

# Shore Lines

Pickereel-Crooked Lake Association

Fall 2015

*Working, Educating, and Advocating for Quality Lake Living Since 1963*

## PCLA President's Letter

### THE STATE OF THE LAKES - 2015

Wow, we are halfway through the second decade of the century, and 2 years since we celebrated the PCLA's Fiftieth Birthday! Our PCLA members and board should feel good about fulfilling our mission statement of: "Working, Educating and Advocating for Quality Lake Living Since 1963".

Our commitment to environmental conservation and water quality continues to be our most important issues as we, along with our many allied partners, monitor the waters of our two lakes for pollution, invasive species, wetland protection, zoning issues, water levels and wildlife habitat. On all of these fronts we have held the status in check with some gains, some losses and plenty of discussion about the reports that we have received, worst case scenarios, and activities that we can initiate to provide solutions. This is a continuous exercise as we look at new weed reports, fish studies, permits, weather conditions, lock operations and everyday visually inspecting our two lakes, the Pickereel-Crooked Channel and our incoming and outgoing creeks, streams and river.

Many of you have taken the Watershed Council's analysis of your individual shorelines to heart. You have changed the way you fertilize, mow, trim and plant that critical distance between the water and your buildings (the first 25 feet being the most critical) to prevent erosion and provide a "natural area" to benefit our watershed. We hope that more of you will follow our Natural Shorelines Committee's advice and recommendations.

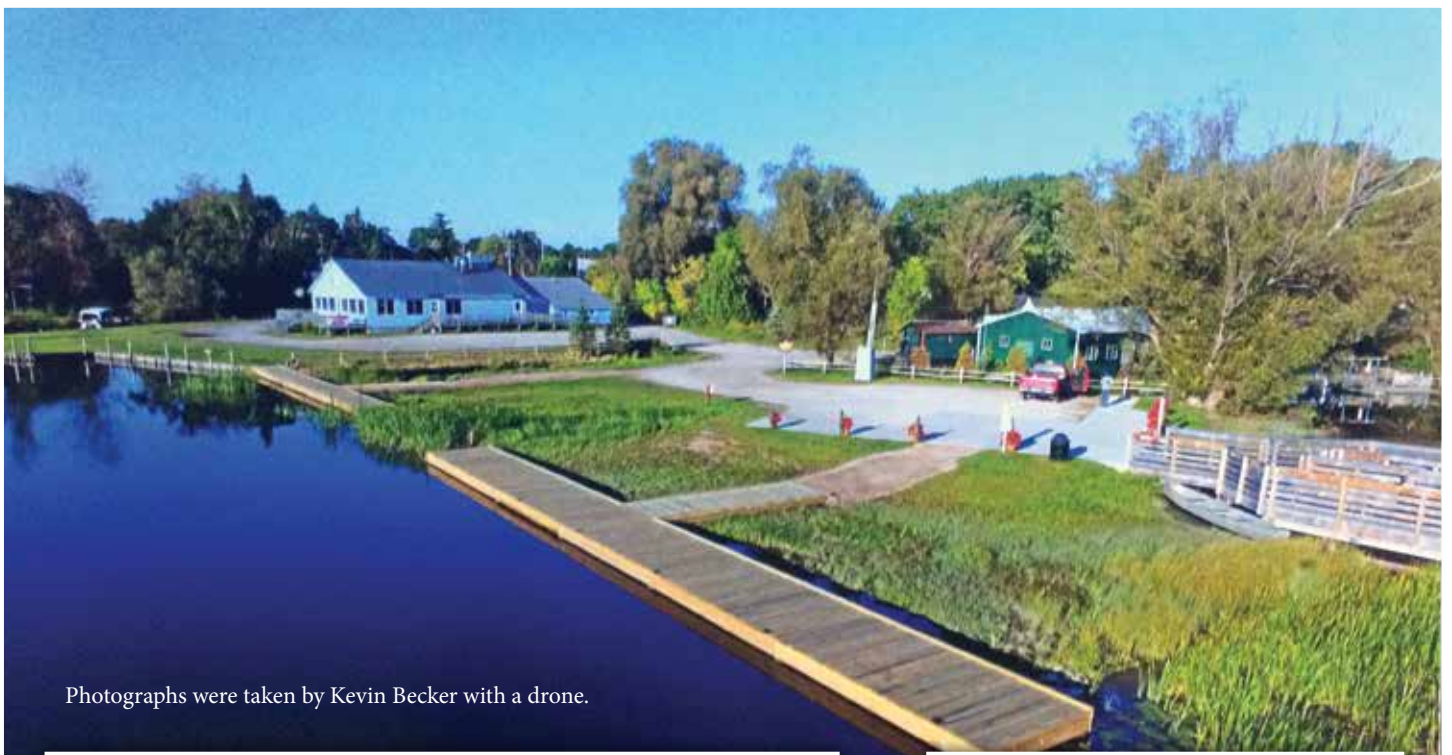


The health, welfare and safety of our lakes are prime concerns of the PCLA. We have had few incidents on the lakes, and have promoted "no wake" zones for safety (as well as erosion), supported the Emmet County sheriff and DNR patrols, worked with the community on life saving and small boat handling, and marked dangerous underwater obstructions. As many of you know, the change in Michigan's fireworks laws allow for larger, nosier, more varied and brilliant displays. While there are few laws regulating this in our four townships, we hope that "neighbor to neighbor" you will restrict uses to holidays, special occasions and between dusk and 11 PM.

Recreational activities of boating and fishing seem to be flourishing with many new boats geared to specific uses, kayaks, paddle boards, and tow behinds/water mats observed on the lakes. Fishing seems to be at an all time high (my observations); although the fishermen seem to be stingy on relating success stories (or locations and strategies). All we can say is: Have fun and be considerate of others!

PCLA itself is in fine shape with active volunteers (we have NO paid employees), good communications, dedicated board members, conservative finances/budgeting, a consistent 300 members (with 20-25 business members included), transparent/recorded administration, and excellent community presence. Dues are still only \$25.00 per family. We have had four new board members in the last three years – and hope that more of you will volunteer for the future. A constantly changing board with representatives from all parts of our lakes is essential for a properly functioning lakes association.

Thank you for your membership and participation – We will see you on the lakes! *Darlene and Dudley Marvin*



Photographs were taken by Kevin Becker with a drone.



## AIG Completes One More Crooked River Improvement

Another facet of the Sanctuary Island Project has been completed. With donated labor from Alanson Improvement Group (AIG) members (Tom Fairbairn, Greg Warner, Dick Weidenhamer, and Larry Williams), and volunteer help from Kevin Becker, John Fowler, Jeff Prater, and Tom Myers, new boardwalks are now in place along the edge of the Crooked River. High river levels have been responsible for the delay, but the construction of the new boardwalks is now complete. Inscribed boards purchased during Riverfest by individuals, families, and businesses, are now ready to be “found”. The new area is a good fishing site and also allows for additional docking for boats traveling up and down the river.

A grant has also been submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources by the Village of Alanson to fund the construction of a boathouse/public restroom. The labor for this project will again be donated by the AIG and other volunteers. The location of the boathouse will be between the two newly constructed boardwalks. No date for completion has been set and will depend on the approval of this grant.

# FUN ON THE LAKE!



Spencer Wineman of Crooked lake and downstate friend Emma McLean of Clarkston MI pull off a double wakesurf!

12 mph, on a short surf board. The rider rides close behind the boat, and the goal is to be able to surf behind the boat on the wake without holding on to any rope. The wave created can naturally push the surfer forward and allow the surfer to ride a perpetual wave—pretty cool!

These are just a few of the ways many of us enjoyed summer on these two incredible lakes. I believe each of us should be able to enjoy our lakes in a lawful and respectful manner. Specific laws pertaining to water sports do exist. It is the operator's responsibility to know these laws. Some of the specific laws include having a spotter on board, not skiing close to sunset, and observing no wake rules near other vessels or shorelines.

For a complete update on boater laws, please visit:  
[www.Michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.Michigan.gov/dnr)

Enjoy the water!

*Dave Harris*, PCLA board of directors

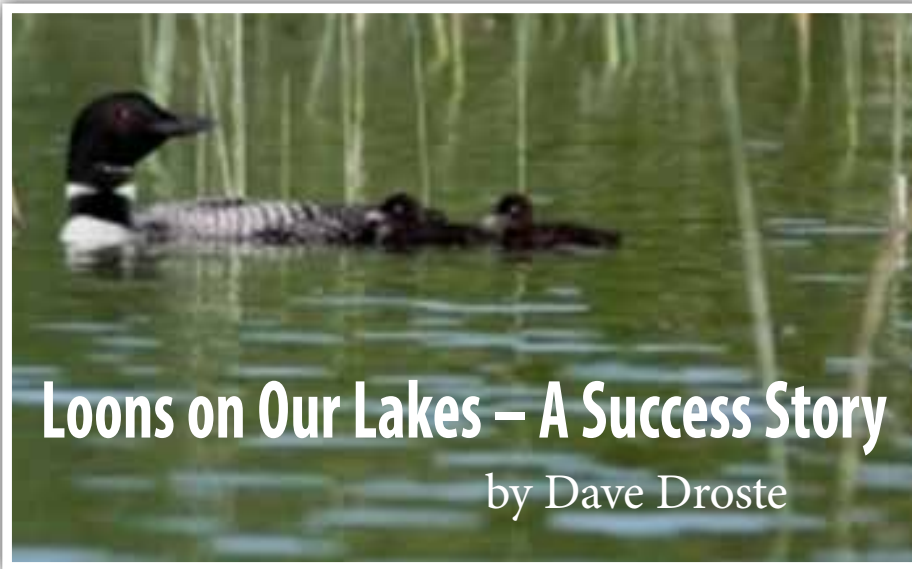
Both residents and non-residents use our lakes for all sorts of recreational opportunities. Most people enjoy being on the water. It is enjoyable and it allows us to spend more quality time with both friends and family. Water sports are one way to spend some quality time and make lasting memories. Some of the most popular summer water sporting activities include waterskiing, wakeboarding, tubing, and the latest is wake surfing!

While many of us have been towed behind a motorboat hanging on for dear life to an inflatable tube of some sort, fewer are able to master the skills needed to glide atop the water either on a ski, wakeboard, or surfboard. Skiing starts out with the novice learning the basics with getting pulled out of the water on two skis. The more advanced skier learns that one ski can be more fun and allows for sharper turns. This slalom skiing takes more skill and more endurance. Typically slalom skiers ski behind a boat at about 30 mph. Since many were looking for different ways to have fun behind a boat, wakeboarding came about. Wakeboarding is similar to snowboarding except on water-not snow. The board used is similar in size to a snowboard, and riders put their feet into boots that are attached to the board. The boat pulls the boarder slower at about 22 mph which creates a larger wake for the rider to play on and over. Aerial jumping across the wakes on a wakeboard while being towed can be fun for the young and daring. Lastly, wake surfing is performed by riding the wake at even a slower speed, around



Cormorants roosting on Crooked Lake - Hope they are just passing through!

# Wildlife Corner



## Loons on Our Lakes – A Success Story by Dave Droste

A year ago I wrote about loon nesting platforms on our lakes and described efforts to encourage a pair to nest and raise a brood. What a difference a year can make! This is the story of success on Crooked Lake largely due to a small group of dedicated volunteers. Here is a recap of activity this year and an update as we wind down the season to migration.

Early this spring a mating pair of loons was spotted on Crooked Lake at the Rocky Point nesting platform. Once eggs were laid and incubation began observers realize we were poised to see the first chicks to hatch in a very long time. Although our Rocky Point nesting pair was late getting started, incubation was finally complete and 2 chicks were successfully hatched. At this point the biggest challenge to their survival began. This means these chicks and parents had to contend with a multitude of dangers. First, they had to contend with the numerous and giant, gar (pike) that cruise the shallows inside the cove where the loons spent their first couple of weeks. Eventually, they had to face the busier sections of the lake, as they grew and needed more and bigger

fish. Watercraft traffic posed a serious peril to the loon family, especially for chicks that separate from their parents, and might have challenged the threats some boats present. Our lake community responded in splendid fashion to a plea for restraint during the summer months:

It's anyone's guess how this historically first loon family will fare this busy summer season. We can make their life easier by spreading the word of their presence, cautioning folks to look out for them, and most important, to give them lots of space. Viewing them from a distance is much preferred. Following them around will upset the parents, and cause them to break away from the chicks to address what they see as a threat. Please enjoy the lake with particular caution this season, so we can see this loon family through their first nesting season successfully and safely.

[Here's an update from Jeff Lange on how they're doing this fall:](#)

The loon family on Crooked Lake fared perfectly, and as of early September, both chicks were doing fine. They are venturing further out in the lake, staying, according to reports, in the waters between Rocky Point

and Oden Island. Their success (the first in many decades) is due partly to all the folks who helped spread the word of their presence and to strict diligence of these loon parents.

Their eagerness and determination to protect their young from the threats of eagles, fish, other loons, and the occasional human intruder surpassed most loon parents I've seen. This is especially rare for loons new to raising a family. The boat race came a little closer than I'd expected to the nesting area where the loons spent much of their time, but fortunately the family stayed tucked deep inside their cove during the event. Because these loons nested about a month later than the average time for loons in the area, the young still haven't mastered flight as of this writing, but should be flying by October, giving them a tolerable margin before weather conditions change.

Because we'd like to identify these loon adults and subsequent offspring from season to season, it would be very helpful to have them banded next year. Color bands are attached to each leg, making tracking them easy whenever they stretch or lift their feet to preen. This way, anyone within binocular range can identify each adult, and we can tell when, and if, chicks return to Crooked Lake as breeding adults following their first migration. The biologist I band with, Joe Kaplan, comes from the Upper Peninsula and it's necessary to pay his expenses. Anyone wishing to contribute financially to this effort, or provide a boat to use, can contact me through my [looncorps.org](http://looncorps.org) website. Contact information is at the bottom of every page. I can always be reached any day at 231-347-3688 for further information on the Crooked Lake loons. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this truly historical event.

Jeff Lange, [looncorps.org](http://looncorps.org)

Stay tuned for more loon news in 2016. Hopefully we can coax a mating pair to nest on Pickerel.

# Creeks of Pickerel and Crooked Lakes

Whether we fish, boat, swim, or simply watch quiet ripples break a reflection, we love our lakes and their streams. Even when western winds blow a chop or ice covers the lakes, our interest doesn't chill. Capturing a photographic vision crystallizes the moment.

We live in a land that was carved by descending glacial ice, and then shaped by the receding ice as it dropped its till in moraines (hills). This early post ice age land was further defined by ancient lakes with waves and their "abandoned beaches."

Over the millennia and still today, natural springs in both of the lakes and the Black Hole bring forth water from the aquifer. Similarly ground water, often associated with wetlands, seeps into the lakes. However, most replenishing of the waters is from recognized creeks and intermittent, streams. Two seasonal creeks worth mentioning flow into northeastern Pickerel Lake; one is crossed by Felder Lane and the other enters the lake just beyond the end of Wayne Williams Road.

Interestingly, some creeks have disappeared or are renamed. On page 80 in the 1897 Michigan Biennial Report of Fish Commissioner, "Brook Trout Plants" for Emmet County, the following creeks were listed: Town Line, Syder and Conway Spring Brook from the Oden area, and Bird's Eye Creek from Littlefield. Town Line Creek is also shown in the 1902 Emmet County Plat Book as it flows across two sections in southeastern Little Traverse Twp., then crosses the corner of Littlefield Twp. to empty into Crooked Lake, pp.13 and 11, respectively. [name.umdl.umich.edu/2933895.0001.001](http://name.umdl.umich.edu/2933895.0001.001) None of these creeks, at least with these names, appear on contemporary maps. Probably names were changed or over the last hundred years the creeks have disappeared.

Major streams (tributaries) of Pickerel and Crooked Lake Watershed are: Minnehaha Creek (Silver Creek and West Branch of Minnehaha); Mud Creek; Cedar Creek (Berry Creek); Fish Hatchery Creek, renamed Oden Creek; and Iduna Creek, sometimes called Round Lake Creek. Although it's not a stream the Pickerel Channel plays a role in water transfer.

These streams not only rush down hills and meander across abandoned fields, they form part of our lakes' past and their present health. Recalling memories of wading or trout fishing bring back stories of yesteryear.

A closer look at individual creeks to recall personal anecdotes or local history will be in a future issue.

*Kay Winslow*



**Thinking of sealcoating your driveway or parking lot of your home or business?** If so, please consider the impact coal-tar sealcoating may have on water quality and human health. Coal-tar-based pavement sealant is the largest source of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) found in 40 urban lakes studied by the U.S. Geological Survey. There are serious environmental and public health concerns associated with PAHs. Several PAHs are suspected human carcinogens and are toxic to fish and other aquatic life. Alarming, PAH concentrations have been increasing in urban lakes in recent decades

Coal-tar sealcoat contains coal-tar pitch, which is composed of at least 50 percent PAHs or up to 100,000 parts per million. This is about 1,000 times higher than PAH concentrations in asphalt-based sealcoat products. Over time, sunlight and vehicle traffic wear down sealcoat. Small particles of sealcoat are transported from parking lots and driveways to streams and lakes by stormwater runoff. One study found that the amount of PAHs in stormwater runoff from parking lots sealed with coal-tar sealants was 65 times higher than stormwater from unsealed parking lots.

When fish are exposed to PAHs, they exhibit chronic problems, including fin erosion, liver abnormalities, cataracts, skin tumors, and immune system impairments. Benthic macroinvertebrates and other aquatic organisms that are exposed to PAHs are susceptible to a number of detrimental effects, including inhibited reproduction, delayed emergence, and mortality.

As a result, states and cities across the nation have taken action to address PAHs from coal-tar sealant, many banning the sale and use of pavement sealants containing coal-tar. Several other states, including Michigan, Illinois, and New York, are also considering bans.

**Prevent the further contamination of PAHs in our lakes by supporting a state ban in Michigan and making sure you are not using any coal-tar sealants.** There are other pavement options, such as pervious concrete, permeable asphalt, and paver systems that do not require sealants. These types of pavements also allow stormwater to naturally infiltrate, resulting in decreased runoff. If you do choose to use a sealcoat, choose alternatives to coal-tar-based sealants, such as asphalt-based sealants or latex sealants. You can determine whether a product contains coal-tar by reading the label.

[www.watershedcouncil.org](http://www.watershedcouncil.org)

## AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION!

When Crooked Lake made the headlines this fall, the news wasn't good: Quagga mussels were discovered by Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council when they were doing a plant study for invasive species.

The identified site of the invasion was the Little Traverse Township boat launch on US-31 north. At that time, the news reported our site was the first lake in Michigan to have made a positive identification of this new threat. Unfortunately, this was poorly researched by the reporter and the report was incorrect. In our area, Mullet Lake also hosts quagga mussels.

It is especially disheartening that quagga mussels, similar to zebra mussels but smaller, were found at a boat launch. Invasive species can travel from lake to lake via boats, watercrafts, and trailers. PCLA has a team of boat launch monitors to check for invasive species at their most likely source.

In fact, quaggas were found at other sites along the main Channel in Crooked Lake so it is possible that the species was introduced downstream and traveled up, as well as the other way around. This is why they are called "invasive". Invasive species are organisms that do not stay in one place, they multiply rapidly, and they are practically impossible to eradicate once they are introduced.

The takeaway from this is what we have been preaching for several years now: boat and boat trailer washing are critical preventive steps for keeping invasives out. A quick visual inspection is not enough. Follow the simple steps on this page to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species in Michigan's waters.

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## BLACK HOLE TIDBITS

- At a recent PCLA monthly meeting the question was asked, "Is the Black Hole bottomless?" I wonder who has the answer to this?
- At the same meeting, we were discussing Cormorants as a threat to the Lakes. Low and behold, we found a tree near Ponsheawaing with over 40 of the "pesky and fish eating birds". Has anyone seen any on Pickerel Lake?
- Wayne Blomberg mentioned that a painted turtle was found in the Walleye Rearing Pond and rather than seeing him die in the pond as it drained down, the turtle was given to a taxidermist and can now be used as an educational display piece—contact Wayne for details. In a less fortunate turn of events, a large dead snapping turtle was turned into Wayne at the marina; and on further inspection, it was found that the turtle had been shot! I doubt it was in "self defense"...please be on the look out for this careless and illegal activity.
- We would like to give a rousing welcome to new Board member, Gail May, who lives on Artesian Lane on Pickerel Lake. Gail is following in her father's footsteps (Frank Lambert) to serve on the PCLA Board of Directors. She will be joining Dave Harris on our Membership Committee.
- A dirty task—deploying bottom mats to control invasive Curly Leaf Pondweed on several sites in Crooked Lake. Thank you to Ray McMullen, Larry Marvin and Dave Harris for this "mucking around job"!

- Clean boats, trailers and equipment before and after launch
- Drain water from bilges and livewells at the ramp before leaving
- Dry trailers, boats, equipment and storage areas thoroughly before using in a different body of water
- Dispose of unused bait in the trash
- Don't transfer live fish to waterbodies other than where they were originally caught
- Disinfect livewells and bilges with a bleach solution:

**1/2 cup bleach to 5 gallons of water OR Potassium Chloride**, a very effective cleanser for boats and equipment used in waters containing zebra or quagga mussels. KCL also does not have the corrosive side effects of bleach. Potassium Chloride can be purchased at any home improvement or hardware store selling water conditioning products. Use a 200 ppm solution created by mixing one teaspoon of dry KCL salt crystals in 2 gallons of waters.

Quagga and zebra mussels are filter feeders can dramatically reduce the amount of food available for other species. PCLA and Tip of the Mitt are looking into ways to control and/or minimize the effects of these two mussels. As Grandma used to say, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!"

*Ray McMullen, Chair*  
Invasive Species Committee



- If you see Karen Plasencia, (another second generation Board member—Mom, Betty Bayless), thank her for her ten years of service to the Board and Membership Committee!
- September Bonus—The great boating weather this September has certainly extended the season for partying on the Black Hole and the Crooked Lake Sandbar.
- Camp Petosega has a newly constructed (October 2014) play area by the beach. If you have little ones who would love to enjoy the play structure, moor your boat on the southwest end of the beach and enjoy walking on the sandy bottom of Pickerel Lake to your final destination. Have fun!
- We are waiting for the publication of two significant studies (TOMWC's Aquatic Plant Study of 2014-15 and The Northern Lakes Walleye Study of the Inland Waterway). These reports, regarding walleye populations and invasive species detection on our Lakes, will be published on our web page upon receiving them.
- Lastly, take a look at the new river decking at Sanctuary Island on the Crooked River—Pretty nice for tying up your boat and visiting the Island and the Alanson area! The Alanson Area Improvement Group (with our very own Greg Warner as a member) is largely responsible for this boating accessible improvement.

Our Business Members provide additional support to the P.C.L.A. Please utilize their services and thank them!!

- B&H Painting and Home Repair [B.H.paintingrepair@gmail.com](mailto:B.H.paintingrepair@gmail.com)
- Breezy Shores Property Owners Association
- Coldwell Banker Fairbairn Realty [www.fairbairnrealty.com](http://www.fairbairnrealty.com)
- Countryside Realty
- Crooked Lake Yacht Club [www.crookedlakeyc.org](http://www.crookedlakeyc.org)
- Crooked Vine Vineyard & Winery [www.crookedvinewine.com](http://www.crookedvinewine.com)
- Edward Jones Investments-Dan Ledingham [www.edwardjones.com](http://www.edwardjones.com)
- Human Systems Change Consulting
- Independent Management Services
- Key Printing and Design [www.keyprintinganddesign.com](http://www.keyprintinganddesign.com)
- Little Traverse Conservancy [www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org)
- Maple River Resort
- Music Makers of Petoskey, Inc [dward@charter.net](mailto:dward@charter.net)
- North by Nature Landscapes [www.nbnlandscapes.com](http://www.nbnlandscapes.com)
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- Northwoods Chiropractic [drspringborn@aol.com](mailto:drspringborn@aol.com)
- Onaway Family Dentistry [www.onawayfamilydentistry.com](http://www.onawayfamilydentistry.com)
- Petoskey Outboard Cruising Club
- Ryde Marine [www.rydemarine.com](http://www.rydemarine.com)
- Stafford's Crooked River Lodge [www.staffords.com/CrookedRiver](http://www.staffords.com/CrookedRiver)
- Sun Shade North Window Tinting [www.sunshadenorth.com](http://www.sunshadenorth.com)
- Tigerlillys [www.tigerlillysflowers.com](http://www.tigerlillysflowers.com)
- Windjammer Marina [www.windjammermarina.com](http://www.windjammermarina.com)
- WW Fairbairn & Sons, Inc. [www.wwfairbairn.com](http://www.wwfairbairn.com)



**PCLA**

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**To Honor & Remember**



Louis W Jr & Meryl D Hankey in memory of **David K Williams**

Price Family Michigan Partnership in memory of **Betty Marsh**

Thomas Fairbairn in memory of **Jean & John Fairbairn**

Nannie Turrell in memory of **Robert & Jean Turrell**



## CROOKED RIVER LOCK UPDATE

### “Lock traffic up over 15 % in 2015”

The summer of 2015 has been one of the best years in a while with an abundance of sunshine and just enough rain to grow wonderful flowers and vegetables. Near normal rainfall have made operations at the Crooked River Lock much easier for the lock master in keeping water at or near prescribed levels.

With the addition of automated water level gages, installed this spring by the US Army Corps of Engineers, water levels are read



Here is a link to where the report can be accessed on the webpage.

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/Missions/Operations/InlandRoute,MI.aspx>

and posted to their website hourly. Once at the page, click on the hourly water level link posted on this page to the left.

As you will see, the page also includes latest navigation channel soundings throughout the system, as well as the mandated target levels for the lock. The lock operators continue (as in the past) to record daily gate setting and weather conditions, so we have a record of gate position versus levels experienced.

With respect to the target levels, they are still shown as included in the lease (w/ the exception that they are now referenced to IGLD 1985). With concurrence we can keep the 595.4 target level for August and September.

*Dan Plasencia*

**CLOSED OFFICIALLY FOR THE SEASON  
SUNDAY, OCT. 25, 2015 at 5:00 P.M.**

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## WERE YOU THERE?

The PCLLA hosted a Wine and Cheese Meet and Greet gathering August 20 at the Crooked Vine Vineyard and Winery in Alanson. The weather was not very inviting for much of the day but luckily the clouds parted just in time for us to enjoy the evening. The opportunity to connect with friends and neighbors in a beautiful setting, with no agenda except to get to know one another and catch up on recent events, was certainly successful.

Once a year we like to take the time to recognize our members and volunteers and express our appreciation for all the time and effort they provide the PCLLA in our many endeavors. Thank you for all you do to help us in our mission to protect and preserve our precious waterways. Hope to see you next year at our celebration.

*Judy Reddick Brown*