

# The Hutchins Lake Herald

A publication of  
Hutchins Lake Improvement Association  
[www.hlia.org](http://www.hlia.org)

*Hutchins Lake is what we all have in common.*

Edition #29

Winter 2015



## Hutchins Lake is in Good Shape

The HLI Board made an effort to bring awareness and opportunities to its members this summer to learn more about the water quality of our lake. According to Kieser & Associates, Hutchins Lake, compared to other lakes its size and use, is in good shape. At the HLI Annual Meeting, they gave an overview of the testing they completed in the summer of 2013. At the Annual Meeting, Gary Tuhachek from the City of Fennville also explained that the waste water lagoons do not drain into the Hutchins Lake watershed. On July 9<sup>th</sup>, Kieser & Associates conducted a free "Healthy Lakes Workshop" for interested homeowners. HLI members who attended learned details about the water quality of the lake and what homeowners can do to keep the lake healthy.

## HLIA Membership Dues

At the June, 2014 HLI Annual Meeting, a \$10.00 dues increase was approved by the membership without opposition. The increase is needed to cover the rising cost of the Riparian magazine (\$12 per year), the increase in the number of members requesting the magazine, and the additional testing of our lake through Kieser & Associates.

**To renew your HLI membership for 2015, or to join for the first time, please:**

- Write a check for **\$30.00** payable to HLI.
- Complete the enclosed payment form.
- Send the completed payment form and check to:

**Denise Grimaldi, Treasurer, HLI**  
**6045 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue**  
**Fennville, MI 49408**

**With your membership in HLI, you will receive:**

- Subscription to *The Riparian* magazine if desired.
- Opportunity to vote at the HLI annual meeting

**Your dues help cover the expenses of:**

- A free summer Discovery Day Camp for kids
- HLI membership in the Michigan Lakes and Streams Association.
- Testing the lake and monitoring water quality

## Distinction Between Two Boards:

### Hutchins Lake Board & HLIA Board

The HLIA or **Hutchins Lake Improvement Association** is a nonprofit corporation of Ganges and Clyde Townships, Allegan County, Michigan. The purpose of the Association can be found in the Bylaws located on the official website (hlia.org). Voting membership of the HLIA is open to riparian property owners and deeded access property owners. The **Executive Committee** of the **HLIA** (President, VP, Treasurer, & Secretary) is elected by the membership at Annual Meetings. The **HLIA Board** is comprised of the Executive Committee and Area Directors of defined areas around the lake.

In 2004, the **Hutchins Lake Board** was formed to oversee the spending of a special tax assessment that lake homeowners pay to Allegan County. Prior to the **Hutchins Lake Board** being formed, the **HLIA** asked for voluntary contributions every year along with dues to control the weed growth on the lake, but donations were not adequate to cover the need. Therefore, a Special Assessment District was created through Allegan County so each Hutchins Lake homeowner (riparian & deeded access) was assessed for weed control with the primary focus on control of Eurasian milfoil.

The **Hutchins Lake Board** consists of:

- Allegan County Drain Commissioner
- Allegan County Commissioner
- Clyde Township Representative
- Ganges Township Representative
- Lake Resident Representative

Both of these Boards work independently, each according to its stated purpose, to maintain the quality of Hutchins Lake.

Future **HLIA Board meetings** will be at 6:30 pm in the Fennville Public Schools' Board of Ed room. Meetings are open to the public. Dates: 12/2/14, 1/20/15 & 4/21/15 The **Annual Meeting** will be held in the Fennville Public Library basement at 10:00 am on Saturday, June 27, 2015.

**2014 Discovery Day Camp** was held July 9 & 10 from 9 am to noon using the McMahon property as their base of operations. The theme was creating 2-D & 3-D art while being inspired by nature. Art projects included floating sculptures (sail boats), water color painting, and nature prints. Activities included learning about measuring water clarity and reviewing boating rules with a Marine Patrol officer while on a tour of the lake looking for wildlife. Camp ended with a picnic lunch and art display. Thanks to **El Clough, Barb Birkholz, Karen Barnes, Janet Stappenbeck, Ralph McMahon, John Lindahl** and parents for bringing such a quality camp to the children of our lake each summer.

**Annual meeting election results:** the HLIA members elected **Loren Barnes** president and **Randy Vogelzang** secretary for two-year terms.

On behalf of all of the HLIA members, the HLIA Board wishes to thank **Bob Renzema** and **John Lindahl** for their many years of service as president and secretary, respectively.

At its May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, the **Clyde Township Board** at the request of the HLIA Board rescinded Resolution #2012-2 dated April 11, 2012 regarding the DNR Mute Swan Management and Control Program. In the spring of 2013, the Ganges Township Board rescinded its resolution.

As the result of a survey, in which over 70% of Hutchins Lake residents responded, two-thirds indicated that the HLIA Board discontinue the DNR Mute Swan Program.

## Traditional vs. Super Fracking

Check out the **HLIA website** at [www.hlia.org](http://www.hlia.org) for the 2014 Water Quality Report. The **HLIA facebook page** at [www.facebook.com/HutchinsLakeImprovementAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/HutchinsLakeImprovementAssociation) offers the latest news of the happenings on Hutchins Lake. Both places on the internet offer news and reports regarding the organization.

On April 29, 2014 the **Lake Board** met for the first time in three years. **John Lerg** was elected as Lake Resident Representative. Another lake resident, **John Burmeister**, is the Clyde Township Representative.

Due to the surplus of funds in the treasury, the Lake Board indicated it would consider: a proposal from the HLIA Board to cover some of the additional lake testing recommended by Kieser & Associates and a reduction of the tax assessment amount for lake residents as early as the next tax bill which was sent in November 2014.

The **Poker Run** was a big success over the Memorial Day weekend. In an hour over thirty non-motorized watercraft started and finished at the Sunset Drive access lot. Each watercraft navigated to seven docks on the Clyde Township side of the lake to select one card from a deck of cards. From the seven cards, the best poker hand won in each of four categories. Prizes donated by local businesses were presented by **Jim Baird**.

The **DO IT YOURSELF BOAT PARADE** over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July continued to be a big success. At 7:30 pm, with or without decorations, many boats left their docks to parade around the lake in a counter-clockwise direction. Many participated from shore as they clapped and voiced their approval for boats and neighbors in the parade.

Fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, is not new. Fracking has been in use since the 1960's and now is referred to as traditional fracking. In traditional fracking a high-viscosity fluid creates a single hydraulic fracture through which oil or gas (or both) migrates to the production well. In more recent years, fracking has changed from traditional to super fracking which uses large volumes of a low-viscosity liquid (water and chemicals) to create a wide distribution of hydraulic fractures, thus greater production volume.

With super fracking, gas production has increased and gas prices have decreased. There are possible negative effects that occur from super fracking including reducing the available water supply for our wells and lake, leakage from contaminated water caused by additives and radiogenic isotopes from the rock, and contaminating the air we breathe from flaring (the process of burning off leaking methane gas). Once any of these situations occur there is little that can be done to reverse the harmful effects to our land, lake, air and water supply.

As companies attempt to acquire super fracking rights and permits to the land near Hutchins Lake, without regulations by state and federal agencies to protect against potentially harmful effects of super fracking (not just traditional fracking), homeowners may be faced with a serious issue.

Homeowners should become informed about this issue and how it may impact our lake, environment, property values, drinking water quality, and the air we breathe.

(Some of the information for this article came from the magazine *Physics Today*, "Super Fracking", by Donald L. Turcotte, Eldridge M. Moores, and John B. Rundle. <[www.physicstoday.org](http://www.physicstoday.org)> August, 2014, 34-39)

Some homeowners organized a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Sunday worship service. Boaters anchored near the vacant lot off of Eagle Point for a beautiful experience.

## **Turtles**

The Hutchins Lake area is home to many kinds of turtles. However, those most often seen are the turtles who roam the open waters of the lake. These include the eastern spiny softshell turtle with the piglike nose, the common map turtle with the blunt chisel head, and the common snapping turtle with the large warty and wrinkled head. When in the water, only the head of turtles extends above the surface so identification usually depends on recognizing head features.

All of these turtles are curious and will come to the surface to see who is invading their space. Then, they quickly dive and swim away. While all turtles can bite, they typically do not unless cornered and provoked. Turtles can carry Salmonella so it is best not to touch them.

Turtles are a part of Hutchins Lake diversity and they add spice to your day. Enjoy them and give them space.

All of this turtle behavior changes in June each year when turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. They move away from water over grass with its thatch of roots to the nearest bare ground where digging is easier. They use their feet and claws to excavate a hole where they lay and cover their eggs before returning to the water. The eggs hatch in 50 to 90 days.

Often, the nearest bare ground for digging is next to a road where the turtles can be hit. While on land, they are more vulnerable in many ways and more likely to bite if approached. So, admire from a safe distance!

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