

# The Gravel Laker

Volume XXX Number 2

[www.gravellake.org](http://www.gravellake.org)

Spring, 2020





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## President's Corner



I hope this finds you and your family safe and well! 2020 has already proven to be a year like no other. By the time you receive this, it would be great if we were on a path to something more normal!

Here's what's going on with the Gravel Lake Association:

Already, the Board of Trustees has adjusted and moved to virtual meetings on Zoom. While not as good as in-person meetings, we've been efficient and have managed to conduct our business similar to usual. Like everyone, we're monitoring the COVID-19 situation as it relates to larger gatherings. As we host a lot of these, we're looking to be as safe as possible so please look for updates on meetings and events on the GLA Community Facebook page.

We're doing our small part to support our local businesses. This issue features free ad space to all of our advertisers. We hope you can continue to support them when conditions are appropriate.

Our GLA Community Facebook page has seen a lot of activity. Many of you have been quite passionate about recent Michigan executive orders, as well as the flooding on 93rd Avenue (as well as Northern pike vs. Grass Pickerel identification...) While we strive for accurate information, and to avoid misleading information, we cannot always fact-check everything. Given some particularly pointed and provocative comments, we asked you how you felt about political comments and posts. More than a few of you messaged me directly to express your concerns. Through a Facebook poll, the vast majority of you told us you don't want that kind of content on the GLA Community page. Taking a measured approach, we've decided to update our rules to forbid **partisan** political comments or posts. Government action/information pertinent to Gravel Lake is still appropriate and so are your respectful opinions on such. Thanks for your feedback and your adherence!

Look for special updates on a potential boat wash, making Shaw Road safer, and changes to our annual picnic further in this issue.

Finally, now is a great time to photo-document your natural shoreline! As mentioned previously, I've noticed many of you taking both small steps (like not mowing a buffer at the shoreline) and big steps (like planting a lakeside wildflower garden). Both efforts are to be applauded and you can best track your progress year after year by taking pictures up and down your shoreline a couple of times a year. Please share!

**Craig DeSimone**

GLA President

## IN THIS ISSUE

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- Meet a Gravel Laker!
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- June Membership Meeting
- Treasurer's Report
- SIBZ Comic



## 2020 Calendar

Monday, May 25	<b>Memorial Day</b>
Saturday, June 6	GLA Membership meeting @ Porter Township Hall or via Zoom
Sunday, June 21	<b>Father's Day</b>
Friday, July 3	GLA Fourth of July events--Paddle Boat Regatta
Saturday, July 4	GLA Fourth of July events--Fun Run and Kids Games
Saturday, July 4	<b>Fourth of July</b>
Saturday, July 18	BOT meeting @ Porter Township Hall
Saturday, July 25	Gravel Lake Garage Sale & Market Day
Saturday, August 8	Poker Run ( <i>tentative</i> )
Saturday, August 22	GLA Membership Meeting and Picnic @ DeSimone's on Chamberlin
Monday, September 7	<b>Labor Day</b>
Saturday, September 12	BOT meeting @ Porter Township Hall
Saturday, September 26	MLSA Region 3 @ Porter Township Hall
Monday, October 12	<b>Columbus Day</b>
Saturday, October 17	BOT meeting @ Porter Township Hall
Saturday, October 17	GLA Halloween

## Place An Ad In The Gravel Laker!

To place an ad in our next issue contact Bob Vick  
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## Gravel Lake Association 2020 Calendar

### BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

- **Saturday, June 6 at 10am – Membership Meeting**
  - o Location – TBD (may be online via Zoom or in-person at Porter Township Hall)
  - o Details will be posted on the GLA website and the GLA Community Facebook Group
  - o Dues collection
- **Saturday, July 18 at 10am—Board of Trustees meeting (Porter Township Hall)**
- **Saturday, August 22 at 10:30am – Membership Meeting and Picnic**
  - o Location – Beebe/DeSimone/McBride yard on Chamberlin Beach (32313 Chamberlin Dr.)
  - o Trustee elections
  - o Dues collection
  - o 50-50 raffle
  - o Buy Gravel Lake paraphernalia
  - o Picnic to follow
- **Saturday, September 12 at 10am—Board of Trustees meeting (Porter Township Hall)**
- **Saturday, October 17 at 10am—Board of Trustees meeting (Porter Township Hall)**

### FOURTH OF JULY ACTIVITIES: Friday, 7/3 – Saturday, 7/4

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 page for changes, info, or cancellations.

- **Paddle Boat Regatta – Friday, July 3 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)
    - Paddle board
    - Chain-driven paddle boat
    - 1-person kayak
    - 2-person kayak
    - Classic paddle boat
- **Fun Run – Saturday, July 4 at 9am**
  - o The Fun Run will be very different this year! Look for details on the Gravel Lake Association Community Facebook page.
- **Kids' Games – Saturday, July 4 at 11am – Willow Beach Resort (TENTATIVE)**
  - o Ages 0-12
  - o Prizes for all participants

(Continued on page 7)

## Gravel Lake Association 2020 Calendar (continued from page 6)

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

Keep an eye on the Gravel Lake website and the Gravel Lake Association Community Facebook page for changes, info, or cancellations.

- **Gravel Lake Garage Sale & Market Day—Saturday, July 25 from 9am-3pm**

- o **Garage Sale:** 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. 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!
- o **Market Day:** Get crafting and bring your goods to Market Day! Contact Maria Lowe (mlowe2719@gmail.com) if you plan on setting up a table.

- **7th Annual Gravel Lake Poker Run— Saturday, August 8 (tentative, based on volunteers)**

- o Ticket sales begin at 9:30am
- o First round of Poker Run starts at 1pm
- o What we need for Poker Run 2020:
  - **Three more docks!** We are only three docks away from having a full Poker Run. Dock hosts are responsible for handing out cards to participants that come to their dock. If you have any questions or are interested in hosting a dock, please contact Alyssa Pinkos at alyssa.pinkos@gmail.com.
  - **Poker Run Sponsors**—Businesses can opt to sponsor the Poker Run in one of three ways: t-shirt sponsors, dock sponsors, and a full sponsor (t-shirt AND dock). Sponsors will be included on Poker Run literature and also printed in the Gravel Laker fall newsletter. If you are interested in sponsoring this year's Poker Run, please reach out to Alyssa Pinkos (email above).
- o For additional updates, please check out the Gravel Lake Association Community page on Facebook.
- o Do you have general Poker Run questions? Please email Janice Pinkos at fampinkos@aol.com.

- **Gravel Lake Picnic—Saturday, August 22 (tentative) —DeSimone's yard**

- o Tentatively scheduled—please check GLA website and GLA Community Facebook page for updates.
- o Immediately following the Membership Meeting (approx. 12-3pm).
- o RSVP the number of attendees who will be eating to dave42171@yahoo.com by Saturday, August 15.
- o Hang out with old friends and meet some new ones!
- o Paid 2019 or 2020 memberships will allow up to five (5) members of each household to eat for free.
- o Additional food tickets (along with non-member food tickets) can be purchased for \$1.00 per ticket by visiting the check-in table.
- o Tickets are for food only. Festivities are FREE!
- o Limited car and boat parking, so carpool and "boatpool"!



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## Boat Wash Update

The GLA Board of Trustees held a special meeting to review questions and answers with boat wash producer, CD3. Recall that the goal of a boat wash is to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species via our public access. During our meeting, we covered a wide range of topics including installation costs, upkeep costs, funding options, placement, monitoring, model options, legal/governmental requirements, and funding sources. Key highlights include:

- Placement of a boat wash station on our site is viable, and we have multiple options.
- Early success has been seen on lakes in Michigan and Minnesota.
- Funding could come from GLA, our aquatic plant special assessment district fund, and grants.

Currently, the board is interested in investigating the availability of grants before proceeding much further. Our next step is to share more details and get feedback ideally at our next membership meeting. Questions or comments can be directed to Craig DeSimone at [cucad4@hotmail.com](mailto:cucad4@hotmail.com).



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## Meet a Gravel Laker!

Nestled against a line of trees on Huff's Landing is a newly remodeled lake home. It is a beautiful blue color that spans three levels, with a large white deck. While some of its walls may be new, its memories span decades with the same family. Its modest beginning as a small summer cottage now serves as the home to full-time residents Robin and Tim Rusthoven.

Robin met her husband Tim 25 years ago in northern Illinois. Robin taught school for 33 years in Libertyville, and Tim was a podiatrist for 30 years. Robin and her three children, Jamie, Steve, and Dave Paramski, enjoyed many summers at Gravel Lake with their family. Robin's son, Dave, even married fellow Gravel Laker, Maggie Paramski (Eggers) of Gebhard Beach.

To sum up the story of this lake house and family I adore, I reached out to Robin. She quickly and enthusiastically wrote back to tell me its tale.

(Continued on page 11)





## Meet a Gravel Laker! (continued from page 10)



"My family and another Gravel Lake family, the Metz's, began renting a cottage on Twin Lake in Dowagiac, MI in the summer of 1963. Eventually, Bill and Pat Metz bought on Gravel Lake (on Winkler Beach) and encouraged my parents, George and Louise Ehemann, to do the same. In 1979, my parents bought "the cottage" on Huff's Landing. When my folks purchased the cottage, it was 480 sq. ft., had one 10x10' ft. bedroom and one small bath!". (Continued on page 12)



## Meet a Gravel Laker! (continued from page 11)



The time together all those summers made for some great stories. "My folks did add a three-season porch to the original cottage, which is where most of us slept on foam mattresses at night for years. Some nights were so hot, but we had box fans going to cool us down. Between siblings, spouses, cousins, grandparents, and friends, the small house was often packed. But my kids grew up here". Robin continues, "Between oatmeal baths to soothe swimmer's itch and mosquito bites, to learning how to ski, to amazing Fourth of July celebrations, and walks to the candy store, blueberry picking in the July heat, fishing off the dock, collecting "treasures" from the beach, and birthday celebrations...the memories are endless. Looking back, sometimes things were hectic, but the memories we created are happy ones. And they are cherished."



Robin adds, "When my parents passed away, about 8 years ago, my husband and I decided we were too old to sleep on the floor anymore, so we added on to the original cottage." The addition allows for Robin and Tim to enjoy the home year-round. They still host family and friends, and now their own grandchildren! (Great-grandchildren to George and Louise!)

"We enjoy all of the seasons here, but we really look forward to summers at GL, cruising around on our pontoon. Each lap full of laughter and happy 'Remember when...?' stories."

Emily Garrett

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## Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass are part of the black bass family, which includes largemouth bass, spotted bass, redeye bass, and Suwannee bass. These fishes are native to the temperate zones of North America but have spread to other areas of the continent due to stocking. The smallmouth can be described as brown in color with darker brown or black vertical bands along its sides, and dark brown or red eyes. Smallmouth bass can range in size, but on average a full-grown adult can measure in around 15 inches. Smallmouths that are found in lakes are much heavier. River "smallies" are slimmer, as the current of the river serves as a sort of treadmill which keeps the river fish trimmer than their lake-based brothers.



Smallmouths will spawn in Michigan from mid-May through June. Nests are generally made in an area of little or no current or traffic. The male smallmouth uses his tail fin to sweep the bottom of the water bed clear of gravel and silt to make the nest for the female to deposit her eggs. It is interesting to note that he always does this within 150 yards or so of his previous season's nest. Once spawning occurs, the female will leave to seek another mate or continue on her own, while the male guards the 2,500-10,000 eggs for up to a week until the young fry hatch. (Fry refers to the recently hatched fish). The male will also keep watch over the fry for another 12 or so days until they disperse and journey out of the nest. Generally, a full-grown adult will live to be 10-12 years old and average somewhere around 15 inches in length. A trophy smallmouth bass will be 20+ inches long. In my research, the largest recorded smallmouth bass that I came across was 22lbs!

Smallmouth bass that live in lakes may not be practicing social distancing these days, as they often swim in schools. After spawning season, they tend to go into deeper waters but have been known to be caught on a fly. Because of the spirited nature of this fish, it is one of the most fun to catch. If you like a good challenge, the smallmouth bass will always put up a good fight. Michigan is known as one of the best places to fish for these little fighters and just last year at least two 20+ inch smallies were caught right in our very own lake!

A wise man once told me that the respectable fisherman or fisherwoman will avoid fishing for smallmouth bass during mid-May to June during spawning season. This allows the next generation of smallmouth to have the best chance of survival and growth. If you do catch one during this time, please consider catch-and-release. It is important for the ecology at Gravel Lake.

(Continued on page 15)

## Smallmouth Bass (continued from page 14)

Also of note, a solid rule of thumb for good fish handling is to keep the fish wet. Makes sense, right? If you just have to snap a picture, try to keep it out of the water for as little time as possible. Hold your breath as you take the fish out of the water... when you need air, they need water! The best bait to use to catch a smallmouth has to do with what is available to the fish in their natural habitat. Smallmouth will eat smaller fish, crayfish, insects, tadpoles, and frogs, and are mainly carnivorous. Because of the prevalence and availability of frogs and small fish in our lake, fishing baitfish, and frog patterns are a great way to target smallmouths! Show us your catch on the GLA Facebook page!



Tricia Brucks (with help from Pete Fazzini)

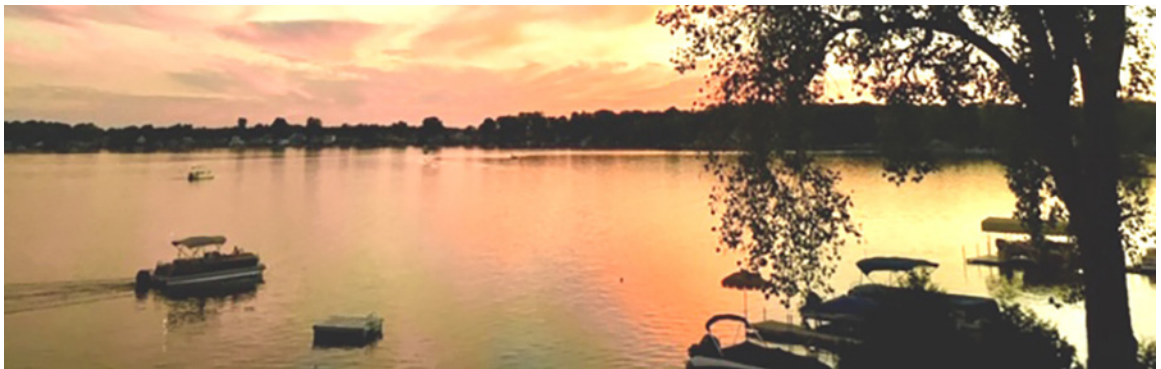
### Sources

#### Smallmouth Bass

[http://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/2010/hetke\\_dust/nutrition.htm](http://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/2010/hetke_dust/nutrition.htm)

[https://www.fws.gov/fisheries/freshwater-fish-of-america/smallmouth\\_bass.html](https://www.fws.gov/fisheries/freshwater-fish-of-america/smallmouth_bass.html)

<https://www.gameandfishmag.com/editorial/one-two-punch-for-smallmouth-bass/363027>



## About The Cover



This issue's cover features your Gravel Lake Association trustees, officers and staff of the Gravel Laker newsletter. They are listed below with the letters they are holding.

From the top left: Chris Toso(G), Arlene Rockwell(R), Dan McDevitt(A), Melissa DeSimone(V), Bob Vick(E), Suzanne Reed(L), Phil Rinaldi(L), Jim McGreal, Chip Van Schoyck, Spencer McGreal, Linda(A) & Kristy(K) Vitkauskas, Carlie DeSimone(E), Ken Hochsprung(R), Tom Zwartz(N), Janice Pinkos(S), Jamie Paramski(T), Jennifer Micheli(O), Craig DeSimone(G).

Not Shown: Kevin LaLone, Dave Brown, Ann LaForge, Carole Roeder.







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## Shaw Road Update

The GLA continues to pursue a traffic study in conjunction with the Porter Township Board. Such a study is necessary for any real improvements on Shaw Road. The GLA board approved some funding to support the study, but requires more information on the parameters and output of the study in order to move forward. Additionally, the GLA board has resolved to not only pursue signage, but an expanded shoulder to better accommodate pedestrian traffic where conditions aren't ideal. To be clear, we are limited by the results of a traffic study and township/county budgets. Still, we'll pursue the best option available. We will continue to provide periodic updates.



## Newsletter Staff

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Melissa DeSimone, Contributing writer

Tricia Barker, Contributing writer

Emily Garrett, Contributing writer

## Treasurer's Report

**Beginning Balance as of 1/1/2020** **\$49,857.42**

### Deposits

Membership Dues deposited 12/19 - 6	\$-
Membership Dues -10	\$670.00
Gravel Laker Advertising	\$110.00
Membership Dues - 6	\$355.00
Membership Dues - PayPal 7 (2 from 2019)	\$584.74

**Total Deposits** **\$1,718.74**

### Expenses

Print Mill - Winter Gravel Laker Issue	\$854.92
MLSA - Riparian Subscriptions	\$1,974.00
MLSA - Membership Dues	\$300.00

**Total Expenses** **\$3,128.92**

**Checkbook Balance as of 4/17/2020** **\$48,448.24**

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## June Membership Meeting & Picnic Update

We are making changes to our June 6th Membership Meeting and picnic due to Covid-19. The picnic will be postponed and we are making plans to move it to our August 22nd Membership Meeting. The June 6th Membership Meeting will either occur at the Porter Township Hall (if conditions permit) or via Zoom meeting (which allows you to attend virtually via your personal computer or phone). For both events, look for updates on the GLA Community Facebook group and [www.gravellake.org](http://www.gravellake.org).



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## Gravel Lake Association

### Membership Form: January 2020 - December 2020

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

You can also pay dues online at [gravellake.org](http://gravellake.org).

Please print clearly.

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Beach: \_\_\_\_\_ Lake Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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*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.

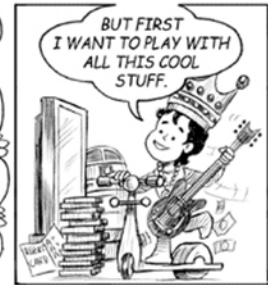
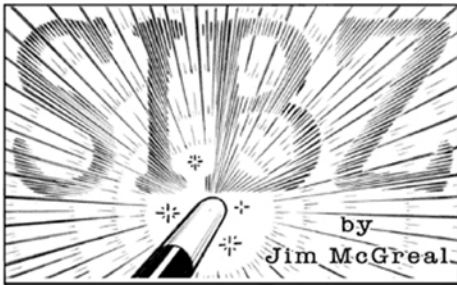
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## Board of Trustees Contact List

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<b>Vice President</b>	Suzanne Reed
<b>Secretary</b>	Melissa DeSimone
<b>Treasurer</b>	Janice Pinkos - fampinkos@aol.com

### OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

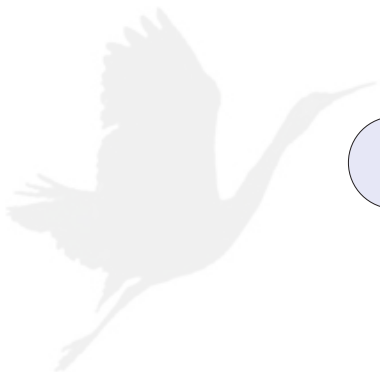
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## Gravel Lake Association

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