



CARIBOU LAKE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2015

CARIBOU LAKE ASSOCIATION PICNIC

All Caribou Lake property owners and families are invited to our annual August picnic, August 22, at 5995, 5997, and 5999 Sunny Lane, hosted by Janice Battersby and Bob Kubicki, Jeff and Mary Charnes and Paul and Mary Manns. Come at 4:00 to socialize, food will be served at 5:00. CLA will have hot dogs, brats, hamburgers, buns and drinks. Please bring a salad or dessert to share, and a chair. Please note the time change from other years.

WEEDS, WEEDS, WEEDS

Nearly everyone I have talked with around the lake this summer has complained about the weeds. "We have weeds growing where we have never had weeds before." Boat motors get clogged with weeds, it's not fun to swim in the weeds, fishing lures get caught in the weeds, pedals on pedal boats get tangled with weeds. People don't remember ever having so many weeds in Caribou Lake.

Running the weed cutter this year has been a frustrating challenge. The cutter is working well, but finding people to run it regularly has been very difficult. We hire through a temp agency, they take care of the liability insurance, workmen's comp and all the withholding. The first person hired through the agency quit because he could get full time hours at his other job, the second and third people didn't show up for training. We are hoping to find a reliable person soon. Several lake people have taken the cutter for a few hours at a time, but we need someone who can run it full time. The farmer who has always helped off load the weeds and haul them to his farm is not able to do it this summer, therefore the weeds have to be off loaded at NERCC and moved by the cutter operator.

We are very restricted by the DNR to cut only 115 designated acres, called a "recreation lane" out of about 600 total acres on the lake. It must stay about 150 feet from the shoreline. Even if the weed cutter were running full time, it wouldn't help the underlying problem of why there are so many more weeds in the lake.

Why are there so many more weeds? The ice went out early so the weeds have had more time to grow, and the warm summer has warmed the water, which has promoted weed growth. In addition, too many phosphates and nitrates are flowing into the lake and fertilizing the weeds. It all comes from non-compliant septic systems and lawn fertilizers that get into the lake. Several years ago a limnologist stated that Caribou Lake will become a marsh if something isn't done to stop the phosphates and nitrates from polluting the lake.

Birch Point is installing a sewer system. They were appalled to learn last fall that only five of the 34 properties on Birch Point had compliant septic systems. If the same percentage of properties on the rest of the lake are non-compliant, it's no wonder that weeds are taking over the lake.

The Canosia Township Comprehensive Plan updated in 2014 states as one of their goals: "Undertake a collaborative assessment on the need for and approach to providing wastewater collection and treatment for property around and near Caribou Lake." It is time for lake people to attend the Canosia Township and Grand Lake Township town board meetings, bring up this issue for discussion, and contact the supervisors to see what they are doing to help Caribou Lake.

LOONS

For the first time in many years we had two baby loons born on Caribou. Now, just one of the two babies is still here. Sometimes when there are two babies, the more dominant one gets all the food and the weaker one doesn't make it. The adults will be leaving in a few weeks but the young one will stay here until late October when it's big and strong enough to fly south for the winter.



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES INSPECTIONS

Jake Carlson, AIS Supervisor for this summer wrote an update:

So far it has been a great summer for inspectors in my opinion. People recognize us more now, and those who don't have seen inspectors at other lakes. The effort to protect our waters has been running smoothly with the joint efforts of many other areas and lakes. This is good because for the most part people are very supportive about having us check their boats. During the month of August we have inspectors at Caribou from 3-8 Thursdays and Fridays and 11-4 Saturdays and Sundays. During the week we see about 5-6 boats a night and maybe 6-10 boats on the weekends, depending on the weather.

Why are zebra mussels not good for a lake?

Zebra mussels upset the natural ecosystem of a lake. ZMs "eat" the food (zooplankton) that native fish need, and eventually the food source becomes compromised, leaving less food for fish. ZMs consume the food source by filtering large amounts of water per day. Eventually the water becomes very clear. That may seem like a good thing, but clear water provides less protection for fish from predators and allows more sunlight to reach deeper depths of the lake, which produces more weed growth.

ZMs are very prolific reproducers, up to 1 million eggs per year. The life cycle can range from 3-5 years. The dead mussel shells (open when dead) are razor sharp. It is recommended to wear water shoes in known ZM infested waters. Zebra mussel infested waters have been known (Great Lakes area) to produce botulism which is toxic to waterfowl and pets. Beaches become very stinky from the dead "carcasses" that wash to shore. Watercraft operators find that when zebra mussels take up residence in the motor cooling system, the engine overheats and can cause expensive repair bills.

Zebra mussels in the larval stage are invisible to the naked eye, small amounts of water contain millions of baby mussels. That is why it is illegal to transport ANY water in boats on public roadways.

The DNR has announced that at least five more Minnesota lakes have been found to be infested with ZMs this summer, and spiny water fleas have been found in Lake Vermillion.

Best practice: assume that any lake could be infested with zebra mussels or another invasive species of insect or weed but not yet reported, and caution should be taken when transporting any watercraft or water-related equipment from lake to lake to minimize spreading all aquatic invasive species (AIS). If you take your boat to another lake be sure it goes through decontamination before putting it back into Caribou.

A FISHING TRIP CAN LAST FOR A DAY BUT ZEBRA MUSSELS CAN LAST FOREVER

MEMBERSHIP

Please join the Caribou Lake Association. We need to work together to protect and preserve our lake's ecosystem, advocate for responsible recreational activities, and enhance the relationships among lakeshore owners. Let's try to increase our membership this year.

Remember that CLA is an IRS approved non-profit under IRS Code 501©(3). Any donations made to the association ABOVE the membership dues of \$35 are fully tax deductible. Your support is greatly appreciated.

If you have already joined, but have not yet received your sign, please send a note to mmmanns@cariboulake.org.

CLA OFFICERS

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