

Summer 2023

# Delavan Lake Improvement Association Newsletter



## Spotlight

Current  
Membership  
364

Farm acreage  
currently in  
program: 1071  
acres

Cubic yards of  
plants removed  
from the lake in  
2023: 5110  
cubic yards

Carp removed  
from the lake in  
2023: 200

Delavan Lake  
Improvement  
Association  
Board

President: Bill  
Thummel  
Vice-President: Kim  
O'Keefe  
Treasurer: Don  
Althoff  
Secretary: Hugh  
Charvat  
Sue Heffron  
Gerri Green  
Ben Nixdorf  
Carol Radford

## Letter from President

Hello to all of our members! It has been a busy first half of the year on our Delavan Lake. While the warm and dry conditions have made growing crops challenging for our area farmers, the lack of heavy rain downpours has significantly reduced the normal amount of runoff into our lake. This means that we have had good water quality so far this year. Of course, that doesn't happen every year and we must continue to advance projects that will help improve the water quality on our lake. The Town of Delavan has resumed the critically important dredging of the Mound Road ponds from work initiated last year and the dry conditions have helped the schedule. Two of the three ponds are now essentially complete, and it is fully expected that all will be completed well before the planned October finish. Another key accomplishment of the DLIA has been the expansion of our soil conservation efforts to include almost 1,000 acres now under no-till farming practices (more on that later in this issue). Also, the DLIA has hosted several information forums, including the very well attended second annual Inlet/Outlet meeting to allow homeowners in those areas to express concerns about water quality, the sold-out Aquatic Invasive Species forum conducted by the Delavan Lake Sanitary District, and our second Farmer Field Day developed by the Walworth County Land Use & Resource Management group. Further, we have continued to lead the carp removal program in conjunction with Lakeside Bait and Tackle. So, lots of things are completed, and more programs will be underway. But none of this could be accomplished without the generous support of you, our members.

Our thanks to all of you!

## **HELP US HELP THE LAKE - Annual Membership Drive**

It's not too late to renew your membership! We've had a good response to our spring renewal drive but we haven't reached our goal for the year yet. So please renew or join. Please, talk with neighbors who are not yet members and ask them to consider becoming a part of the DLIA community. Renewing and joining online is quick and easy. Simply go to [Delavan-lake.org](http://Delavan-lake.org) and click JOIN.

DLIA Website: [www.delavan-lake.org](http://www.delavan-lake.org)  
Facebook: [Facebook.com/HelpUsHelpTheLake](https://www.facebook.com/HelpUsHelpTheLake)  
Instagram: [Instagram.com/dlia\\_delavanlake](https://www.instagram.com/dlia_delavanlake)





## No-till Farming Successes

It's estimated that much of the phosphorus and sediment that enter the lake comes from farm runoff. That's why you have heard us talk many times about no-till farming practices as a key element in reducing the amount of phosphorus that runs into Delavan Lake. No-till farming is an agricultural technique for growing crops or pasture without disturbing the soil through tillage. While not a 'silver bullet' in managing runoff, no-till farming decreases the amount of soil erosion that tillage causes in many soils. Other benefits include an increase in the amount of water that infiltrates into the soil, soil retention of organic matter, and nutrient cycling. At the recent Farmer Field Day sponsored by the DLIA, a demonstration was conducted which simulated rainfall on three different field types: pasture, no-tilled, and tilled. This demo highlighted the significant positive impact no-till practices have on soil retention (videos of the simulation are posted on the DLIA website).

Your DLIA Board has set an ambitious and attainable goal to raise \$50,000 in targeted donations over and above our normal membership fee contributions to enable us to support local watershed farmers in the purchase of the equipment needed to perform no-till. As of this writing, we have raised over 80% of our target. With your support, we are hopeful to reach our target in the next few months. Just as critical to successful funding, we are actively working with neighboring farmers to practice no-till farming. We just contracted with a local farmer who has committed to no-till practices for almost 1,000 acres. To put this in context, this will have the effect of reducing inflow of phosphorus by about 47 pounds, and sediment inflow by over 90 tons. And 47 pounds of phosphorus could produce almost 12 tons of algae.

We are extremely pleased to be close to our fundraising goal and getting 1,000 acres under no-till is the direct result of those donations. We are incredibly thankful to those who have donated, and we ask for your help to enable us to achieve our goal for this year by making a contribution to this effort.



Specialized planter for no-till fields



Field planted with no-till approach



Demonstration to show the positive effects of no-till farming during a rain storm



## Water Safety Cards

To help ensure a safe and pleasant lake experience it is important for all boat owners to know and understand the basics of boater safety. As the boat owner you are responsible for ensuring anyone using your boat know and understand boater safety. To help, the DLIA has updated and published a Water Safety Card which includes several sections to help all boaters. These cards are available at many locations around the lake, including: Town of Delavan (ToD) Police Department, ToD Police Boat, American Marine, Delavan Lake Marina, DLYC bulletin board, Lake Lawn Resort-Boat Rentals, Reed's Marine, Lakeside Bait & Tackle, Community Park and Delavan Lake Resort.

Included on the card is some basics information and references for things such as what equipment is required on-board, like having a "throwable" PFD in case someone in the water is in distress. And some basic operational rules such as boats should operate at "Slow-No-wake" (SNW) within the "shore zone" (100 feet from piers & rafts). The cards also provide emergency responder information and key locations around the lake in case you need to identify the closet shore location near you to get help.

The DLIA Safety Cards are printed on water resistant paper and could be kept in your boat, bulletin board or other easily visible "lake side" location. Boater safety is in everyone's interest. Please take care and be sure to know, understand and pass along the safety and operational rules and guidelines so everyone can enjoy our beautiful Delavan Lake.



## DLIA Social Media Growth

Social media has become an indispensable tool for modern boating communication, as people crave connection and interaction. While connecting with family remains the top function at 48%, other uses such as reading news stories (35%), seeing what's being talked about (27%) and sharing viewpoints/opinions (22%) are also essential. The real-time aspect of social media where information is received and responded to almost immediately is a crucial factor.

The DLIA had utilized Facebook and Instagram for some time, but it was not a significant part of our communication plan until Carol Radford joined the team in 2020. Under Carol's guidance, the DLIA's Facebook page has seen exponential growth from 200 followers to over 1,200 followers as of last month- that represents a 500% increase in a very short time!

Carol's digital influence extends beyond social media too - her insight about designing our website to be mobile-friendly proved invaluable as between 50% and 70% of internet users access through their mobile devices. With so many things going on within the DLIA, Carol's timely posting and receiving of information have played a significant role in ensuring the success of our projects. Thank you for your exemplary service, Carol!

Be sure to follow the DLIA at [facebook.com/helpuskelpthe lake](https://www.facebook.com/helpuskelpthe lake)

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## Newly Formed Lake Committee sub-group. Fish and Wildlife

The Town of Delavan (TOD) has created a new sub-committee, Fish and Wildlife, to proactively support Delavan Lake fishery and wildlife. We are pleased that Town Supervisor and DLIA board member Ben Nixdorf will be leading the sub-committee. Joining him on the board are John and Brad Mikrut, owners of Lakeside Bait and Tackle, and fishing guide Doug Ide.

The purpose of the group will be to create a better conduit between what is being observed on the lake and the organizations that have the accountability to properly manage the resources. The sub-committee will be working directly with the TOD Lake Committee and the WDNR to provide timely feedback on the issues that we see on the lake so that resources can be put in place to ensure that we preserve or enhance our fishery and wildlife.

One issue that the sub-committee will be driving is getting a fish survey scheduled that is normally done every 7 – 8 years. The last survey was done in 2013 and another was in progress in 2020 but then cancelled due the pandemic. Without a new survey we could have significant undesired fish population changes without any ability to account for and change it. We are pleased to announce that there will be a WDNR stocking survey done this fall to serve as a stopgap until a more thorough netting survey can be done. This will lay the groundwork to do any stocking activities (if needed) to preserve our great fishery. And we will continue to advocate for a full survey to be performed as soon as possible.

The sub-committee will also be looking for signs of bacteria infections such as Lymphosarcoma, which causes open sores on the skin of pike. We will be monitoring negative effects of catch and keep gamefish tournaments. And reporting any significant fish kills caused by algae blooms or winter



conditions. So essentially we will be the eyes/ears and voice of every outdoor enthusiast!

Feel free to reach out to Ben at [ben\\_nixdorf@hotmail.com](mailto:ben_nixdorf@hotmail.com), or any other of the subcommittee members if you want to bring anything to their attention or ask any questions.

