

# The Gravel Laker

Volume XXIV Number 1

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

Spring/Summer, 2024

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## President's Corner

Recently, I've been getting questions and comments about walking around the lake on the beach side. "Are we allowed to do that?" or "we used to do that when we were kids walking to the candy store." To these, I've given both technical and conventional answers. Technically, one may not cross another's property without permission (or prescriptive easement, this includes one's bottomlands). Conventionally, Gravel Lake has been a particularly welcoming place for my 4+ decades and many expect neighbors to pass by in such a manner. Hopefully, that tradition continues as homes pass to new generations and we welcome newcomers to our very special place.

We are lucky to have the community that is Gravel Lake (as I've said in the past). We are welcoming, we look out for each other, we help each other out, and we're certainly rather good at celebrating (just about anything!) together. It's true; we don't agree on everything. However, I'll venture to say we agree on more things than not and often seek productive ways to discuss. For these things, I consider myself so fortunate that my parents found our place on Gravel Lake and to be able to continue such traditions for my own family.

My thanks to you, Gravel Lakers!

**Craig DeSimone**

GLA President

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Photo by Chris Toso



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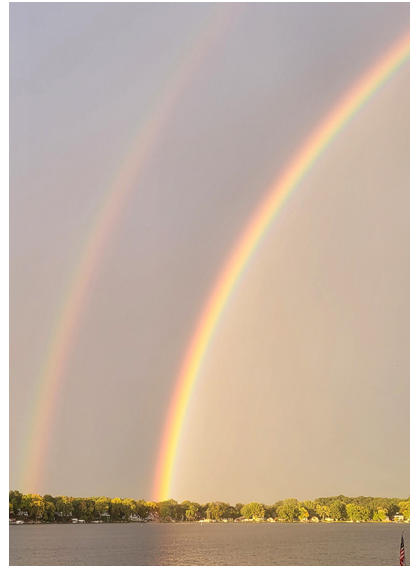
## 2024 Calendar Of Events

### Date

Sunday, May 12  
Saturday, May 18  
Monday, May 27  
Saturday, June 15  
Sunday, June 16  
Thursday, July 4  
Friday, July 5  
Saturday, July 6  
Sunday, July 7  
Saturday, July 13  
Saturday, July 20  
Saturday, August 10  
Saturday, August 17  
Monday, September 2  
Saturday, September 7  
Saturday, October 5  
Monday, October 14  
Saturday, October 19

### Event

Mother's Day  
BOT meeting  
Memorial Day  
Membership Meeting and Picnic  
Father's Day  
Fourth of July  
Boat Parade  
Kids Games, Paddle Boat Regatta  
Fun Run  
Garage Sale Day  
BOT meeting  
Poker Run  
Membership meeting  
Labor Day  
BOT meeting  
Fall Festival  
Indigenous Peoples Day, Columbus Day  
BOT meeting



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## Gravel Lake Association 2024 Calendar

### BOARD/MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Saturday, June 15, 10am—Membership Meeting & Picnic - Location: Kelliher's - 95065 LakeView Ct.

Saturday, July 20, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting - Location: Porter Township Hall

Saturday, August 17, 10am—Membership Meeting - Location: Rinaldi's - 94321 Gebhard Dr

Saturday, September 7, 10am—Board of Trustees Meeting - Location: Porter Township Hall

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

### FOURTH OF JULY ACTIVITIES



#### **Boat Parade—Friday, July 5 immediately after Taps (sunset)**

Theme: Glow stick party!

Gather your family and friends for an evening boat cruise. Wear white and decorate yourselves with light-up jewelry and glow sticks. Please take two laps. Judges will be at the Gordon's dock on Gebhard beach. The winning boat will receive a \$50 gift card to Wakeside Marine. On your second lap, you'll be waived in to claim your prize.

#### **Kids Games—Saturday, July 6 at 10am**

Who: Kids ages 12 and under are welcome to participate

Where: Willow Beach Grocery front (lakeside) lawn  
What: Participants will be divided into age groups upon arrival and matched up with volunteers to play yard/relay games. Groups will rotate to different stations. Goody bag and treats will be handed out at 11am.



#### **Paddle Boat Regatta—Saturday, July 6 at 6pm**

We hope you are ALL excited for the most anticipated event of the season! The race location, format, starting line, and finish line are the same as last year.

PFDs are required for all participants.

Rules are as follows:

1. All participants are required to have a PFD on their vessel during the race. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

## Gravel Lake Association 2024 Calendar (continued)

2. Throwing water balloons into the channel during the race is strictly prohibited. Water balloons pose a safety issue and they are an environmental concern for our lake waters and wildlife.

3. High powered hoses are not allowed out of concern for safety. While this is a fun event, it should be fun for everyone, including the small children who would like to participate.

4. Spectators are not allowed to swim in the channel during the race, nor to attempt to flip racers out of concern for safety.

Race divisions are as follows: Kids (12 and under) 1-person kayak, Kids (12 and under) paddle boat, Adult stand-up paddleboard, Adult 1-person kayak, Adult 2-person kayak, Adult 2-person chain-driven paddle boat, and Adult 2-person classic paddle boat

Please note: If one person in your paddle boat is older than 12, you will be bumped to the adult division.

Trophies will be given to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each division.

### Fun Run 5K—Sunday, July 7 at 9am

The Gravel Lake 5K is back this year. The start and finish line will be near the Willow Beach Grocery sign at Lakeview Court and Gebhard Drive. The race will be a complete lap around Gravel Lake in a clockwise path. Trophies will be awarded to the top three males and top three females overall, and 1st through 5th place ribbons will be awarded to the following age groups for each gender:

6 and under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40+

Water and light refreshments will be provided at the finish. There is no registration necessary, and there is no fee. If you'd like to volunteer to keep runners safe on Shaw Road or help with timing, please contact Jen Micheli (jmicheli7@hotmail.com).

Not a runner? You can still participate! You could: provide water on a table outside your home, blast pump-up music (please try to keep it appropriate for all ages), put out a sprinkler for the runners to run through, and/or hang out roadside and cheer on the runners! Your participation will make this even better! The award ceremony will take place near the starting line promptly at 10am.



### OTHER ACTIVITIES

#### **Gravel Lake Garage Sale & Market Day—Saturday, July 13**

Need to do some spring cleaning? Clean out the clutter and turn your unused items into cash. We will be collecting names and locations in June to place on the map. Last year our sales earned enough to send a check to Elenor's Pantry and Animal's Best Friends. If you would like to participate, register with Linda Vitkauskas by phone (269-303-7787) or email (vitkauskas3@comcast.net). Be sure to register by July 1 to be included in the advertising and on the map.

On July 13 place your 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.

#### **Poker Run**

The Poker Run is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, August 10. We are in need of docks and volunteers. Check the Gravel Lake Community Facebook page and website for more information.

#### **Gravel Lake Apparel Sales**

Saturday, June 15, following meeting @ GLA Picnic

Sunday, July 7, 9-11am during the Fun Run @ Pinkos house (Idle Ease Beach)

Saturday, July 13, 9-11am during Garage Sales @ Pinkos house

Saturday, August 10 during Poker Run sales @ TBD

For additional sales dates, keep an eye on the Gravel Lake Community Facebook page and website. Check, cash, and Venmo are accepted forms of payment.



Photo: Holly Sell James



## Goodbye To Our Gravel Lake Friends



### **Joy Andrews**

Lifelong Gravel Laker, Joy Andrews passed away in March of 2024. She was friendly and always had a story to tell. Thank you Joy for all the memories. You will be missed.

You can enjoy an interview we did with Joy and Joan Rockwell at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEx0q\\_\\_3j3k&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEx0q__3j3k&t=1s)



### **Jim Bergenham**

Life long Gravel Laker, Jim Bergenham of Winkler Beach, passed away peacefully in his Grand Rapids home. January 1942 - 14 April 2024. I'm gonna miss you, Dad. I love you.

Stephan Bergenham



### **Alice Rau-Jennings**

Our Gravel Lake neighbor Alice Rau-Jennings has passed away. She was a long-time resident of Gebhard Beach.

Head to the Gravel Lake website to view an interview we did with Alice at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngcN5cCkgYQ&t=1s>



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## GLA Committee Updates

You'll recall that we created several new committees last year. So far, so good! A cadence is forming, we're meeting as committees to discuss and prioritize special topics, and allowing the board to focus more on decisions and key topics during board meetings. This effort will continue to evolve as we find what works and what doesn't. So, here's the latest:

- Water quality
  - Public Access signage finalized; seeking permit/location from DNR. Continue to research lake manager and boat wash options.
- Communications
  - Making improved effort to hit email, Facebook, and website consistently.
- Events
  - 2024 calendar is set
  - New picnic location: Kelliher's house on Willow Beach: 95065 Lakeview Ct.
- Safety
  - Updated boater safety cards will be distributed in June
  - Health safety: researching ways to increase on GL
  - Shaw Road safety: pursuing expert opinion
- Membership
  - Updated phone directory will be distributed at picnic
- Fundraising
  - Finalizing sale dates: monitor website, Facebook, and email
- History
  - Calendar in the works

Overall, the GLA strives to provide as much information as possible on a variety of topics—and there are many. Let us know what topics are most important to you.



Photo: Jennifer Micheli



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## Cicadas

You may have heard a lot of buzz (pun intended) on the incoming emergence of cicadas this year. Cicadas are not invasive and while they may be rather annoying, they are harmless to plants, animals, and people. In Michigan, two species of cicadas garner attention: the periodical cicadas, which emerge en masse every 13 or 17 years, and the annual cicadas, which appear each year in spring and summer. There are about 15 broods, or species, of cicadas that emerge together at differing intervals. This year, we will see two periodical broods simultaneously: Brood X and Brood XIV.



### Periodical Cicadas

Brood X, also known as the Great Eastern Brood, is expected to emerge this year. Brood X encompasses both 13-year and 17-year cicadas, with different species emerging in different regions. Brood XIV is known as the “14 Year Periodical Cicada”. These interesting insects live both above and below ground. Cicadas spend the majority of their lives underground as nymphs, feeding on sap from tree roots. After this developmental stage, they emerge from the ground, typically in late May to early June, to metamorphose into adults. Once above ground, the male cicadas produce their characteristic loud buzzing calls to attract mates, while females lay anywhere from a few dozen to a few hundred eggs in tree branches. After mating and egg-laying, the adult cicadas die, and their offspring drop from the trees and burrow into the ground to begin the cycle anew.

### Annual Cicadas

In contrast to periodical cicadas, annual cicadas emerge on a yearly basis. In Michigan, species such as the dog-day cicada (*Tibicen* spp.) and the scissor-grinder cicada (*Neotibicen pruinosus*) are commonly encountered during the summer months. Unlike their periodical counterparts, annual cicadas have shorter life cycles, spending two to five years underground as nymphs before emerging as adults. They typically emerge in late summer, with their buzzing calls serving as background music to warm summer days.



Developing cicadas underground

## Cicadas (continued)

Both periodical and annual cicadas contribute to ecosystem dynamics in Michigan. As nymphs, they play roles in nutrient cycling and soil aeration. Upon emergence, their sheer numbers provide abundant food for predators, including birds, mammals, and predatory insects. Additionally, their feeding activities can influence tree growth and physiology, although the extent of these effects varies among species and ecosystems. Cicadas also contribute to pollination, albeit to a lesser extent than bees and other pollinators.

Whether it's the synchronized emergence of Brood X or XIV periodical cicadas, or the familiar buzz of annual species, cicadas are an integral part of Michigan's biodiverse habitats.

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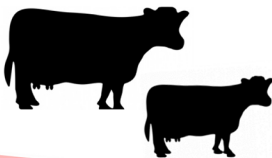


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Photo: Frank Gordon



Photo: Maria Lowe



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Huff's Landing Picnic - 2023

Photo: Jay Emcee

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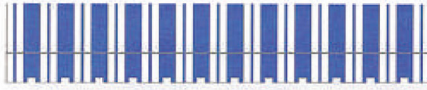
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Jamie Paramski, Editor  
jparamski@gmail.com

Jim McGreal, Design  
jim@jmcstudios.com

Spencer McGreal, Production/Graphics  
spencer@jmcstudios.com

Lois Gorbacz, Ads  
gorbfam996@gmail.com

Contributors: Tricia Brucks

Cover Photo: Annie Page

Printing by Joe, Newsletter Printing  
printingbyjoe@sbcglobal.net



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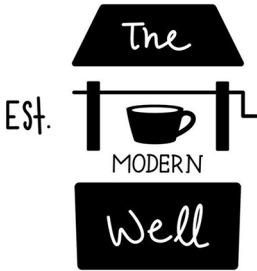


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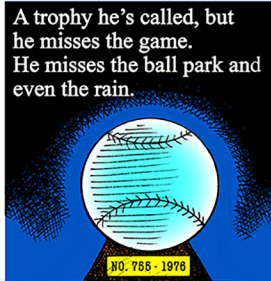
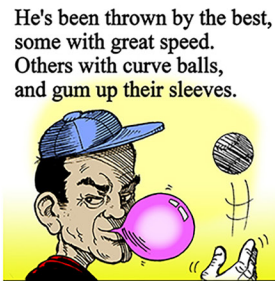
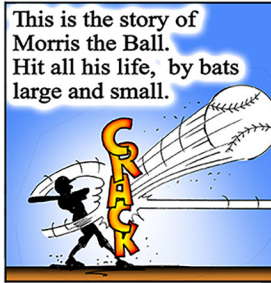
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# SIBZ


by Jim McGreal



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## Join the Gravel Lake Association Community Facebook group!

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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### OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Editor, Gravel Laker            Jamie Paramski - jparamski@gmail.com  
 Newsletter Advertising        Lois Gorbacz- gorbfam996@gmail.com  
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**SAT 10AM-3PM**  
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