



# Douglas Lake Improvement Association Inc.

May, 2005

www.douglaslake.org

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A few weeks ago, as I was passing through Roscommon County on the south east side of Houghton Lake, I drove through the after math of the forest fire that had just been brought under control. I am still vividly carrying with me the sight of charcoal gray ground covered by dirty white ash, stumps smoldering and of tree trunks 6 to 15 feet in height standing like stark chimneys emitting plums of smoke from their hollow centers. Because we are "lake people", especially in the summer, we often focus on the lake and forget the land that surrounds it. When I arrived at the cottage later in the day I noticed how dry our woods was and how easily a forest fire could strike our area of mixed forest. Imagine walks through a charred countryside instead of green paths. So please keep an eye out for fire, do not let your guests be careless with fire and always follow the fire rules for the conditions.

Recently we informed the DNR of major damage to the boat ramp due to ice shoves during the winter. They have said that they will be out and repair should soon be under way. Watch the Web site and we will let you know when it is fixed and once again usable as a boat ramp.

Have a good spring and think summer, it will come.

Barbara Wilkinson

## *The History Corner*



The early 1900's saw many forest fires in northern Michigan. Climatic conditions were at their worst, with droughts, high winds, and hot temperatures off and on for several years. In 1908 the village of Metz in Presque Isle County, a hub of farming, lumbering and a stopping point of the Detroit & Mackinac Railway on the way to Alpena and Cheboygan, burned to the ground. Metz vanished as a brush fire which started several miles to the west cut a swath 3 miles wide by 30 miles long taking 42 lives and destroying 200,000 acres of land before burning itself out on the shores of Lake Huron. That same fall there were fires at West Branch, Black River, Sault Ste. Marie, Petoskey and Cheboygan to mention only a few. A Petoskey report stated "A summer resort near Conway is threatened with destruction, forest fires creeping upon all sides. A pall of smoke hangs over Bayview, the big Methodist resort, but fires are not near enough to cause anxiety. East of Brutus, the fires are sweeping towards Riggsville." At the same time "Cheboygan, Mich. Oct. 17 - an immense tract of hardwood burned over, destroying the new camps being built. The men escaped with only their clothes, and one horse, being driven out last night at midnight, and compelled to run to the lakeshore. Lakeside resort has been burned, the groves and cottages. County farmers are saving their homes, but all the stuff in the woods has burned. The Indian Reservation south of Mullet Lake has burned over and the Indians are homeless."

Around 1913 Douglas Lake had its own forest fire. In the book Memories of Douglas Lake, compiled by the north shore residents, Fritz Roberts remembered, "For four or five summers we lived in the Inglis house, Sunny

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# We Will Miss

We offer our condolences to the families of Rhea Gaunt and Howard Ervin



**Dr. Rhea I. Gaunt, Ph.D.**, 61, of Cresson, Pa., died Tuesday, March 22, 2005, at UPMC Shadyside Hospital in Pittsburgh. The daughter of Ernest and Donna Rae Rhea was born Feb. 8, 1944, in Bloomington, Ind. She received her associate's degree from Northern Michigan College, bachelor's degree from Michigan State, master's degree from Heidelberg College in Ohio and her Ph.D. from Kent State University of Ohio. She taught English in the Netherlands and taught French and English in Ohio and Michigan public schools. She was a coordinator for the gifted students in the Ohio public schools, and the last eight years worked as a professor of education at St. Francis University in Loretto, Pa., where she was a founding member of Kappa Delta Pi, an honorary society for educators. Rhea enjoyed traveling all over the world and spending time with her family both at Douglas Lake and at home. Rhea was a familiar and helpful person at the lake for many years she is missed by all. She is survived by her parents of Largo, Fla. and Douglas Lake, her children, Siobhan and Sean Dalrymple, and her sisters Sara Lagasse, and Joan Stafford.

**Howard Guy Ervin** 86, of New Berlin, A second generation Douglas Laker, Boze was a Naval Air Corps pilot in World War II and recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross. He died March 16, 2005 unexpectedly of heart failure. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1941 where he was a member of the Flying Illini Squadron and Sigma Chi Fraternity. He had two terms of combat duty in the South Pacific where as a dive-bomber pilot, he made air strikes on Japanese-held islands and against the Japanese fleet. His squadron supported MacArthur's landings on Leyte Gulf. On January 15, 1945, his plane was severely damaged by anti-aircraft fire and he was forced to make a crash-landing in heavy seas during the monsoon season. Fortunately, he was picked up after two passes by the destroyer U.S.S. Maddox. Upon returning to the States, he married Janet Halliday of Muncie, IN. He was Midwest District Manager for Owens-Corning until retirement. He is survived by his wife, Janet; three sons, Howard III, Dennis David, four grandchildren, Howard IV, Kelly, Kyle and Rebecca. Through out his life "Boze" enjoyed and loved his time at the lake with family and friends.



## *Winter - Spring*

*Mark Paddock*

Winter was rather nondescript in 2004-5, not very cold, snowy or windy, just sort of average. We had about 90" of snow (below normal) with a maximum depth of 26" on my snow stake on March 20. The coldest reading at my house was -21 on January 27, although the Pellston Airport routinely has 5-10 degrees colder on clear, calm nights. The lake froze over in mid-December and thawed on April 12. Both dates are about normal. Without a deep snow cover the ice became quite thick, over 20", and this thick ice caused some shore damage, especially on the east shores. For example, it pushed up the concrete pads on the lake access by the DLB several feet. Ice expansion is a tremendously strong force!

Early spring was unusually mild, sunny and dry, or completely different than our usual mix of unpleasant early spring conditions. It was this way for over a month until the 23rd of April when we had two days of cold wind and a couple inches of snow. We lucked out however, because places hundreds of miles farther south had deep snow and even some drifting. The snow pack melted slowly in late March and early April and without any rain the runoff was light and the lake did not rise much compared to recent years. The Biological Station tells me it was 7" lower than last year and that makes an enormous difference in erosion of shoreline. I would guess the lake levels will be a lot lower early this summer, especially if the beaver dams are not rebuilt on the Maple River outlet near the lake.

The loons have returned and soon will think about nesting. One problem we now have is that we have a nesting pair of Bald Eagles on Pells Island and eagles can be predators of loons. We may not place a loon-nesting raft at the west end of the lake, or if we do, Garth Spencley may try to place a wire fence "roof" over the nest. We'll see...

In a few days it will be May Day and I better remember to gather some flowers for a "May Basket" and present it to Ruth, my girl friend of 53 years." Or, are we the only people who remember May Day, May Baskets, and the May Pole from long ago?



**Get into the field** with five-day Mini-Courses, held at the beautiful University of Michigan Biological Station in Pellston. Learn about birds, or the ecology of the forest; practice techniques to capture the art of nature either through drawing, painting, writing or photography; study how Native Americans used plants in this area. All these topics are taught in small classes held in the great outdoors, and led by professionals who are experts in their field and well-acquainted with the Biological Station's unique qualities.

Choose from two sessions of non-credit, five-day adult mini-courses, held June 8-12 and August 17-21, plus a special "Be a Biologist: Science Adventures for Kids," for young learners ages 8-13, whose parents or grandparents are part of the August session of adult mini-courses.

Tuition is \$350 for a week-long course (includes lab fee), plus \$150 for housing at the Douglas Lake facility and meals—six nights in a cabin or dorm, plus 17 great meals, starting with dinner on Tuesday through breakfast on Monday. Courses begin Wednesday morning and run through Sunday afternoon. Family members are welcome, but no pets, sorry. For more info, contact the UMBS office at [umbs@umich.edu](mailto:umbs@umich.edu), or call 734-763-4461 in Ann Arbor or 231-539-8408 in Pellston. Full course descriptions and registration materials are available on our website, [www.lsa.umich.edu/umbs](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/umbs). **These have limited enrollment, but are open to the public. Some classes fill quickly, so register soon!**

### Early Summer - June 8-12, 2005

#### **ART IN NATURE**

Ann Singsaas

Focused on the rich visual experience and inspiration that the Biological Station's woods, fields and shorelines provide, this workshop features demonstrations and instruction in plein-air sketching, charcoal and pencil drawing, collage, simple print, and watercolor techniques (supplies provided). All skill levels, styles and media welcome.

#### **FLORA OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN**

Ed Voss

This course deals with identification of late spring and early summer plants, including basic structures and terminology. Outdoor hikes, with some indoor slide-lectures and lab work, plus field trips to the Upper Peninsula, Whitefish Point, Tahquamenon Falls, and some fine bogs.

#### **BIRDS OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN**

Mary Whitmore

Rich in bird life during June, UMBS and Northern Michigan provide fascinating watching at varied sites. This class features early mornings in the field highlighted by the traditional Bird Class Breakfast around the campfire. Special trips to the Upper Peninsula to see boreal species are planned.

#### **SNAILS & CLAMS**

John Burch

Snails, clams and slugs are mollusks, the second largest and most diverse major group in the animal kingdom, but often overlooked. Common in our forests, lakes, streams, and urban areas, they are significant constituents of our biosphere and vital players in the process of organic decomposition. Learn more about these remarkable creatures.

### Late Summer - August 17-21, 2005

#### **AMERICAN NATURE WRITING**

John Kinch

Combine theory with practice—read classics in American Nature Writing such as Thoreau's "Walking" while doing your own writing about nature in and around the creatively rich environs of the Biological Station. Melding scientific facts with environmental ethics, history, social commentary and keen observation, nature writing is a burgeoning hybrid. Excursions with other mini-courses form the basis of learning a variety of natural subjects.

#### **ETHNOBOTANY: CULTURAL USES OF PLANTS IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

Scott Herron

Learn to identify some of the region's most culturally useful plants using sight, smell, touch and taste. Explore their life cycles, habitat and ecology, why they were important to the peoples of this land, learn their English, Latin and Ojibwe names, and understand sustainable harvesting practices. The focus of the course is for educators, tribal employees, and government workers, but all are welcome.

#### **FOREST AND LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY**

Burton Barnes

Why do plants grow where they do? Learn the answer while studying the remarkably diverse glacial geology, landforms, soils, vegetation, and disturbance history of UMBS landscapes. Examine old-growth forests, study the habitats of rare and endangered Kirtland's Warbler, and sharpen your identification skills of woody plants in Michigan.

#### **FUNGI OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN**

Marilynn Smith

Emphasizing the ecology of forest fungi, how to find specific mushrooms and avoid their poisonous look-alikes, we go on field trips to varied habitats, collecting mushrooms for identification in the lab. Learn techniques for preparing and storing edible fungi, as well.

#### **PHOTOGRAPHY IN NATURE**

Kim & Chris Cerrudo

A digital photographic odyssey through the realm in late summer, exploring the enormous artistic potential of an area abundant with birds, mammals, late summer flowers, dunes and lakes. Take this wonderful opportunity to learn nature photography; conventional cameras welcome but emphasis is on acquisition of digital images, their manipulation, storage, and recall. (No provision to process film this year.)

#### **BE A BIOLOGIST: SCIENCE ADVENTURES FOR KIDS**

Marty Samson, SEE-North

Especially designed for young learners, ideally ages 8-13, who focus on science the way a biologist does it, using observation and exploration techniques to appreciate the art of nature. Learn way-finding techniques, use some of the cool tools UMBS offers to study birds, mammals, and insects, do scientific data collection and visit local habitats. Field trips to lakes, ponds, a river, a gorge, forests, meadows, fish hatchery and more.



## Open House at UMBS

**Saturday, June 25th, at 2pm**

"Bug Camp" holds an Open House for all who are interested in learning about the research and educational activities that take place at our Douglas Lake field station, one of the finest in the world.

The event begins at 2pm with a welcome and introduction from Director Knute Nadelhoffer, followed by short presentations by research faculty and students about their work based at UMBS. Projects include many vital topics of interest to the local community. Afterwards, participants join in a guided tour of the facilities, meet the researchers and see their work up close.

**DATE: Saturday, June 25, 2pm-6pm**  
**WHERE: UM Biological Station, 9008 Biological Station Road, off Riggsville Road, in Pellston.**

For more information, contact the UMBS Pellston office at (231) 539-8408 or email [umbs@umich.edu](mailto:umbs@umich.edu).



## Bears & Bird Feeders

Mark Paddock

As some of you know, a local bear learned last summer that bird feeders are easy sources of food. There is at least one bear that has learned this quite well and makes the rounds of houses and cottages tearing down feeders to get at the food. We do not feed birdseed in the warmer seasons, but we do feed hummingbirds and a bear was in the process of trying to get at our hummingbird feeder last August when I spied it at the window and chased it away. We learned later that several bird feeders at homes nearby and along the lake had been torn down the night before.

Therefore Ruth and I resolved to put the hummingbird feeder out of reach this year and quit feeding birdseed before bears come out of hibernation so we did not have a repeat visit. But, I did leave the niger feeder in place thinking that those tiny seeds would not be worth a bear's while. **WRONG!** This morning that plastic feeder was torn down and ripped apart. There were big claw marks in the grass nearby. No doubt it was our friend again.

So, unless you don't mind having your bird feeder torn down, or similar mischief, quit feeding birds in the warm seasons when bears are about.

Are bears dangerous? How many times have you read about a bear in Michigan hurting a person? Almost never. They have incredibly good noses and ears and 99% of the time they know you are around before you have any idea that they were nearby and left. There are lots of bear stories but most are just that. If we had grizzly bears here the situation would be different but our black bears are really afraid of people. I know this won't persuade many of you (it doesn't Ruth) but I don't worry about bears and neither should you.

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*View of forest fire from Ingleside*

and the boys on the roofs kept putting the water on the roof shingles. My cousin, Harry Berlesky, and I were on one of the cabins. It was my job to meet the man at the top of the ladder, and to take the bucket of water to Harry who kept wetting the shingles and dousing the sparks that had fallen on the roof. All cottages were saved. When we were relieved as fire fighters we went to our cottage and Mother doctored the burns on our arms from the sparks that fell on us. In other years we all were involved in fighting forest fires. It was hard work but none of the fires were as exciting and dangerous as that first fire on Sunny Sands."

Over the years forest fires have claimed lives and destroyed property but as fire fighting methods have improved less life is lost and less property is destroyed and yet for those who lose a part of their life or their part of the world it really is much the same.

*The more things change - the more they stay the same.*



## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

KNOW YOUR D.L.I.A.  
BOARD, will return in the next  
issue with a review of the new

officers and I would like to include many of our zone  
representatives – so zone reps for zones 15, 31, 32, 41,  
51, 61, and 81 please send me your lake bio's, the  
sooner the better.

The next newsletter is scheduled for early June. If  
you wish to contribute please forward your articles or  
announcements to me no later than the May 20<sup>th</sup>. If  
possible e-mail the information to me at:  
cdataserv@earthlink.net. otherwise please type and  
mail your information to me at P.O. Box 1067 Jackson,  
MI 49204. We do publish events that are not necessar-  
ily D.L.I.A. sponsored as long as it would be open to  
all or of general interest to part of our membership.



## Douglas Lake Bar & Steakhouse

“A Gourmet Roadhouse”

May - June Schedule  
May 4 - Reopen

May 8 – Mother's Day – Kirby Snively  
(reservations recommended)

May 11 – Wine Diner – Dreyfus Ashby Portfolio  
(reservations only)

May 18 – Cooking Class  
(reservations only)

May 28 – Kirby Snively live for  
Memorial Day Weekend!

June 19 – Father's Day – Kirby Snively  
(reservations recommended)

### July & August

Kirby Snively plays acoustic guitar lakeside Saturday  
nights

### Chef Eric Basta

#### Preview of New Spring Menu Items

Steamed Snug Island Mussels with garlic, white wine,  
herbs & oven roasted tomatoes

Slow Cooked Pulled Pork Nachos with Vermont white  
cheddar, spicy BBQ sauce, scallions  
& house made chips

Sautéed Sonoma Duck Breast brandied soft polenta,  
caramelized cipolin onions, baby bok choy

Herb Encrusted Rack of Lamb potato gratin, wilted  
baby arugula, blue cheese, cherry tomatoes & veal jus



## NOTICES

Waste Management's trash collection  
day is now Friday

The Michigan Department of Transportation announced  
that more than 13 miles of I-75 is receiving a major over-  
haul. The original concrete pavement from Riggsville Road  
to US-31 will be resurfaced and repaired at a cost of \$12  
million.



## DOUGLAS LAKE BOOKIES

The Book Club continues with weekly meetings at the DLB  
on Wednesday mornings.

This is not DLIA sponsored. New members are welcome,  
join in when you can.



## FOR SALE

After 75 years of the Mercke family owning property  
on the North Shore of Douglas Lake, I will be offering a  
pristine 185 foot lake front parcel for sale. Approxi-  
mately 1 acre in size, no drainage problems, level site and  
views of a sunset. Please contact  
Mariellen Mercke Harland, (203) 969-7280.

1973 ZEF 12' Sailboat w/ trailer. Main sail & jib. \$600  
Call Gary 616/361-6823 winter or 231/627-5718 summer.  
Can see Memorial Weekend or late June. North Fishtail  
Bay. E-mail ggblaskowski@yahoo.com



## FOR RENT

Cottage for rent on Maple Bay side of Douglas Lake. 3 bed-  
room, 1 bath A-frame, on wooded lot, sleeps 6, lake access  
available. \$500 per week. Great place for extra summer  
guests! Contact Will and Jenny Chamberlain (734) 668-  
2478 or wlc3694@comcast.net

Nice, clean, one-family lakefront cabin for rent in Sunset  
Bay Subdivision, one-quarter mile west of the DLB. No  
smoking, no pets, maximum accommodation six persons.  
Call (419) 537-1570 or e-mail jaynemorse@yahoo.com.

A few weeks of rental at the Watz's cottage on Pells Island  
Drive are still available. \$650 per week (\$100 deposit for  
each week is required.) For available weeks please call  
(989) 781-1710. Check-in time is 1:00 pm Saturday, and  
check-out time is 12:00 pm the following Saturday.



## Dues

for DLIA membership are \$10 per-year



# Womenade

The first 2005 Womenade dinner will be :

**Wednesday June 22**

**6:00 p.m.**

**11578 Seabrook Lane, Joan Hartwig's home**



We will have a Plant Sale and encourage members to bring plants that may result from spring dividing.

Reservations can be made and more information is available

by e-mail at DLWomenade@Yahoo.com

or by calling Joan at (231) 539-8943 or Sue Nelson at

(231) 539-8322.

Our purpose is to assist individuals for a one-time emergency as recommended by one of our References.

If you would like to be a part of this group please join us at our June meeting

If life gives you lemons, make lemonade;  
If life presents problems make Womenade.



## TRASH PICKUP Sat. May 28. FREE TRASH PICKUP

**MUNRO TOWNSHIP IS HAVING ITS GENERAL TRASH PICKUP**

**Saturday**

**MAY 28**

**Starting at 7:00 a.m.**

**WILL TAKE:** Mattresses, small couches, TV's, small appliances, garbage and odds and ends.

**WILL NOT TAKE:** Organic matter (such as leaves or brush), tires, batteries, large appliances, hazardous waste, large metal items, concrete, lumber (over 3 ft), or pallets.