

The Gravel Laker

Volume XXXVI - Number 1

gravellake.org

Spring/Summer, 2026

In This Issue

- President's Corner
- 2026 Calendar of Events
- 2026 Gravel Lake Events Info
- Interview with Mary Howell
- Gravel Lake Native Plants
- Please Do Not Feed Waterfowl
- All Winter Long Ladies Group
- Deer Ticks
- Membership Form
- SIBZ Comic

Photo by Jen Micheli

WAKE SIDE MARINE

A CULMINATION OF CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS.



574-264-2874

WakeSideMarine.com

NAUTIQUE

65 YEAR YEARS OF THE SKI NAUTIQUE

The completely redesigned 2026 Ski Nautique is the ultimate expression of unparalleled performance setting a new standard in three-event waterskiing.



President's Corner

In my role, I field a variety of questions:

- When is the next aquatic invasive species treatment from PLM? Is it safe to go in the water?
- What can I do about shoreline erosion? Is there an option other than a seawall?
- What are we going to do with all of this water when it rains? My house/garage/lawn is flooding!
- What's causing my sewer bill to go up?
- When are Fourth of July activities planned?
- Are we going to stock fish? If so, what and when?
- Is this "weed" (aquatic plant) good or bad for the lake?
- Are we going to have the Poker Run this year?

These are just a handful of examples. (The answer to some of these questions can be found on the Gravel Lake Association Community Facebook page, at www.gravellake.org, or in *The Gravel Laker* newsletter). But what this tells me is that you have a lot on your mind.

That said, we'd like to hear from you and, as such, we're planning another survey to understand what's important to you, where we should focus, and what we can improve. Look for that survey via email/website/Facebook this season. As always, don't hesitate to reach out to your beach trustee with your topics of interest.

As we look to our community for feedback, we are also interested in getting some expert, data-driven point-of-view on the health of our lake. The GLA water quality committee is exploring professional lake manager support to both evaluate the state of our lake (like we did about 10 years ago) as well as improve our approach to assessment, improvement, and education. Given our volunteerism, enthusiasm, and means, we really must pursue the very best available for our most cherished place: Gravel Lake.

Craig



Photo: Frank Gordon



PRO DOCK
DOCK, LIFT, AND BARGE SERVICES
INC.

(269) 447-4796
 prodockinc.com



**WE ARE
 YOUR LOCAL**



AUTHORIZED DEALER

BULMANNDOCK.COM



2026 Calendar Of Events

Date

Saturday, April 18
Sunday, May 10
Saturday, May 16
Monday, May 25
Saturday, June 6
Sunday, June 21
Saturday, June 27
Friday, July 3
Saturday, July 4
Saturday, July 4
Saturday, July 18
Saturday, August 8
Saturday, August 22
Monday, September 7
Saturday, September 19
Saturday, October 10
Monday, October 12
Saturday, October 17
Saturday, October 31

Event

Board of Trustees Meeting
Mother's Day
Board of Trustees Meeting
Memorial Day
Membership Meeting, Picnic, GL Night Out
Father's Day
Garage sale
GLA Fourth of July activities: Fun Run
Independence Day
GLA Fourth of July activities: Kids Games, Paddle Boat Regatta, Boat Parade
Board of Trustees Meeting
Poker Run
Membership Meeting
Labor Day
Board of Trustees Meeting
Fall Festival
Columbus Day, Indigenous Peoples Day
Board of Trustees Meeting
Halloween



**Do it
Best**

TIM MCCORMICK
JENNEE MCCORMICK
OWNERS



ADAMS HARDWARE INC.

#0042

Phone (269) 624-3531

Fax (269) 624-2203

adamshardware42@yahoo.com

115 Third St., PO Box 336, Lawton, MI 49065

**STORE HOURS: SUN 9AM - 2PM SAT 8AM - 4PM
MONDAY - FRIDAY 8AM - 6PM**

2026 Gravel Lake Events Info

BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Saturday, June 6, 11am—Membership Meeting & Picnic - Location: Zwartz's backlot on Idle Ease

Saturday, July 18, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting - Location: Porter Township Hall

Saturday, August 22, 10am—Membership Meeting - Location: Rinaldi's pole barn on Gebhard

Saturday, September 19, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting - Location: Porter Township Hall

Saturday, October 17, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting - Location: Porter Township Hall



FOURTH OF JULY ACTIVITIES

Information regarding Fourth of July activities will be posted on the Gravel Lake Community Facebook page. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Jen Micheli (jmicheli7@hotmail.com).

Fun Run 5K—Friday, July 3 at 9am

Start near old Willow Beach Grocery

Kids Games—Saturday, July 4 at 10am

Willow Beach Grocery front (lakeside) lawn

Paddle Boat Regatta—Saturday, July 4 at 6pm

Start at the mouth of the channel

Boat Parade—Saturday, July 4 at sunset (immediately following Taps)

Keep an eye on the Gravel Lake Association Community Facebook page for updates to events.



Photo: Joseph Britvich

2026 Gravel Lake Events Info



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Gravel Lake Night Out—Saturday, June 6

Who remembers when we all left the lake for an evening of fun at a nearby establishment back in the day? There's food, a cash bar, and music, so bring your appetite and dancing shoes! Come ready for a good time with your fellow Gravel Lakers. Info will be posted on the Gravel Lake Community Facebook page as soon as it becomes available.

Gravel Lake Garage Sale—Saturday, June 27, 10am-3pm

Gather your unused items and make some cash for yourself or your favorite charity. If you would like to be included in the map distributed to shoppers, text or call Linda Vitkauskas at 269 303-7787 or email at vitkauskas3@comcast.net. Deadline for sign-up is June 15th.

On June 27, place your items in your garage or yard (roadside) and wait for the shoppers.

Poker Run

The Poker Run is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, August 8. We are in need of docks and volunteers. Check the Gravel Lake Community Facebook page and website for more information. Email Alyssa Pinkos (alyssa.pinkos@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering or hosting a dock.





Lawson's Citgo

Convenience Stores/Gas Stations

Lawrence, Lawton, Lawton 1st Street,
M-51 @ I-94, Marcellus

Bulk Fuel Delivery
Phone 269-624-4851

Thank you, and have a great Summer!
Lawson's

Tom Motycka
PLUMBER



269.760.2645
(Master Licensed & Insured)

element salon



Tara Motycka

269.624.5821



204 west street suite 210
lawton, mi 49065





NEED INSURANCE?

SPECIALIZING IN: LET US QUOTE YOU!

- Home
- Auto
- Motorcycle
- Watercraft/ ATV
- Farm
- Commercial

**SERVICING GRAVEL LAKE,
SURROUNDING LAKES AND
COMMUNITIES FOR 32 YEARS!**

MOTTER INSURANCE AGENCY

**220 N MAIN ST
PO BOX 416
LAWTON MI 49065**

PHONE 269-624-7116

WEB PAGE motterinsurance.com

FACEBOOK Motter Insurance Agency Inc.



Casual Dining Atmosphere
Over 250 Brands of Beer
Full Menu Dining
Meeting Rooms
46 Craft Beers on Tap
Cocktails

FOOD, FOAM &
GOOD FRIENDS

45 YEARS IN
BUSINESS

155 N. Main, Lawton, MI (269)624-1200 FAX (269)624-4814
Wed. & Thurs. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m., Fri. & Sat. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Sunday Noon - 9 p.m. Closed Mondays & Tuesdays

NOW OPEN



HOURS: 8 AM TO 8 PM
LAST LOAD 7 PM
350 MAIN ST., LAWTON

Interview With Shoreline Steward, Mary Howell

Mary and Paul Howell are Huff's Landing residents. They have a beautiful natural shoreline and are acknowledged as Shoreline Stewards, a designation awarded by the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership (MNSP). The MNSP created the Michigan Shoreland Stewards Program "to achieve the goal of creating a statewide program to recognize lakefront property owners for maintaining shoreland property in a manner that reduced negative impacts on inland lakes". Mary and Paul are committed, as are many other Gravel Lakers, to keeping our lake clean and healthy for generations to come. Here, Mary answers some questions about their natural shoreline and the journey it took to get there.

How did you decide to convert your shoreline to a natural shoreline? Did you plan your shoreline or did it happen organically?

My parents had always had a bit of a native shoreline in that they had Joe Pye weed and mint growing to the south of our pier. They also let the grass grow tall along the lake to keep the geese off of the lawn. After hearing Craig and Missy DeSimone talk about the advantages of the native shoreline, I expanded and added some plants. I didn't have much luck with many native plants, but I kept trying. There were a few Michigan lilies to the north of the pier that really took off and filled the area.

What was your thought process? Did you plan your shoreline or just stop mowing and see what happened?

It was both. We keep leaving about a foot of grass untrimmed by the south end of our property. It's grass and other things. I've tried planting many native plants over the years with only some success. Milkweed has done



Interview With Shoreline Steward, Mary Howell (continued)

well and hosts many monarch butterflies in late summer. My hundred-year-old Joe Pye weed is healthy and tall with little pink flowers. The butterflies and bees love it, which is my main goal! The area always fills in with other plants and looks nice.

What's maintenance like with a natural shoreline?

It's like any garden or flower bed. I clean up dead brush in the spring and try to add a few plants if there is an empty area. I don't fertilize or water and it does fine. The deep roots of native plants water themselves and stabilize our shoreline.

Do you have any plans to alter/grow/reduce your natural shoreline?

I always try to add a few native plants every year, but don't have any plans to change things otherwise.

What's your favorite part about having a natural shoreline?

I love seeing the bees and butterflies enjoying the plants. My grandkids love searching for monarch eggs, caterpillars, and chrysalises. I also just love knowing that I'm doing what's best for the lake.

What advice do you have for people considering implementing a natural shoreline?

Be patient. See what happens. You can always add things the next year. It's worth it! Try plants and if they don't "take", try another.

How did you feel when you were acknowledged as a Shoreline Steward?

It was very nice and encouraged me to keep going when I got discouraged.

Sources:

<https://www.mishorelandstewards.org/about>



Gravel Lake Native Plants

Beautify a corner of your shoreline!

The Gravel Lake Association will again offer members of the lake the opportunity to plant a small group of native plants along a corner of their shoreline. The association will purchase plants from Wildtype this spring, and will pass along the wholesale price to you.

Last year 24 families planted the package of 12 native plants along their shoreline. This spring and summer we look forward to seeing their success! This year the plants will be available by Memorial Day.

Participating members will receive a bundle of 12 plants. Each bundle includes:

- 4 Rose mallows (spring bloomer)
- 4 Brown-eyed Susans (early summer bloomer)
- 4 New England asters (summer bloomer)

The cost is up \$5 this year, to a total of \$30 per bundle. This is because we have chosen to purchase the rose mallow native plant which has a beautiful blossom but comes at a slightly higher cost.

These plants are specifically chosen because they require wetland and need to have wet roots. We will only have a limited amount available; this year we have plants for 24 families. The plan is to have the plants available on Memorial Day weekend.

If you are interested in reserving your bundle, please text Heidi Kussurelis at 734-395-6008 or reach out in a Facebook private message. Please provide your name, beach, and address.

Why participate? There are many reasons!

The chosen plants:

1. Provide joy by beautifying Gravel Lake
2. Attract butterflies, birds, and bumble bees
3. Help filter run-off water that enters Gravel Lakes, thus providing us cleaner, clearer water
4. Help prevent erosion
5. Help reduce wave bounce back



Please Do Not Feed Waterfowl

Feeding ducks is tempting. It has been a pastime for generations, but the more we learn about wild waterfowl, the more we realize how detrimental feeding them is. Feeding bread, seed, crackers, chips, popcorn, or even bird seed to ducks is the equivalent of feeding your child nothing but candy. Ducks like the bread or other food, and will clamor for it much like a child will ask for candy. But the human food has no nutritional value for waterfowl, and it fills their stomachs up so that they do not eat the foods they need in order to remain healthy. Birds without proper nutrition can quickly succumb to disease and death. Nutrition is not the only reason we shouldn't feed wild ducks and geese. Feeding wildlife causes many problems, for the ducks and for the environment as well. **Bottom line: Artificial feeding is harmful to ducks.**

Reasons NOT to Feed the Ducks:

Overcrowding

Where birds are fed, more birds will come, usually leading to a crowded situation. More birds mean more droppings. Excess feces cause water pollution, create an unsanitary environment for human recreation, and lead to the spread of disease in the bird population. This last one has been a big issue in recent years.

Disease

Many avian diseases have been attributed to duck feeding. There are documented cases of waterfowl dying from enteritis, aspergillosis, and avian botulism, all due to excess food left floating in the water. These diseases spread quickly throughout populations due to the overcrowded situations that feeding waterfowl causes.

Aggression

Ducks and geese, although acclimated to humans, are still wild animals and thus unpredictable. Many ducks and geese that get used to humans will become aggressive towards humans and towards each other.

Other Reasons not to feed ducks human food

- Causes duckling malnutrition, which can lead to deformities and early death.
- Young ducks do not learn their own foraging skills.
- Bread is not a balanced diet for waterfowl and causes malnutrition.
- Feeding attracts more ducks than the habitat can support.
- Too many ducks in one place promotes disease.
- Causes a loss of natural behavior, some become more aggressive and some will not survive because they cannot compete.
- Leads to increased pollution and pests.
- Causes delayed migration patterns of waterfowl.
- Feeding areas are unsanitary and harbor diseases.
- Feeding weakens the gene pool.

Most people feed ducks with the best of intentions, not realizing the negative impact of their actions. Now that you know, you can help by not feeding the ducks and by educating others.

Article republished from <https://www.nrhtx.com/680/Ducks-and-the-Environment>.

PUT DOWN THAT BREAD!



7 REASONS TO STOP FEEDING THE DUCKS.

Feeding ducks, geese, and other waterfowl "people" foods like bread, crackers, chips, donuts, and popcorn can lead to a number of problems for the birds and for humans.

- 
- 1 MALNUTRITION**
When humans regularly feed ducks junk food, ducklings don't receive adequate nutrition for proper growth and may not learn how to forage for natural foods on their own.
 - 2 OVERCROWDING**
Ducks will lay more eggs where easy food is abundant, which makes it difficult for them to leave to seek out healthier food sources. This increases the likelihood of territorial aggression.
 - 3 POLLUTION**
When ducks are unnaturally gathered in a feeding area, their waste creates problems on the ground and in our water. Fecal bacteria in the water create a health risk for humans.
 - 4 DISEASE**
Disease can spread quickly when ducks are close together, when their fecal matter harbors disease, and when moldy bread causes a lung infection that can destroy a whole flock.
 - 5 UNWANTED PESTS**
Food meant for humans attracts unwelcome pests like mice, rats, and insects. These pests harbor additional diseases that can be dangerous health risks to humans.
 - 6 LOSS OF NATURAL BEHAVIOR**
When ducks and geese become accustomed to people giving them food, they lose their natural fear of humans and can become aggressive. Canadian geese can become **very** territorial.
 - 7 HABITAT DEGRADATION**
Large groups of ducks can de-vegetate natural areas, cause erosion, increase the fecal matter in ground and surface water, and create an unsightly mess for others sharing the space.

Ducks are natural foragers and can find healthy food on their own.
www.nrhtx.com

IG post: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DOgvBtAjb4/n>

The All-Winter Long Ladies Group

The All-Winter Long (AWL) Gravel Lake Ladies Group is an open get-together for women who live on Gravel Lake year-long. The purpose is to connect with other ladies who are facing the long winters on the lake, because we all know how long those winters feel. This adult womens group is meant for us to mingle, have quality girl time, and make new friends. No boys allowed! We meet four times a year in the winter months and have raised over \$600 for local charities and animal shelters. We have also collected 21 bags of food since November 2024 to help our local community.

If you are interested in joining this fun, social group, please reach out to Liz McGreal at McGrealElizabeth@gmail.com.



The All Winter Long (AWL) ladies group, January 2026



Photo: Matthew Olds



Burrus Auto

Family Owned and Operated
FULL SERVICE AUTO CARE

Rod Burrus
Owner

(269) 888-2399

62422 - Lawton, MI 49065

~ Custom Boat Covers ~

Pontoon Individual Seat Covers

Pontoon Full (Playpen) Covers

Boat Mooring/Travel Covers

Repairs & Alterations

~ no upholstery services offered ~



269.436.4475 ~ the-cover-girl.com



THE BREAKFAST PLACE

Eggs, Bacon, & Friends



HOURS: Open All Week
7:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

206 N. Main Lawton, MI 49065
269-624-3241

* 3% cash discount on all purchases *



SUN & SOUL

TANNING AND MORE

110 E, MAIN ST. MARCELLUS, MI 49067
(269) 587-2040

UV TANNING
CUSTOM SPRAY TANNING
SOUL SIDE BAKERY

(smoothies, coffee, baked goods, soups,
salads, paninis, and sandwiches.)

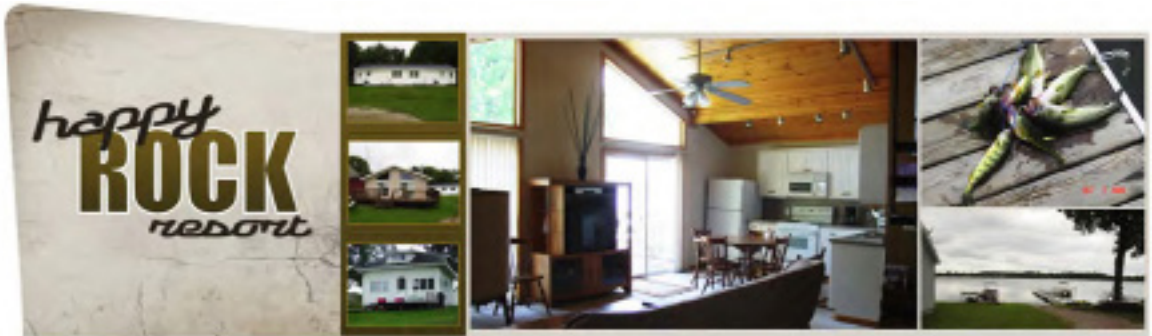


Follow us on
Facebook

Evergreen Massage
by Whitney

Restore & Renew LLC
by Sally





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

		<p>Happy Rock Resort 32850 South Street Lawton, MI 49065 (269) 757-4262 happyrockresort.com</p>
--	--	---

Happy Rock Resort - Southwest Michigan Lakefront Vacation Cabins on Gravel Lake



RE/MAX ADVANTAGE



JULIE HAMMEL
 REALTOR®

7127 Westhedge Ave., Suite 2
 Portage, MI 49002

Direct: (269) 488-6566
 Cell: (269) 655-5405
juliehammel@mi-homes.com

Stump Removal • Crane Service • Firewood
 • Free Estimates • Snow Plowing

J.C. & SONS



TREE SERVICE

100 w. South St., Decatur, MI 49045
 269-423-7614 - Fax: 269-423-6290

Jay Clark • Jared Clark • Mitch Clark

Deer Ticks

If it felt like the deer flies declared your lake their personal summer resort last year, you weren't imagining it. These persistent biters tend to surge in cycles, especially after wet springs that create ideal breeding conditions. Deer flies are most active on warm, sunny days with little wind, and they're particularly fond of slow-moving targets—like people drifting on a float or taking a leisurely walk. Unlike mosquitoes, it's the females doing the biting, and they are determined little things.

The life cycle starts in moist soil or muddy areas near water, where females lay eggs in late spring. Once hatched, the larvae live in damp environments—think shoreline muck, wet fields, and low-lying wooded areas—where they feed on organic matter and small organisms. By mid-summer, they emerge as adults ready to take to the air... and unfortunately, to your ankles, shoulders, and scalp. Because they rely on these wet habitats to reproduce, lakeside environments naturally give them a bit of a home-field advantage.

Deer flies don't infest homes or breed indoors, but they do travel. They're strong fliers and are attracted to movement, heat, and even dark colors, which is why they seem to follow you with a seemingly personal vendetta. While their bites are more annoying than dangerous for most people, they can occasionally transmit diseases among wildlife, though this is rarely a concern for humans in our area.

As frustrating as they are, deer flies are woven into the lake's food web. Their larvae help break down organic material in wet soils, contributing to nutrient cycling, and they serve as an important food source for fish, frogs, and other aquatic life. Once they emerge as adults, they become a quick snack for birds like swallows, as well as dragonflies and other predatory insects that help keep their numbers in check. Even their larvae are preyed upon by beetles and other invertebrates in the mud. In that way, deer flies help support everything from the smallest shoreline organisms to the birds swooping overhead—though most of us would agree we wouldn't mind if the local predators got just a little more efficient.



Photo: Mary Rinaldi

SHANGRILA FARMS

RANCH & NATURE RESERVE

www.SHANGRILA-FARMS.COM

BEEF - PORK - LAMB

Experience Full-Service Farm-To-Table...

Reserve your Farm Raised Black Angus Beef, Pork, Lamb
and Taste The ShangriLa Difference!!

- FIREWOOD -

Campfires...Fireplaces...Wood Stoves...

Seasoned - Custom Cut - Single Bundles - Face Cords
24hr Self-Service Pick-Up or Delivery Available

Visit our website to learn more about our pricing, products,
place an order, or signup for our mailing list...
or email us directly at: info@shangrila-farms.com



31150 96th Ave
Lawton, MI 49065
708/334-7507

MAEAP VERIFIED Systems
Farmstead * Livestock * Cropping * Forestry
Since 2019



Photo: Mary Rinaldi

O'Donnell's Docks LLC

CRAFTLANDER HYDRAULIC LIFTS
Available in 4,500 lb, 6,000 lb, and 8,000 lb capacities

Spring Sale
Price \$8300

30 SECONDS FOR 60 INCHES OF TRAVEL

NEVER UNDER SOLD

- HEAVY-DUTY ENGINEERING
- EFFORTLESS OPERATION
- RELIABLE HYDRAULIC SYSTEM
- BUILT FOR CONVENIENCE

MORE SPRING SPECIALS
25% off 4'x10' in-stock HD anodized aluminum dock sections
retail \$91.00 **SALE 25% off** now just \$68.25 per section

For an online quote, go to www.odonnellsdocks.com

12097 M-60 • Jones, MI
269-244-1446
info@odonnellsdocks.com
Authorized Dealer For:

SHOREMASTER lifttech marine HEWITT LSP

4Ever Aluminum PRODUCTS POLYDOCK PRODUCTS CRAFTLANDER

AMY'S
Fabulous
DINER

591 W Main St, Marcellus, MI 49067
269-646-1431



THE HAYLOFT

ICE CREAM • PIZZA • BURGERS

Home of the Famous Brownie Bucket



Located at 45502 M-51, Decatur, MI 49045

Dine in or order
online for pickup!
hayloftdeatur.com

HOURS
SUN-THURS: 12 – 9 P.M.
FRI & SAT: 12 – 10 P.M.
Closed Tuesdays

BRING THIS COUPON IN OR
MENTION "GRAVEL LAKE AD"
FOR

10% OFF
YOUR TOTAL ORDER

*VALID THRU OCT. 31, 2026



MATTAWAN
MECHANICAL SERVICES
Your Comfort Crew Since '92



PROTECT YOUR FAMILY & PETS WITH THE **DEFENDER** LOW LEVEL CO MONITOR



TEAM MMS
 IS PUTTING SAFETY FIRST
 BY PROVIDING
 CO MONITORS
 @
 OUR COST OF
\$ 80.00

CO MONITOR VS CO DETECTOR

WE RECOMMEND USING A CO MONITOR INSTEAD OF A TRADITIONAL CO DETECTOR. WHILE CO DETECTORS ONLY ALERT YOU WHEN CARBON MONOXIDE LEVELS ARE DANGEROUS, A CO MONITOR CONTINUOUSLY TRACKS THE PRESENCE OF CO, PROVIDING REAL-TIME DATA AND ALLOWING FOR QUICKER RESPONSES TO POTENTIAL ISSUES—OFFERING ENHANCED SAFETY.



Travel

WITH A PEACE OF MIND—TAKE IT WITH YOU AND STAY **SAFE** AT YOUR RENTALS, HOTELS, AND MORE. ASK YOUR TECHNICIAN TO ADD IT TO YOUR SERVICE APPOINTMENT TODAY, OR CONTACT US TO SCHEDULE A PICKUP OR DELIVERY WHEN WE'RE IN YOUR AREA.



CALL 269.688.5415 TO ORDER ONE TODAY!

WWW.MATTAWANMECHANICAL.COM

Neighbors Helping Neighbors



Here in Van Buren County, we help each other out, especially when we fall on hard times. We're volunteers who lend a helping hand to neighbors facing challenges with essentials like rent, utilities, and groceries.

In the past year, we helped almost 6,000 households.

We are United Christian Services of Eastern Van Buren County, serving communities of all faiths.



<https://www.unitedchristianservices-evbc.com/>



Photo: Mary Rinaldi

Posh
Salons

141 East Main Street
Marcellus, MI 49067

269-646-1102

Terrill's Market

117 E. MAIN ST., MARCELLUS MI

Terrill's Market is a 108 year-old meat market and grocery store; Blake, the fifth generation owner and head meat cutter, keeps tradition alive by hand cutting, trimming, grinding, stuffing, seasoning, and marinating everything we sell in our meat case - all USDA Choice and ABOVE.

We offer a huge selection of steaks, chops, brats (46 unique flavors), chicken, sausage, deli meats and cheeses as well as a large selection of produce (including locally grown/organic). Stop in soon and find out why we've been trusted by Marcellus and surrounding communities for 108 years and counting. You won't be disappointed.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK ☎ **269.646.3027**



D & M CANVAS

O: 269.244.8020 | C: 269.506.3276

PROTECT YOUR PORCH WITH
Sunbrella-Roll-Curtains



CUSTOM CANVAS COVERINGS

Sunbrella roll curtains
outdoor furniture covers
boat covers
pontoon covers

12291 BIDELMAN RD. | THREE RIVERS, MI 49093

Newsletter Staff

Jamie Paramski, Editor
jparamski@gmail.com

Jim McGreal, Design
jim@jmcstudios.com

Spencer McGreal, Production/Graphics
spencer@jmcstudios.com

Lois Gorbacz, Ads
gorbfam996@gmail.com

Contributors: Tricia Brucks
Sheri Kurtyak

Cover Photo: Jen Micheli

Printing: Printing by Joe
printingbyjoe@sbcglobal.net



Photo: Mary Rinaldi

MEYER WOOD PRODUCTS



PICNIC TABLES ♦ SHEDS ♦ DOCKS ♦ POLI FURNITURE

32180 RED ARROW HWY., PAW PAW • (269) 657-3450

www.meyerwoodproducts.com | email: meyerwoodproducts@gmail.com

GRAVEL LAKE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM:

January 2026 – December 2026

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 mailing address: _____

Home phone: _____ City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please print clearly. Mail check or money order payable to Gravel Lake Association

Membership dues for **2026** **\$50.00**

I would like to receive 4 free issues of the Riparian magazine for **2027**.

Yes No (circle one)

Please indicate where your Riparian should be sent.

Home Lake (circle one)

Additional donation _____

Total Enclosed _____

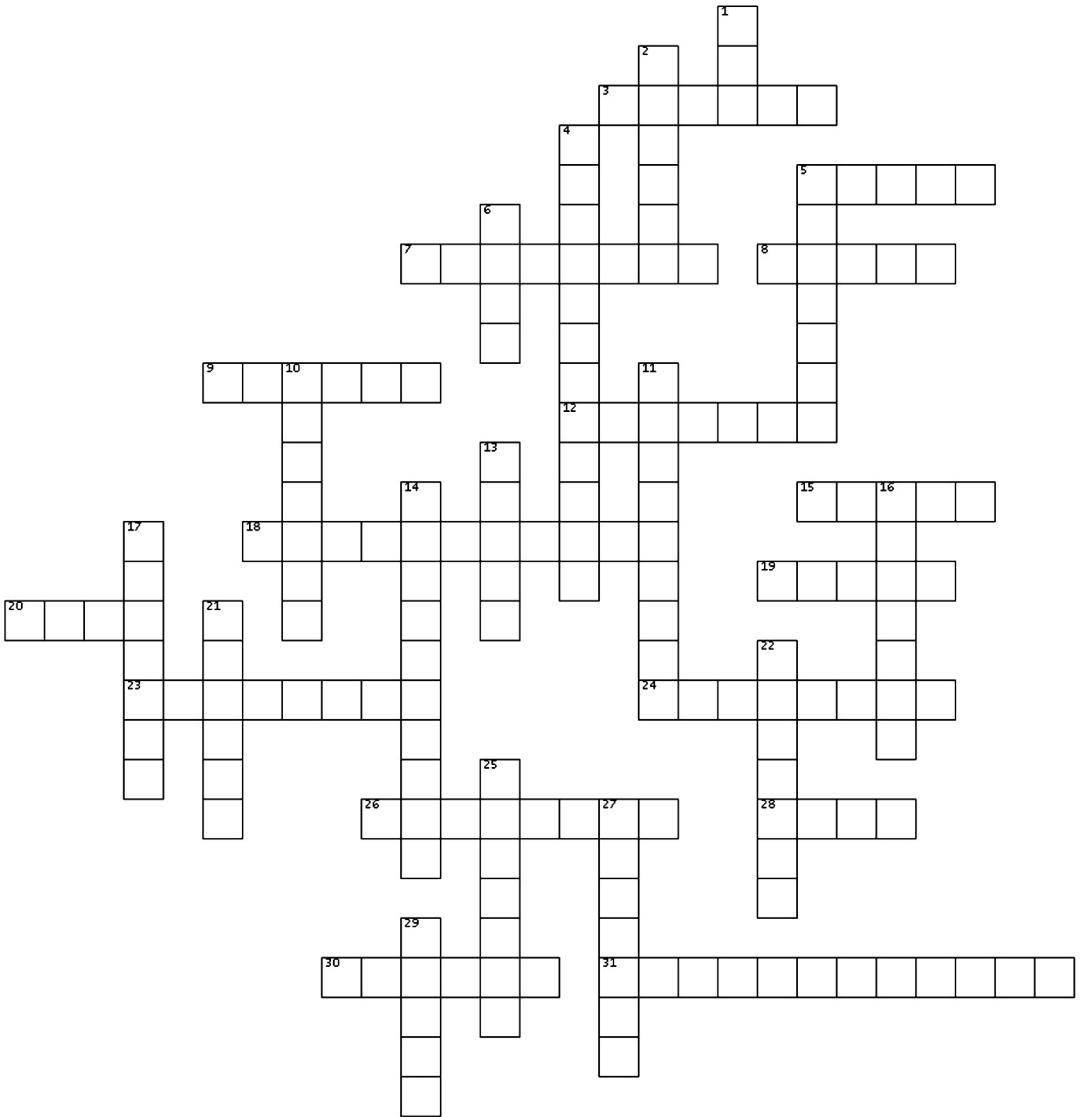
Where Do My Gravel Lake Association Dues Go?

- Water quality testing & research
- Social activities: picnic, 4th of July, Halloween, etc.
- Communications: The Gravel Laker, website hosting, signage, other printed information
- No wake zone buoys (weed bed, channel)
- New resident welcome baskets
- Michigan Riparian subscriptions
- Michigan Lakes & Streams Association dues
- Membership directories
- Treasurer’s bonding
- Liability insurance
- Administrative (invoices, postage, office supplies, etc.)
-

Why Should I Become a Member?

- Increase lake stewardship and water quality
- Support the efforts and activities of the GLA
- Voice your opinion
- Strengthen our community
- Meet your neighbors
- Protect your significant real estate investment

Crossword



Crossword Puzzle Answers on Page 36

Crossword

ACROSS

3. Relatives
5. ___ Landing
7. A cool summer treat
8. ___ and stripes
9. ___ Landing
12. Family and ___
15. Beach between Sandy and Dugan's
18. Something to roast at a bonfire
19. Big white birds that stalk the lake
20. Young'uns
23. Beach closest to Strawberry Lake
24. Beach with the highest altitude
26. The 26th state of the Union
28. Red, white, and ___
30. The healing waters of ___ Lake
31. Declaration of ___

DOWN

1. Fun pastime with two planks attached to your feet
2. ___ goose; birds from the north
4. Summer holiday
5. Hamburgers and ___
6. Life ___ (aka PFD)
10. Beach between Willow and Huffs
11. Explosions on the Fourth of July
13. Home of the ___
14. Beach between Streeter and Dugan's
16. Beach named after a farmer
17. Scary activity for a Nightcrawler
21. Beach with the same name as a tree
22. Grassy knoll in the middle of the lake
25. aka the Intercoastal Waterway
27. United States of ___
29. Beach that could be a lady's name

LAWTON BOOTCAMP



START TRAINING TODAY

JOIN TODAY

Call to find out more
+1269-532-2030

www.lawtonbootcamp.com



EXPERIENCE THE LUNA DIFFERENCE

• SALES • SERVICE • STORAGE



LUNA MARINE

Conveniently located
in Dowagiac, Michigan!
Serving all of Southwest
Michigan and Northern
Indiana!



LUNA MARINE
FACTORY-TRAINED SUZUKI REPOWER CENTER

4-STROKE
CLEAN POWER
QUIET &
RELIABLE

4-4-2
PROGRAM

2-STROKE
EASY TRADE-IN
UPGRADE &
VALUE

South Bay

SUZUKI
MARINE

ALERA
MARINE GROUP

MERCURY

DOCKSIDE

STARWELD
BY STARCRAFT

Pioneer BOATS

269-444-LUNA LUNAMARINE.COM

Advertiser Index

Business	Page	Business	Page
Adams Hardware	3	Mattawan Mechanical Services	22
Amy's Fabulous Diner	20	Meyer Wood Products	26
Advance Pest Control	34	Motter Insurance Company	7
Apollo Marine	Back Cover	O'Donnell's Docks	20
Balli Garage	31	Posh Salons	24
Big T	8	Pro Dock	2
Big Tony's Pizzeria	33	ReMax	17
Burrus Auto	15	Terrill's Market	24
Carlson Farms/Copper Ridge	Inside Back Cover	Tom Motycka Plumber	6
Decatur Ace Hardware	35	Shangrala Farms	19
D&M Canvas	25	Sun & Soul	16
Element Salon	6	The Breakfast Place	16
Hammel Construction, LLC	33	The Cover Girl	16
Happy Rock Resort	17	The Hayloft	21
High's Marine	32	The Wash Laundromat	8
J.C. & Sons Tree Service	17	United Christian Services	23
Lawson's Citgo	6	Wakeside Marine	Inside Front Cover
Lawton Bootcamp	29		
Luna Marine	30		

Please support our advertisers



BALLI GARAGE

FULL SERVICE AUTO REPAIR • DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN • ANTIQUE VEHICLES

JERRY URQUIETA - Owner

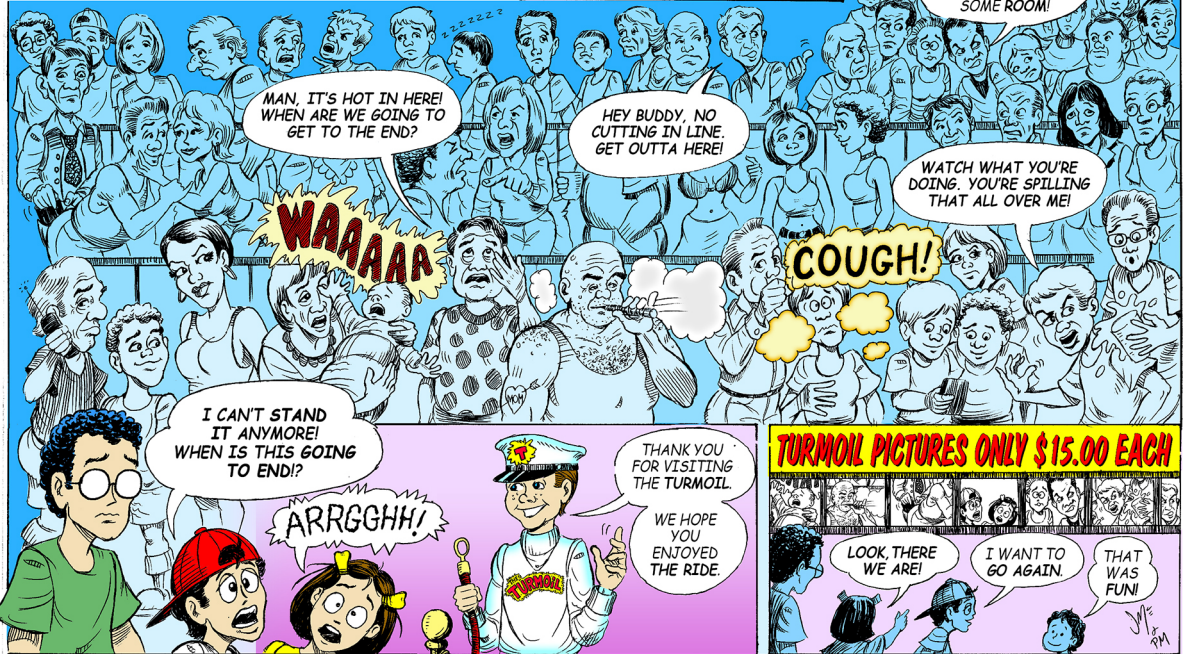
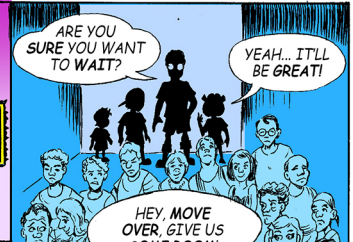
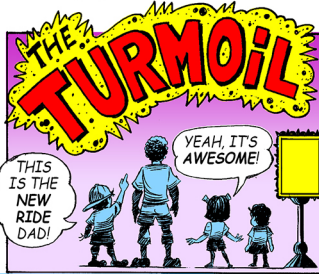
(269) 624-3753 • 32130 CR669 • LAWTON, MI 49065

SE HABLA ESPANOL • MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM TO 5PM

balligarage.com

S&BZ

by Jim and Pat McGreal



©2026 Jim McGreal

BENNINGTON FLAGSHIP LAKE LOUNGER LUND

YOUR LOCAL MERCURY MARINE & SUZUKI DEALER DECATUR, MI 49083

HIGH'S MARINE

269-423-7065



Photo: Allison Last



Photo: Laura Sylvester



Photo: Sandra Vox

Big Tony's Pizzeria

(269) 646-2200
 290 S. Centre St.
 Marcellus, MI 49067
btpizzeria.com

HAMMEL CONSTRUCTION, LLC
 BRYAN HAMMEL, OWNER
269-720-3274
hammelconstructionllc@gmail.com

Custom Homes & Remodels
 Concrete Poured Walls & Flatwork
 Interiors & Exteriors
 Licensed & Insured



Photo: Allison Woodward



advance
Pest Control

Tim Strausberg, Owner
269-624-5137

P.O. Box 279
Lawton, MI 49065
advancepc.lawton@gmail.com



Photo: Dan McDevitt

Decatur ACE Hardware

**105 S Phelps Street
Decatur, MI 49045
(269) 423-8818**

**STORE HOURS: MON - FRI 8:00AM - 5:30PM
SAT 8:00AM - 5:30PM
SUN 9:00AM - 4:00PM**

Board of Trustees Contact List

OFFICERS

President	Craig DeSimone - cucad4@hotmail.com
Vice President	Suzanne Reed
Secretary	Jennifer Micheli
Treasurer	Janice Pinkos - fampinkos@aol.com

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Editor, Gravel Laker	Jamie Paramski - jparamski@gmail.com
Newsletter Advertising	Lois Gorbacz- gorbfam996@gmail.com
Fundraising	Alyssa Pinkos (chair)
Communications	Jim McGreal - jim@jmcstudios.com
AIS Control	Ken Hochsprung
History	Sheri Kurtyak (chair)

TRUSTEES

Chamberlin Beach	Craig DeSimone Vicki Carlos Liz Zwartz
Gebhard Beach	Phil Rinaldi
Huff's Landing	Dan McDevitt
Idle Ease Beach	Janice Pinkos Tom Zwartz
Lewis Beach	Ken Hochsprung
Sandy Beach	Suzanne Reed Jennifer Micheli
Streeter Beach	Kristy & Linda Vitkauskas
Willow Beach	Tom Kelliher
Winkler Beach	Patti Faustino Rick Rogers

Page 28 Crossword Puzzle Key

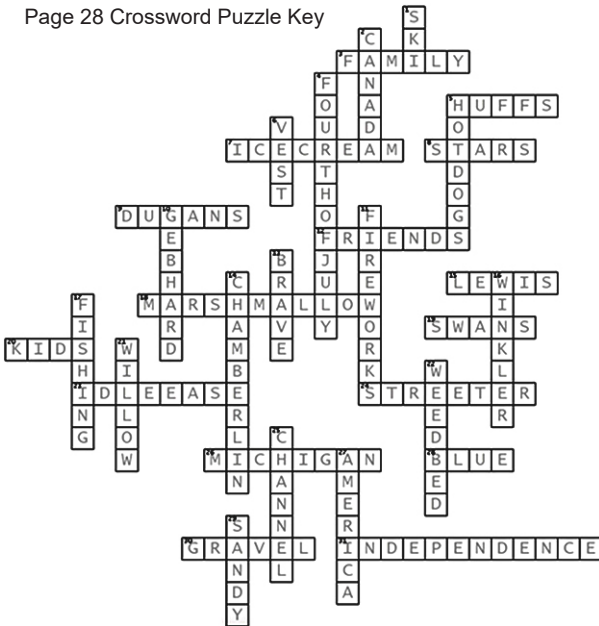


Photo: Frank Gordon

CARLSON FARMS

Visit us!

COPPER RIDGE FARM MARKET

Friday: 3pm - 6pm
Saturday 10am - 2pm
Year round!

BAKED GOODS |
BREAKFAST

EGGS | LAMB | BEEF
CHICKEN | PORK

WE ARE A WORKING FARM
THAT PRODUCES LOCAL,
ALL-NATURAL, ANTIBIOTIC-
FREE, HORMONE-FREE,
FREE-RANGE, AND
HUMANELY-RAISED BEEF,
PORK, CHICKEN, LAMB,
AND EGGS.



More Information

copperridgemi.com

269-436-1180

Inquiries

269-262-1871

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook!



APOLLOMARINE.net

**We
rent
Pontoon
Boats!**



**We
service
all area
lakes!**

**South side of Gravel Lake
15355 96th Avenue - Lawton, MI 49065**

269-423-6011 - 1-888-996-BOAT

SALES • SERVICE • STORAGE