

Crystal Lake Association

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Autumn 2021 Newsletter



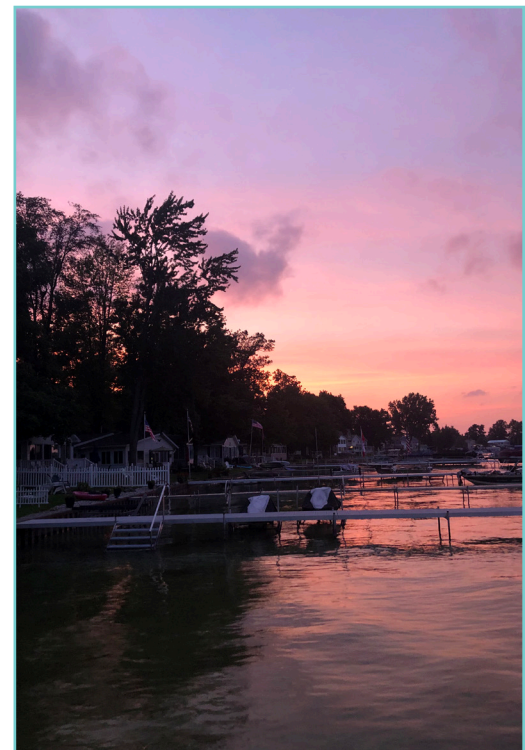


Prominent Township Items


Tim Dorch, Township Meeting Rep.

A handful of Crystal Township issues impacting CLA members, and their wallets, have been under consideration by the Township Board for some time. The most prominent follow:

Community Center: 'What to do' with this property has been examined in detail by the Township Board since 2018. Community sentiment from townhall-style workshops, survey mailings, and public exchange during regular Board meetings lean toward retention and repair in contrast with teardown and rebuild onsite, or sale and build offsite. The Crystal Township budget cannot absorb the costs involved to rehab and upgrade. The Board has a bond issue under consideration in lieu of a millage proposal. Recent dialog with experts in the field suggests that a bond issue would be a reasonable alternative to a new millage for taxpayers. The Township Board has little confidence that Crystal taxpayers would support a long term millage. Although there is lingering sentiment for selling, exploratory steps have piqued almost no interest. Kingscott, a Michigan architectural firm, with a complex advisory history with the Township Board on these issues was invited to the next monthly meeting (October) to go over more options for re-configuring the building. In the meantime, the clock keeps ticking while serious maintenance issues, essential upgrades, and code remediation await action.



Park Grant: The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) has the Crystal Township grant application under review. The purpose of the application is to help fund major improvements to Crystal Township Park. In effect, this was a strengthened reapplication made in April, 2021, for a grant in the amount of \$300,000. If approved, the Township has committed \$100,000 from the Township general fund. The balance of the projected \$507,000 renovation would come from public donations (\$57,000) and donated materials and labor (\$50,000). The improvements proposed would include a new public beach and the creation of a safer slope to the water with user friendly terracing. Typically, applicants are notified near summer's end about whether the application will move to a next level of consideration. Crystal Township has not heard anything as of this writing. There is hope and optimism, but never certainty, that our community will be selected this year.



Marijuana Licensing: In September Township action, the Board approved the renewal application for 'Lucky Buds' (102 S. Main St.). This business is licensed to operate under State Law and Township Ordinance for the sale of medical and recreational product. In August Township action, Twisted Sista (403 S. Main) was approved for recreational sales. Earlier this summer, Twisted Sista had been approved for medical only. Legal Counsel for Crystal Township have been closely monitoring the approval steps taken by the Township to insure compliance with existing law.

Wind Energy: Wind turbines have been a hot button issue in our region. Apex Clean Energy embarked on a 9 township 75 turbine project in Montcalm County. Surrounding townships have had mixed reactions from residents. The Crystal Township Board has concluded that Apex is not looking to Crystal Township to support their project. Accordingly, not feeling the pressure to take a deep dive into the world of energy ordinances, our Township will simply monitor and review what other townships are doing/have done but not act preemptively or consider drafting an ordinance. On another note, solar farms and their development in nearby townships have not gone unnoticed. The Board has not taken a public position regarding solar farms.



Police Service Contract: The existing services contract between Crystal Township and the Montcalm County Sheriff for routine police coverage expires at the end of 2021. This agreement provides us with Crystal specific coverage for approximately 40 hours each week. In 2020, a county-wide millage was voter approved to enhance road patrol coverage generally and other services. In view of the new county-wide police millage, the Board has been conflicted about whether or how to deal with contract renewal, or not.

American Rescue Plan: In July, 2021, the Board formally approved that it would accept Federal dollars from the 'American Rescue Plan,' designed to aid State, County and local governments affected by the economic downturn caused by Covid-19. There are unspecified 'strings attached' which were not clear at the time of this writing. The proposed share for our Township was approximately \$270,000. Crystal is still waiting to hear from the benevolent Uncle Sam. Some communities have already been approved. For example, Montcalm County already received approximately \$12 Million in American Rescue Funds.



Membership Sets New Record!

Nancy Ayres, Membership Chair

For the first time in history, we have reached 364 members for the year. Just two short years ago we had 300 members, so the huge increase this year is certainly something to celebrate. Thank you to all who joined and supported the CLA this year. The funds raised through membership are critical to the work the CLA can perform each year in support of keeping Crystal Lake a clean and safe place for all to enjoy. But the membership number is important as well. It means that more and more people who use the lake are realizing the importance of supporting the lake through the CLA.

Please remember that you don't need to be a property owner to join the CLA. You just need to be someone who enjoys the lake and wants to help support and protect it. As we look ahead to 2022, we would like to focus membership on two areas to continue our recent growth. The South Shore Campground now has about 25% of the 160 families in the campground as CLA members. We would like to increase that in 2022 to at least 40% of the campground families who are also CLA members. We will also focus recruitment on many of the side streets in and around the lake. While we have a large portion of families directly on the lake as members, we know we can increase membership to those who live on neighboring streets and still have access to and enjoy Crystal Lake.

Yes, summer is the busy season, but Crystal is a four-season lake, and we would encourage you to continue to enjoy the lake and support the local economy. Beautiful fall colors, and soon – ice fishing, snowmobiling and snow shoeing will be here to enjoy in the months. Thank you again for your support and have a safe and enjoyable fall and winter.

CRYSTAL STANTON

MAPPED 9-9-21
RJK + JOHNN

Legend

- Crystal Lake Boat Launch
- EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL 3.09 ACRES



Water Quality Report:

Joe Kopchick, Water Quality Chair

Restorative Lake Services conducted the late summer survey on September 9th for invasive weeds. Three acres of Eurasian Water Milfoil along the north shore were identified.

We had treated nearly 40 acres in June and it's not surprising that we have some clean-up. PLM Lake and Land Management will proceed with treatment shortly.

The final water samples for chlorophyll and phosphorous were taken September 16th. Once processed and frozen, the samples were turned in to the Michigan EGLE office in Grand Rapids on September 21st.

Secchi disc readings for water clarity for July and August have ranged from 9 to 12 feet which is better than last year when August 2020 averaged 7 feet. August 2019 averaged 9 to 12 feet of clarity. These samples and readings wrap up our water quality program for this year. Next year's program starts shortly after the ice goes out with phosphorous samples.



Regulating Crystal Lake Water Levels

Summary: Existing law designates the Montcalm County Drain Commissioner as the official responsible to regulate Court ordered water levels for Crystal Lake. In a recent statement to the CLA, Drain Commissioner Todd Sattler (elected to a 4 year term in November, 2020) said that his office will fulfill the existing legal mandate despite a historic easement circumstance which may require remediation. Not unlike similar situations in Montcalm County, the Crystal Lake trapezoid-style control structure requires access through privately owned property.

The Court Order governing the lake level requires that the 'board' (previously known as 'planks') be installed on April 1st of each year, and removed at the discretion of the Drain Commissioner between September 15th and December 1st of each year. As of this writing, Drain Commissioner Sattler has set the target period for removal not earlier than the Thanksgiving holiday time-frame, weather permitting, as early cold weather will require earlier removal.

Details: In 1932, and again in 1962, the Montcalm County Circuit Court codified the current lake level standard for Crystal at 800.49 ft above sea level during summer months, and 799.49 ft the other months. In 1983, that same Court updated its earlier order by establishing a special assessment district responsible for all costs associated with maintaining the lake level. Consequently, if your property is on or near the shoreline, expect that you may be in the special assessment district and subject to future assessments in order to maintain the lake level regulation infrastructure.

In addition to the assessment district, the Court also ordered a span of specific dates for removing the 'board' (previously known as 'planks') to facilitate discharge into Mud Lake (formerly known as Swan Lake). The Montcalm County Drain Commissioner was designated Custodian. The order specifically requires that the 'planks' be installed on April 1st of each year, and removed at the discretion of the Drain Commissioner between September 15th and December 1st of each year. No notice is required.

The Court Order does not specify the engineering design to be used for damming purposes. The existing system for Crystal Lake is approximately 25 to 30 years old. It's a trapezoid-style control structure which requires manual installation and removal of a metal 'board' by human beings.

In 2019, the former Drain Commissioner petitioned Montcalm County Commissioners for authority to assess the special assessment district for funding to replace the existing dam. The request was denied. At that time, there was much public opposition to replacing the existing control structure.. Drain Commissioner Sattler noted that the aging dam structure, as well as the historic access (easement) circumstance, are under review by his office, and he is working on a plan to improve the control structure's functionality, safety and create a legal easement.

Lastly, Commissioner Sattler noted for the record that Crystal Lake levels were low this year (2021). To his knowledge, there was little to no discharge into Mud Lake since the 'board' was installed in the Spring. As of this writing, he has set the target period for removal not earlier than the Thanksgiving Holiday time-frame, weather permitting.



Introducing Fairway Farms

When Crystal Golf Course closed in 2011, it not only left a void in the community, but it left an even bigger void in the hearts of the Robert Nodus family members.

A new era began in 2020 with Bob's daughter, Diane Nodus Rydahl, together with husband Don, daughters Paige and Madison, and new son-in-law Mac, working tirelessly to re establish a portion of the business know as Fairway Farms, a self service driving range.

In the works for 2022 will be a concession stand with outside seating and practice sand trap. The driving range and concession will operate Thursday - Sunday, cash only at this time.

As they continue to look to the future, features such as food trucks and a outside venue for private parties are in the works.

In Diane's words, "We hope for families to create lasting memories at Fairway Farms and Crystal Lake. The next generation is working hard to bring renewed life to what Joe and Mary built years ago."

Remember your golf clubs each time you come to Crystal Lake.



Crystal Lake Association Information

Property Inspection Request

The Montcalm County Sheriff's official website continues to offer a Property Inspection check program. The Sheriff's Office has forms available for interested property owners (see excerpt at right).

You may request a vacation house check by downloading the 2-page form at this web address:

http://www.montcalm.us/document_center/Sheriff/property%20inspection%202017.pdf

Fill it out and either print/mail it to the Sheriff's Office; or if you wish, scan/email it to mcsheriff@montcalm.us.

| MONTCALM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PROPERTY INSPECTION REQUEST | |
|---|--|
| NAME : | _____ PHONE: (____) _____ |
| ADDRESS: | _____ |
| | _____ EMAIL: _____ |
| DESCRIPTION OF HOUSE: | _____ |
| ALL BUILDINGS LOCKED? | _____ ANY UTILITIES ON? _____ |
| CONTACT PERSON: | _____ |
| | <small>NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER OF SOMEONE NEARBY WE CAN CONTACT IN CASE OF A PROBLEM</small> |
| WHERE CAN YOU BE CONTACTED WHILE AWAY? | _____ |
| | _____ PHONE: (____) _____ |
| LEAVE DATE: | _____ RETURN DATE: _____ |
| OTHER NOTES: | _____ |
| | _____ |
| | <u>DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE - DEPARTMENT USE ONLY</u> |
| DEPUTY ASSIGNED: | _____ HOUSE CHECK NUMBER: _____ |
| | PROPERTY CHECK LOG |

Board of Directors

President

Steve Meinhardt
e: steve@casair.net

Vice President

Nancy Ayres
e: nayres3801@gmail.com

Treasurer

Kim Morgan

Secretary

Roxy Eaton
e: roxy4msu@yahoo.com

Directors

Tim Dorch
Eric Johnson
Joe Kopchick
Mike Manning
Cheryl McNeil
Kent Roth

Why CLA Membership?

- Water Quality
- Goose Roundup
- Fireworks
- Sheriff's Patrol
- Newsletters
- Township Meeting Attendance
- Lake Association Directory
- Community Support

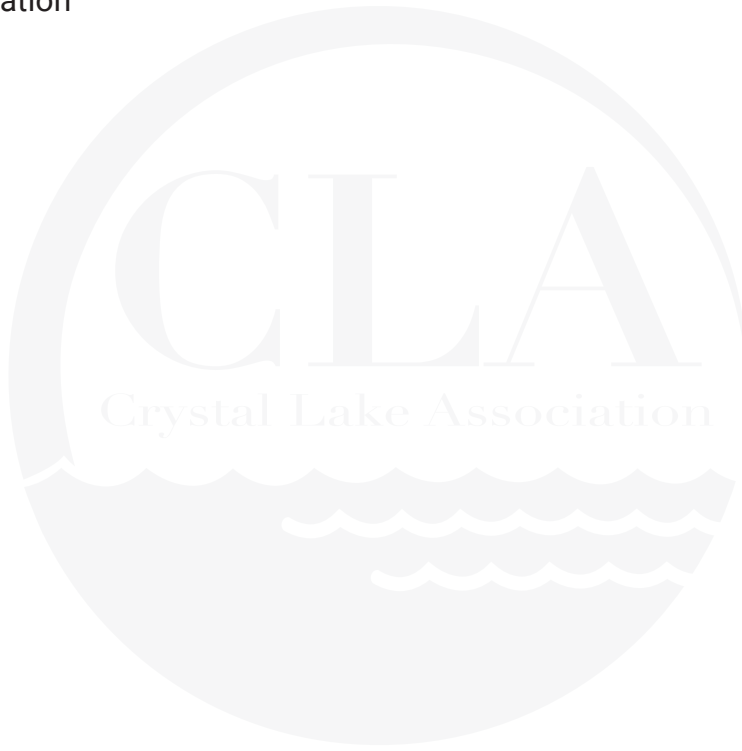
Membership is easy:

Visit website crystalonline.org or mail form (last pg)

Dues:

\$45 per year directly support your Crystal Lake!

Crystal Lake Association
P.O. Box 307
Crystal, MI 48818



CLA Membership Application and Donation Form

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Mailing City, State & Zip: _____

Crystal Address: _____

Contact Phone: _____ **Contact Email:** _____

Check here if you would like future correspondence via email:

We Now Accept PayPal, Credit Cards or ACH.

Pay to: Crystal Lake Association

Mail To:

Crystal Lake Association

P.O. Box 307

Crystal, MI 48818

2021 Annual Dues (\$45.00) \$ _____

Fireworks Donation \$ _____

Water Quality Fund \$ _____

Legal Defense Fund \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Renew online at: <http://www.crystalonline.org/renewonline.htm>