

Spring 2022

# Delavan Lake Improvement Association Newsletter



## Spotlight

2021 Year-end  
Membership 295

Carp removed from  
the lake in 2021:  
700

Farm acreage  
added to program:  
145 acres

Tonnage of plants  
removed from the  
lake in 2021: 7,406  
cubic yards

## SAVE THE DATE

**June 1 - Town of  
Delavan Lake  
Committee State  
of the Lake**

**June 23 - DLIA  
Spring Fling**

Delavan Lake  
Improvement  
Association Board

President: Bill  
Thummel  
Vice-President: Kim  
O'Keefe  
Treasurer: Katherine  
Gaulke  
Secretary: Sue  
Heffron  
Don Althoff  
Gerri Green  
Jim McKevitt  
Mary Pat O'Connor  
Carol Radford

## President's report...

*Your Delavan Lake Improvement Association has continued to generate and participate in projects to improve the quality of our Delavan Lake. Much has been accomplished, and more is planned for 2022 and beyond. To improve our outreach and the effectiveness of our communications with our members and key stakeholders, the DLIA will resume publishing a newsletter three times per year. The newsletter will be mailed to our members and posted on our website. We will select topics for each issue that we believe will be most interesting to you. We would value your input to improve its effectiveness. So please provide your feedback through our website [Delavan-lake.org](http://Delavan-lake.org)*

## Monitoring Lake Inflow Water Quality

For the past three years, two DLIA board members have been working with the Rock River Coalition to monitor locations on Jackson Creek that feed into Delavan Lake. Mary Pat O'Connor leads the program with volunteers Sue Heffron and Jack Sunta. They were trained by the Rock River Coalition, which is interested in Delavan Lake because the lake eventually feeds the Rock River.

Several indicators are measured such as temperature, stream velocity, dissolved oxygen and macroinvertebrates (critters) living in the stream. Monitoring is done monthly from May through October. Mary Pat enters the results in a statewide database that can be referenced by the DNR and scientists to examine trends and findings.

The volunteers received training through the RRC and enjoy getting out



Jack, Sue and Mary Pat examine the dishpan contents to count dragonfly larvae, snails and leeches, among other critters.

into the streams. "It's a different viewpoint when you're in the stream than looking at it from the road. Hearing the birds, seeing the changes in wildflowers over the seasons, it's very relaxing and fun," said Sue.

This year they will add a third location on Turtle Creek, the outlet of Delavan Lake. If you want more information or to see the monitors in action, contact Mary Pat or Sue.

Monitoring our own Jackson Creek is an example of a DLIA partnership that provides benefits to our lake.



## 2022 Actions and Goals

The Board has developed a list of key actions and goals for 2022 that we believe will have the greatest impact on delivering our mission and address concerns that we hear from our members/ key stakeholders

- Sponsor educational events, news releases and articles, including adding two new farmers to DLIA cover crop program
- **Communicate** more effectively with electronic and hardcopy newsletter
- **Increase followings on Facebook and Instagram**
- **Continue to educate members and the public** of conservation best practices and begin to promote boater safety/awareness
- **Explore restoring a Delavan Lake Safety Patrol**
- **Create an Urban Development Education Program**
- **Increase membership by 15%**
- With the County, jointly **sponsor Two (2) Farm Field Days**
- **Promote Healthy Lakes Initiative Grants**
- **Continue partnerships with the Town of Delavan (TOD), the Delavan Lake Sanitary District (DLSD), and the Walworth County Land Use & Resource Management (LURM) group**

## Mound Road Basin Dredging Project

Probably some of the most important infrastructures features that are in place to protect and improve the lake water quality are the Mound Road basins. Constructed when the lake was lowered several years ago, the basins are intended to capture sediment from the Jackson Creek portion of our watershed and help contain/reduce the amount of phosphorus reaching the lake. As we all know, phosphorus is the key contributing factor to the elevated levels of chlorophyll in the water. The basins have not been dredged for many years and are no longer as efficient at capturing sediment. This year the Town of Delavan plans to dredge some of the engineered basins at Mound Road to improve the capture of sediment and thereby

improve the water quality in Delavan Lake. The work is expected to start this spring once key permits have been retained by the town. Significant new monitoring will be put in place during the construction phase of the project to ensure water quality remains high throughout the process and that work proceeds in accordance with the approved permits. The DLIA applauds the Town for its focus on the dredging project for 2022, and we are hopeful that the Town will find funding in order to address the needed dredging and to continue regular maintenance of the basins in the years ahead.



## Shoreline Education and Resources

In conversations with our neighbors and builders around the lake, we've come to realize that construction best practices for conservation and lake water quality weren't well known and easily accessible. Often the building codes don't include these elements but homeowners would have incorporated them if they were aware.

Julie Hill, the UW-Extension Horticultural Specialist for Walworth County, has led an effort involving several of the county's lake association to develop a Lakeshore Resource Guide. The Guide is designed to provide lakeshore property owners, managers, residents, (and those that work on those properties) the resources they need to know about living on, managing, and working on

these properties for the benefit of the lakeshore environment. Construction, landscaping, yard maintenance, lawn care and other practices are different for lakeshore properties.

The Guide will be a collection of links to credible and trustworthy resources that are free from bias and backed by research and evidence. These links will be organized by categories in order to simply finding and using the resources.

The DLIA is pleased to have participated in and supported the establishment of what will be a very useful resource for all lake users. The Guide can be found at: <https://www.co.walworth.wi.us/365/Land-Use-Resource-Management>

## Annual Membership Drive

Through your generosity, the Delavan Lake Improvement Association has been busy working on projects to maintain and improve the quality of the Lake. You have received our annual request. To all of you who have already renewed, thank you! For those who haven't yet, renewing online is quick and easy. Go to [delavan-lake.org](http://delavan-lake.org) and click Donate.

Also, this year in support of our goal to raise our membership numbers, we will be putting in place another approach. We're calling it the Delavan Lake Advocate program. The idea is pretty simple. We are looking to create a list of DLIA

members around the lake who would be willing to speak to their neighbors about joining the association. If you're interested, please contact Don Althoff at [don.althoff@gmail.com](mailto:don.althoff@gmail.com). We're planning a barbecue on May 26th for those who are interested in hearing more.

And finally, visit our website to see the great DLIA merchandise for sale. A great way to support the cause and get some great stuff too!

DLIA Website: <http://delavan-lake.org>  
Facebook: [Facebook.com/HelpUsHelpTheLake](https://www.facebook.com/HelpUsHelpTheLake)  
Instagram: [Instagram.com/dlia\\_delavanlake](https://www.instagram.com/dlia_delavanlake)





## Explore restoring a Delavan Lake Safety Patrol

One message we have heard from many of you and observed ourselves, is that the boat traffic on the lake has increased over the last few years and everyone is concerned about water and boating safety. A goal for this year is to study what it would take to re-create a lake safety patrol. Some might remember that Delavan Lake had a water safety patrol at one time that was sponsored and funded by the DLIA.

We are in the early stages of our review, but we began the effort by speaking with several lake water safety patrols in our area including Lake Geneva. We learned a lot from the meetings with one of our big take-aways being the number of benefits an organization like this can create. Not only can a water safety patrol provide enhanced enforcement of the rules, but the organization can also provide rescue and assistance to boaters on the lake. And probably the most important benefit would come through improved water safety education.

Stay tuned, as we think this initiative could have a huge impact on the quality of everyone's lake life and we will report our direction soon. And we would love to hear what you think. Please share your thoughts by either reaching out to one of our board members or by using the contact page on our website.

## Utilizing drones to monitor water quality

We are all aware that advances in technology are progressing at a staggering pace. As we all work to try and remain contemporary with these developments, the DLIA board has been investigating the use of a global drone company to provide a low cost and timely monitoring system for Delavan Lake. Last year the DLIA funded the use of the drone company to create an register of all buoys and piers on the lake, as well as assist the Town in a boat-use survey conducted in 2020.

We still have a lot to learn in this area and we are working closely with the Town of Delavan Lake Committee to explore opportunities to support the Town. We have created a budget to support a number of projects for 2022 including one that may fly routine monitoring of the Mound Road basins during the dredging project.

## Question Corner

*We've heard a lot of questions around the extraordinary aquatic plant growth in the lake last summer. People have wondered if harvesting was scaled back or if there were other problems.*

*Here's what we know. When we have had major "rain events" in the springtime, the run-off can be substantial and negatively impact water clarity. When the water is "murky", the sun's penetration to the bottom is limited, thus limiting weed growth to shallower depths. In the last few years we have been missing these huge springtime rain events and the associated farm field run-offs. So, the water has been very clear from the spring "ice-off" date. This clearer water leads to early and plentiful weed growth in shallow AND much deeper water. In 2021 the DLSD harvested a record 7,406 cubic yards of weeds, almost 2 times the "typical" 3,000-4,000 cubic yards.*