



FoCL 2023 Spring Newsletter

www.friendsofclamlake.org

A Special Newsletter and President's Message

In its 17-year history, Friends of Clam Lake (FoCL) has always taken on challenging issues which impact all who live and/or play on Clam Lake. For that reason, this member newsletter is going out to all Clam Lake riparian owners.

We are officially launching the "Wakes and Boats Initiative". It will be an on-going education effort to protect water quality, our shorelines, and property investment. We have seen how excessive boat wakes damage our shorelines, compromise the fisheries, and cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars to save our properties. It's time to do something; not to demand, nor attempt to regulate, but to explain the real issues, provide practical recommendations, and ask for help.

The first step is with you, the riparian owners, understanding the problem, the realities, the research, and the consequences of inaction. The solution will be with the boating public - riparian owners, vacationers, VRBO and Airbnb rentals, and boat rental liveries.

Whether you're a member of Friends of Clam Lake (FoCL) or not, please join us in this effort. Remember, FoCL is proud to be the only organization solely dedicated to Clam Lake.

Paul Sak, FoCL President

2023 Annual Meeting – Saturday, August 5

- 10:00 am - 10:30 am: Registration
- 10:30 am - 11:30 am: Meeting with Speaker (TBD)
- 11:30 am - 12:30 pm: Socialize - Get to know your neighbors

With record attendance at last year's meeting, we will be returning to **Torch Lake Cellars**.

Thanks to the donation of a 55" large screen TV from Ken and Laurie Butman, the computer-generated presentations will be easier to view and read.



Savor the beautiful view from the patio while you sip a Torch Lake Cellar specialty, a mimosa, on us. Or, enjoy a glass of juice, our treat. Coffee, tea, and snacks will also be provided by FoCL.

Alert: Are You Getting Our Emails?

We have a new email address:
focl@friendsofclamlake.org

On 12/18/2022 and 2/25/2023, we sent out our first Quarterly e-Newsletters. If you didn't receive them, it's because some email systems put them in a "Spam/Junk" folder or the "Promotions" folder when using Gmail. There are ways to correct this.

Since special announcements and future e-Newsletters will be sent via email, we ask you to do the following:

1. Create a new, separate Contact in your email system for Friends of Clam Lake (FoCL) using our new email address focl@friendsofclamlake.org.
2. Check the enclosed membership application. If the email address is correct, great!
If the email address is incorrect or missing, please submit your current email address when you renew or join.

By creating a new Contact, this should ensure that FoCL emails are not put in some "Spam/Junk/Promotions" folder.

If you have an issue creating a new Contact for FoCL, please send us an email. We will work with you to try and resolve the problem.

On the Road to Summer



Welcome from the Membership Director

It's been a long, gray winter that some may even call grueling. But now it's beginning to warm up, and look and smell like spring, and that means summer is not far off. If you're like me, your thoughts are turning to Clam Lake and all the fun to be had with family and friends.

A few worries may also be popping up...what your property looks like after the cold and snow, needed maintenance on your home/cottage, lake water levels, etc. Looking ahead you may be wondering what condition your shoreline will be in after another season of increased boat traffic.

Well, FoCL probably can't help with what you find you need to do for prepping your cottage or house for the summer. But we've got your back when it comes to helping maintain the beauty of Clam Lake and protecting your water and shoreline quality.

Being a Member of FoCL is an investment in the future. We have new initiatives that everyone living on or around the Lake will benefit from. If you love Clam Lake, as all of us on the Board do, join now, or renew your membership. If you have any questions or need more information about FoCL, feel free to contact me or any other Board Member.

Warmly, Megan Raphael

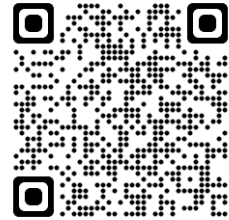
Membership Options to Renew or Join

Enclosed in this mailing is the membership application for 2023. Our annual dues remain at \$35 per year.

You can mail the application to us or as an option, you may also renew or join at our website:

<https://friendsofclamlake.org/membership/>

Or use the QR code:



Note that with a mobile phone or tablet, once you get to the website, exit the "mobile version" to enter data on-line.

Boaters Education

To earn a Boating Safety Certificate, the Antrim County Sheriff's Office conducts free boater safety courses every spring for local students. FoCL helps sponsor the lunches and refreshments for these Saturday classes.

Please take note, Michigan law states:

Those **born on or after July 1, 1996**, may legally operate a **motorized boat over 6 horsepower** only if they have been issued a Boating Safety Certificate and have it in their possession.

Those **at least 16 years of age and born after Dec. 31, 1978**, may legally operate a **PWC** only if they have obtained a Boating Safety Certificate.

Another option (for a fee): www.boatEd.com.



Our Northern Michigan Owls

By Megan Raphael



They make the night come alive with their calls and screams. The flapping of their wings announcing their arrival is a thrill. To encounter one sitting in a tree as you're walking down the path is memorable.




Clam Lake is the home to many owls that you can hear almost every night, establishing and protecting their territory, wooing a mate, or signaling the presence of a predator. As nocturnal birds, they are often heard but not seen.

Michigan hosts 11 species of owls, and in our area the barred owl and barn owls are most prevalent. They've often been called "one stop shops for pest control" because they are so good at ridding an area of their favorite meals: mice, voles, and other small rodents.

Research has shown that a group of owls can eliminate several hundred rodents in one season. Smaller owls also eat insects.

Owls' natural enemies include squirrels, hawks, skunks, weasels - and humans. They are spooked by loud talking, shouting, and clapping, and sudden flashes of light. In fact, lights of any kind will deter owls from your area.

To support a healthy owl population:

-  Mow less often to give owls a more appealing hunting ground.
-  Put outdoor lights on a timer.
-  Keep loud noises – shouting, clapping – down at night

Remember owls are revered in many cultures, and when they're seen in an area, they're said to bring greater inner wisdom, transformation, and good luck. Who doesn't want more of that?!

Loon Watch – Every Year is Different

By Fred Sittel

An article in last spring's newsletter about Clam Lake loons ended with the hopeful thought that territorial disputes being observed would be sorted out by egg laying time, leading to chicks again being raised with the help of FoCL's artificial nesting island (ANI) and boater advisory buoys. Unfortunately, those disputes continued to dominate last spring's activity and no chicks were seen anywhere on Clam Lake in 2022.

The good news is every year is different! This spring at least one territorial pair has been spending time on the lake since mid-March. On April 22nd, the pair were observed exchanging places on the ANI, signaling their intent to take advantage of the relative safety it provides from shoreline predators during a month of egg incubation. Since 2009, there were ten years when loon chicks hatched on the ANI. The earliest hatch date was June 3 (two times) and the latest was June 19 (three times). Incubation normally takes a month. So, over those years loons began spending a lot of time on the ANI during early to mid-May.

Adult loons trading places on the ANI before the end of April may signal an early start to egg laying and incubation this year. That's good because the earlier chicks hatch, the better able they are to avoid boat traffic when it really picks up at the end of June. This year's hope for loons and their chicks is "better early than never!"

Could This Be in 2023?



Wakes and Boats Initiative



The enclosed brochure is a quick summary of the excessive boat wakes problem on Clam Lake. While wakesurf boats have been cited in much of the research, almost every type of boat contributes to the problem at some point during their operation. For more insight into this issue, please visit our website or use the QR code shown below.

In the next couple of weeks, we will be asking local boat rental facilities and vacation rental agencies, VRBO and Airbnb rentals, and individual vacation rental owners to make this brochure or rack card available to their clientele.

If you would like extra brochures or rack cards, please email us at focl@friendsofclamlake.org.

Website: <https://friendsofclamlake.org/wakes-and-boats-initiative/>



When waves get behind riprap, it becomes useless as riprap wall collapses into water.



Do You Know?

By Megan Raphael

One of the most enjoyable activities on the Lake is stargazing...the night sky is always fascinating. But very often too many lights or lights pointed in the wrong direction make it hard to even see the stars.

Do you know that Helena Township and Forest Home Township both have Zoning Ordinances that cover lighting on your property? These ordinances are designed to “preserve the restful quality of nighttime,” while ensuring the safety of individuals and property.

Included are requirements that all outdoor lighting must have “cut-off shielding” to make sure the light is not projected up into the sky, disallowing quartz and vapor lighting, etc.



It's easy to maintain our dark skies and be a good neighbor with a few simple fixes to your lighting. To learn more, see the Helena Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 5.07 at:

<http://www.helenatownship.com/links/ordinances/> or the Forest Home Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 1502 at: <https://www.foresthometwp.com/documents-forms>

Friends of Clam Lake

P. O. Box 173, Alden MI 49612

Officers

President: Paul Sak
VP: Bob Hockenberger
Secretary: Fred Sittel
Treasurer: Art Hoadley

FoCL is a member driven organization dedicated to the protection of Clam Lake and its environment for all to enjoy.

Directors at Large

Bill Hershey Megan Raphael
Tom Marsh Gary Mayes
(One open position)

Website: <https://friendsofclamlake.org>
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Webmaster: Jessica Kubin