

Okauchee Lake Management District

Spring 2019

Greetings from Okauchee Lake Management District Chairperson Carol Wilson



Each year, Okauchee Lake gives us something to be grateful for in our lives. From its beckoning waves on a hot summer day to the wildlife and fish we catch and eat, we have reason to be thankful. We owe thanks to the people that help to take care of the lake as well. For that reason, in this newsletter you will find an article about people that make taking care of the lake their daily work. Okauchee Lake Operations Manager, Gary Steinmueller and the weed harvesting crew deserve our thanks for keeping the lake navigable for us to enjoy. Arnold Groehler continues to control the muskrat population.

In addition, it is important to thank our OLMD Commissioners elected by the public at the 2018 Annual Meeting for their continued efforts to be good stewards of the lake and the District: Tom Godar, Secretary, Dennis Johnson, Lake Operations Liaison, Dee Schriver, Treasurer, and Town of Oconomowoc Representative, Bruce Mueller. Without the continued daily efforts of these people and others, Okauchee Lake would not be the great place to live and work that it is each day.

Wishing you a safe and happy summer!

Carol Wilson

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Spraying Permit Information

The OLMD is in the process of obtaining a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to apply herbicides for the control of the aquatic plants in Okauchee Lake for the 2019 season. A copy of this application is available for your review at www.olmd.org. Any questions you may have can be directed to Dennis Johnson at 414-828-5461 or info@olmd.org. This Notice is required under Chapter NR 107 of the WI Administrative Code.



Muskrat Control Program Update by Arnold Groehler

The spring muskrat removal program is currently underway! There are colony traps set along the shoreline throughout the lake. Muskrat activity has been slower this year in conjunction with the cooler weather patterns. As things warm up, activity should increase. If you see muskrats swimming along your shoreline, especially if they use the same location, please mark that spot with some flagging. This indicates an active burrow. Then call Arnold Groehler (262-490-9363) to come out and set some traps!

Once the muskrats are removed it is important to dig up the burrows and repair the damage, otherwise new muskrats will arrive and move in to that burrow. The burrows need to be completely dug, filled in with stone and re-seeded. Place rocks in the entrance to the burrows under your sea wall. If you have any questions, about how to fill in the burrows, please give Arnold a call.



Photo courtesy of Arnold Groehler

OLMD Barging Policy

It is the OLMD policy regarding collection of aquatic plants from landowners that all plants for pick up **MUST** be placed on the end of the pier. This placement facilitates pick up, avoids damage to the hull of the barge on shoreline obstructions (i.e., rocks) and allows the employees to safely transfer the plant material to the barge. Recently some landowners placed plants to be picked up on rocks at the shoreline to avoid discoloration of their pier. OLMD employees will not be allowed to risk their safety and personal injury to traverse rocky shoreline areas while carrying pitchforks to retrieve the weeds. It is imperative that the plants be placed on the end of the pier for pick-up.

Plants will be picked up during the week from piers in the sections being cut on a particular day and every Monday and Friday, weather permitting. Please check the OLMD website home page (www.olmd.org) frequently to review the updated cutting schedule.

Plants must be free of any trash, such as cans, tree limbs, leaves, etc., as the farmers who receive the plant material will not accept anything except plants.

In the rare event plants must be on the shoreline, they must be in one pile in a location allowing the employees to easily transfer the plants directly to the barge. Please note that adequate space is required between piers, boat-lifts, etc. to safely maneuver the barge to the pick-up point (20 feet minimum). If, in the opinion of the foreman (and after discussion with the riparian owner), these conditions are not met, the Commission's policy is to refuse pick up of plant material until the above conditions have been met.

If you have any questions, please call 262-966-0286.

Police Report

The following information was provided by the Town of Oconomowoc Police Department at the August 27, 2018 Annual Meeting. Town Police patrol Okauchee Lake on a part-time basis from the first weekend in May through Labor Day and beyond. Officer Williams reported the following:

- Total patrol hours: 466
- Citations: 90
- Warnings: 343
- Boater Safety Class : 0 (due to lack of students)

During the 2018 Tie-Up, the DNR, Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, Town of Oconomowoc and the Town of Merton provided boat patrols. There were five Boat Tie-Up related OWI arrests made this year. Please continue to use safe boating practices.

Officer Williams also noted there is a Facebook page titled "It Floated Away on Okauchee" where people post lost and found items to be retrieved.

A Reminder About Slow-No-Wake

"Slow-No-Wake" by definition means the slowest possible speed by which one can maintain steerage. Boating violations observed on the lake should be reported through the City of Oconomowoc dispatch center at 262-567-4401. This number could be used for emergency purposes in addition to calling 911.

Goose Round-Up

The District will again cooperate with the USDA Fish and Wildlife Service to round up non-migratory Canadian Geese on Okauchee Lake in 2019. The Goose Round-Up will take place in mid-June when the birds are flightless.

In order for this project to move forward, we need your consent. **We are required to have your consent to access your property before the Round-Up. Once you provide consent, you are no longer required to complete it annually.** IF YOU SUBMITTED THE CONSENT FORM TO THE OLMD AFTER 2012, YOU DO NOT NEED TO FILL OUT THE FORM EACH YEAR. IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE CONSENT FORM SINCE 2012, PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED GOOSE ROUND-UP CONSENT FORM BELOW **BY JUNE 15, 2019.**

Return the consent form to:

OLMD
P.O. BOX 526
Okauchee, WI 53069

This form can also be completed online. To do so, please visit our website, www.olmd.org and click on "Forms".

We need to know where the geese hang out! Please let us know where you have seen geese by calling the OLMD office at 262-966-0286 or emailing us at info@olmd.org.

Permission for Entry to Property for Goose Round-Up

I authorize representatives from the United States Department of Agriculture—Wildlife Services and the Okauchee Lake Management District (OLMD) to access the property/properties listed below for the purposes of goose round-up. Decisions on goose management will be made on an annual basis. This permission form has no expiration date and remains in effect unless you request to be removed from the approved site list. Please contact the OLMD by calling its office at 262-966-0286 or by emailing info@olmd.org if you wish to be removed from the list, have problems with geese on your property, know of a nest, or have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your assistance!

Printed Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Phone: _____

Signature (Mandatory): _____

Please return this form as soon as possible, no later than June 15.

Thank You Weed Harvesting Crew! A Few Words With Gary Steinmueller, OLMD Lake Operations Manager



Gary Steinmueller has been working on Okauchee Lake longer than some kids have lived on its shores. For the past 13 years, he has been the Lake Operations Manager for the Okauchee Lake Management District. It is his job to supervise all weed cutting and barging operations on the lake, including hiring, crew training, and equipment

maintenance and repair in every season. As you are well aware, his job is very important! Recently, Gary took some time from his busy spring schedule to answer some questions about his “life on the lake.”

How many people are in the summer and winter weed cutting crews?

There are 12 crew members in the spring. Ideally there are 12 in the fall also; however most of the time there are only five because the majority of the crew returns to college in September.

How big is the weed cutter? What is the maximum/minimum cutting depths of the weed cutter? How many pounds of weeds can the barge hold?

The weed cutter is approximately 42 feet long and weighs 15 tons! The maximum cutting depth is five feet below the cutter and the minimum cutting depth is one foot. The barge holds one and one-half tons of lake weeds.

How long does it take to cut the entire lake one time?

In a perfect summer it would take approximately five weeks with the first cutting in the second week of June and concluding in July. In reality, the weather



rarely cooperates. We try to get to “hot spots” first. The lake cutting gets split up a bit after that due to different factors, such as weed growth and resident requests. We do try our best to get the entire lake cut at least once every summer but it can be difficult to accomplish.

What is the most challenging area of the lake and why?

Highway C, Gastricks Bay and Stephens Bay. There are nutrients from farm fields coming into the lake in these areas that make the weeds very happy!

What is the best part of your job?

Knowing that the job is getting done safely with the safety of the crew as a priority and that the lake looks good, according to my standards, is the best part of my job.

What do you wish residents knew about cutting and barging the lake?

Residents should know that the crew is a well trained team that can safely run all the cutting and barging equipment stronger and better than any other lake crew! The strong training program we use keeps them safe and also keeps them from damaging other’s property. Crew members end up working in all weather conditions, including high heat and storms, etc. Working on the lake is not always as easy as one might think.

Thank you, Gary and the OLMD weed harvesting crew!



Okauchee Lake Independence Day Celebration Fireworks

Okauchee Lake knows how to celebrate!

Date: Thursday, July 4, 2019

Time: 9:30 p.m., approximately

Location: Island Park In Front Of The Golden Mast Restaurant On Okauchee Lake

We need your help! This fireworks display is funded solely by donations from local residents and businesses.



To help continue this yearly tradition, please call Monica Pakalski at 414-801-4888 or send your donations to:

Okauchee Fireworks Fund
W353N6220 Marina Drive
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

Online donations are accepted at www.okaucheeLakefireworks.com or venmo@OkaucheeLake-FireworksFund.

Please join the Okauchee Lake community in celebrating our independence at this Fireworks Extravaganza!



For additional fireworks fun...On Wednesday, July 3rd another fireworks display will begin at dusk near Whittaker Bay. Enjoy!



Aquatic Invasive Species Reminder from AIS Coordinator, Cassie Taplin

As we quickly approach the warm summer months, many eager anglers and boaters are prepping to get out on Wisconsin's beautiful lakes and rivers. With increased boat traffic also comes the risk of boaters spreading aquatic invasive species! It is important for anglers and boaters to remember to make sure boats and gear are clean before entering a water body. Remember to:

- **CLEAN** off all plants & animals from your boat, trailer & gear
- **REMOVE** attached aquatic plants or animals from your boat, trailer & gear
- **DRAIN** all water from your boat including livewells & bait buckets
- **NEVER MOVE** animals, plants or live fish away from a water body

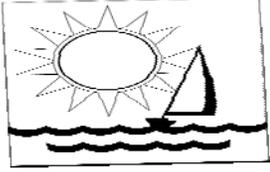
OLMD Weed Cutting Operations Soon Underway! Please Review These Safety Rules!

- Please mark any underwater obstacles, such as boat tracks, ramps, raft chains, etc. with a clearly visible buoy. These are unsafe for employees and equipment. If unmarked, these obstacles would prevent us from cutting in your area and could cause harm or damage to people and equipment!
- Placement of personal buoys may affect the ability to cut weeds in that area.
- Do not swim near or around equipment. If you swim between piers, we cannot cut in your area until you exit the water.
- Keep boat/wave runners at least 150 ft. from equipment at all times! We cannot change direction easily to avoid you.
- If passing equipment, please do so without a wake. A wake can cause operators to lose control of equipment.





Okauchee Lake Management District



PO Box 526
Okauchee, WI 53069
www.olmd.org



District Meetings

Okauchee Lake Management District meetings are held the second Monday of every month from April through October at 7 p.m. at the Town of Oconomowoc Town Hall located at the junction of Brown Street and CTH K. Check the website at www.olmd.org for agendas, minutes and updates. Please reserve the date of August 26, 2019 on your calendar for the Annual Meeting! All are welcome to attend.

We hope to see you soon!

Commissioners

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|----------------|-------------------------|---|
| Carol Wilson | Chairperson/County Rep. | 262-367-7363 |
| Tom Godar | Secretary | 608-577-9235 /Thomas.Godar@huschblackwell.com |
| Dee Schriver | Treasurer | 262-560-1487/dschriv@aol.com |
| Dennis Johnson | Lake Operations | 414-828-5461/mej2548@yahoo.com |
| Bruce Mueller | Town Representative | 414-704-5420/bruceTRC@wi.rr.com |