

THE WALL LAKE SIGNAL

Volume 6, Issue 4

A PUBLICATION OF THE GREATER WALL LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC.

December, 2001



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Another great summer on Wall Lake is now a memory. The boating activity begins heartily in mid June and then drops off dramatically after Labor day. It is a sure sign of fall when you watch the speed that the docks start to disappear after Labor day. Our lake level was quite constant through out the year. This fall has been a wet one so we should start out the new year with a good water level.

At our last board meeting a report was given by the committee formed to review the various methods of treating the Eurasian Milfoil problem. The committee met with board members of the Big White Fish Lake Group. This lake is located north of here and has experienced similar problems with Milfoil. Big White Fish Lake is a lake of comparable size to Wall Lake. Wall Lake consists of an area of approximately 550 acres while Big White Fish Lake covers an area of approximately 600 acres. Both lakes have about the same number of riparians surrounding the lake. The infestation with Eurasian Milfoil at Big White Fish Lake was more significant than that of Wall Lake. Big White Fish's riparians have

attempted to control the problem with the use of 2-4-D, and to a limited extent weevils. They have been involved in treatments of 2-4-D since 1992. Because of their limited success with prior treatments a Sonar application was done in June of 2000. The application was done at the rate of 6 parts per billion to avoid harming the native vegetation. The treatment did eradicate the Eurasian Milfoil. This year the residents of Big White Fish Lake could find no areas of re-infestation. Should re-infestation occur at Big White Fish, the riparians plan to use weevils to treat those areas. The committee formed to study this problem at Wall Lake hopes to have a recommendation for the lake association at a future meeting.

Another challenge facing the board is funding. The revenue for funding our lake projects comes from two sources- dues and donations. Our dues are utilized to fund routine expenses such as the riparian magazine and the annual trash pickup. Our dues have been constant over the past few years but our expenses have not. The cost of the trash pickup that is provided to the lake residents is an example of

how some of these costs have escalated. The trash pickup cost has more than doubled in the last four years. This year's cost for the service was \$2450., which accounts for more than 65% of the dues collected. The increase in cost is not attributable to the cost for collecting the material as much as it is for the amount of material collected. In other words we are using this service more but not increasing our funding of it accordingly.

As we look to the needs of our lake it is becoming clear that we need a more consistent and longer term approach to both funding and planning. The lake association board is reviewing options available to meet these challenges and will be giving you our recommendations in future editions of the Signal.

On behalf of your lake association we extend to you and your families a Joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jerry Bullock

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SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Fire Safety Tips For Christmas

From Roger Carn, Chief
of the Hastings Fire Department



The holidays are rapidly approaching and to help ensure that everyone has a safe Christmas, we suggest that several basic fire safety guidelines be observed. Remember, Christmas trees don't start fires, people do.

Natural trees should not be set up earlier than 10 days prior to Christmas. Buy a fresh Christmas tree. If the needles are already falling off, the tree is too dry and should not be purchased. Once a tree is selected, leave it outside until it is time to decorate it. Be sure the tree is securely fastened in a sturdy holder filled with water. It is a good idea to trim at least a one-inch piece from the bottom of the tree after purchase. This increases the tree's ability to absorb water. During the period of time that your tree is indoors, water it regularly. Select the location for your Christmas tree carefully, keeping it away from fireplaces, heating vents, wall furnaces, and other heat producing appliances that may dry out the tree. Be careful not to block exit paths and doorways with the tree. Use Christmas lights which utilize lower wattage bulbs or are of the "twinkle" type. This type generates less heat under prolonged use. Also, examine tree lights for the Underwriters' Laboratory (U.L.) label, and check the strings for signs of wear and tear. Discard if old or frayed. Be certain all light strings are in good condition and are operating properly. Tighten bulbs

in sockets to prevent arcing. Never use candles or any open flame device on a Christmas tree. Don't overload electrical circuits by plugging too many cords into a single outlet. All circuits should be protected by the proper fuse, appropriately matched to the appliances being utilized. Christmas lights should always be turned off when no one is home or whenever everyone has retired for the evening. Remember, "Christmas Trees Don't Start Fires, People Do".

Residential fires kill an average of 5,000 people, injure an additional 21,000 persons and cost \$3.4 billion dollars each year! Here are some safety tips for you.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Smoke is responsible for three out of four deaths.

- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas. Test every detector at least once a month. [See your instruction book for the location of the test button.]
- Keep smoke detectors dust free. Replace batteries with new ones at least once a year, or sooner if the detector makes a chirping sound.
- Inexpensive smoke detectors are available for the hearing impaired.

THINKING AHEAD: Your Exit Plan

- Prepare a floor plan of your home

showing at least two ways out of each room.

- Sleep with your bedroom door closed. In the event of fire, it helps to hold back heat and smoke. But if a door feels hot, do not open it; escape through another door or window.
- Easy-to-use window escape ladders are available.
- Agree on a fixed location out-of-doors where family members are to gather for a head count. Stay together away from the fire. Call 911 from another location. Make certain that no one goes back inside the burning building.

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

- It is better not to use extension cords. If you feel you must use one, make sure that it is not frayed or worn. Do not run it under a rug or twist it around a nail or hook.
- Never overload a socket. In particular, the use of "octopus" outlets, outlet extensions that accommodate several plugs, is strongly discouraged.
- Check periodically for loose wall receptacles, loose wires, or loose lighting fixtures. Sparking means that you've waited too long.
- Allow air space around the TV to prevent overheating. The same applies to plug-in radios and stereo sets, and to powerful lamps.

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- If a circuit breaker trips or a fuse blows frequently, immediately cut down the number of appliances on that line.

KITCHEN

Careless cooking is the number one cause of residential fires. Never leave cooking unattended.

- It's wise to have a fire extinguisher near the kitchen. Keep it 10 feet away from the stove on the exit side of the kitchen.

- Never pour water on a grease fire; turn off the stove and cover the pan with a lid, or close the oven door.
- Keep pot handles on the stove pointing to the back, and always watch young children in the kitchen.
- Don't store items on the stove top, as they could catch fire.
- Keep kitchen appliances clean and in good condition, and turn them off and disconnect them when not in use.
- Don't overload the kitchen

electrical outlets and don't use appliances with frayed or cracked wires.

- Wear tight-fitting clothing when you cook. Here's why: An electrical coil on the stove reaches a temperature of 800 degrees. A gas flame goes over 1,000 degrees. Your dish towel or pot holder can catch fire at 400 degrees. So can your bathrobe, apron, or loose sleeve.
- Be sure your stove is not located under a window in which curtains are hanging.



A LEGEND OF SAINT NICHOLAS

Submitted by
Dean Williams



NICHOLAS, THE BISHOP of Myra in Asia Minor, was known for his many deeds of kindness. He liked to ride about the town on his white horse, with his faithful servant, Black Piet, walking beside him, and give oranges and toys to the children he met on his way. He cared for the sick, and helped the poor and lonely. People began to speak of him as St. Nicholas.

The good bishop was particularly fond of entertaining travelers who had been to other lands, one day a returned voyager told him of Holland. "The cities are full of waterways," he said, "and the houses have stepped roofs. The children wear wooden shoes, and have round, merry faces. There are windmills in the fields, and the ports are full of white-sailed ships."

"I should like to see that country," the bishop said. He clapped his hands to summon his servant. "Black Piet, we are going to Holland. I will take ship tomorrow."

The bishop had the hold of the vessel filled with oranges, and toys, and sugarplums. Of course, his white horse had to go, too. It was winter and the sea was stormy. The winds rose and the waves were so high that the ship listed dangerously.

"We are doomed!" the sailors cried. "Only the bishop was calm. "Fear not," he said. He fell to his knees and prayed, and suddenly the seas were smooth again.

It was the fifth of December when the ship reached the harbor of Amsterdam. As soon as he came ashore a crowd surrounded Bishop Nicholas. The people wanted to stroke his white horse which carried baskets on either side. They wanted to touch the bishop's handsome embroidered robes. They liked his kindly face under the tall miter. And they had never seen anyone like Black Piet.

The children ran beside the bishop as he rode to the market square. There

he distributed the good things that filled the baskets. The children clamored for the gifts. But first Bishop Nicholas would say to each one, "Have you been a good child this past year?" If the child said "Yes," he would ask the parents, "Has he truly been a good child this year?"

Those who had been good received the gifts, and those who had not been, found Black Piet shaking a switch at them, so that they ran and hid behind their mothers' skirts.

The crowd followed Bishop Nicholas around the city. "This is a beautiful country," he said. "I have always wanted to see it. And now that I have seen it, I know that I shall come back again."

The children brought sweet hay and carrots to feed the white horse. There was dancing and feasting and singing. Somehow all the people knew that this

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was a very special visitor, and they were happy to have him in the city. At the end of the day the children of Amsterdam fell asleep, their wooden shoes full of gifts.

As Bishop Nicholas and Black Piet wandered through the quiet streets, they heard the sound of weeping coming from a handsome house. The bishop got off his horse and went close to the house to listen. "There are two sisters there," he whispered to Black Piet as he peered through one of the windows. "The room is empty. All the furniture is gone. Their eyes are red from weeping. Let us hear what they are saying."

The older sister said, "Where can we go? What can we do? The money our father left us is gone; we have sold all our belongings, we have nothing. Tomorrow we must leave this house, but where can we go?"

The younger sister said, "Do not despair. I will pray to God to take care of us." They both bent their heads.

Bishop Nicholas and Black Piet crept away. Late that night, when the sisters were asleep on the bare floor,

the bishop came back and silently put a big bag of gold through the window, where they would find it the first thing in the morning.

On the way back to his lodgings, the bishop passed a lowly hovel. He knew that the people in this little hut must be miserably poor, and he wanted to do something for them. But he could not put money through a window, for there were no windows in the hut. And the door was tightly closed against the cold.

The good bishop was puzzled. "How can I get inside to leave money for them?"

Black Piet pointed to the sloping thatched roof. "Why not climb up to the chimney?" And that was what Bishop Nicholas did. Carefully he dropped a handful of gold coins down the chimney, and by a miracle they fell into the stockings which the two children of the household had hung in the fireplace to dry.

Next morning, when they found the coins, the children could not believe their eyes. "It's a gift direct from God!" They cried.

But a neighbor, who had seen the

bishop clambering over the roof, told them what had happened.

Although everyone hunted over the city for the bringer of gifts and Black Piet, they had disappeared and their ship was gone from the harbor.

But the next year Bishop Nicholas came back, and every year since then he has returned, to bring gifts to the children of Holland on the night of December fifth. When he died, he was made a saint, and the day of his visitation is called Sinterklaas, which is Saint Nicholas in Dutch, and from this we get our Santa Claus.

The beloved bishop became the patron saint of sailors and the city of Amsterdam, the largest church there is named in his honor. Cakes are made in his image and sold in the streets.

Every year Saint Nicholas visits all the homes in Holland, rich and poor. On the night of December fifth, the children put their wooden shoes in the chimney corner, filled with carrots or hay for his white horse.

MILFOIL COMMITTEE UPDATE

by
Tom Austin

The Wall Lake "Milfoil Committee" (consisting of Dean Williams, Tom Schaberg and myself), met last month, with Bob Cichewicz (chairman of the Environmental Committee of Big White Fish Lake Association). Big White Fish Lake, located north of Grand Rapids, is very similar to Wall Lake in size (about 600 acres) and the number of lake

residents. They have been fighting Eurasian Milfoil since the early 1990's. Their problem has been worse than ours in that they had approximately 90 acres of Milfoil whereas our treated areas amount to about 25 acres.

They started their treatment program with voluntary contributions and the use of 2-4-D. Over the years

they have treated with 2-4-D, weevils and finally with Sonar. The spot treatments with 2-4-D helped to control the spread of the Milfoil, but did not eradicate the weed. Their use of 18,000 weevils (at a cost of approximately \$1.00 each) did not have an appreciable effect at all. In the

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year 2000, the entire lake was treated with Sonar. Unlike 2-4-D, which is a spot treatment program, the chemical treatment of Sonar covers the entire lake at a rate of 6 parts per billion.

Bob Cichewicz is an outspoken proponent of the use of Sonar. In their survey of the lake this year, they could not find any evidence of Milfoil. He stated that there was no effect on the lake's population of fish or native

weeds. In fact the native weeds have started to come back in the areas formally occupied by the Milfoil. However, Sonar is not cheap. The cost to treat their lake was over \$37,000. To fund their treatment efforts, the Big Whitefish Lake Association had petitioned their township board to create a special assessment district (SAD) through *Michigan Public Act 188*. Their SAD was initially approved back in 1995 and repitioned and

renewed again in 2000.

Through discussions with Mark Kieser at Kieser Lakes Associated we have found out over 50 lakes have been treated with Sonar. We are continuing to research the results of other lakes before we make any recommendation as to the approach for Wall Lake.

Membership dues allow the Association to offer services such as trash pick-up, Signal publishing, Riparian subscriptions, etc. Dues for 2002 continue to be only \$25.00 per household. Please use this form to forward your dues to our Treasurer, Everett Kuizema, at 265 Lakeview Drive, Delton, Michigan 49046. Thank you for your involvement.

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