

The Gravel Laker

Volume XXXIII Number 1

gravellake.org

Spring/Summer, 2023



In This Issue

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| - President's Corner | - Meet a Gravel Laker | - Membership Form |
| - 2023 Calendar of Events | - Summertime Word Search | - SIBZ Comic |
| - GLA 2023 Calendar | - Moles | |

Photo by Susan Betteridge



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President's Corner

2023 comes with some changes to the Gravel Lake Association board of trustees. First, we have created a more developed committee structure with the intent of prioritizing business more efficiently and involving more volunteers. Thus, we've created committees for membership, communications, water quality, events, safety, and history (in addition to our well-operating fundraising committee). As these committees are new, we will need to figure out ideal ways of working over time. If you'd like more information or to get involved, please contact me. Below are our committee chair assignments:

- Membership: Janice Pinkos
- Communications: Jim McGreal
- Water Quality: Ken Hochsprung
- Events: Jen Micheli
- Safety: Phil Rinaldi
- History: Suzanne Reed
- Fundraising: Alyssa Pinkos

Secondly, our board of trustees will have some changes.

Thank you to Dave Brown, Ann LaForge, Kevin Lalone, and Carole Roeder (DeSimone). On behalf of the Gravel Lake Association, I'd like to thank our retiring trustees.

Carole Roeder of Willow Beach joined the GLA in 2011 at the urging of her son. With an almost perfect attendance and perhaps the greatest passion for dues collection that this president has ever seen, she is looking to pass the baton to a newer resident of the beach.

Dave Brown and Ann LaForge of Winkler Beach joined the GLA in 2011 and 2019 (respectively). Dave and Ann have organized our well-attended annual picnic for the last several years. With Dave's departure, we lose someone who's willing to challenge the status quo and delve into somewhat uncomfortable topics.

Kevin LaLone of Dugan's Landing re-joined the GLA in 2007 and brought his extensive GL experience from originally growing up on Willow Beach. Kevin is the originator of our very popular and successful Poker Run. His passion, experience, and conscientiousness will be missed!

Craig DeSimone
cucad4@hotmail.com



Photo by Melissa DeSimone



Photo by Michael Micheli



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2023 Calendar Of Events

Date	Event
Monday, May 29	Memorial Day
Saturday, June 10	Membership Meeting & Picnic, Apparel sale
Sunday, June 18	Father's Day
Saturday, July 1	Kids Games, Paddle Boat Race, Boat Parade
Sunday, July 2	Fun Run/Walk 5K, Apparel sale
Saturday, July 8	Garage Sale, Apparel sale
Saturday, July 15	Board of Trustees meeting
Saturday, August 12	Poker Run (tentative)
Saturday, August 19	Membership Meeting
Monday, Sept. 4	Labor Day
Saturday, Sept. 16	Board of Trustees meeting
Saturday, October 7	Board of Trustees meeting, GL Fall Festival
Monday, October 9	Indigenous Peoples Day, Columbus Day
Tuesday, October 31	Halloween



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BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

- **Saturday, June 10, 10:30am—Membership Meeting & Picnic**
 - Location: 32313 Chamberlin Drive, Lawton, MI 49065
- **Saturday, July 15, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting**
 - Location: Porter Township Hall
- **Saturday, August 19, 10am—Membership Meeting**
 - Location: TBD (but likely at the Rinaldi's garage on Gebhard Beach)
- **Saturday, September 16, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting**
 - Location: Porter Township Hall
- **Saturday, October 7, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting**
 - Location: Porter Township Hall

FOURTH OF JULY ACTIVITIES

Kids Games—Saturday, July 1 at 10am

- Kids ages 12 and under are welcome to participate
- Willow Beach Grocery front (lakeside) lawn
- There will be age-appropriate games for kids 12 and under
- Kids will get a goody bag and a treat

Paddle Boat Race—Saturday, July 1 at 5pm

- Race begins at the first curve of the channel
- PFDs are required for all participants
- We are requesting that there are no water balloons this year, as they can be dangerous and our wildlife sadly mistake the rubber for a food source. We also request that there are no extreme-force hoses used. While this is a fun event, it should be fun for everyone, including the small children who would like to participate.

Boat Parade—Saturday, July 1, immediately after Taps (sunset)

- Theme: Venetian night
- Parade begins from the Taps location (on Streeter Beach)
- There will be no registering, judging, voting, or prizes



Gravel Lake Association 2023 Calendar

Fun Run 5K—Sunday, July 2 at 9am

We are going back to a racing format this year for the annual 4th of July weekend Fun Run/Walk 5K. Here is what you need to know:

- Who: Everyone of all ages is welcome to race or walk. There is no cost to participate in this event.
- What: 5K Race around Gravel Lake. Racers will go around the entire lake this year!
- When: Saturday July 2 at 9am
- Where: Start and finish near the old Willow Beach candy store
- We need volunteers for the following jobs:
 - to turn on sprinklers and have water stands around the lake
 - to play some music on different beaches for our runners/walkers
 - to guide runners and encourage cars to slow down; we need one at Entrance Drive and Shaw Road to guide runners/walkers, and another down by the Public Access to guide runners/walkers down the dirt road
 - to help us sign everyone up before the race starts and keep track of finishers
 - a photographer to take pictures of everyone at the finish line
- If you are a high school student looking for volunteer hours, this is a great young group to be a part of!
- Finally: We did a Split-the-Pot last year netting \$400 to a lucky winner and \$400 to the Gravel Lake Association. Mr. Garrett will pull the winning ticket immediately following Taps on Saturday night!



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Gravel Lake Garage Sale—Saturday, July 8, 10am-3pm

It's time to recycle your unused items, make some cash, and meet your neighbors. If you would like to participate, register with Linda Vitkauskas. Register by phone (269-303-7787) or email (vitkauskas3@com-cast.net). Be sure to register by July 1st to be included in the advertising and on the map.

On July 8, place items in your garage or yard roadside, and wait for the shoppers. Ads will be placed in all area event publications. Participating locations will be listed on a Gravel Lake map and distributed to shoppers.

Continued on page 6

Poker Run

The Poker Run is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, August 12. We are in need of docks and volunteers. Check the Gravel Lake Facebook page and website for more information on the Poker Run.

Gravel Lake Apparel Sales

- Saturday, June 10, 9-11am @ GLA Picnic
- Sunday, July 2, 9-11am (during the Fun Run) @ Pinkos house (Idle Ease beach)
- Saturday, July 8, 9-11am (during Garage Sales) @ Pinkos house

For additional sales dates, keep an eye on the GL Facebook page and website. Pay with check, cash or Venmo app.



Photo by Nancie-Corum-Oxley



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Photo by Jay Emcee

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Meet a Gravel Laker

Name: Patricia Walter

Where are you from and what do you do?

I am from Elmhurst, IL and I am a retired RN.

Tell us about your family.

I was married to my husband, Paul Walter, for 49 years before he passed away in 2014. I have three children: Mary, Edward, and Kathy. I also have six grandchildren: Connor, Kylie, Philip, Kevin, Bailey, and Joey.

Describe your home and its location.

Our home is located on Gebhard beach, six houses from the end of Gebhard where the path is that heads up to Huff's Landing. It is a tan-sided house and up at the top of the hill (from the lake side) with 35 steps, and yes I know exactly how many steps because I can hardly breathe after climbing them.

What year was it built? Have there been any improvements?

I don't have an exact date, but I was told it was built in the 1940s. When my husband and I first bought the house it was one level, and had two very small bedrooms. The house was always full with family and friends. It was very crowded at times, but nobody cared. I can remember when my daughter Mary brought her boyfriend (now husband, Phil Rinaldi) to the lake for the first time. He slept on a roll-away bed in the kitchen next to the sink and stove. I remember the next morning I apologized that he had to sleep in the kitchen and he responded, "This is great!"

As our children were all married and two grandkids were born, we knew we needed to build an addition, so in 1997 we added an upstairs with three bedrooms and another bathroom. Then in 2004, when there were six grandkids and definitely not enough room in the house, we built a four-car garage with a three-bedroom apartment above it on our back lots. The last addition was in 2017 right after my daughter, Mary, and her husband, Phil, bought the house. They added square footage to the living room and master bedroom and decided to go maintenance-free by changing the cedar siding to vinyl siding.

(continued on page 10)



Meet a Gravel Laker (continued from page 9)

When and why did you come to GL?

We were first introduced to Gravel Lake in the late 1970s when we would visit my husband's brother and sister, who both were on the lake. When my husband and I decided to purchase our own lake house in 1985 we looked at homes on other lakes, but nothing compared to Gravel Lake.

What is your favorite memory to-date?

I have so many favorite memories, but from the early years I can remember how excited Paul and I were to get to the lake. We would have the car all packed Thursday night so when we got home from work on Friday (which seemed to get earlier and earlier), we would be able to leave right away. As soon as we got to the lake, before we even unpacked the car, we would head down to the lake and take a pontoon boat ride. Then would come the dreaded Sunday night. We hated to leave so we decided we would get up early Monday morning, taking advantage of gaining an hour on the drive back to Illinois, and head straight to work. We were tired, but it was worth having the whole day Sunday at the lake. Then came the glorious day in 2006 when my husband and I retired, moved up here, and became full-time Michiganders.

What is your favorite lake activity?

Everything about the lake is my favorite! From floating in the water to pontoon boat rides to watching my grandkids enjoy the lake, and of course, bonfires. My husband always had a bonfire going. It was an open invitation to all. He always said if you build a fire "they" will come and boy did they, and we loved it. There's nothing better than sitting around the fire with a drink and with friends and neighbors that feel more like family.



Meet a Gravel Laker

Why is Gravel Lake special to you?

Gravel Lake has been a part of my life since the late 1970s. More than half my life has been connected to Gravel Lake. I have met some of my dearest friends on this lake. I have been blessed to have shared many, many years with my husband, and equally as blessed to be able to live out the rest of my life on Gravel Lake, living with my daughter and son-in-law.

What is your favorite lake holiday?

I love all of them, but I'd have to say my favorite is the Halloween/Fall festival that Mary and Phil started in 2019. I love to see all the littles (and bigs!) dressed up in costumes, trick-or-treating, going on hayrides, doing crafts, and playing games.

What is your favorite lake animal?

The GL ducks that live on the channel.



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 i b l f r t i d i e o z b n n r v l v
 n o x w d r k k a n r s r w i e v t y
 d a m o e f d y d l y a v a t l r a p
 e t g m r e g a t t a r l m e k m o o
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 n r c a l y k m b o b o d t t p b l i
 d a j l u a k m q c c i p d a s t d c
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 f o k o o i p u s e m a g s d i k r p
 m t w z f r e g r u b m a h g n a b s

flag	summer	popsicle	Fourth of July	fireworks	Fun Run
red	June	hot dog	America	sparklers	Boat Parade
white	July	hamburger	United States	boom	Kids Games
blue	August	potato salad	Independence Day	bang	Paddleboat Regatta
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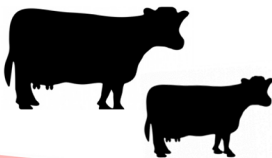


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Moles

You've likely heard of moles, but never seen one. These industrious, subterranean mammals live the vast majority of their lives underground. They spend their time digging intricate tunnel systems searching for food. In fact, moles can hollow out a 160-foot burrow in one night. (The human equivalent would be digging a half-mile tunnel in the same amount of time.) Moles can dig a tunnel at a speed of about 15 feet per hour. They are certainly equipped to do so, with their powerful forelimbs and long, shovel-like paws.



Moles have very underdeveloped eyes and thus, poor vision. Though not blind, moles can really only see light and movement. They also have very sensitive snouts and rely on their sense of smell to help them find their next meal. Moles feast on insects, insect larvae, grubs, and earthworms, and they consume at least half their body weight in earthworms per day. Contrary to popular belief, moles do not eat the roots of plants. (Their tunnels can, however, kill plants by displacing roots.) Moles are perceived as pests, yet they do their part in the ecosystem by aerating the soil, thus allowing for more water to be absorbed and vegetation to grow.

Moles can be found all around world with the exception of South America and Antarctica. There are seven species in North America alone. Acceptable habitats include meadows, grasslands, woodlands, sand dunes, and wetlands. They can also live in urban areas. You can find moles pretty much anywhere that has dirt. (They tend to stay away from acidic soil, though.) Moles can survive underground for a long time and have evolved to be able to live in environments with low levels of oxygen. They are most active after rain, as they like to dig in soft, wet soil. Moles are active year-round, though they may reduce activity in excessive heat or cold periods.



Females give birth in underground tunnels to 3-4 pups at a time. Baby moles grow quickly and can live independently at a young age. They are weaned at 4-5 weeks and leave the nest at 33 days. By 5-6 weeks they leave their mother and home tunnel completely. Most species will grow to about 8-10 inches in length, including the tail. Adults weigh 3-5 ounces.

(continued on page 18)

Moles (continued from page 17)

The lifespan of a mole is no more than three years for most species, and they are solitary animals for the vast majority of their lives. Three to five moles per acre of land is considered a lot. They are only interested in other moles for mating purposes. Other than that, they are quite content to continue working on their extensive network of tunnels alone.

The tunnels that the moles create are about two inches in diameter. There are two types of tunnels; the permanent tunnels are 8-23 inches below the surface, and the temporary tunnels are right under the surface. They use the tunnels to travel, and they even dig special "rooms" at the ends of the tunnels that serve various purposes such as bedrooms and birthing areas.

Sources:

<https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Mammals/Moles>

<https://www.livescience.com/52297-moles.html>

<https://a-z-animals.com/blog/10-incredible-mole-facts/>

<https://a-z-animals.com/animals/mole/>

<https://www.wildlifeillinois.org/gallery/mammals/burrowing-wildlife/moles/>



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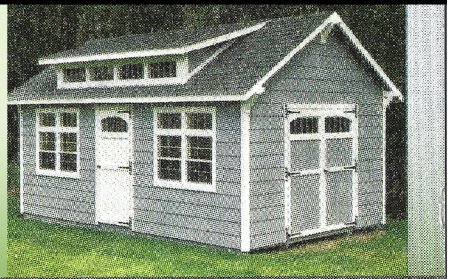


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Gravel Lake Association

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Please print clearly.

Member name(s): _____

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The Gravel Lake Association Community Facebook page is an excellent way to connect with our fellow lakere. 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!

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Business	Page	Business	Page
A&A Little Red Shed	12	Happy Rock	14
Adams Hardware	3	Kalamazoo Boat Show	8
Advance Pest Control	16	Lawson's Citgo	12
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Berkshire Hathaway/Julie Hammel	19	Matawan Mechanical Services, LLC	14
Big T	18	Meyer Wood Products	23
Big Tony's Pizzeria	28	Motter Insurance Company	7
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Country Market	27	Shangrala Farms	15
Decatur Ace Hardware	20	Terrill's Super Market	19
Element Salon	6	The Rock	26
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