



LaGrange County Lakes Council

To promote, protect and preserve the quality of the lakes and watersheds of LaGrange County.

Volume 2 - Number 1

Spring, 2006

Hoosier Riverwatch Water Quality Training Class set for June 24

A Hoosier Riverwatch training class will be held at Maple Wood Nature Center on Saturday, June 24. Nancy Brown will be coming from Elkhart to conduct the class with assistance from Bob Mayer and Terry Gust of LCLC.

Please register early and plan to attend. The class is limited to 20 students. All necessary materials and supplies are furnished.

Participants are required to be at Maple Wood at 9:00 a.m. to begin the classroom work. After a sack lunch at noon, students will head out to Fly Creek for hands-on training.

Hoosier Riverwatch **Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring "Basic" Training** introduces citizens and educators to water quality monitoring utilizing hands-on habitat, chemical, and biological assessment methods. Participants gain experience and skills in the use of chemical monitoring kits and aquatic in-



Students examine and identify macroinvertebrates gathered as part of the training. (Hoosier RiverWatch photo)

sect collection and identification. The sessions are held both inside and outdoors. After completion of this training, participants become "Certified Volunteer Monitors" and are qualified to submit data to the statewide volunteer stream monitoring database. Any interested adult is welcome to attend, and once certified, may teach students how to monitor. Sign-up today & bring a friend!

The workshop is free, but *pre-registration is required!* Please bring a sack lunch. For more information and to register, please contact Nancy Brown at 574-533-3630 ext. 3. You may also register by email: Contact: nancy.brown@in.nacdnet.net

Got Geese? Get Answers!

A special workshop devoted to issues related to Canada Geese will be held at 9:00 am on Saturday, April 22 in the LaGrange County Office Building located at 114 W. Michigan St. in LaGrange.



Rex Helton of A-1 Wildlife Services will describe legal and humane ways of providing relief

from the presence of Canada Geese at your home pond, lake or place of business.

Alger VanHoeve, DNR district biologist will also be on hand to explain the permitting processes necessary to satisfy DNR regulations.

This educational event is sponsored by the LaGrange County Lakes Council as a public service. It is free of charge and open to the public.

Lakes Council Sponsors Sell Phosphorous-Free Lawn Fertilizer

Feed your lawn, not your lake

By Dona Hunter, LaGrange County SWCD

During the past several years we've all heard "Don't fertilize so much." The following are some basic tips for lawn fertilization around the lake. Healthy lawns reduce runoff and erosion, produce oxygen, absorb noise, provide cooling, absorb pollutants such as carbon dioxide, resist insect infestation, and they look terrific! The biggest thing to always remember is to use common sense when doing lawn maintenance.

Special care is needed when selecting the type of grass and fertilizer program for lawn areas near lakes and ponds. Did you know that annual nitrogen requirements differ considerably by turf grass species? Several species of Bluegrass and Bentgrass require more nitrogen than red and chewing fescue. As a general rule lake residents should never apply more than 1 pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet.

Many homeowners like to catch their grass clippings and make a compost pile or simply haul

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MemberLakes:

- Adams
- Atwood
- Big Long
- Big Turkey
- Cedar
- Dallas
- Fish/Royer
- Lake of the Woods/McClish
- Little Turkey
- North Twin
- Oliver/Martin
- Pretty
- Shipshewana
- South Twin
- Stone
- Westler
- Witmer

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Boating Study Nearly Complete

Members of LaGrange and Steuben County Lakes Councils have been working on a study to determine lakes carrying capacity since last summer. The first draft report has been presented and the group is now in the process of refining their data to prepare the final report.

County officials have been receptive to local ordinances that would prevent funnelling and overuse of their lakes. The study will give additional credibility to the establishment of capacity limitations for Indiana's lakes.

Numerous studies of similar nature in surrounding states were examined and compared to similar situations in our counties. The studies are not intended to place limits on numbers of boats on our lakes, only to demonstrate the rates at which water quality declines with increased usage.

When the report is finished, early this summer, it will be posted on our website.

Business Sponsors Support Lakes Council

LaGrange County Lakes Council invites business owners to share in the financial benefits that lakes bring to our county. This newsletter goes to 4,200 members and others that enjoy our lakes.

Supporting the Lakes Council just makes good sense. Approximately 45% of lake property owners live here year-round. The other 55% are summer visitors who enjoy their weekends and vacations here. Lakes bring more repeat visitors to our county than any other attraction. What's more, many of those "visitors" will eventually make LaGrange County their perma-

nent home.

Lake residents are continually upgrading and improving their lake properties. In addition, Lake homes are taxed at higher rates than other residential properties due to the higher demand for lakefront land.

Every business in LaGrange County has a stake in the financial future of our lakes because "Healthy water is everybody's business."

Potential Sponsor Members are invited to call Karl Reed at 351-2195 or Vic Milla at 854-3060 for full details and benefits of membership.

Membership Cards Planned for 2007

Your Lakes Council is planning to provide membership cards beginning in 2007. It's quite an undertaking for our volunteer organization but with the continued support of our Business Sponsors, it's another way of recognizing the fi-

nancial impact of the lakes in LaGrange County.

Our Business Sponsors will be contacted later this year and asked to provide a discount or other incentive to our members. As you patronize LaGrange businesses, you will simply present your 2007 membership card to participating Sponsors to claim your incentive.

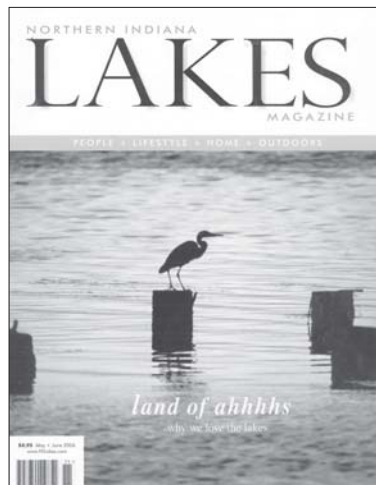
Participating Sponsors will be announced in the Spring, 2007 LCLC Newsletter and on our website.

New Lakes Magazine Partnership Announced

The *Northern Indiana Lakes Magazine* will debut in May, serving readers with a high quality, full color magazine that features people, places, entertainment, events and items of interest in Hoosier Lakes Country.

This new magazine is partnering with us in a fundraising effort to benefit your Lakes Council.

Visit Northern Indiana Lakes Magazine's website at www.NILakes.com to see for yourself the quality of this publication. Every subscription will earn a bonus for your Lakes Council. It's their way of helping to protect our lakes and we encourage your support. Use the subscription form on the flier enclosed with this issue.



E-mail Alerts and Announcements Inform Members

Are you receiving the Lakes Council's e-mail alerts and announcements? We communicate year-round with information and announcements that pertain to lake residents and others who are concerned with LaGrange's lakes.

You are invited to sign up for our alerts to stay abreast of news involving your lake, even when you're gone.

To subscribe, just go to our website and click on "Lakes Council News and Alerts."

Did you receive more than one newsletter?

The Lakes Council has been implementing a new database program since last June. Because we were using several different mailing lists, a number of duplicate addresses were discovered. While the new program has the ability to purge duplicates, it only detects multiple entries that are nearly identical. It is possible that some more "doubles" will occur. If you receive more than one copy, please let us know and we'll make corrections. Please e-mail: accounting@lagrangecountylakescouncil.org.

Lakes Management Work Group Reestablished

With little fanfare but much support from lake groups, Senator Robert Meeks authored legislation that would reestablish the Indiana Lakes Management Work Group.

The 26-member Indiana Lakes Management Work Group was originally established by the General Assembly in 1997 to take public comments and develop solutions for problems affecting Indiana lakes. Work Group members represent a broad base of lake and reservoir organizations, users, and researchers from across Indiana.

The original Work Group held two public meetings at Tri-State University in Angola. At these meetings, about 600

citizens developed an extensive list of lakes problems and challenges. They also offered examples of how lake groups are providing local solutions to some of the problems. By law, the Work Group was charged with developing by January 1, 2000, final recommendations that offer solutions to the myriad problems affecting Indiana lakes. These recommendations are contained in the Indiana Lakes Management Work Group Final Report, available at:

http://www.in.gov/indianalakes/report/final_report.PDF. We applaud Senator Meeks for his steadfast support of Indiana's lakes and for recognizing the value of the Work Group.

The LaGrange County Lakes Council board meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, except November and December, at 6:30 p.m. in the LaGrange County Office Building, 114 W. Michigan St., LaGrange. Board meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The 2006 Annual Meeting of the organization will be held on Thursday, July 27.

New Window Decal Enclosed

Included in this newsletter is a new Lakes Council window decal for your home or car. These decals are made of high-quality vinyl, are removable and adhere readily to windows.



Please attach the decal to your car's rear window to show that you support the Lakes Council in protecting LaGrange lakes.

“Personal Yellow Page” Enclosed

This newsletter issue contains your first edition of the Lakes Council's official “Personal Yellow Page,” your personal directory of our Business Sponsors.

You may have already visited our website page dedicated to Sponsors and used it to find your favorite sources for goods and services. Since most of us make use of our phone books for contact information, we've published this handy bookmark to make your searching easier.

In addition to our Business Sponsors, one side of the Yellow Page contains other important LaGrange contact information. Please keep your Lakes Council Yellow Page and refer to it often.

Feed your lawn.

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them away to a composting facility. However, if you return clippings to your lawn the required nitrogen fertilizer can be reduced by 40%! This is a sizeable reduction that will improve the health of your lake.

Nitrogen sources can be classified into organic and inorganic. Organic nitrogen is much better for your lawn because it releases the nutrient slowly during the growing season and allows fewer applications. In most situations using organic nitrogen reduces your application to one per year, usually in the fall.

What about the phosphorus and potassium? Remember phosphorus is the limiting nutrient that stimulates unwanted algal blooms in your lake during spring and early fall. The good news is that lawns rarely need additional phosphorus or potassium. You should never apply a fertilizer that contains phosphorus or potassium without first completing a soil test to see if these nutrients are required. If you have been using a fertilizer with these nutrients it's likely your soil has built up a residue. Bottom line: use an organic nitrogen fertilizer only and apply phosphorus or potassium only if a soil test indicates it is needed.

Remember – a clean, clear, healthy lake is what we all wish to see, which by the way certainly will improve your property value.

No-phosphorus fertilizer is now available locally

Since its beginning, your Lakes Council has been encouraging the use of “Lake-Friendly Fertilizer.” This is the one with a “middle number” of zero (0), meaning no phosphorous.

Our Sponsors, Schlemmer Hardware in LaGrange and Stroh Farm Supply in Stroh have ordered a supply of phosphorous-free lawn fertilizers.



Three varieties are available in convenient 16 lb. Bags (5,000 sq. ft. coverage): Lawn Food, Weed and Feed, and Crabgrass Preventer. Please feed your lawn, not your lake!



Please Join Now!

LaGrange County Lakes Council

PO Box 86
LaGrange, IN 46761
www.lagrangecountylakescouncil.org

2006 Annual dues: \$5.00 (additional donations appreciated) Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name Lake

Address

City State Zip

Phone (.....) Email

If you have already paid your dues and are not in a position to donate further, please accept this notice as our thanks.



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