

# COCHRAN LAKE UPDATE

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## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT by Randy Cook

It seemed like this winter would never end. I, like many of you, enjoy being at and on the lake during the winter but it was starting to feel a little like the never-ending winter in Narnia in C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*. I am so glad to see our Cochran Lake fluid again.

I hope all of you will make the annual membership meeting on Saturday, May 23rd at 8:00 a.m. Yes, 8:00 a.m.. The time was moved up with hope that this would cause less interference for those folks with friends and family up for the Memorial Day weekend kick off of the summer season. I will be trying to keep this meeting to about 1 1/2 hours, but please know you can always take off early and be assured that we understand and appreciate your time.

At the meeting we will have information on the Pike Lake Fire Department's "Vial of Life" program including a form and stickers so you can be enrolled. The enrollment into the program will help provide the E.M.S. personnel critical medical information in the event they must respond to a medical emergency at your home on the lake.

In December of 2008, the Town of Fifield applied for a grant to develop a program to fight aquatic invasive species (AIS) on the Pike Lake

Chain. We, the Cochran Lake District, were asked to support their request for a grant. I, along with your board, agreed to write a letter of support with hope that this would also help Cochran Lake remain free of AIS since boats go to and from the chain. However, Fifield did not get the grant.

This is a good time to remind everyone that there are reports that there are infestations of Purple Loose strife in the Pike Lake chain. Let us all be very careful and follow the boating guidelines for invasive species control to help protect Cochran Lake. I will have handouts at the membership meeting detailing the procedures to help stop these aquatic hitchhikers.

On March 19th, I attended the 2009 Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Green Bay. The main session was on Wisconsin's invasive species strategy dealing with prevention, containment and control. I plan on talking more on this at the meeting but let me say at this time we are very, very fortunate not to have an invasive species problem and we all need to stay alert and diligent to keep it that way.

At our annual membership meeting we will be electing a new treasurer since Donna Mandt's term will expire. In checking with Donna, I learned she will not be running for another term, so

please consider joining the Cochran Lake District board or suggest who would be a good candidate for this vital position. I would like to thank Donna for her service - all of us have benefitted from her help and work throughout her term.

I agreed to run for president a year ago with some reluctance and have tried to do my best. I have received some feedback through the grapevine that there are some members of the District that have been dissatisfied. I have discovered there are many very strong views in almost all areas that our Lake District deals with and I would encourage all of us to make an attempt to be more open to possibilities. I have no hidden agenda, I want to be a positive force and want each of you to feel like you are part of the Cochran Lake community. Cochran Lake is for many, if not all of us, a refuge and retreat and I would encourage each of us to work toward making this small piece of God's earth a good place for all.

Just so you know, I am willing to relinquish my crown . . . oops, I mean my *job* . . . as president to anyone who would be interested in completing the term. Seriously, if any of you would like to complete this term of president, just send me an email. Otherwise, I will continue to do my best for the Cochran Lake Management District and all of you.



*Our lake, lit by the moon.*

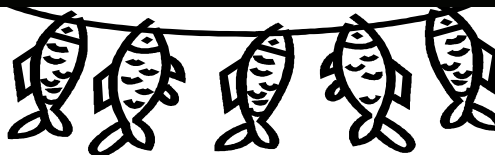


## SPRING MEETING

8:00-9:30 a.m.  
May 23rd, 2009

*Agenda on page 4*

## COCHRAN LAKE FISHING by Sig Kaminski



Welcome to another year of fishing on the lake. It should be a good one. Last year was a good year. A nice 17" Crappie came out and went on the wall. Some nice Bass were put back: 19" and over. A few big blue gills went up on the walls at over 10". More Small Mouth Bass are now showing up. Plus, the Northern are getting bigger.

Because I do the water check each month and fish the lake a good number of days each month, I can tell you that the water temperature in the deep part of the lake never got over 80 degrees last summer. The lake stayed very clear, 14 to 15 feet visibility. Weed growth was down and not as heavy. That was because of the late spring and the water temperature staying on the low side all summer. The lake was down last year and is still down at this point. We need a good deal of rain to get it back up because the snow fall was only average and it was a slow meltdown. That means the trees and the ground get the water and the lake has no run off water and the ground water table stays the same.

Fishing season opens on May 2<sup>nd</sup> this year for Northern, Walleye, Pan Fish, and catch and release of Bass. But note, if you are after Bass only you need to fish with barbless hooks from May 2<sup>nd</sup> until the opening of the Bass season on June 20<sup>th</sup>. In fact, it would be nice if all of us went to fishing as many bait as we can barbless. Just take a pliers and bend the barb down, or file it off. It will help the fish we release and it makes it easier to take a hook out of anything, or anyone, who is hooked. Ask me, I have had to have hooks cut out and it hurts. Here are some things to note about the lake. We have a large number of Northern in the lake. The size is up also with a

number of the fish getting into the upper 20" mark and some over 30". The Bass numbers are down; the fish we have are in great shape. The DNR did not change the rules for the lake. It is still 5 Bass per day, with no size limit. I feel that that is not good news. So we all need to work on putting some of the Bass we catch back. (I think we should kept Bass under 14" and release the 14" to 18" for reproduction, and feel free to keep a trophy Bass.) Think of the future of the lake. Catch the Northern, Crappie, Blue Gills and a Bass that make for a good meal of fish.

By the way, the DNR will shock the lake on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Last year Mary and I watched them and were at the dock when they emptied the tanks on the boat. They got what they wanted for scale samples. Only they had to fly around the lake because a thunderstorm was coming. They had a good number of 5" perch. And from what I saw ice fishing this winter, we had another good hatch last year. There were lots of 2" Perch all over the lake.

We still have Walleyes in the lake, but from what we can tell, they have not reproduced. So let's release them and give them a chance. Maybe the lake will get lucky. It would only take one good hatch. Then we will have a few walleyes we can take out in the future.

Oh! Please check any fish you feed to the eagles to make sure they do not have hooks or jigs inside of their mouths. Also, take the time to enjoy the loons and other wild things that live on and around the lake.

## KIDS' FISHING CONTEST 2008 by Sig Kaminski

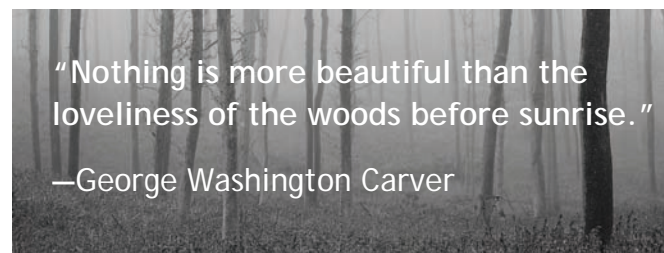
The contest ran from May 1<sup>st</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup> and was open to all kids ages 4 to 15 that catch fish from Cochran Lake, be it bass, northern, perch, crappies, bluegills or what ever came from the lake. We had 18 kids enter the contest. Each one sent in a picture of the fish and a short story of their fishing experience.

The tournament was the idea of Frank Sevcik. And I, Sig Kaminski, felt it was a good one. So Frank and I sat down and worked out the details of how to run it. I feel our concept turned out to be a good one, but we are open to any ideas from anyone on the lake.

The support of this contest was from a total of 5 families: 4 on the lake and one from a guest that was up for a weekend and liked the idea. I feel a great deal more can be done if more people support the tournament by donation of prizes such as baits, books about fishing or the outdoors. Anything that deals with the outdoors is welcome. Check out last year's prize list (on the Cochran Lake website) if you need ideas.

The people that gave to the tournament do not wish to be listed. They all said that the tournament was about the kids and not them. But Frank and I, plus the families of the kids that got prizes should thank them all. THANK YOU—GREAT JOB.

The list of participating kids, pictures, stories and the prize list will be at the spring meeting in May. At that time we will vote to see if we will have a contest in 2009 and set the rules and the dates. I, Sig Kaminski, with the support of Frank, am more than willing to run it again.



"Nothing is more beautiful than the loveliness of the woods before sunrise."

—George Washington Carver

## LOONS by Pat Schwai

What a difference a year makes! Last spring I reported that we found no evidence of nesting during the summer of 2007. (Loons nest 3 out of 4 years.) Fast forward to the summer of 2008. After years of patient waiting, Cochran Lake became home to not one but two loon chicks. It was a hard fought battle for the parents. They'd lost their first nest, presumably to otters. With such a late re-nesting attempt, there was the possibility that the chicks would not be ready to leave the lake by the time the parents' instincts urged them to depart.

Rick and I were conducting our morning nest observation on July 16<sup>th</sup> and noticed that the parents' behavior was unusual. Returning 4 hours later, I spotted the male, floating in place 100 yards away. He responded to frequent calls from the female who remained on the nest. After several moments, a little head popped out from beneath the male's wings. I can't describe what a thrill it was to see my first-ever loon chick and on our lake!

The loon chicks soon became the center of attraction for resi-

dents and visitors alike. However, the peacefulness was shattered when a rogue loon that had been hanging out on the west side of the lake suddenly challenged the father to a territorial fight. By engaging the father, the rogue sought to exhaust him to the point of death and to take over the family. The father gallantly defended his territory, charging back and forth across the surface of the lake in pursuit of the rogue. As dusk fell, the chase abruptly ended. Mother loon brought the chicks out of the shadows and cooed to her hero. He was too exhausted to respond. It was as touching as it had been frightening.

As autumn came, the female was left to parent alone. She took the first-hatched and stronger juvenile on day trips away from Cochran Lake, returning in the late afternoon to meet up with the weaker juvenile. October 2 was the last day any of our loons were observed. Hopefully they were on their way to wintering grounds in the Atlantic Ocean.

The success of our loon story was greatly impacted by the cooperative participation of resident and guest fishermen, boaters and respectful observers. You got the word out, reduced boat speeds, altered your fishing locations and sat quietly observing from a distance. By sharing your observations with me (LoonWatch volunteer), you made a valuable and greatly appreciated contribution to the program. You did a super job!

## TOWN NEWS by Jack Wierzba

### Forest Road 144 Update

Officially, there is no money in the stimulus package for 144. However the Forest Service is going to help the Town as much as they can through their area budget. We are going to go into a contract with them so we don't lose the funds when the fire season starts out west and they lose unpledged funds.

### AIS Grant Update

We learned at the WAL convention that because of the over-subscription of the grant we may not be considered at all. It's official now we did not get the grant. What the state decided to do was instead of giving money to areas that do not have a problem with AIS instead give money to areas that do have a problem and use the funds to keep the AIS from spreading. I'm still trying to understand this strategy. Time will tell.

That's it for town news. If you have any questions, I'm here.



Scout out for a walk on Cy's Drive.

## CY'S DRIVE PROPERTY TAX



Where does our property tax go? (Thank you to George Rasmussen for gathering this information.)

Net property taxes collected for 2007:

48 lakeside lots in 2007: \$169,446

10 off-lake lots for 2007: \$10,128

Grand total for all properties on Cy's Drive - \$179,574

Distribution:

|       |                   |          |
|-------|-------------------|----------|
| 10.7% | Town of Fifield   | \$19,214 |
| 36.1% | Price County      | \$64,826 |
| 1.2%  | State of WI       | \$2,155  |
| 34.4% | P.F. School Dist  | \$61,773 |
| 12.9% | Technical College | \$23,165 |
| 4.7%  | Fire Department   | \$8,440  |



## COCHRAN LAKE MANAGEMENT BOARD

President: Randy Cook  
randalljcook@gmail.com • 920-277-4151

Secretary: Pat Schwai  
rpschwai@centurytel.net • 920-762-3199

Treasurer: Donna Mandt (term expiring)

Fifield Town Supervisor: Jack Wierzba  
wierzba@centurytel.net • 715-762-3547

Fifield Town Charirman: Doug Noetzel  
idlehour@centurytel.net • 715-762-3872

Land Conservationist/Price County Liaison: Evan Lund  
lcd@co.price.wi.us • 715-339-2550

### Committee chairs

Fisheries: Frank Sevcik

Boat Landing: Brian Mandt

Water Quality: Sig Kaminski

Adopt a Highway: Greg Yorton

(Thanks to *all* who help keep our roads clean and beautiful!)

Lake Plants: Stan Kmiecik

Website: Don Schmitz

Please feel free to contact any of the board members with ideas or concerns. Thank you to all committee chairs for the work they do throughout the year.

## AGENDA

Cochran Lake District Spring Meeting  
May 23, 2009 8:00 a.m., Pike Lake Fire Station

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Approval of March 13, 2009 minutes
- President Report - Randy Cook
  - Vial of Life Information
  - '09 WI Lakes Convention -Aquatic Invasive Species Update
- Secretary's Report - Pat Schwai
- Treasurer's Report - Donna Mandt
- Town Representatives' Report - Jack Wierzba/Doug Noetzel
- Price County Liaison Land Conservationist's Report - Evan Lund
- Committee Chair Reports
  - Frank Sevcik- Fishery
  - Brian Mandt- Boat Landing
  - Sig Kaminski- Water Quality
  - Greg Yorton- Adopt-a-highway
  - Stan Kmiecik-Lake Plants
  - Don Schmitz- Website
- Lake Business
- Goose Problem
- Election - Treasurer
- Other Business



*Milkweed plants on a sunny afternoon.*

## COCHRAN LAKE IS ONLINE

When you can't get up to the lake, visit with our community online. Here are two ways to get connected.

### Cochran Lake District Google Group

The Cochran Lake group emails have really taken off. What a great way to share information pertinent to Cochran Lake owners! If you are not in the group and would like to hear from other lake owners please let Don Schmitz, [Dons@surgery.wisc.edu](mailto:Dons@surgery.wisc.edu), know so he can add you to this very active group.

The group email address is: [Cochran-Lake-District@googlegroups.com](mailto:Cochran-Lake-District@googlegroups.com)

### Cochran Lake Website

Thanks to Don Schmitz for maintaining our Cochran Lake website! Please take some time and visit the site. There is a lot of good information found there, such as meeting times and minutes.

[http://in.geocities.com/cochran\\_lake\\_district/](http://in.geocities.com/cochran_lake_district/)