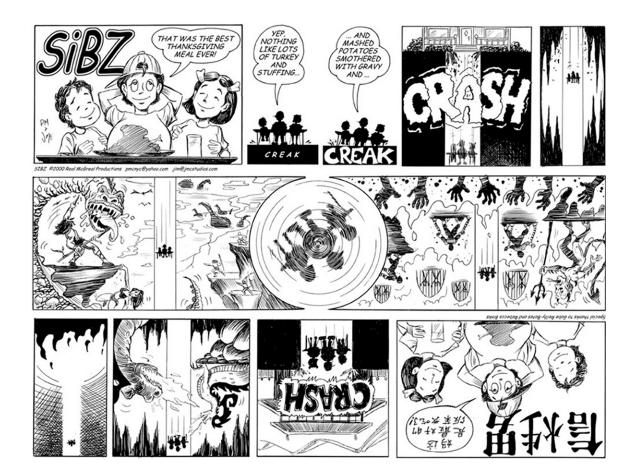
Place An Ad In The Gravel Laker!

To place an ad in our next issue contact Bob Vick

Text or Email 269.744.2136 djbob365@gmail.com



Gravel Lake Association				
Membership Form: January 2021 - December 2021 Fill out and mail to: Gravel Lake Association, P.O. Box 531, Lawton, MI 49065				
You can also pay dues online at gravellake.org.				
Please print clearly.				
Member name(s):				
Beach: Lake Phone:				
Gravel Lake Address:	Lawton, MI 49065			
Home Address:				
City: State:	Zip:			
Home Phone:				
E-mail address:				
Please print clearly. Mail Check or Money Order payable to Gravel Lake Association				
Membership dues for 2020	\$50.00			
I would like to receive 4 free issues of the Riparian magazine for 2020. Yes No (circle one)				
Address where your Riparian should be sent.				
Home Lake (circle one)				
Fish Stocking Donation\$10.00\$15.00\$25.00orOther				
Total Enclosed				





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