

Catch and Release

BASS LAKE

PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Grace Hehemann, our newsletter photographer, took this photo of the 2023 winter weather and wind at Bass Lake.



President's Letter

Another January and another new year lake level; I measured it at about minus 10 inches. Freezing at that level should not cause much shoreline damage. That's about 4 inches lower than last New Year's Day. The end of December was cold and ice fishermen were out in numbers; then, the weather warmed. The 63 degrees on January 4th was the warmest I can remember ever taking down Christmas lights. On January 5th, lake ice was essentially gone. I'm pretty sure it will be back; the lake is not usually guaranteed to be ice free until April. In 1970, not long after I bought my trailer in Rannells Park, I remember "Old Charlie" telling me not to put my pump in until after April 17th. I recall Charlie saying, "Early April can be cold and pumps and pipes can freeze". They still can. That is great knowledge to have and remember. I can relate numerous sad stories of broken pumps and broken pipes owned by people who didn't follow that sage advice. Old Charlie doesn't seem that old anymore; I think he was about 80 in 1970. Charlie was a spry old guy, who for decades took care of the park for Sheriff Joe Rannells who owned it. Charlie lived in a Park Trailer year around and remained caretaker with new owners until he was pushing 100. To this day I do not remember who decided to give him a \$100 US Savings Bond to mature in five years for his 95th birthday. Times were different back then. "Old Charlie" implies there might have been a "Young Charlie"; there was. Young Charlie, who was Old Charlie's son, was one of Joe's deputies who often helped out on Friday and Saturday nights at Wherley's. Wherley's was the tavern that Joe owned at the end of the entrance road to Rannells Park. Until it was torn down in about 1956, it was attached to the cottage that still stands at that location. Joe liked peaceful drinking so he would often assign Deputy Charlie to maintain nightly order. Yes, times were different back then. Like the Golf Course, Wherley's is now just part of Bass Lake history..

The first 2023 Property Owners meeting is scheduled for February 4th. As usual, discussion items will be the Directory, the Annual Letter, the Membership Form, Committee assignments along with discussions of what improvements the BLPOA can bring to our lake in 2023. Volunteers will be needed for some projects. Come to the meeting and volunteer; the BLPOA always likes help. From 2022: New "Welcome to Bass Lake" signs are on order and the second pump is progressing with no known problems.

January is a great month to start anticipating April and May. Those are really the months that start the new season and the months when lake stuff starts going in. Now is the time to start planning your spring activities. Wonder about our local eateries? The Harbour House, The Woodshed, The Pub, Scoops & Smiles and the Honey Hole have remained open and await your 2023 business.

At the VFW, the Great American Game jackpot has grown to \$129,954. You can try your luck knowing 25% of your \$1 ticket price will still be going to local charities. Stay safe and healthy, Rick Anderson

Meetings and Gatherings

Bass Lake Property Owners Association:
Saturday, February 4 at 9:00 a.m.,
BLPOA Building

Bass Lake Neighborhood Watch:
Monday, April 10 at 6:30 p.m., BLPOA Building (Drivers continue their watch duties during the winter.)

Bass Lake Festival:
January 29 at 9:30 at the BLPOA Building
Exercise Class
At the BLPOA Building each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8:00 a.m. CST

Prairie Trails Club
(our nearby bike trail):
Thursday, February 9 at 5:30 p.m., CST (6:30 p.m., EST), BLPOA building, there is no meeting in January

Bass Lake Conservancy District:
(sewers, pump & lake weeds)
Monday, February 13 at 6:00 p.m. CST, BLPOA Building

Starke County Park Board:
(our Beach & Campground)
February 14 at 6:00 p.m., Starke County Annex; go to the YouTube link at the bottom of the Starke County Parks page to attend virtually.



Bass Lake Property Owners Association

President Rick Anderson
Vice President Rich Linkus
Treasurer A. J. Gappa
Secretary Kathy Laiter

Board Members

- Tom Busch
- Terry Chimel
- Shirley Grajewski
- Mary Jesso
- Stefanie Neal
- Ron Vendl
- Val Williams

Board Member contact information is on our website: www.inbasslake.com

Newsletter Contact Information

We welcome photos and articles from our property owners. Contact Kathy Carrier, kcarrier@briljent.com.

Bass Lake Yacht Club

We're now planning our 2022 Awards Party for early spring 2023 and combining it with a welcome party for new members. We have many ideas for 2023, including raft-ups, poker run and others. One thing we've learned is the need to plan early! The summer goes fast and we'll need help from members and volunteers to plan our events. Watch for updates in this newsletter or on www.blinyc.org. For more information, contact Jim DeYoung at: blinyachtclub@gmail.com.

Tracy Williams - Bass Lake Beach

On August 10, Tracy became our third Superintendent of Parks and Recreation for Starke County. She has lived at Bass Lake for 32 years. She oversees the Bass Lake Beach and Campground, the Veteran's Memorial in Knox, Kramer Beach, a small beach at Koontz Lake and the Starke County Forest. Most of the revenue comes from the Bass Lake Beach and Campground. We welcome her to this position!



Freshwater jellyfish, from an Indiana pond!

Bass Lake Conservancy District

Rainfall for December was 1.72 inches. Total precipitation for 2022 was 32.04 inches. That is some 6 1/2 inches below the average of 38.57 inches. Lake pump added 21.0 million gallons for December. Total output for 2022 was 302.99 million gallons. Average water pumped (2005-2021) was 212.99 million gallons. The electric motor on the pump had to be replaced in December. We were down about two weeks but there was ice on the lake. The pump is currently running – due to the January thaw – until the lake freezes (hopefully again).

Larry Collura – BLCD ViceChairman

Bass Lake Beach and Campground

Did you know all Park Board meetings are available via YouTube on the Starke County Parks Department website? The Park Board is currently writing grants to fund new garbage cans and picnic tables for the Bass Lake Beach. They are in the early stages of planning a renovation of the historic Beach building. They will be working with The Troyer Group on this. Tracy Williams, Park Superintendant and Angelina Guiliani are planning events for the beach and other changes, as funding becomes available. For more information, please call (574) 772-9181. *Submitted by Tracy Williams, Starke County Parks Department*

LARE Grant for Glacial Stone Seawalls

Last week we submitted a grant to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to continue our glacial stone seawall program. Approximately 25% of our lake homes have concrete seawalls. These seawalls are detrimental to the health of our lake; the waves action against the concrete depletes the plants that our fish need to thrive. We will know if we received the grant we requested in July and will publish the details in this newsletter! If we are successful, we'll work with local landscape firms so they know how the glacial stone seawalls should be built. Note that we requested that the DNR fund 80% of the seawall cost, which means the property owners would pay for 20%. If you have questions, contact Rick Anderson, barefootrun@mchsi.com or Kathy Carrier, kcarrier@briljent.com.

Freshwater Jellyfish at Bass Lake? By Jed Harvey, Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams

You are probably familiar with the different creatures found in Indiana's ponds and lakes, but you might not include jellyfish in that list. While it sounds like a myth, freshwater jellyfish do live in Indiana, though only the luckiest of lake lovers have laid eyes on them. Thanks to a Lilly Center friend who found freshwater jellyfish in his pond near Winona Lake, we were able to study some of these penny-sized creatures.

Craspedacusta sowerbii is a small, white, and mostly transparent jellyfish that lives exclusively in calm bodies of fresh water like ponds, lakes, old quarries, and slow-moving streams. They are very small – they grow no larger than an inch in diameter and never more than 0.3 grams in body weight. They have a radial (circular) body layout and the tentacles form a ring around the base of the body. Can freshwater jellyfish sting? No, *C. sowerbii* cannot sting humans. They have stinging cells (called nematocysts) but are too small to sting through our skin. It is hard to find these jellyfish because they seem to appear at random in different bodies of water, but rarely in the same place for multiple years in a row. This is because of *C. sowerbii*'s elaborate life cycle. The jellyfish stage, also called the medusa stage, is the final step of that cycle. The main goal of the medusa form is to reproduce, though this form only lives for a few months at most. For most of a jellyfish's life (sometimes up to fifteen or more years), it rests attached to the lakebed in a coral-like 'polyp' form. These polyps reproduce asexually by budding, creating a small army of clones that are genetically identical to the original polyp. When the conditions are right those polyps transform into the free-swimming medusa.

What conditions lead to the formation of a 'smack' (the real name for a group of jellyfish)? Scientists are not entirely sure, though temperature seems to play a large role in the process. The duplication ability means that it only takes one freshwater jellyfish to create a population. A single organism can multiply hundreds or thousands of times. The resulting swarm has one distinct problem: since they all have the same genetic 'identity', they can only reproduce by budding. As a result, freshwater jellyfish tend to only appear in medusa form every five to fifteen years.

If you are lucky enough to come across a "smack of jellies" at Bass Lake, please contact Nate Bosch, director of The Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams, boschn@grace.edu.



This photo was contributed by Grace Hehemann. She is the official photographer of our newsletter and her contributions are appreciated!

No Ice is Safe Ice!

Here are winter safety tips to share with your kids and grandkids:

- Remember that no ice is safe ice.
- If you don't know the thickness of the ice, don't go on it.
- Before going on the ice, leave a note of your whereabouts with family or friends.
- Don't test the thickness of the ice while alone.
- Wear a life jacket or flotation coat.
- Carry ice hooks and rope gear.
- If you see a pet or animal in distress on the ice, do not go onto the ice after it. Call 911 and the emergency response folks who are equipped to make the rescue will do it.

Wearing a life jacket or flotation coat is especially important on the ice. If you fall through, a life jacket will keep your head above water until help arrives. Though our lake is shallow, we have had drownings. Snow can insulate the ice, causing it to freeze at a slower rate. When snow and rain freeze into ice, it is never as strong as solid, clear ice.

Source: ILMS Winter 2022 Newsletter

Editor's Note: We had a family member return home from a vacation last week to pipes that had burst with the cold weather. It has been a very difficult crisis. If you haven't turned the water off in your lake home, then have a neighbor who is at the lake check it often! If you don't have anyone to check on it for you, contact me, Kathy Carrier, kcarrier@briljant.com and I'll find someone to do it for you.

OFFICIAL BASS LAKE SWIMMING SUIT RESOLUTION FOR 2023:

THIS YEAR I RESOLVE TO GET DOWN TO THE WEIGHT I SWORE I'D NEVER GET UP TO.

CONTRIBUTED BY RICK ANDERSON

Owl Prowl!

Where: Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area, Visitor Center
13540 West 400 South, Linton, IN 47441
<https://on.in.gov/goosepondfwa> #GoosePondEvents

Join the Indiana DNR for an educational evening with the owls of Goose Pond! We will start out in the visitors center to talk about what makes owls so special, what allows them to hunt at night, and why they're so important to our Indiana ecosystems. From there we'll head outside to hopefully get a look at some of our resident Short-eared Owls over the prairie as well as some time spent calling to a woodland species or two. Be sure to dress for the weather as we will be outside for a part of the program. We hope to see you at 4:30 p.m. EST at Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area on Jan. 21st – it's going to be a HOOT!

Please register to attend. Note: Other education sessions, including water fowl are on the DNR website.

Learn About Lake Science

The Indiana Lakes Management Society has scholarships, a useful conference, information about lake science, best practices from other lakes and education. Note the 34th annual ILMS conference is on March 9 and 10 in Bloomington, Indiana. Contact Sara Peel, speel@arionconsultants.com or (765) 337-9100 if you have questions about registration.

Bass Lake Festival

The next Festival planning meeting is on January 29 at 9:30. Do you have a cool idea for our Festival logo design for next year? Contact Mary mjtoplevelan@gmail.com. We will be making the final design decision by February. Watch for updates at basslakefest.com or contact the Festival President Jenny Rocha, rocha32790@gmail.com.

BLPOA Building Rental

Need space for a graduation party or family reunion? Rent the large, renovated BLPOA building. Members pay \$125. Contact Rich Linkus for details. Linkusr1@hotmail.com. Nonprofits use the building for no cost!



Mae Villa

Joseph Esposito was born in Italy in 1871. Around 1900, he came to America and first worked as a baker in Brooklyn, New York. Soon he moved to Chicago, where he became a very powerful ward committee man with many business interests. He was especially fond of wearing diamonds and soon became known as "Diamond Joe".

The story goes that he spent several months vacationing back in Italy around 1920. While there, he stayed at a magnificent Italian Villa. He was so enthralled by this villa, that he decided to build his own villa on Cedar Point at Bass Lake. He named his new villa "Mae Villa", a nickname his young wife, Carmella, used. This is a view of the villa looking south, probably taken from the Taggart Hotel pier.

Diamond Joe was known locally as a good supporter of Knox and Bass Lake activities, including an annual 4th of July fireworks display. He was also instrumental in the paving of the road around Bass Lake. When he visited Bass Lake, it involved as many as 20 or more autos in a caravan. This would stir up quite a bit of dust to the dismay of local residents. Always willing to please his local neighbors, he saw to it that the road around the lake was paved.

Diamond Joe Esposito was gunned down by unknown assassins on a Chicago Street in 1928, but the family continued to vacation at their Bass Lake home for many years.

Later the family did sell the property, and it was remodeled into the Club Riviera, a restaurant and tavern. The Riviera burned down in 1981 and was replaced by a private residence.

Submitted by: Ron Vendl, photo from Starke County Historical Society