

# The Gravel Laker

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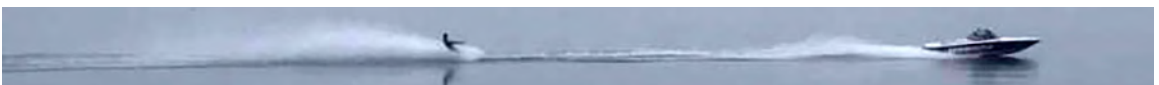
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## President's Corner



Periodically, I'm asked what the Gravel Lake Association does and why someone should join. I usually have quick answers like water quality monitoring and 4th of July activities, but as I think about it, the answer is not necessarily short nor quick.

Many of us are familiar with the variety of social activities like our annual picnic, 4th of July activities, and the Poker Run. (Newer lakers may not be aware of past activities like the Social, Car Show, Market Day, water ski competition, and fishing derby—we miss you Vernice Lalone!). Did you know that Kevin & Keith Lalone started the paddle boat race in the 80's with a buoy far from shore in front of the Willow Beach Resort and Kerry Moore reinvented the event in its current form up and down the channel? (Continued on page 2)



## President's Corner (continued from page 1)

Education and information have always been a high priority for the GLA. We currently boast one of the best lake association newsletters and websites in the state! (Yeah, I'm biased...but I've only seen a few that even compare...). We now have a highly active GLA Facebook group (1000+ members strong) for community information and posts, a GLA Facebook page that is dedicated to lake stewardship topics, and we're resurrecting email blasts as yet another form of communication. Our newsletter has been going since the 70s and has had high quality content driven by the extensive efforts of editor and board member Jeannette Garrison. We can thank Jamie Paramski, Jim McGreal, and the newsletter team for pushing it to a new level in the last decade or so. The Gravel Laker is distributed to ALL GL residents and strives to educate as well as entertain. Additionally, the GLA provides a free *Michigan Riparian* subscription to all dues paying members (upon request). This publication is a leader in all lake stewardship related topics.

The Gravel Lake Association is connected. While Gravel Lake is first in our minds, we still look outward for information, counsel, and support. The GLA is an active member of the Michigan Lake Stewardship Association, the Michigan Waterfront Alliance (a lobbying group that represents riparians or waterfront homeowners), and maintains a regular, open dialogue with the Michigan DNR, Porter Township board, and the Van Buren County Sheriff Marine Patrol. The GLA president (myself) and secretary regularly attend MLSA meetings where we share and receive information about the challenges and successes of other lake associations such as water quality, aquatic invasive species control, fundraising, natural shorelines, boater safety, etc.

Lake stewardship is the core of the Gravel Lake Association's mandate. As homeowners around a lake, we assume (or sometimes shirk) the duty of protecting our natural resource. Though it is easy to view Gravel Lake as purely a recreational area, much of its allure comes from its clean water, great fishery, and associated wildlife and plant life. The GLA regularly stocks fish to improve the sport on our lake, but also does its due diligence on the appropriate amount, timing, species, and impact to the lake. (Continued on Page 3)

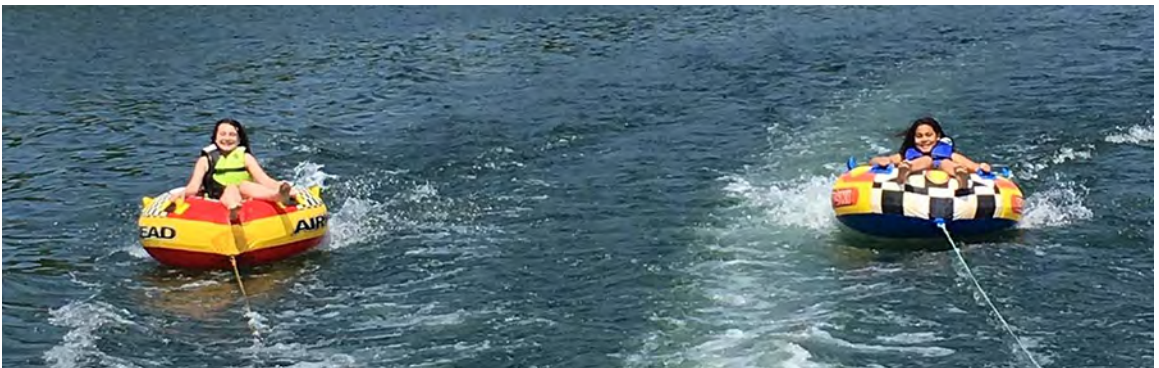


## President's Corner (continued from page 2)

Additionally, we have pursued additional water quality testing via Professional Lake Management and through participation in the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP...thanks Greg Garrett!). We now have a secretary and president that have become Shoreline Ambassadors who can teach others the basics of restoring some or part of shorelines to nature in an effort to further improve water quality for fish and other aquatic animals. Through a rather large investment of over \$10,000, we were able to conduct a whole-lake survey to more rigorously determine the current state on fishery health, water quality, aquatic plant community, and watershed impacts. (This survey validated many of our efforts and suggested the need to revert our highly-developed shorelines back to nature). The GLA has also worked with Clean Boats, Clean Waters and the DNR to host a boat wash on GL as well as educate public access visitors on the need to clean their boats as a means to curb the spread of invasive species. Historically, the GLA pursued two major water quality projects: aquatic invasive plant species control to rid the lake of Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) and the creation of a special assessment district (SAD) to pay for the construction of the Lakes Area Sewer Authority. In the year 2000, a small group (with Art Earl, Craig DeSimone, Shelly Carpenter, and Lynn Flavin as president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) sought to restart a virtually defunct GLA with the goal of addressing a growing EWM infestation and a virtually non-existent checkbook balance. Through lots of research, door to door conversations, and an extensive petition drive, this new group was able to establish a SAD for aquatic invasive species control. Several years later, this growing group was able to do the same for the abandoned sewer effort of the 1980s.

Overall, the GLA is an organization that serves a variety of interests from social and community, to environmental. As a GLA member, you're supporting all of these various efforts including the important projects of the past as well planning and preparing for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We thank you for your support and hope you'll convince others to do the same!

Craig DeSimone  
GLA President



## Summer Events at a Glance

Monday, May 27	Memorial Day
Saturday, June 8	Membership meeting and Gravel Lake Picnic
Sunday, June 16	Father's Day
Saturday, June 22	Gravel Lake Garage Sale
Sunday, June 23	Gravel Lake Garage Sale
Thursday July 4	Fourth of July
Saturday, July 6	Kids Games **tentatively scheduled pending volunteers**
Saturday, July 6	Paddle Boat Regatta
Sunday, July 7	Fun Run
Sunday, July 7	Boat Parade
Saturday, July 20	Board of Trustees Meeting
Saturday, August 3	Poker Run **tentatively scheduled pending volunteers**
Saturday, August 17	Membership meeting
Monday, September 2	Labor Day
Saturday, September 21	Board of Trustees Meeting
Saturday, October 19	Board of Trustees Meeting

**Question:** What is the best way to prevent the spread of invasive species?

**Answer:**

1. Clean any visible mud, plants, or fish off of your boat by rinsing it off with clean water.
2. Drain all water holding compartments (including live wells, bait wells, and bilge areas).
3. Dry boats and trailers before entering another body of water.

### Help Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers! Get Involved!

The Clean Boats, Clean Water Initiative is a way to educate people, state-wide, about how invasive species spread. Just like any other lake, ours is vulnerable to these invasive species. (Anyone else remember how fun it was when Eurasian Watermilfoil had us stopping our boats to clean the prop a quarter of the way around the lake?) Keep an eye on the Gravel Lake Facebook page to see when you can volunteer to help out at the Clean Boats, Clean Water Initiative at the public access. Any amount of time is appreciated- thirty minutes, an hour, whatever you've got! Bring the kids! It's a great way to show some love for the lake that you love so much.



**STOP AQUATIC  
HITCHHIKERS!**

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.  
Clean all recreational equipment.  
[www.ProtectYourWaters.net](http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net)



## Rules of the Water Quiz

How well do you know the rules of the water?

**1. All operators born before July 1, \_\_\_\_\_ may operate a vessel legally without restriction.**

- a. 1990
- b. 1996
- c. 2000
- d. 2010

**2. People less than 12 years of age may operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than \_\_\_\_\_ horsepower.**

- a. 6
- b. 10
- c. 25
- d. 50

**3. Those less than \_\_\_\_\_ years of age may not legally operate a personal watercraft (PWC).**

- a. 14
- b. 8
- c. 16
- d. 21

**4. How many personal flotation devices (PFDs) must be on board a boat that is underway?**

- a. at least five
- b. one
- c. at least one for each person on board the boat
- d. one for every adult aboard

**5. Michigan law requires all children under \_\_\_\_\_ years old to wear a USCG approved Type I or II PFD when riding in a vessel that is underway.**

- a. 10
- b. 6
- c. 12
- d. 8

**6. True or False:**

The person being towed behind a boat does not need to wear a PFD.



## Rules of the Water (continued from page 5)

**7. What must be on board a boat (16-26 ft.) that is underway? (circle all that apply)**

- a. enough PFDs for all aboard (Type I, II, or III)
- b. a flare
- c. a bell, whistle, or horn
- d. a cooler full of refreshing beverages
- e. a type B1 fire extinguisher
- f. a carbon monoxide detector
- g. a smartphone
- h. a Type IV throwable

**8. True or False:** The size or fit of the PFD is not important, as long as you have enough on board.

**9. The only light that must be illuminated if a boat (<26 ft.) is anchored or adrift at night is the \_\_\_\_\_ light.**

- a. white
- b. red
- c. green
- d. all lights must be illuminated

**10. At Gravel Lake, the correct direction of traffic is:**

- a. clockwise
- b. counterclockwise
- c. the direction the people from Illinois are going
- d. any direction you feel like going

**11. Which type of life vest meets the requirements of the law? (circle all that apply)**

- a. Type I
- b. Type II
- c. Type III
- d. a vest with pockets
- e. any kind that fits
- f. the neoprene kind that doesn't actually do anything

**12. If your BAC level is \_\_\_\_% or greater, your driving is impaired and you are operating a boat illegally.**

- a. 50
- b. 0.05
- c. 0.08
- d. 0.1

**13. True or False:** The effects of alcohol are greater on the water versus on dry land.

**14. When towing someone, how many people must be in the boat?**

- a. at least two
- b. just the driver
- c. at least three
- d. two people over the age of 21

**15. PWCs must maintain a distance of \_\_\_\_\_ feet from the shoreline and \_\_\_\_\_ feet behind another vessel other than a PWC.**

- a. 50, 100
- b. 10, 10
- c. 0, 0 (I do what I want)
- d. 200, 150

## Answers to the Rules of the Water

1. b. 1996
2. a. 1996
3. a. 14; Those 14 or 15 years of age may operate a PWC legally only if they have obtained a boating safety certificate and either a) he or she is accompanied on board by a parent or a person at least 21 who has been designated by the parent OR b) he or she is operating the PWC at a distance of no more than 100 feet from a parent or legal guardian or from a person at least 21 years of age designated by the parent.
4. c. at least one for each person on board the boat
5. b. 6 years old; All children under six years of age must wear a USCG-approved type I or II PFD.
6. False. Any person being towed behind a boat MUST wear a USCG-approved PFD.
7. a, c, e, h (and d is highly encouraged)
8. False. The PFDs must fit the people on board.
9. a. the white light; the red, green, and white lights must be illuminated if the vessel is underway
10. b. counterclockwise
11. a, b, and c
12. c. 0.08%
13. True; It may have to do with being in the sun, dehydration, fatigue, and the swaying motion of the boat.
14. a. at least two—the driver and a spotter
15. d; if your answer was c, go to Cedar Lake!

## Gravel Lake Garage Sale

**June 22 & 23 (9am-3pm)**

Many Gravel Lakers have expressed an interest in a lake-wide garage sale. Here is your chance to clear out your unused belongings and make some cash. Place your items in your garage or yard, price them, put a sign in front, and wait for the customers! A general ad will be placed in the Flash telling customers to follow the signs.

It would be helpful to compile a list of specific locations, so if you think you will be participating please email Linda at vitkauskas3@comcast.net or call 269 624-7455 with questions. We would like to provide a list for shoppers so they can visit each location.

## Gravel Lake Association 2019 Calendar

### BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

- **Saturday, June 8th at 10:30am – Membership Meeting & Picnic**
  - o Location – Craig & Melissa DeSimone's yard on Chamberlin Beach (32313 Chamberlin Dr.)
  - o Dues collection
  - o 50-50 raffle
  - o Buy Gravel Lake paraphernalia – shirts, coozies, towels, etc.
- **Saturday, July 20th at 10am—Board of Trustees meeting (Porter Township Hall)**
- **Saturday, August 17th at 10am – Membership Meeting**
  - o Location – Rinaldi's pole barn on Gebhard Beach (94321 Gebhard Drive)
  - o Dues collection
  - o 50-50 raffle
  - o Buy Gravel Lake paraphernalia
- **Saturday, September 21st at 10am—Board of Trustees meeting (Porter Township Hall)**
- **Saturday, October 19th at 10am—Board of Trustees meeting (Porter Township Hall)**

### FOURTH OF JULY ACTIVITIES: Saturday, 7/6 – Sunday, 7/7

The Fourth of July is right around the corner! We are still seeking volunteers for the Kids Games and Fun Run. If you're interested, please contact Craig DeSimone ASAP! Keep an eye on the Gravel Lake Association Facebook group for changes, info, or cancellations.

- **Kids' Games – Saturday, July 6th at 11am – Willow Beach Resort (TENTATIVE)**
  - o Ages 0-12
  - o Prizes for all participants
- **Paddle Boat Regatta – Saturday, July 6th at 6pm – Channel**
  - o Register at 5:45PM at the first turn of the channel
  - o Race begins at the first turn of the channel
  - o All participants MUST have certified personal flotation devices
  - o Divisions
    - Youth paddle boat (both racers under 12)
    - Paddleboard
    - Chain-driven paddleboat
    - 1-person kayak
    - 2-person kayak
    - Classic paddleboard
- **Fun Run – Sunday, July 7th at 9:00am – Willow Beach Resort**
  - o Registration begins at 8:30am



- o 2-mile walk/run
- o FREE for all participants
- o All ages welcome
- o Trophies for Top 3 Overall Male and Female finishers
- **Boat Parade – Sunday, July 7th at 2:00pm – Fazzini’s dock**
  - o Theme: Favorite sports team!
  - o Registration and judging from the dock of the Fazzini home: 94295 Gebhard Dr. (From the lake, it’s to the left of the forest between Gebhard and Huff’s; look for a sign on the end of the dock that weekend).
  - o Register at 1:30pm
  - o Parade begins at 2:00pm
  - o Vote for the winner by texting the boat number to (708) 692-8999
  - o Prizes

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

Keep an eye on the Gravel Lake Association Facebook group for changes, info, or cancellations.

- **Gravel Lake Picnic—Saturday, June 8th (rain or shine)**
  - o Immediately following the Membership Meeting (approx. 12-3pm)
  - o Hang out with old friends and meet some new ones!
  - o Paid 2018 or 2019 members may enjoy a complimentary lunch!
  - o Limited car and boat parking, so carpool and “boatpool”!
  - o Please respect the natural shoreline



## Gravel Lake Association 2019 Calendar (continued from page 9)

- **Gravel Lake Garage Sale - Saturday, June 22 & Sunday, June 23 from 9am-3pm**

- o Time to clean out your house and make some cash! Place your items in your garage or yard, price them, and put a sign out front.
- o If you're planning on participating, email Linda Vitkauskas (vitkauskas3@comcast.net) or call at 269-624-7455, as she is providing a list for shoppers so that they don't miss your house!

- **6th Annual Gravel Lake Poker Run- Saturday, August 3rd (TENTATIVE, based on volunteers)**

- o Time TBD
- o Needed: Volunteers to help with ticket sales, dock set-up, party set-up, and t-shirt sales on Saturday, and clean-up on Sunday.
- o Needed: 7 sponsors to donate \$200+. Sponsors will get a sign at a dock, as well as their logo on the back of the Poker Run t-shirt, in any Poker Run literature, and printed in the Gravel Laker newsletter. These funds will support activities at the docks.
- o Email Janice Pinkos at fampinkos@aol.com if you are interested in hosting a dock or being a volunteer or sponsor.



*Welcome to your very own Southwest Michigan vacation paradise.*

		<p><b>Happy Rock Resort</b> 32850 South Street Lawton, MI 49065 (269) 423-5091 <a href="http://happyrockresort.com">happyrockresort.com</a></p>
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**Happy Rock Resort - Southwest Michigan Lakefront Vacation Cabins on Gravel Lake**

## Michigan House Bill 4362 - Boating Hours

On March 13, 2019, Michigan House Bill 4362 was introduced by representatives Sheppard and LeGrand. Many of you read about this on Facebook. My intention is to provide as many facts as are currently available. The bill is to amend 1994 PA 451, entitled "Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act," (MCL 324.101 to 324.90106) by adding part 306. The exact language follows:

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

PART 306 INLAND LAKE REGULATION SEC. 30601. AS USED IN THIS PART:

(A) "PUBLIC BOATING ACCESS SITE" MEANS THAT TERM AS DEFINED IN SECTION 78101.

(B) "PUBLIC INLAND LAKE" MEANS THAT TERM AS DEFINED IN SECTION 30901.

(C) "VESSEL" MEANS THAT TERM AS DEFINED IN SECTION 80104.

SEC. 30602. SUBJECT TO SECTION 30603, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE THE HOURS OF OPERATION OF ALL PUBLIC BOATING ACCESS SITE OR AROUND PUBLIC INLAND LAKES. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL POST A NOTICE AT THE ENTRANCE OF EACH PUBLIC BOATING ACCESS SITE THAT STATES THE REGULAR HOURS OF OPERATION OF THAT PUBLIC BOATING ACCESS SITE. THE NOTICE SHALL BE POSTED IN A VISIBLE LOCATION, AND THE LETTERING OF THE NOTICE SHALL BE OF A SUFFICIENT TYPE SIZE TO BE EASILY READ BY VISITORS.

SEC. 30603. OPERATION OF A VESSEL ON A PUBLIC INLAND LAKE IS LIMITED TO BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8 A.M. AND SUNSET, UNLESS FURTHER LIMITED BY SPECIAL RULES PROMULGATED BY LOCAL ORDINANCE RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION 80110.

(Sources available on page 23).

This particular language has sparked quite a bit of feedback from riparians and boaters throughout the state. As a result, the authors of this bill are re-writing it. Fox 17 News (West Michigan) reported that representative Sheppard intended to expand the timeframe that boats could be on inland lakes. They state that "Sheppard said he came up with the bill because he's seen lakes that have public boat access, but limit sporting activities to a certain timeframe." "Sheppard says part of the issue was that it was interpreted to apply to all the lakes in Michigan." He did not intend it as a restriction on all lakes (i.e. lakes without restrictions). Sheppard's team is working on alternative language.

The Gravel Lake Association Board of Trustees has reviewed this topic and is awaiting the new language before potentially writing our Michigan House & Senate representatives (Beth Griffin and Aric Nesbitt, respectively). If the new language is still objectionable, both the Gravel Lake Association AND homeowners around Gravel Lake should be prepared to write, call, or email these representatives.

What do you think? How do you feel about the DNR being able to set boating hours on Gravel Lake or boating/public access site hours in general? Email me at [cucad4@hotmail.com](mailto:cucad4@hotmail.com) or talk to your beach trustee.

(Note: Sources available on page 23)

Craig DeSimone  
President, GLA

## New Members of the Gravel Lake Community!



Spring has sprung in the Intercoastal Waterway! The Michelis welcome two female Indian Runner ducklings to their family. Their names are Sandy and Willow, named after the Gravel Lake beaches the Micheli family has resided over the years. Serafina and Josephine (the human daughters) call them "Princess Lily" and "Quack Quack."

Indian Runners (*Anas platyrhynchos domesticus*) are known for their upright carriage that resembles a penguin. Instead of waddling like most ducks, runner ducks "run" or quick step. They have long slender necks and their eye placement is high on their heads. Female ducks tend to be more vocal, but aren't as aggressive as drakes. They lay 300-350 greenish blue eggs per year and are excellent foragers. This species has wings but cannot fly. When fully grown, they will be white and fawn in color like Mango. They will be free to roam during the day but will be locked up in their coop at night to protect them from predators.



Meanwhile, across the channel at the Witteveens, CJ, Mark, Ava and Jake have adopted two ducks of their own! Macaroon is a French Rouen and Quackers is a Peking. Female French Rouen ducks are brown, whereas the males are gray and brown with a green head. Peking ducks are white in color and known for their calm demeanor. The Witteveens joined us as Gravel Laker status in Fall 2018. Say hello to them when you are cruising through the channel this summer!

## Gravel Lake Earth Day Clean Up



Earth Day was celebrated with a Gravel Lake Clean-up on Saturday, April 27.

A big thanks to our young environmental enthusiasts, Serafina Micheli, Josephine Micheli, and Morgan Swalec.

And thanks to Jennifer Micheli for bringing awareness and helping out as well!



## Fall Gravel Lake Halloween Event



The GLA is planning a Fall 2019 Halloween event.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page for info as we get closer to the fall.

# Copper Ridge Inn & Farm Market



Copper Ridge Inn & Farm Market  
34460 96th Ave. Lawton, MI 49065  
269-716-0327  
naturallynorms@gmail.com  
copperridgemi.com

Located in Southwest Michigan, Copper Ridge Inn & Market is the perfect location for a weekend getaway, hunting trip, or family vacation. Many have also enjoyed the picturesque, agrarian backdrop for weddings, receptions, and reunions.

FREE RANGE PASTURE RAISED

BEEF  
EGGS  
CHICKEN  
TURKEY  
LAMB  
PORK

NON-GMO FEED BLENDED WITH ORGANIC NUTRIENTS





## Meet a Gravel Lake Family: The Lone Willow on Willow Beach



Every now and again, the sadness hits me. Sometimes it's in my gut, sometimes it's in my throat, but mostly it's in my heart. About five years ago my family lost Heinz and Hertha Gutmann. They were our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. They passed away peacefully within six months of each other. I like to think they're on a boat ride at the great Gravel Lake in the sky, Heinz with his gin and tonic and Hertha feeding the neighborhood stray cats. I'm sure several of you reading this article can share an anecdote, a memory, or how they touched your lives in some small way. I like to look at the little things around me that remind me

of them; my china cabinet that once sat in their living room, my grandmother's handmade quilt she made me, my grandpa's German soccer scarf, my son's middle name (which I am sure he will one day have to explain to friends and teachers—sorry Jack Heinz!), but my favorite thing to see that brings them back to me is the lone willow tree on Willow Beach.

To explain how that tree got there, I will have to take you back a few years. After immigrating from Germany to Canada, then from Canada to the U.S. in 1959, Heinz and Hertha settled in LaPorte, Indiana. During the summer they would travel to Traverse City, rent a cabin, and enjoy the outdoors with their daughters, May and Patsy. The long journey to Traverse City would soon seem too far, as they discovered they would be welcoming a third child in 1966, my Aunt Barbra. That year they were also planning a trip back to Germany, but because Hertha was pregnant, they decided to cancel the trip. With the money they had saved they decided it might be time to purchase their own cottage. They saw an ad in the South Bend Tribune and began their search.

The first home they saw was on Cedar Lake. Oh how our family's decades-long love affair with this lake would have changed if they settled there, but it was on too big of a hill. They fell in love with their place on Gravel Lake because it reminded them of the little cabins they would rent in Traverse City. Shortly after taking up their summer residency at the lake they decided the heat was a little unbearable so they wanted to plant a tree. Their home in LaPorte had a large willow tree growing in the corner of their yard. They cut a branch off that tree and planted into the ground by the beach of their new lake house and before they knew it, it implanted and began to grow into the large tree we see today.

## Meet a Gravel Lake Family: The Lone Willow on Willow Beach (continued from page 14)



They added on a few rooms, changed the color a few times, built their big beautiful deck, and hoisted their American flag accompanied by their German flag just underneath. I know my grandpa took great pride in his second home; it was part of his American dream. As an immigrant, he moved his family and children, country to country, home to home, to seek out a better life, and to ensure his children didn't see the war-torn life he and my grandmother grew up in. A parent's love can truly be measured in the lengths they will go to set up a better life for their children. The journey didn't come without its fair share of challenges; a new language, a new community, and feeling like they didn't belong. My mother recalls that their first lake neighbors had three sons who would spend their days outside playing horseshoes, enjoying a drink or two, and would affectionately call my grandpa "Heiney". He wore that nickname like a badge of honor, his "American" nickname. He fit in. They found "their place".



Gravel Lake became a place where they no longer felt like outsiders. The years would bring them many lifelong friends and neighbors they could share a meal or a drink with. If you were lucky enough to enjoy an afternoon on their deck, you probably got one of the best tasting gin and tonics from Heinz, or coffee and cake from Hertha. If you were sitting by the water, you felt the cool shade of their giant willow tree. They would eventually welcome six grandchildren to share the lake with. I was lucky enough to spend most of my childhood summers with them, and with my parents at their place they purchased over 30 years ago not too far down the beach. I truly had a unique opportunity to be with them, on this lake, and I could not be more thankful.

The sadness still hits me, although the sting is not as strong. I still catch myself off guard when I see something I want to call them

about, when I see my grandpa's goofy little grin on my son's face, or when a stray cat lets me pet her. I am comforted by my memories of them I get to keep, the legacy they left, and all the things I get to enjoy that were made possible only because of them. The willow tree that sits in front of their cottage, now owned by my Aunt Barbra and her husband Steve, to me is a symbol of their journey to seek a better life for their family. It is something we have been able to enjoy since we lost them, and something we hope to enjoy for years to come.

Emily Garrett  
Contributing writer

## The Red Fox



Cunning and cute as can be, Red Foxes have been frequenting the Gravel Lake area for the past few years. I have been lucky enough to have had some up-close and personal observations of an adorable fox family this winter and spring. If you take a walk through "the woods" on Huff's Landing, keep your eyes peeled for these furry friends. The Red Fox is very adaptable to its environment but they prefer wooded areas with easy access to resources, like water! This makes Gravel Lake the perfect home (and I agree!).

These intelligent creatures can grow to be as large as 24 pounds, about the size of a small dog or a large cat. The fox's most distinguishing characteristic is its big bushy tail, which is used for warmth as well as balance.

Foxes find their mates in the winter and are believed to be mostly monogamous. With a short gestational period of about 2 months, the female fox, or vixen, will birth a litter of up to 12 kits! The kits will be brown or gray at birth

and about a month later they develop their signature red coat. The family will live in a den that is most often built by the vixen. Both mom and dad are hands-on in raising their kits until the fall, when the little ones are old enough to be on their own. When a kit is finally able to hunt and survive independently, the diet of choice can be anything from fruits or berries to small mammals like mice, chipmunks, moles, or squirrels. They also love a plethora of invertebrates such as crayfish or caterpillars. The red fox has incredible hearing which allows it to hear its small prey from far distances or even burrowing underground.



It is important to be aware that this small and intelligent animal is NOT a danger to you or your family. If anything, they help keep small vermin at bay! Most often, the fox will retreat when he or she is approached. Like any wild animal, there is always the chance of a fox becoming rabid, so strange behavior may be a red flag to keep your distance. Please be respectful of the fox and keep your kiddos and pets away from their dens and their kits. Observing these cuties can be a real treat, but please do so with respect. Sharing our lake with a variety of wildlife is one of the things that makes it so special!



Tricia Barker  
Contributing writer

## Farewell to a Gravel Lake Friend

Winifred Eilene Melton, 93, passed away on January 31, 2019 at Settlers Place in La Porte, IN. Born in Mishawaka, Indiana on June 12, 1925 to Alvin and Mary Curtis, Winnie, as she was called, was an only child.

Winnie was a master seamstress having started at a young age. She sewed thousands of hemlines, shortened an untold number of pants and slacks, and made everything from drapes to dresses. Winnie thoroughly enjoyed sewing for her family, friends, and customers. There are many Cabbage Patch dolls and Barbies wearing her creations also. Alterations were her specialty and there was nothing made of fabric she wouldn't tackle. Winnie joined the Busy Hands of Michiana group in 2005 and was awarded the President's Volunteer Service Award more than once for her hundreds of hours of work there. The one project she kept track of was fleece mittens, of which she made over 500 pairs.

Winnie enjoyed watching the birds, sewing, knitting, crocheting, and playing UNO and Bingo, but most of all, she enjoyed spending time at the family cottage at Gravel Lake, where she bested about everyone in catching bluegill and perch. She was an avid Notre Dame fan and enjoyed watching both college and professional games of all sports on TV. Winnie read the paper daily until recently and did crossword puzzles in ink. She was quiet, strong, and loved by many, including the staff at Settlers Place.

Winnie was preceded in death by her husband Chester (Chet), parents Alvin and Mary Curtis, and numerous aunts and uncles. She is survived by her son Bruce (Penny) of Rolling Prairie, IN and her daughter Mindy Cheyne (Rick) of Jacksonville, AL; six grandchildren Jennifer, Christopher, Heather, Ashley, Steven and Craig, and eleven greatgrandchildren Evan, Elizia, Violet, Amanda, Olivia, Allison, MacKenzie, Brianna, Xavier, Anya and Avery.

There will only be a private service for immediate family. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Busy Hands of Michiana, 702 S. Chapin St., South Bend, IN 46601, or visit their website to donate online; or to Dunes Hospice, 4711 Evans Ave., Valparaiso, IN 46383. Bubbs Funeral Chapel, Mishawaka, IN is in charge of arrangements. To sign the guest book or leave condolences online please visit [www.BubbsFuneralChapel.com](http://www.BubbsFuneralChapel.com).





## Did Someone Say POKER RUN?!

This year's Poker Run is **TENTATIVELY** scheduled for **Saturday, August 3rd!**



Going on its sixth year, the Poker Run is a fun Gravel Lake tradition that everyone has come to know and love! This event would be nothing without the help and support from all those willing to volunteer.

**Docks:** We are now looking for volunteers to host a dock! Simply enough, a dock host is responsible for passing out cards to all players when they pull up to your dock. **No docks equals no Poker Run!** We need seven volunteers by May 31st or else we will need to cancel this year's event. If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please reach out!

**After party:** If anyone is interested in hosting an after party, please contact me for more details.

**Committee members:** Looking for a few people to help plan the day! Committee members can help contact sponsors, design and order t-shirts, or coordinate and run a raffle.

**Day of:** In order to make the day run smoothly, we are in need of several volunteers for ticket sales and other coordination. A list of jobs to volunteer for will become available after we secure seven docks. If you are interested in being a general volunteer, please let me know!

Questions?? Please feel free to reach out!

For dock volunteers:

Alyssa Pinkos

Email: [alyssa.pinkos@gmail.com](mailto:alyssa.pinkos@gmail.com)

Text: (708) 846.7355

For everything else:

Janice Pinkos

Email: [fampinkos@aol.com](mailto:fampinkos@aol.com)

Text: (708) 567.9351



## Treasurer's Report

**Beginning Balance as of 1/1/19 \$37,859.01**

### Deposits

Membership Dues - PayPal 1	\$33.68
Membership Dues - 24	\$1,050.00
Fish Stocking Donation from	
Non-Lake Resident	\$500.00
Membership Dues - 5	\$310.00
Membership Dues 2	\$85.00
Membership Dues 1	\$30.00
Membership Dues 16	\$560.00
Membership Dues 18	\$1,005.00
Gravel Laker Advertising	\$110.00
Membership Dues - PayPal 16	\$830.20

**Total Deposits \$4,513.88**

### Expenses

JMC Studios, Inc.- Website Hosting	\$60.00
Laggis Fish Farm - Balance for Perch	\$1,045.00
Cannopeum - Picnic Rentals	\$764.97
Michigan Lakes & Streams Membership	\$250.00
Riparian Memberships	\$1,848.00
USPS - Stamps for Invoices	\$198.00
Staples - Printing for Invoices	\$280.32

**Total Expenses \$4,446.29**

**Checkbook Balance as of 4/05/19 \$37,926.60**

### Other Assets:

**Total Funds \$37,926.60**



## The Vineyard Cafe

231 North Main Street Lawton, Mich

**(269)-624-6558**

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# SUMMER IS HERE!

"F" is for firefly that shines in the dark  
and lights up the lake  
with its tiny white spark



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## Sources

### Michigan House Bill

<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2019-2020/billintroduced/House/pdf/2019-HIB-4362.pdf>

<https://fox17online.com/2019/03/21/misinterpretation-leads-to-controversy-for-proposed-law/>

### Rules of the Water Quiz

[https://www.boat-ed.com/michigan/boating\\_law.html](https://www.boat-ed.com/michigan/boating_law.html)

<https://www.michigan.gov/dnr>

<https://www.wbir.com/article/news/local/verify-does-alcohol-get-you-drunker-on-a-boat/51-571081338>

## MEYER WOOD PRODUCTS

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Children's Playsets

Dock Installation



32180 Red Arrow Highway  
Paw Paw, MI

Voice: 269-657-3450  
Fax: 269-657-1724

Owner: Roy D. Meyer





# The T&T Tour

visits Gravel Lake on JULY 13th

**WAKE  
SIDE**  
MARINE  
**NAUTIQUE**  
**LIQUIDFORCE**  
WakeSideMarine.com

On Saturday, July 13th, Wakeside Marine hosts Olympian Tommy Czeschin, a Nautique and Liquid Force team waksurfer on Gravel Lake.

Join us for a tie-up in the middle for a day of wakesurfing, fun, and watching Tommy ride.

**Tommy's main exhibition set is at 4:00 pm.**

Tommy is joined by Liquid Force's Tyler Mosely and regional team rider Andrew Atkinson.

This will be an epic day of surfing and fun on the lake. Limited sessions with Tommy are available, but everyone is encouraged to surf your boats.



**GOOD FOOD**



**GOOD DRINK**



**GOOD TIME**



**M: 3:00-9:00 • T: CLOSED • W 3:00-9:00 • T 2:00-10:00 • F: 11:30-12:00 • S: 11:30-2:00 • S: 12:00-9:00**

**THE ROCK AT BIG FISH LAKE**

**14625 Loveridge  
Marcellus, MI 49067  
269.646.7625**

**[therockatbigfishlake.com](http://therockatbigfishlake.com)**

## Gravel Lake Association

### Membership Form: January 2019 - December 2019

Fill out and mail to:

Gravel Lake Association, P.O. Box 531, Lawton, MI 49065

This document is also available on the website @ [www.gravellake.org](http://www.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 2019 \$35.00

I would like to receive 4 free issues of the Riparian magazine for 2019.

Yes   No   (circle one)

Address where your Riparian should be sent.

Home   Lake   (circle one)

Fish Stocking Donation      \$10.00    \$15.00    \$25.00    or   Other      \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed      \_\_\_\_\_





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<b>Secretary</b>	Melissa DeSimone
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## Gravel Lake Association

P.O. Box 531  
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