President's Letter:
President’s Message
by Mike Disher

Can you believe we are in September already? Hard to imagine we’ll soon be working at getting things ready for winter at our lake place, but it’s the truth! Here are a couple things to keep in mind as you do.

1. Zebra mussels are present in the lake and we are trying to keep track of their movement. Last year, we had reports from several members finding them on their docks and lifts to the north of Greystone Golf Club. If you discover them, please send us a quick note with your address, a description of where you found them and a picture if you can...to bigsauk@gmail.com.

2. Remember that because our lake HAS been verified as being infested with zebra mussels, so if you are selling your dock or boatlift, it MUST be out of the water and dried for 21-31 days prior to being moved. This isn’t just the law, its a very good idea and will protect the lake to which its being moved.

3. Also remember to make sure whomever you hire to remove your docks, lifts, etc. is certified and trained to operate on lakes with aquatic invasive species present. This IS a requirement and your service provider should be aware and willing to provide this evidence on request.

You probably know that your Board of Directors meets just about every month to talk about and deal with issues that come before us. We don’t have the ability to solve every problem, but as we are able, we’ll certainly try to at least point you in the right direction. One of our members brought a concern to a director as to what they need to do to plant native vegetation in the waters along their shoreline. As you might guess, the DNR controls this, and for good reason. The success rate of planting vegetation in the waters is not high, generally. For this and other reasons there is a process you must follow. There is also a FREE permit obtainable from the DNR to transplant vegetation. You can find this and other information related to this at the following link: https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/apm/aquatic-plant-management-permits.html

Someone also asked a director, who is responsible for marking hazardous areas, such as shallow spots, on the lake. We talked about this amongst ourselves and we don’t know, except to say that the Lake Associations are NOT the ones responsible. We know that someone in Todd County, takes care of making sure the rock signs are up on the northwest side, and someone took responsibility for putting a marker on a log that juts out a little way further south of the rocks.

What we can do, is advise everyone to take personal responsibility to make sure you are aware of your surroundings BEFORE you do anything that could potentially pose a danger. For example, don’t dive or jump into an area until and unless you are absolutely certain of the depth and what is beneath the water. It only makes sense, right? Like most things in life, we must take primary responsibility for what we do, where we do it, and the consequences! We are our own best watchtower.
Looking forward to next year already, we have some very exciting news! Because you’ve encouraged us to continue efforts to reduce the carp in the lake, and because we want to develop a QRP (Quick Response Plan) for invasive species such as Starry Stonewart, and more generally because we want to be positioned to do the best job of keeping everyone informed on what is happening on Big Sauk Lake, BSLA is happy to announce we are planning our 1st (perhaps annual) Big Sauk Lake Association Golf Scramble!

The BSLA Golf Scramble is planned for June 13, 2020! Keep your eyes on the newsletter and our Facebook page and website for details as we get closer. Only a limited number of golfers will be able to participate, and we hope to make this a fun event for everyone, including members who are NOT golfers! Details will be coming...but mark your calendar and save the date.

Until our next issue, enjoy your lake!

Big Sauk Lake Maps

17 1/2” x 21 1/2” Map—Fully Laminated
26 1/2” x 34” Map—Not Laminated

Members—FREE

Non-Members
17 1/2” x 21 1/2” Map—$5
26 1/2” x 34” Map—$10

To obtain a map contact:
Jeff Mayer, 612-710-9866

NOTE: A $10 charge added to each map that must be shipped.
A natural shoreline is a complex ecosystem that sustains fish and wildlife and protects the entire lake. Native vegetation along the shore acts as a buffer zone, intercepting nutrients and reducing runoff, erosion, and sedimentation. Aquatic plants provide food and shelter for ducks, songbirds, and other animals while reducing problems caused by Canada geese and burrowing muskrats. Plants growing in and near the water are critical for wildlife and fish habitat and a healthy lakeshore. Tall plants like bulrush, lake sedge, and cattail can reduce the energy of wave action to minimize erosion and help maintain water quality.

Creation of a buffer zone is the essence of the lakescaping concept. A buffer zone is an un-mowed strip of native vegetation that extends both lakeward and landward from the water’s edge. A buffer zone that extends 25-50 feet from shore is preferable, but even 10-15 feet provides benefits. Installing a buffer zone can restore many functions critical to the health of the lake that may have been eliminated previously by sod, hard structures, or mowing. Planting grasses and flowering plants that are native to your area will diversify and enhance your shoreline and provide a seasonal show of color.

Creating and maintaining natural buffer zones along the shore does not mean your property has to look unkempt. Buffers and upland islands of trees, shrubs, and flowers can bring natural beauty to your yard. Additionally, tall native plants typically have deep root systems. They will slow erosion, decrease ice damage, increase rain infiltration, and act as a barrier to discourage geese from walking on your shoreline property.

**LAKESCAPING AND EROSION CONTROL**

Vegetation is extremely important for controlling erosion. Native trees, shrubs, and grasses dissipate the energy of raindrops, slow the water, and allow it to infiltrate the soil. The DNR and your county soil and water conservation district can help you select the right plants for your project. Listed below are some other erosion-control recommendations.

- **Prevent erosion.** Preventing erosion by maintaining native vegetation is less costly than fixing an eroded area. Think “root systems.” Native plants typically have greater rooting depth and root density. For example, the roots of the little bluestem are about 2-3 feet long and have a great capacity to hold soil. In contrast, the roots of lawn grass are only 2-3 inches long.
- **Identify and address the cause of erosion.** Causes may include excessive foot traffic on fragile soils, vegetation clearing (both upland and in the lake), yard waste on the bank that kills vegetation, wave action from boat traffic and prevailing winds (especially when water is high), ice heaves, overland runoff down slopes, stairways that channel water, and runoff from impervious surfaces.
- **Choose erosion-control methods that are “light” on the landscape.** For example, use biodegradable erosion control materials that contain biodegradable netting, not photodegradable plastic netting which can trap wildlife. If wave action is eroding the bottom (toe) of the bank, consider reinforcing only the toe of the bank and planting native vegetation on the remainder.
- **Plant aquatic vegetation.** In-lake vegetation can help prevent erosion. Native aquatic vegetation disperses wave energy, anchors soil, limits ice heaves, and provides excellent fish and wildlife habitat.

The above article is from the MN DNR. For more information see the following:
*Restore Your Shore:* (2002, Department of Natural Resources) This on-line tool presents ideas to use in protecting and restoring natural shorelands. Visit the Restore Your Shore website at: mndnr.gov/restoreyourshore
*Score Your Shore:* Is a tool for landowners to evaluate the habitat on their developed lake lots. Visit the Score Your Shore website at: mndnr.gov/scoreyourshore
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On these two pages are a listing of BSLA Residential and Business members who have paid dues for calendar year 2019 as of September 1, 2019. **THANK YOU** for your support of Big Sauk Lake and the Sauk Centre community!

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