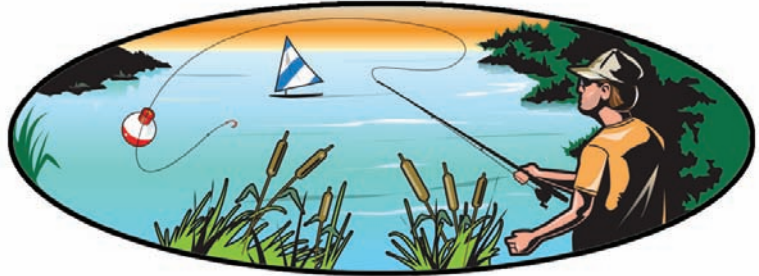


Hardwood Lake Property Owners Association

www.hardwoodlake.org



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Fall 2014

The newsletter is
in **color** on the website.



Beth Smith of West Michigan Aquatic Weed Removal docks the harvester for unloading.

This has been a very trying year for the lake weed control project.
When the project started in 1998 the primary goal was to control the massive amount of non-native weeds like eurasian milfoil. It has been largely successful. *continued on page 2*

www.hardwoodlake.org

For updated information click on *late breaking news* link on the **HOME** page

Weed control update

The lake is extremely rich in nutrients and as one type of plant is reduced, something else will grow in its place. That has happened, not only in the growth of native weeds, but also in algae growth.

When the project first started, in addition to the milfoil there was a lot of planktonic “green scum” algae. It gradually went away to suddenly reappear in late 2013 and through 2014.

This cycle seems to coincide with cattle

farming northeast of the lake, where the primary lake water drains from. Cattle farming re-appeared in the past few years after an absence.

Weed harvesting has been an ongoing endeavour.

The primary reason is to remove plant biomass.

In 2013 the harvesting contractor removed eight machine loads of weeds in the 17 acres earmarked. This year they removed 22 machine loads in 19 acres. Harvested areas were basically the same for the two years.

With almost three times the biomass removal increase in one year there is a strong indication of huge nutrient overload which can come from farming, septic issues and lawn fertilizing. Remember, all of the water in the lake comes from ground runoff.

The first herbicide and algae treatment of the lake this year was on June 17.

Harvesting was done in early July. Because of docks in the lake the harvester was unable to work in between them. Harvesting stirred up the lake and our engineering firm, Progressive, decided to let the water stabilize before another algae treatment, which was done July 17. Within less than a week there was another large algae bloom, which was treated July 22. Progressive said it was not unusual to see another bloom so soon after a treat-



Mark and Beth Smith pilot the weed harvester along the North shore in July.

ment. Treatments are usually effective for only a week or two. Just because there is a treatment, doesn't mean the algae won't return. Following the July 22 treatment water clarity was great for the lake, to a quality of what is usually seen in early spring.

There was another algae treatment September 22. Because there is a fall treatment doesn't necessarily mean there will be an impact on the algae in the spring, per Progressive.

Another complicating factor in the algae treatment addressed by the DEQ who wrote to our herbicide contractor: *“Offshore treatment for epiphytic algae is denied. Do not*

damage native vegetation, native algae, or native macroalgae (e.g. Chara) beyond the five-foot depth contour or beyond 300 feet from shore, whichever is closer to shore.”

Paul Hausler of Progressive Engineering reports, “We had similar algae blooms on Wixom Lake this year and I have preliminarily identified the culprit as Uroglena, a colonial planktonic algae. The problem with this species is that it can persist longer due to its ability to use bacteria as an alternative food source when phosphorus levels are low.”

Paul is investigating the problem and will present his findings at the Lake Board meeting on Monday, October 13, 2014 at 7 pm. Logan Township Hall, 4507 E. M-55.

His findings will be reported in the next newsletter.



Mark Smith, top, of West Michigan Aquatic Weed Removal pulls weeds from the harvester into a truck. Below, he operates the harvester close to a dock.



The Hardwood Lake Board meets annually. Last year's meeting was held at the Logan Township Hall which is the same location where the Property Owners Association meets.

Homes of Hardwood

Have you ever gone for a walk or boat ride and wondered who owns a particular cabin or home on Hardwood Lake? A directory of residents and homes be created and is linked through the CONTACTS page on the website, www.hardwoodlake.org.

As you can imagine, it is difficult to keep up with changes. If you know of any please contact President Dave Sommers.



Austin Schmidt on Hardwood Lake since 1946

It was 1946 when Austin Schmidt was clearing land by hand. His dad, Oscar, had purchased property on the north shore of Hardwood Lake a year earlier for \$300.

"There were only a dozen or so buildings along Hardwood Heights, none on the north



Austin reflects on his years on the lake.

side of the road," reminisced Austin as daughter Peggy and her husband, Jerry, listened around a campfire on the north shore of Hardwood Lake.

If not the longest living resident on the lake, he is close to it.

"There have been thousands of campfires here," the 90-year-old Austin remembered.

In 1946 the 20-year old 1st Lieutenant had recently returned from WWII after flying 30 combat missions as a bombardier on a B-24.

His dad, a Bay City resident, wanted a place up north and a co-worker had built on the lake earlier. They bought it from William Cook, who once owned most of the property around the lake.

"People were starting to get away, after the war," said Austin. "Dad and I built the place by hand. It was just 20 feet by 22 feet on a cement slab and probably cost us less than \$1,000. That was a lot of money back in 1947. We had a pump outside for water. We didn't have electricity for about five years so we used kerosene lamps. And there was the outhouse.

"I liked hunting and shot a lot of partridges

down by the point. There was no one there as we were the last cabin to the east. Shot a lot of ducks too.

"After four to five years we added a front porch. After dad died in 1963 we added a bathroom and kitchen.

Within a few years after the cabin was built daughters Peggy and Marsha joined the family which now includes four granddaughters, five great granddaughters and two great grandsons. "I've been widowed twice," recalled Austin.

"It was really pristine back when we built. There were a lot of woods around. At dusk so many fish would rise it looked like rain on the lake surface. I even saw a bear track or two.

"We felt pretty proud putting around the lake with our 14' plywood boat with our two and a half horse outboard. It was the only outboard on the lake.

"There was a 4-H camp across the lake, the same place the campground is now. I don't remember too much about it other than there



Austin's cabin shortly after it was built

was a big Blue Heron rookery near there. There was also a resort to the west of his cabin with a couple of cabins. One is still there.

Editors Note: This would be the property now owned by the Nasuti family.

"After we built, more cabins went up. Much of the development was in the late 40's to early 50's.

"There was always ducks on the lake all summer, no one ever bothered them. At night

you were lulled to sleep by the mourning cries of loons, croaking bull frogs along the shoreline and crickets. In the evening there were hundreds of swarming fire flies. My two girls used to catch them in glass jars.”

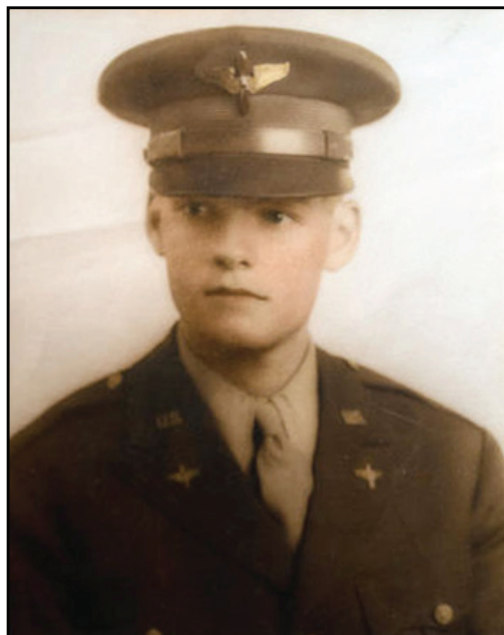
Austin worked for Dow Corning Corporation in Midland. He retired in 1982 as Personnel Manager for the Dow Corning Healthcare Industries Materials Site plant west of Saginaw. He used to teach Dale Carnegie classes and is an accomplished wood carver, with songbirds his specialty.

Austin still enjoys an occasional round of golf and enjoys puttering around the yard of his Bay City home.

He still makes a trip to the cabin every few weeks and finds time to enjoy another campfire overlooking the lake.

“I get homesick for the old days. There are too many people and boats,” he reflected.

“Our place isn’t very prestigious, but it is cozy,” he concluded.



For his 90th birthday, his daughters and grandchildren treated Austin to a flight aboard the Diamond Lil, the last flying B-24 Liberator in the world. It was an emotional visit at the Air Zoo in Kalamazoo,

To see the Bay City Times story on Austin go to: http://www.mlive.com/news/bay-city/index.ssf/2014/09/michigan_honors_essexvilles_austin.html#incart_river

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Lake Board meeting

The Hardwood Lake Board will meet Monday, October 13, 2014 at 7 pm. Logan Township Hall, 4507 E. M-55. The meeting is open to the public.

Looking for something to do?

Check out the local area websites for current activities.

www.westbranch.com

www.tawas.com

www.ogemawherald.com

www.visitwestbranch.com

The sites are linked on

www.hardwoodlake.org

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