

**CLA Mission**

To protect the interest of the members of this Association in the real property owned by them; to endeavor to maintain the natural level in said lake; to protect against water pollution and unhealthy conditions; to secure adequate protection against fire, theft and pilfering, to secure improved roads leading to and around the lake; to protect and promote good fishing condition in said lake; and for such other purposes as shall be beneficial to the interests of said members and the community.

**With this issue of the CLA Newsletter we have begun to accept advertising sponsors.**

**Sponsors pay a fee to help defray the cost of production of the publication.**

**If your business would like to sponsor an upcoming issue of the Newsletter please contact Bonnie Kanitz at [kanitzb@msn.com](mailto:kanitzb@msn.com)**

**Curbside Leaf Pickup Through the End of October**

**Have a safe  
Holiday Season  
See you in 2018**

**Help us reach our  
2018 membership  
goal of 325.**

**Renew your membership or Join the  
Crystal Lake  
Association  
Today!**

# Crystal Lake Association

Established June 5, 1932    [www.crystalonline.org](http://www.crystalonline.org)

## Stone's Marine Storage

Serving Crystal and the surrounding community, Stone's Marine Storage was established in 1982 by Theodore Stone, father of the current owner and operator of the business, Bradford Stone. Brad worked with his father prior to taking over the

Starting the business with just 14 boats in storage in 1982 Stone's Marine now stores upwards of 120 boats each winter.

Another important service provided by Stone's is shrink wrapping. Shrink wrapped boats (and other vehicles and equipment stored out of doors during

the winter months ) are protected from the elements by shrinking a heavy weight plastic sheeting to conform to the shape of the boat providing a weatherproof cover. Covering boats with shrink wrap can extend the life of carpet and upholstery for many years.

The winterization program offered by Stone's can be all inclusive, from removing your boat from the lake in the fall, performing the winter maintenance of replacing gear lube, fogging the carburetor to prevent today's gasoline, which contains alcohol, from damaging your fuel system , shrink wrapping, winter storage in a secured lot and returning your boat to the lake in the spring.

Stone's sells Harbor Master boat lifts as well as marine batteries. They also sell used boat motors and used boats and boat lifts.

For as long as the CLA has been launching the annual 4th of July Fireworks from barges, Stone's Marine has been putting them in the lake on July 3rd and removing them on July 5th and storing them for the time between shows. CLA appreciates the excellent service we have received over the years. Stone's Marine Storage is located at 2386 S. Pine Grove Rd. Crystal, MI 48818 (989) 235-3148



**Brad Stone with the official greeter Rosie**

family business in 1994. Following the family tradition, Brad's son Jarad works in the business as a mechanic..

Stone's Marine is a full service business offering maintenance and repair of boat motors and boats, winterization and storage, aluminum welding, propeller repair and a full line of parts from cables and gas lines to spark plugs and major engine components.

**Board of Directors**

2017-2018

**Board President****Steve Meinhardt**

steve@casair.net

**Vice President****Bonnie Kanitz**

kanitzb@msn.com

**Treasurer****Kim Morgan****Secretary****Roxy Eaton****Newsletter Editor****Bill R. Hepburn****Directors:****Fred Engle****Joe Kopchick****Mike Manning****Nancy Ayres****Tim Dorch**

## Water Quality 2017 Status Report

The after-treatment scan for invasive plant beds produced an "All Clear" result! Our water quality program is top notch and working. We cannot rest on our laurels! The CLA is committed to continue this successful program. Expenditures this year totaled \$13,000. \$8,400 was donated by our members. The \$4600 shortfall came from the annual dues. This equals approximately 22% of the total dues collected (\$12330). So while the weed control has been a success, the program to fund it has fallen short.

Many lakes within Michigan have "special assessments" to ensure cost burdens are shared equally. Where voters turned down a special assessment, their lakes are experiencing weed density levels that navigating a boat is nearly impossible. In Ionia County, special assessments top \$200 per lakefront home on one lake.

Crystal Lake is fast becoming one of the premier lakes in SW Michigan. Many thanks to our water quality committee, Bonnie Kanitz, Joe Kopchick and Tim Dorch. They participated in the all-volunteer Michigan Cooperative Lakes Monitoring (CLMP) program taking water samples all season long. This volunteer program substantially reduces costs. We are 274 members strong in 2017, but we could do better!. Our main goal is to protect the lake, thus protecting property values and increasing business within the Crystal Community and Membership and support is critical. Thank you to all our 2017 members for your generosity in donating towards the fireworks, goose roundups, water quality program, etc., and keeping our lake community vibrant! As a member, you can go one step further and talk to your neighbors on the value of joining and supporting CLA. Help us recruit new members next Spring for 2018.

**CLA Membership****What you get:**

- *Fireworks*
- *Water Quality*
- *Sheriff's Patrol*
- *Goose Roundup*
- *Community Support*
- *Winterfest*
- *Township Report*
- *Lake Association Directory*

**Membership is easy**  
Go to our website [crystalonline.org](http://crystalonline.org) and sign up, or mail in your application or call us and we will pick up your application. Dues are only \$45 per year. Please support the Crystal lake.

## Township Board Approves Removal of Swans

The DNR has started a program to control the population of Mute Swans in Michigan. The brochure states that the Mute Swans are:

**A Danger to Native Wildlife.**

One of the world's most aggressive waterfowl species especially while nesting and raising their young. Mute swans drive out native waterfowl and other wetland wildlife with their hostile behavior. Mute Swans will chase native breeding birds from their nests. Some birds at risk include: common loons native ducks and trumpeter Swans.

**Mute Swans Destroy Wetland Habitat:** Mute Swans consume four to eight pounds of plants per day. Continuous feeding by a flock of mute swans can destroy an entire wetland ecosystem.

**Mute Swans Threaten Humans:**

There have been many complaints on Crystal Lake about the aggressiveness of Mute Swans and the DNR gets complaints all over the State of MI.

From 2005 to 2015 the population of Mute Swans has tripled in Michigan from 5,000 to 15,000 birds. The DNR's goal is to reduce the statewide population to 2,000 by 2030.

At the August CLA Board meeting a motion was made and approved that a representative of the board go to the Crystal Township Board to get a resolution to allow the DNR to come on Crystal Lake to remove the mute swans.

At the September Crystal Township meeting, the Crystal Township Board approved a resolution to allow the DNR to come on the lake to remove the mute swans.

Removal can only be done by the DNR. The general public is not allowed to touch the swans or eggs..

# The Importance of Membership

Do you live on or near Crystal Lake? Do you fish, swim, or boat on the lake? Do you watch the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks with thousands of others? Are you a Facebook follower of the Crystal Lake Association(CLA)? Do you enjoy getting regular updates on lake happenings from the CLA Newsletter? If you answered "yes" to even one of the above questions then I hope you also answer yes to this question. Are you a member of the CLA?

The CLA board members are all volunteers. The CLA does not receive any funding except what is raised through membership and the occasional fund raising events. We rely on membership dues to fund the work of the CLA and we need your continued support. Our membership numbers have remained fairly constant over the last several years at about 270 members a year. While that may seem like a large number to some, it is less than 50% of the home/cottage owners on and around the lake.

We need your help to grow the number of members.

Will you help us by talking with your friends and neighbors around the lake to insure that they are aware of all the work that the CLA does for the lake?

If you don't see that Crystal Lake supporter 2018 sign in their window by Memorial Day will you help us identify them or talk with them yourselves about joining the CLA? We will be working on new recruitment strategies over the winter months but current members are also our greatest asset.

A clean, safe and beautiful lake to enjoy doesn't come at no cost . We believe that the \$45 annual membership fee is a small price to pay for such a great resource. If you believe that too then we encourage you to help us grow the number of new members. Thank you for your support in the past and thank you in advance for helping us grow that support in the future. Help us keep Crystal Lake the beautiful, clean and safe lake we all enjoy!

**Remember to let the sheriff's department know if you will be away during the winter months!**

**Below is a sample of the form you will need to file with the department. The complete form can be found on the Sheriff's Department web page. Follow this link to get the form. You can mail it or email the completed form.**

[http://www.montcalm.us/government/sheriff/house\\_check\\_form.php](http://www.montcalm.us/government/sheriff/house_check_form.php)

## MONTCALM COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

### PROPERTY INSPECTION REQUEST

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF HOUSE: \_\_\_\_\_

ALL BUILDINGS LOCKED? \_\_\_\_\_ ANY UTILITIES ON? \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER OF SOMEONE NEARBY WE CAN CONTACT IN CASE OF A PROBLEM

WHERE CAN YOU BE CONTACTED WHILE AWAY? \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

LEAVE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



## What To Do About A Free Loader

Reprint from Winter 2015 The Michigan Riparian

By: Clifford H. Bloom, Esq.  
Bloom Sluggett Morgan, PC  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
[www.bsmlawpc.com](http://www.bsmlawpc.com)



Many voluntary lake associations collect dues for services such as aquatic weed treatments, 4th of July events, boat safety courses and similar matters, but typically not all property owners on the lake will join the lake association or pay dues. Along many private roads in Michigan, some of the property owners contribute moneys for the snowplowing, upkeep and maintenance of the private road, but others do not. In such cases, the paying land owners subsidize those who do not contribute, yet those who do not contribute funds still receive the benefits of those who do. Some might call the non-paying parties “freeloaders.” In such cases, what are the lake association members or land owners along a private road who do contribute funds to do?

Typically, property owners who refuse to join a lake association or to pay private road maintenance costs have a million excuses. For example, they claim that the lake association wastes money or does not spend money the way the non-contributing property owner desires. Or they claim that the snowplow driver for the private road has not done a good job of snow removal in the past. Or, the property owner is philosophically opposed to chemical treatments for aquatic weeds in the lake involved. Sometimes there is a perception by some property owners that they were somehow slighted by the lake association or the other lot owners along the private road in the past.

The refusal by some property owners to pay lake association dues, aquatic weed treatment costs or private road maintenance expenses is particularly perplexing given that their lake or other properties are often worth hundreds of thousands of dollars or more. Typically, annual lake association dues, aquatic weed treatment payments or annual private road maintenance and snowplowing costs per property are a pittance. Furthermore, funds utilized for such purposes usually enhance the value of all properties involved.

In general, in Michigan, absent deed restrictions or restrictive covenants, a lake property owner cannot be forced to join a lake association or pay dues for that purpose. And, in most cases, the greatest monetary expenditure for lake associations is aquatic weed treatment costs. If the majority of lake property owners wish to force nonparticipating property owners to pay their fair share of aquatic weed treatment costs for the lake, there are three general options available. However, not all of them are always practical.

First, Michigan has several ancient statutes whereby a group of property owners can force all land owners within a certain area to become members of a summer resort association or the equivalent. These include the Summer Resort and Assembly Associations Act of 1897 (Public Act No. 230 of 1897) MCLA 455.1 et seq., the Summer Resort and Assembly Associations Act of 1889 (Public Act No. 39 of 1889) MCLA 455.51 et seq., and the Suburban Homestead, Village Park, and Summer Resort Association Act (Public Act No. 69 of 1887) MCLA 55.101 et seq. However, the most commonly utilized statute is the Summer Resort Owners Act of 1929 (Public Act No. 130 of 1929), MCLA 455.201 et seq. A Michigan summer resort association (or the equivalent) under statute has broad powers and could, in most cases, force all members to pay aquatic weed treatment costs. Nevertheless, this option is rarely pursued due to the legal expenses incurred in setting up such an association, their unwieldy governing procedures and the fact that the Michigan courts could eventually hold such associations to be unconstitutional and void given that they are accorded city-like powers. Please see my other article in this issue of the magazine regarding a recent court decision involving a summer resort association.

A second option is for members of a lake association to pursue a special assessment district for the lake for aquatic weed treatment purposes through the local town-

ship, city or village that has jurisdiction over the lake. Given that most lakes are located in townships, Public Act No. 188 of 1954 (MCL 41.721 et seq.) can be utilized. An aquatic weed treatment special assessment district can be set up pursuant to that statute, and in that case, if the entire lake is within the district, all property owners within the district must pay the assessments on their property tax bills. For more information about such special assessment districts, please see my article entitled, “Weed Whacker” in the Winter 2009 issue of the Michigan Riparian Magazine.

The third and final option is to establish a Michigan statutory lake improvement board pursuant to MCL 324.30901 et seq. All such lake improvement boards constitute a semi-independent local governmental agency and have the authority to establish special assessment districts. For private roads where no recorded private road maintenance agreement exists, there are also at least two alternatives available for forcing everyone with property fronting on a private road to pay their fair share of the snowplowing, maintenance and upgrade costs of the road. First, a special assessment district can also be created by the local municipality for that purpose. Second, unlike voluntary lake associations, all property owners along a private road have a common law duty to contribute to the maintenance and snowplowing costs of that private road. Unfortunately, that common law duty can only be vindicated by a lawsuit. In such cases, one or more property owners along the private road who contribute to the snowplowing and maintenance costs would have to sue those other property owners along the private road who refuse to pay such costs.

In all of these situations, it would, of course, be easier if everyone involved would simply pay their own fair share.

# Fred Engle Realtor™

Cell 989-560-4857

Resident of Crystal Lake

Fredengle.com

Specializing in Lakefront and Residential Properties



**MY GOAL IS TO MAKE YOUR REAL ESTATE EXPERIENCE A GREAT ONE.**



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319 S Main Street Crystal, MI 48818  
**Active / [17030925](tel:17030925) \$63,000**



114 St Johns Crystal, MI 48818  
**Active / [17018998](tel:17018998) \$69,000**



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1780 S Colonel Point Drive Crystal, MI 48818  
**Active / [16053011](tel:16053011) \$180,000**



402 North Shore Drive, Crystal, MI 48818  
**Sale Pending Customer Detail Report**

## CLA Membership Application and Donation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing City, State & Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Crystal Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK HERE IF YOU WOULD LIKE FUTURE CORRESPONDENCE VIA EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

<b>WE NOW ACCEPT PAYPAL, CREDIT CARDS or ACH. Pay to: Crystal Lake Association</b>	<b>2018 ANNUAL DUES ( \$45.00)</b>	\$ _____
	<b>Fireworks Donation (2018 Target \$9000)</b>	\$ _____
	<b>Water Quality Fund (2018 Target \$11,000)</b>	\$ _____
	<b>Legal Defense Fund</b>	\$ _____
	<b>Total</b>	\$ _____

Mail To:  
Crystal Lake Association ( CLA )  
PO Box 307, Crystal MI 48818

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

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

**LIKE! Crystal Lake Association  
On Facebook Let's be Friends**