

Assembly Park's Road Project

By Mary Pat O'Connor

The final touches on the permeable paver road installation in Assembly Park wrapped up this summer. Just over a year ago, this project was only a vision in the minds of many. Now, the road not only looks beautiful, it clearly serves its purpose of storm water management.



This project undertaken by the leaseholders tells the story of what can be done to help improve Delavan Lake water quality. The roads in Assembly Park started as cart paths, then evolved into tar and gravel; with the installation of sewers in the late 1970's, a black top asphalt was installed. After several years, the asphalt began to crumble, storms became more frequent and runoff was out of control. Five years ago, the leaseholders began the discussion of road replacement and started saving money for an upcoming project. The assumption was the product would once again be asphalt, or some other type of non-permeable substance. However, during the spring 2013 annual meeting, a presentation on an innovative type of road replacement occurred. This peaked the curiosity of many and after much discussion and cost analysis, a vote took place approving the installation of 2.5 miles of Unilock pavers. Part of the funding was provided by a DNR Lake Protection grant.

Clearly Assembly Park took an aggressive approach to storm water management and the results so far indicate the system works. During the early spring and summer months of this year, we experienced heavy storms and there wasn't a puddle found anywhere in the Park, and certainly no run off.

If you are considering road or driveway replacement within the Delavan Lake watershed, permeable pavers are worth investigating. For more information, contact a board member at the DLIA, or go directly to our website, assemblypark.com.

DLIA Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 11th was the DLIA Annual Meeting, held at Delavan's Town Hall. Six directors were elected: Renewing their 3-year terms were Kay Beers, Nancy Coglianesi, Gerri Green and Beth Peters. New directors are Rich Beaulieu and Kim O'Keefe. Lori Stahl, a long-time board member wasn't able to run again due to family commitments and was thanked for her many years of service.

Jan Williams discussed the DLIA website, Delavan-lake.org, and how much information is contained there. She urged members and friends to visit regularly for updates.

Major accomplishments this year besides a survey created by board member Susan Vogus and used at Lake Fest and homeowner association meetings (see inside pages) included continuing our farm conservation program, where local farmers are compensated for taking land out of production. Four waterways in strategic fields near Jackson Creek and Delavan Lake are planted in grasses to slow runoff and retain sediment, thereby reducing the amount of sediment and fertilizer entering Delavan's watershed and lake. The DLIA was also a sponsor of Walworth County's Clean Sweep program and Lake Fest.

After the business meeting, there were presentations by citizens who are engaged in grassroots efforts to improve water quality. They were Gerri Green who worked on the Congdon Gardens floating gardens project, Mary Pat O'Connor from Assembly Park speaking about their pervious paving project, and Sue Heffron speaking about citizen involvement in lake monitoring. Officer Mike Smith presented boating safety results from the summer season, Mary Knipper talked about the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership events, and Kathleen Renowden spoke about her efforts to sow native plants. More information is available throughout this newsletter.

Floating Gardens as an Environmental Control for improving water quality

By Gerri Green

Floating Gardens are also known as floating wetlands. Communities, states and countries across the globe use them as an innovative way to improve water quality, provide habitat for wildlife and reclaim wetlands. Today there are more than 5,000 Floating Islands installed around the world.

How Do They Work

On Wednesday August 27 the Delavan Congdon Gardens installed a floating garden in the pond in the gardens. The purpose is to ameliorate the runoff into the pond from Highway 50 which is just south of the gardens. It will also become an aesthetically pleasing and educational component of the garden. The island is made from a fibrous mat of recycled non-toxic plastic which is planted with a variety of native wetland plants. The mat is injected with environmentally friendly foam for buoyancy. As the roots of the plants extend through the mat and into the water, both the roots and mat become colonized by microorganisms. These microbes form a green slimy film (referred to as "biofilm") on the roots and matting. As water flows through the roots and matting, the microbes take up various nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrates and filter out suspended solids to clean and oxygenate the water. This action also prevents the growth of algal blooms.



Photo by Beth Peters

The floating garden that was installed in Congdon Gardens was 12 ft. by 12 ft. Volunteers planted mainly bog friendly resilient native species that can survive the winters such as: fescue, asters, switch grass, and swamp milkweed. The island moves up and down easily as water depth changes in the pond, which avoids plants being flooded or drying out. The island is covered with

coir to provide UV protection and is anchored to the bottom of the pond. The cost for this island was around \$6,000 including transportation from St. Paul, Minnesota.

Floating Islands can be used in a number of different environments but basically they act as wetlands with all the same properties. A short video and more information are available at www.FloatingIslandSolutions.com and [facebook.com/midwestfloatingisland](https://www.facebook.com/midwestfloatingisland). The website is www.floatingislandinternational.com.

DLIA Survey

Board member Susan Vogus created a 5-question survey to find the opinions of citizens on Delavan Lake. Here are the questions:

- What's the first word you think of when you think about Delavan Lake?
- What's your favorite use of Delavan Lake?
- What's your biggest worry about Delavan Lake?
- What's your best source of information about Delavan Lake?
- What do you need to know about the Lake?

The survey was used at Lake Fest and several homeowner association meetings over the summer and more than 40 responses were collected. Responses will be used to frame DLIA goals and projects.

There are many first words that come to mind about Delavan Lake. Most of them were favorable – beautiful, fun, nature, and a treasure. A few expressed concern, such as algae and weeds.

Every kind of boating was mentioned as favorite uses, and also many people like to sit on their piers and view wildlife.

The biggest worry about the lake is water quality. People observe silt build up, excessive weeds and algae. They are concerned that it will return to the pre-rehab days of pea-soup algae and rough fish conditions. People are also concerned that not enough people care about the condition of the lake. Boating safety and fishing were also mentioned.

The best source of information about the lake is the DLIA newsletter and website, the local newspapers, and friends and neighbors.

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DLIA Survey continued

What do people need to know? Here are some questions. They want to know who is managing the lake and how, what are the goals and what are the water quality measurements. Is the water safe? Who is taking care of the Lake? Are future improvements planned? How can I advocate for my needs?

You can see that the survey responses chart a course for DLIA communications and education about these

issues and you can expect to see more information on our website and newsletters in the future. The DLIA's number one goal has been and still is to advocate for water quality for our area's most beautiful and valuable natural resource. Many agencies are involved in ensuring the lake's quality and the DLIA will tell you more about them in the future.

If you haven't already filled out the survey, please go to our website and do so today! All responses are helpful and will help the DLIA frame its future work.

**Are your piers numbered? Does your swim raft have a Town permit?
See the Town's website for information about these ordinances,
www.townofdelavan.com**

It's time for members to renew – or if you haven't joined the DLIA yet, it's time to join! We do good work, such as bringing lake experts to Lake Fest and we want your help! Add your voice to this 119 year old organization that's relevant today – helping protect and improve our most beautiful natural resource – Delavan Lake. Fill out the application below, or go to our website (www.delavan-lake.org) and join using Pay Pal.

Membership Application

Date: _____ Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

Lake Address: _____

Lake House Phone#: _____

Email Address: _____

(NOTE: The DLIA does not sell or distribute address, phone or email lists)

Do you wish to receive the DLIA
Lake Notes Newsletter via email?
Yes _____ No _____

Do you wish to be included on the
DLIA Email Alert List
Yes _____ No _____

Memberships:

<i>Patron - \$100 per year</i>	<i>Sustaining - \$50 per year</i>	<i>Regular - \$30 per year</i>
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Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ Signature: _____

***Please complete and send to the Delavan Lake Improvement Association
P.O. Box 353, Delavan, Wisconsin 53115***



Citizen Lake Monitoring Network

This year for the first time, 4 DLIA representatives were trained in the Citizen Lake Monitoring program. They worked with the Delavan Lake Sanitary District and learned what invasive species to look for. Then they monitored their neighborhoods for those plants.

The program, used by more than 850 lakes in Wisconsin, had more than 1,100 volunteers this year. More information will be published in our spring newsletter, but anyone can take the training and learn about lake monitoring. The DLIA website will have training information as soon as it becomes available in the spring.

All of the DLIA volunteers thought it was a worthwhile experience, to learn what goes into water quality measures, what kind of plants we should look for and to see how hard the DLSD works to keep the lake free of invasive species.

An Opportunity for You!

At the DLIA Annual Meeting, Mary Knipper, President of Wisconsin Lakes, gave us information about an upcoming convention that might be interesting to citizens. The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership, made up of Wisconsin Lakes, the UW Extension, and the Wisconsin DNR, holds an annual convention that provides educational workshops, meetings and seminars for lake people who want to learn more.

The dates for the next convention are April 23-25, 2015, and it will be held at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. The theme will be "Healthy Watersheds, Healthy Lakes, Healthy People." Planned to date are workshops on limnology, volunteering, Citizen Lake Monitoring, watershed ecology and native plants.

The Thursday through Saturday meeting dates allow working people and out-of-towners to attend at least part of the convention. The DLIA has had representatives in attendance for many years, and scholarships are available from the DLIA if you want to attend. More information will be posted on the website, Delavan-lake.org, so stay tuned for updates, and put the dates on your calendar.

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