

# Crystal Lake Association



Spring 2022 Newsletter





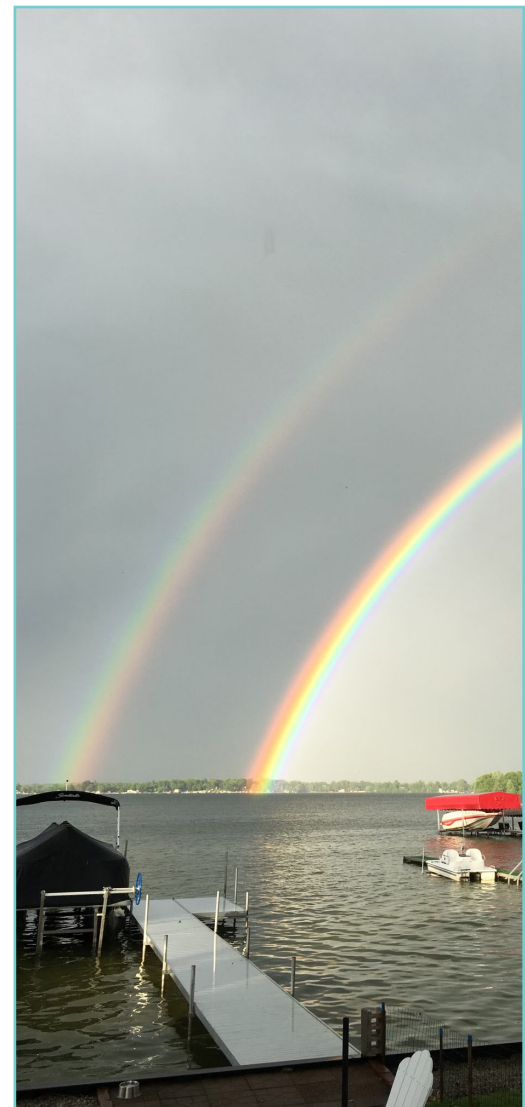
## Prominent Township Items

Tim Dorch

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 older, repair and update prone facility has been the 'off and on' centerpiece issue for the Crystal Township Board since pre-pandemic time. Perhaps you may recall that a few years back a series of 'town hall' type meetings were held in the gym, including outside experts, to gauge community consensus and support for a plan. Then there were survey mailings to voters to collect community thinking more broadly. Then there was the nearly \$100,000 semi emergency roof repair, and a string of other concerns. Posturing for and against specific architectural choices by community members and the Township Board over an extended period led to sharper divisions, a likelihood for cost increases, lowered expectations, and 'foot dragging' inaction. Tax dollars continue to be spent in patchwork fashion to keep the building open and operational despite the ever-looming dark cloud potential for extraordinary repairs and maintenance issues lurking around the corner.

Pressure for the Township Board to take some action recently escalated. Following additional research, external consultation and debate, a motion was made during the February 9, 2022, monthly Township Board meeting to seek voter approval on the August 2022 ballot for one mil for ten years to fund a remodel/construction project, with specifics to roll out in the coming months. Generally, the vision would have included retaining the gym, some demolition, and a smaller footprint for Township offices and meeting space with appropriate code upgrades and energy efficiencies. The motion failed 3 to 2. As of this writing, the Township Board has taken a break from the building deliberations.





**Crystal Township Park Redevelopment Plan Update:** In 2021, the Township, in concert with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), was awarded a \$300,000 Grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) for a proposed enhancement project. Wolverine Engineering was hired in 2018, to draft a concept plan to ride along with the application to the State. The redevelopment plan envisioned a new public beach, terracing to the water, public docks, bath house etc. As of this writing, estimated costs for the targeted plan are \$507,000 and would be borne as follows: \$300,000 (MNRTF Grant); \$100,000/pending (Montcalm County American Rescue Plan Act [ARPA] funds); \$40,000 (private donations); \$17,000 (in-kind services); and the balance to be determined. The Township had earmarked \$100,000 for the project and presumably would kick in the residual amount. Engineering bids are next in the process followed by construction beginning possibly in Autumn 2022, but more likely Spring 2023.



**Potential Acquisition Grant for the Downtown Go Cart Property:**

The Crystal Township Board met in a late March special public meeting to determine whether to pursue an Acquisition Grant from the MNRTF to purchase the old Go-Cart property thereby enhancing the overall vision of the approved park expansion. The Township has a unique opportunity to acquire the former Go-Cart track property from a Township friendly seller. This potential opportunity for an Acquisition Grant was triggered by the State approval of the park redevelopment Grant. The Township plan would envision expanded Downtown (Lake St) parking adjacent to the park, public changing facilities, and added public restrooms. The current cost estimate, likely to fluctuate over time, envisioned a potential purchase price of \$250,000, funded by \$175,000 in potential Acquisition Grant money, supported by \$75,000 in budgeted Township funds, within a two-year timeline. The motion to move forward with the Acquisition plan was approved by a vote of 3 to 2. Note that no legally enforceable commitments exist between potential buyer and potential seller at this time.



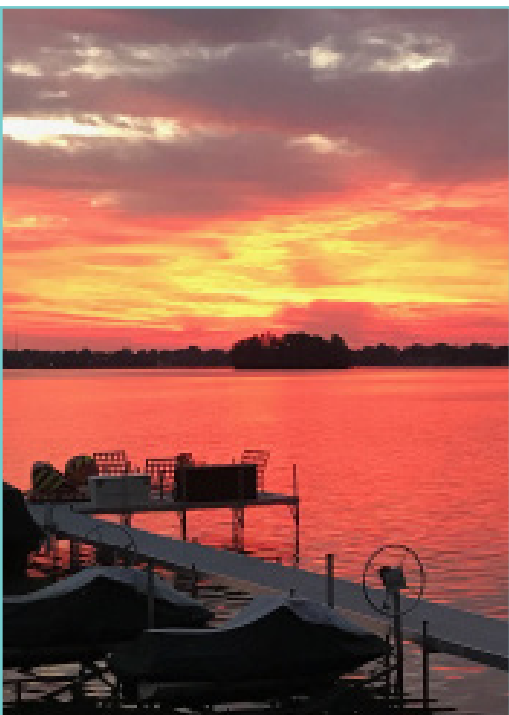
**Wind Energy:** In recent times, wind turbines have been a heated issue in Central Michigan. In Montcalm County, Apex Clean Energy has embarked on a nine township seventy-five turbine project. Townships surrounding Crystal have had opposite reactions from taxpayers in their communities leading to divisive interaction especially concerning the language of proposed ordinances dealing with setbacks, noise, height and the like. The Crystal Township Board has been consistent in its view that Apex is not looking to Crystal Township to support the project. Accordingly, the Board has declined to consider taking a deep dive into the world of energy ordinances or take any other preemptive action. Likewise, the Township Board has not taken a public position regarding solar farms.

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021:** The ARPA, also called the COVID-19 Stimulus Package, or American Rescue Plan is a US\$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill passed by the 117th US Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden on March 11, 2021, to speed up the US recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Montcalm County (approx. \$12.5 million) and Crystal Township (approx. \$280,000) shared in the derivative pot of taxpayer dollars. It's our money gifted back, but with limitations, i.e., strings attached. Both Montcalm County and Crystal Township are in the process of identifying eligible recipients, reviewing applications, and establishing proportional payouts. The basic criteria to share in the dollars was defined by the US Department of the Treasury. Generally, eligibility required negative economic impact or disproportionate negative impact resulting from the pandemic.

Crystal Township recently pitched Montcalm County for \$100,000 to support the Park redevelopment project. Indications are that the County will support the Crystal request. Crystal Township has begun the process of reviewing applications from local businesses and governmental entities such as Crystal Fire, Crystal Sewer etc. Final decisions remain pending.

The Crystal Lake Association queried the Township Board whether it could be considered eligible for ARPA funds under the Treasury Department criteria. Some generic examples of annual water quality and fireworks expenses were provided. The Township Treasurer provided the CLA with criteria information and the funding request form. A review of the ground rules led to the conclusion that the CLA does not qualify for ARPA funds. During the pandemic, the CLA had significant increases in membership and no decrease in income. Any increased costs for invasive weed treatment and/or fireworks bore no relationship to the pandemic.



**Police Service Contract:** It is unclear whether Crystal Township Board will take steps to renew the existing contract with the Montcalm County Sheriff for Township specific police coverage forty hours each week. Coverage will expire this year. Sentiment for renewal as expressed by the Township Supervisor has been negative. Renewal of the one mil tax to continue would require placement on the August Ballot followed by voter approval. In 2020, County voters approved a one mil assessment for improving overall County police services to include hiring more Deputies, upgrading vehicles and equipment, and increasing county-wide Road Patrols. In light of the recent one mil County tax for police services, the Crystal Township Supervisor would prefer to walk away from the Crystal specific coverage under a 'double dipping' theory. Other Township Board members have not offered public expressions, positive or negative, that this writer has heard.



## Membership Sets New Record!

Nancy Ayres

For the first time in history we reached 364 members in 2021. Our goal for 2022 will be 375 members. Just two short years ago we had 300 members, so the huge increase last year is certainly something to celebrate. Thank you to all who joined and supported the CLA last year and we hope we can count on your support again this year. The funds raised through membership are critical to the work the CLA is able to perform each year in support of keeping Crystal Lake a clean and safe place for all to enjoy. We take spending the money you donate seriously and work hard to be good stewards of those funds.

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. Renters, campers, day visitors to the lake are all welcome to join. As we look to growing membership in 2022, we would like to focus 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 this year 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.

In driving around the lake recently I noticed new cottages, remodeled cottages and families who are new to the lake. Lots is going on, including refurbishing of the roller rink. It's always exciting to see what has taken place over the winter months. The CLA has been notified of some new owners in the area but if you have new neighbors, please help spread the word about the CLA. New owners on the lake get one year of free membership in the CLA but we need their information in order to sign them up.

We are looking forward to another great year on the lake. Thank you for your support- we couldn't do what we do without you!

### Remember all that your membership supports:

- July 4 fireworks show
- Water treatment to keep the lake clean
- Goose roundup
- Newsletters
- Facebook page
- Sheriff patrol on the lake for safety
- Annual Directory of lake residents





## Water Quality Report

Joe Kopchick

Each summer as we participate in the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP), we monitor the amount of phosphorous and the resulting chlorophyll in the lake. Phosphorous is a nutrient and some amount is naturally occurring. It can also come from agricultural runoff and even lawn fertilizer. If we have heavy spring rains, we can expect to see more green algae blooms. Too much is a problem: More phosphorous = more green algae / chlorophyll.

We measure in several different ways. In the early spring shortly after the ice goes out, we take a sample of the water to be analyzed for phosphorous. A second sample is taken in September. Starting in May and each subsequent month until September we take a sample of the water using a special collection apparatus that brings up an average water sample from about 35 feet down to the surface. The water is processed through filters that capture the chlorophyll, and these filters are turned in to CLMP. We also take weekly measurements of water clarity using a Secchi disc as another indicator of the amount of chlorophyll (algae). The more algae we have, the less water clarity.

We have just received the results from last summer. The Secchi disc transparency has remained constant with the average from 2021 at 12.9 feet the same as it has been for the prior 5 years. Chlorophyll, however, is showing an upward trend indicating we have more algae. Phosphorous last year at 12 parts per billion is higher than the 2016 – 2019 average of 9 parts per billion which explains the higher level of chlorophyll last year.

Overall, our average score of 41 last year is slightly better than the average of all lakes at 42, monitored by the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program.

Our overall score at 41 is still good and Crystal can be described as mesotrophic: between oligotrophic, deep clear with little aquatic plant or algae growth, and eutrophic with turbid water and abundant aquatic plant growth. The complete CLMP Report is available at <http://crystalonline.org>.

As in past years, we have contracted with Restorative Lake Sciences to survey the lake prior to Memorial Day. Last year we had a major issue with aquatic invasive species, specifically, Eurasian water milfoil. It was very expensive to treat, and we hope we won't have a recurrence.



## Fourth of July Fireworks:

Mike Manning

The Fireworks will be on the usual July 4th date (Monday). We will be using the same company as last year as they have done a good job in the past.

There is some work to be done on the barges again this year along with the maintenance and normal upkeep. It is the plan to put additional floats/pontoons under the barges. This will steady the barges as they are being taken out to the midpoint of the lake for the show.

We hope that you will continue to donate to the fireworks fund as the show is possible because of your generosity. The CLA board is extremely grateful for your help. Thank you and lets all look forward to a GREAT Summer.



Taken by daughter of Teresa Bailey, Sarah Kusmierski







## Goose Maintenance Program

Eric Johnson

Goose season is upon us. The lake is clear of ice and I've seen several pairs of Geese on my scouting trips around the area. We need to prepare for the upcoming "Goose Maintenance Season". Permit requests have been sent and we are waiting for final approval and dates. In the meantime, please scout the areas around your property and adjoining properties and report the location of any nesting couples you observe. We have been informed that the "Goose Roundup" will not be allowed again this year due to Avian Flu concerns, so the Nest and Egg maintenance will be our only shot at controlling the number of geese on the lake, so please scout the areas around your property. When you locate a nesting pair, flag the nest location and if possible geolocate it so that our trained "Nest Maintenance Personnel" can properly monitor the nest and determine the appropriate way to take care of it. If you are not trained, please do not disturb the nest yourself. If you are interested in being trained, please contact me via email at the address below. We will keep you up-to-date on our activities via the CLA website ([crystalonline.org](http://crystalonline.org)) as well as the "Crystal comes together" blog site. I will be contacting those who volunteered last year and provided contact information. You can also contact me for information or questions at: [ejohnson@edzone.net](mailto:ejohnson@edzone.net) Thank you and enjoy your summer!



## Regulating Crystal Lake Water Levels

April 4, 2022 the 'Board' is in. Spring/Summer on the way despite the ongoing tricks of Mother Nature!!

The first pic was taken March 31, 2022.





# Clean Boat, Clean Waters Grant Program

This past fall we were advised that grants would be made for groups applying through the Michigan State University Mobile Boat Wash program to be an all-encompassing boater outreach program. The program is currently funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and is a partnership between Michigan State University Extension and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. We put together a proposal install a sign at our DNR Boat Launch site and to provide cleaning materials. Unfortunately for us they were overwhelmed with applications and didn't have the funds to support our project. We tried!

We subsequently received notification that there will be additional funds for this year: The Great Lakes Commission today issued a request for proposals (RFP) to support in-person outreach to recreational boaters in coordination with the annual regional Great Lakes Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Landing Blitz.

Through the program, tribal or U.S. local units of government, lake associations/watershed protection groups, non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, universities/colleges, and conservation groups are eligible to receive grants for up to \$10,000, supporting work during the period of July 1 – July 10, 2022. Applicants are invited to submit proposals for activities that provide in-person outreach to recreational boaters at boat launches.

We will resubmit our proposal and keep our fingers crossed.

## Board of Directors

### President

Steve Meinhardt  
e: [steve@casair.net](mailto:steve@casair.net)

### Vice President

Nancy Ayres  
e: [nayres3801@gmail.com](mailto:nayres3801@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

Kim Morgan

### Secretary

Roxy Eaton  
e: [roxy4msu@yahoo.com](mailto: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

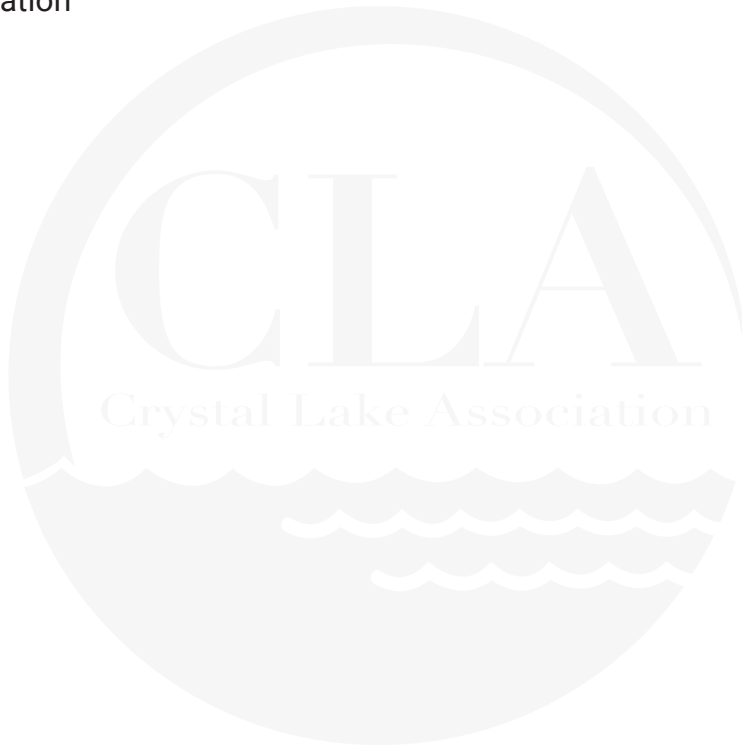
### Membership is easy:

Visit website [crystalonline.org](http://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

2022 Annual Dues ( \$45.00) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Fireworks Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Water Quality Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Defense Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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