



Bills Lake Association July 4, 2008



Officers

President: Denny Miller 652-3305
 Vice President: Tery Schuiteman 652-5783
 Secretary: Ed Waits 652-2629
 Treasurer: Jim Tower 616 560-2319
 Trustee: Ron Madsen 517 719-8278
 Trustee: Del DeJong 652-9941
 Trustee: John Merkle 652-7676

Zone Representatives

Apache	Tery Schuiteman	652-5783
Blackhawk	Holly Sosnowski	652-4829
Cherokee & Dakota	Ed Schroeder	652-1713
Erie	Betty Olson	652-9359
Fox	????	
Geronimo 1	Karen Bos	616 405-3357
Geronimo 2	Del DeJong	652-9941
Hiawatha	Ardi and Dan Coby	652-9643
	John Merkle	652-7676
Iroquois	Pat Crow	652-7871
	Judy Hicks	652-5708

Web site: www.billslake.net

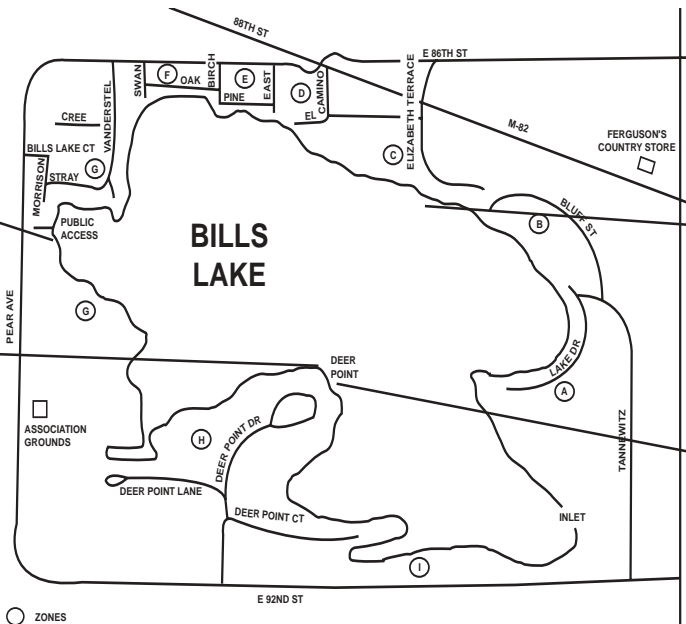
Circle of Fire to be held on (gasp!) the Fourth of July

Rain date is Saturday, July 5th. Time is **9:59 p.m.** (a concession to those who find it difficult to restrain themselves). Flares -- \$2.00 apiece -- can be purchased from your zone representative. Extra flares can be obtained from Ed Waits who will also sell to Fox zone residents.

Contests to be held on Saturday, July 5th. Rain dates-times at discretion of managers.

Boat Parade - 7:30 p.m.
Preregistration during the day at the DeJong (blue) dock would be appreciated. Details on next page.

Paddleboat Races
LaPenna- 11:00 a.m.
652-7812. They will also sponsor games for 10 and Under after the races.



John Mulder Memorial Regatta
(652-2983)
Race starts at 2:30 p.m. Please arrive at 2:15 p.m.

Canoe and Kayak Races
Nash-- 10:00 a.m.
734 673-7000



Bits and Pieces

A Source of Concern: On March 28, Howard Myerson, outdoor columnist for the Grand Rapids Press, issued a heads-up that was headed by Bills Lake resident Bob Cobb. It involves the possibility that all recreational boats owners might have to apply for an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permit starting in September if Congress doesn't pass legislation this summer exempting our boats.

Since 1973, we have not had to apply for permits even though in truth we discharge water (primarily engine cooling water) into Bills Lake when we run our boat motors. But because of a ruling by a well-intentioned judge regarding discharge of ballast water from ocean liners and cargo ships (the same discharge, by the way, that presumably got us our zebra mussels), the judge painted with a broad brush by declaring that the EPA had no authority to exempt small craft such as jet skis, speed boats, pontoons, and even sail boats (runoff water when it rains on them is apparently regarded as discharge).

It seems reasonable (an understatement) that we owners of small boats should be exempt from applying for an EPA permit to operate our small craft but only if Congress says so through legislation which is pending. Myerson says that they need prodding via letters and e-mails before it is too late. Otherwise 13 million boaters nationwide (approximately 935,000 in Michigan) will be required to get a permit starting in September.

Myerson's column, along with the addresses of your Michigan senators, can be found on our Web site.

Barefoot skiing tournament on Bills Lake? Jason Sosnowski, a highly-skilled barefoot water skier who regularly competes in tournaments state-wide, has suggested that an event be held on Bills Lake. However, when this was brought up at the Memorial Day meeting, several residents expressed concerns in terms of liability. A more thorough recitation of these concerns can be found on the "Minutes of the Memorial Day 08 Meeting" page of our Web site. If you have an opinion about this one way or the other please come to the June 28th meeting.

Lake Clarity: If the waters of Bills Lake seem unusually transparent this year, it is not your imagination. Sechi disk measurements thus far have been the best in recent memory. An eight-inch disk, alternately painted black and white in quadrants and attached to a tape measure, has been seen at depths in the upper 20s. Average throughout most summer is 11.3 feet. However, if you rake leaves into the lake, you are contributing to the opposite, not basking in the glory of our clear water.

Breaking the law on Bills Lake. Seen by residents from onshore on Saturday, June 21: A jet ski pulling tubers without a spotter, a speed boat pulling tubers without a spotter, and a pontoon boat proceeding with youngsters seated outside the front guard rail with feet in the water. If after Labor Day we breathe a sign of relief and congratulate ourselves on another safe summer, this will not be why.

Boat Parade details: Please preregister at the De Jong's dock (blue carpeting next to the public access) or call 652-9941. Carol and Del need your name and the title of your entry. Also, please put your entry title on a sign to be placed on the right side of your boat in letters large enough to be seen by people on shore. Votes will be taken from lake residents using your entry title – one vote per dock. There is only one category – there are no separate junior and senior divisions. Please arrive 10 minutes early to line up. Also, please stay in the public access cove afterward until the votes are counted and the trophies are awarded.

Bragging rights: The Bills Lake Association stopped awarding Big Fish prizes several years ago, perhaps because \$5 didn't provide enough incentive to report impressive fish. But if you have caught something worth bragging about in the newsletter or on the Web site, please contact Ed Waits. Pictures would be very much appreciated.

Pictures, please: Coverage of July 4th events has improved over the past several years primarily because residents have taken photographs and then actually taken the time to submit them. As was the case the past two years, photos of all of the boat parade entrees will be on the Web site. So will photos and results of the contests.

Directory updates: As your zone representative goes around selling flares, please consult his/her list of directory information for accuracy. The directory will be published and distributed by the end of July to those who request it.

Heads up: Residents are reminded that tragedy can occur on land as well as in the water. In this case, we are talking about **golf carts** which are often operated by overconfident (read: speedy) but inexperienced drivers, particularly in the Hiawatha and Geronimo 1 zones. On June 13, the *Grand Rapids Press* carried an article about the risks. Over half of the accidents nationwide involved drivers ages 10-19 and on streets, not golf courses.

Treasurer Jim Tower reports that we are off to a good start in dues payments. He appreciates those who have sent more than the minimum \$15.00. July will be the month when most money is spent. Expenses will include flares, prizes, trophies for the 4th and insurance payment on the association grounds. For those who wish to mail dues to Jim, his address is 8972 Lake St. Newaygo, Mi 49337. Otherwise, he will be at the June 28th meeting.

Within the past month, the *Grand Rapids Press* has carried excellent articles regarding the use of **phosphorous** on lawns and about mute **swans**. Copies of them can be found on our Web site under "*Grand Rapids Press* articles worth reading."

A great place for kids: On Father's Day, six kids in the Fox zone caught 42 turtles. They were, of course, returned to the wild.