

Our Mission

To learn, study and monitor the condition of Portage Lake and take steps to keep it healthy and viable.

Friends of Portage Lake

www.friendsofportagelake.com

Portage Lake Report



President's Report

Water, water everywhere!

It seems the theme of the day is “water, water, everywhere!” We are all anxious for the high water levels to return to normal following the many inches of rain that have fallen in recent weeks. Our lake has gone from being low on water to overflowing! Fellow lake residents have shared with me that we saw similar water levels in 2009 when hurricane Ike passed through. Barring further heavy rains, the water should begin to recede soon.

Thank you for your support this summer of our efforts to keep our beautiful lake healthy and viable. Please see Rick Flegel’s article which summarizes this year’s treatment of

native and invasive plants and algae in the lake. The lake management program administered by PLM Lake & Land Management has allowed us to keep the weeds and algae under control, while supporting fish and wildlife and keeping our lake usable for recreation.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and welcome your feedback on ways that we can make it better. Thank you again for your continued support of our efforts and your interest and concern for our lake. Everyone is welcome at our annual dinner meeting on **Thursday, Sept. 29th**. For details, see page 3.

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, Sept. 29! *Mark Parks*

September 2016

2016 Board Members

Greg Dedes - *Secretary*
Nancy Lane & Snug Harbor
greg@cornerstonecm.com

Elayna Stierhoff - *at large*
elayna13@aol.com

Kevin Hughes *Treasurer*
Davis Drive
chrisnkev19@comcast.net

Frank Peterman
SE end of lake/Rivolake Dr
hpeterman7521@msn.com

Richard Flegel
Klines Resort
Rick.flegel@cox.net

Marie Lewis
Lake Ave.
dandmlewis2@gmail.com

Mark Parks *President*
North end & E. Shore Ln
mark@jergensinsulation.com

VFW Float Wins “PATRIOT CUP”

VFW Post 5189 proudly led the boat parade with flags flying and patriotic music playing to win this year’s most patriotic decorated float in the annual parade on July 4th.

Kevin Hughes presents cup to veterans:

Mel Kuis - Army
Robert Rainwater - Army
Linda Hamarick - Navy
Jim Hamrick - Air Force
Butch Wesoloski - Navy



Our Shy, Beautiful Neighbors:

13-lined Ground Squirrels

By Elayna Stierhoff

Last year, I saw a small mammal out of the corner of my eye in the grass area in the middle of Lake Avenue. At first I thought it was just a chipmunk, but the way it stood up on its hind legs made me look again. I was excited to find that it was a beautiful 13-lined Ground Squirrel. They are obviously named for the 13 alternating brown and cream colored lines on their back. It was the first one I had seen in decades.

These mammals are about 10 inches from nose to tail tip and weigh about 5 ounces. They are diurnal, like us, being active in the daytime. They may have up to 8 pups a year, but are not likely to over-populate due to the fact that 90% of their young die before the first hibernation.

They have many predators including hawks, weasels, foxes, coyotes and even snakes. Adults only live a few years.

They are shy and quickly hide in “emergency” tunnels that end a short distance underground. You might hear them chirp as they give an alarm call when danger is around. Though I have seen as many as 4 ground squirrels in this area, they do not live in colonies and will defend their burrow against others. They will, however, tolerate other ground squirrels living nearby and even greet one another by touching noses and lips.

As they prefer grassland and prairie areas, their food is mostly seeds of weed plants, grass, clover leaves and insects. They generally do not go near houses, but may visit under a birdfeeder where there are seeds on the ground. They are not to be confused with chipmunks that do not mind living around our houses. Chipmunks are smaller and only have a few stripes on their backs.



Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrels are true hibernators, meaning they go to sleep in October and do not wake up until early April. While hibernating, their body temperature falls to just above freezing, their heart rate drops from a normal of 200 beats per minute down to 10 beats per minute and their breathing is reduced to one breath every 5 minutes.

They have a hibernating tunnel that goes 15 feet underground and which they plug up the en-

trance to in the fall. In the Fall, they will store food in their hibernating tunnel so that they will have something to eat when they emerge from sleep the next Spring.

The most famous 13-lined Ground Squirrel is “Goldy Gopher” – the University

of Minnesota mascot and are the reason Minnesota was named the Gopher State. These ground squirrels have also proven beneficial in the study of Muscular Dystrophy, Alzheimer’s (due to their ability to rapidly grow brain cells after hibernation), and could be the key to deep space travel. The Washington Post indicated that these ground squirrels “may one day make it possible for astronauts to enter a deep and lengthy sleep and wake up unharmed and raring to go.” It went on to say that they are “very intelligent animals...extremely visual, alert and sensitive”.

Hopefully, you will get a glimpse of these beautiful creatures. If you don’t have them in your area, check them out in the area south of the curve of Lake Avenue. Because they are shy, bring your binoculars to get a good look at their gorgeous coat.

Aquatic Plant Control Update

Portage Lake - August 2016

It has been a busy aquatic plant control year here at Portage Lake. Our supplier of lake management services, PLM Lake and Land Management, has made at least seven visits to the lake for evaluating our lake and applying appropriate control measures.

You may have noticed the yellow signs posted along the lakeshore advising of water use precautions and/or restrictions that come with the application of weed control chemicals. The lake management process is done in accordance with our state permit and with the federal regulations that address herbicide application.

Efforts continue to control the invasive species from years past - curly leaf pondweed, eurasian watermilfoil and cabomba/fanwort. A relative newcomer to Portage Lake is an unwelcome plant-like algae called starry stonewort (aka SS). Several of this year's weed control efforts targeted SS to minimize the spread of the algae. Early treatment is essential given this algae's re-growth ability.

The treatment chemicals and application techniques used to control plants like pondweed, milfoil and cabomba are separate and distinct from treating various algae species. The 'plants' were treated over areas ranging from 10 to 20 acres. The algae was treated over areas ranging 20 to 30 acres. Some lake-front owners raked up and removed the dead plants and/or algae. This dead plant removal process is helpful in minimizing the oxygen depletion effect of plants decomposing on the lake bottom.

As noted in previous updates, invasive plants are treated where and when they appear. The control of native aquatic plants and algae is limited to developed shorelines to a depth of approximately 5 feet.

Plant and algae growth slows as fall approaches so treatment frequency will slow. We will continue to monitor the lake and take action as needed.

Enjoy the lake to its fullest. *Richard Flegel*

2016 Annual Meeting & Election

You are cordially invited to attend the annual membership meeting of the FRIENDS OF PORTAGE LAKE, INC. on Thursday, September 29 at the Klines Resort Clubhouse.

Members and non-members are invited to join us for dinner at 6 pm. Food and beverages are provided. Feel free to bring a dessert to share if you are able.

The meeting portion begins around 7 pm and is also open to members and non-members. We will explain our treatment program and the treatment plan for 2017, discuss community activities, and hold the election of new board members.

We hope you will join us for this upcoming meeting! Thank you for your continued support of our great lake!

Dinner & Annual Meeting / Election

Thursday, Sept. 29, 6 pm

Klines Resort Clubhouse

*Sandwich & 2 sides provided
courtesy of FPL*

Bring table service & a dessert or salad to share.

General meeting 7 pm

Treasurer's Report

Thank you to the 62 renewing and new members of Friends of Portage Lake in 2016.

A special thought goes out as we lost one of our original members, Richard Meyer, this spring.

Beginning balance: \$12,718

Income:

Memberships & donations: \$ 425

Expenses:

Service charges \$ 12

Insurance \$ 527

Current balance: \$12, 604

We appreciate your support in helping to keep Portage Lake healthy and viable!

*Kevin Hughes, Treasurer
chrisnkev19@comcast.net*

2016 Members

Lake Ave.

Michael Monroe
Jim & Sheri Munn
Hannah Noble
Frank & Helen Peterman
Ray Brown
Butch & Karen Wesoloski
Chris & Linda Miller
Dave & Marie Lewis
Elayna & Brian Stierhoff
Steve Snyder
Tom & Jaime Barrett
Fred & Panette Edinger
Kurt Holmquist
Sharon Skinner **

South End/Rivolake

Lawrence & Kathy Pickett
Dave & Kathleen Kauffman
Bob & Yvonne Conrad
Jon & Denise VanSickle
Tonja Ambrose **
Sharon Pluskis **
Pat & Judy Jergens **

Snug Harbor/Nancy

Steven Snyder
Greg & Rachel Dedes
Tom & Vickie Kelley
David & Cindy Mohr
Joe & Nancy Brumley
Tim Johnson **
Michael & Jill Cullitan **

Davis Drive

Paul & Joyce Kline
Robert Watson
Ruth & Jerry Besser
Phil & Tama Kline
Kevin & Chris Hughes
Dennis & Nancy Lewis **
Kathy Brueck **

E. Shore /North End

Betty Meyer
Robert & Lori Meyer



Jim & Barb Martus won this year's "most creative" award in the July 4th boat parade. Their boat was decorated with profiles of proud service men at salute.

Community Events Calendar

Sept. 4: Gospel Concert 6:30 pm
at Klines Resort tent. Rain location
West Mendon UMC.

Sept. 5: Pancake Breakfast 8-10 am
at Klines Resort. Fundraiser for Carers
& Sharers. \$5 donation.

Sept. 10: Community Yard Sales
at Klines Resort, 8am - 1pm

**Sept. 29: Friends of Portage Lake
Dinner / Annual Meeting:** 6pm
Klines Resort clubhouse.

October 2: Captivating Keyboards
concert 6:30 pm Klines Resort.

Commission on Aging

Info Call 269-279-8083

*These programs are for St. Joseph
County residents age 60+ and their
spouses.*

Wed & Fri - 11 am: Exercise Class
clubhouse rec room, Klines Resort

Fridays 12 noon: Buffet lunch -
Klines Resort clubhouse. Suggested
donation.

Fridays 1 pm: BINGO - 25¢/card.
Klines Resort clubhouse.

Larry & Carol Higgins
Mark & Robin Parks
Julie Aguilera & Chris Snyder
Ruth Parks **

Klines Resort

Daniel & Cydnea Pierce #176
Robert & Sharalyn Vogel #117
Paul & Becky Roberts #124
Jim & Linda Hamrick #93
Donald & Janet Squires #235
David & Jolaine Snyder #132
Beverly & Merle Gray #89
Quentin & Eileen Meyers #284

John & Charlene Esman #268
Karen Crook #135
Richard & Sharon Flegel #236
Larry & Jeanine Helmer #85
Richard Ireland #122
Gerry & Debbie Ireland #120
David Bratt #163
Bob and Joan Cole #226
Leonard McKee & Karen Dougherty
#137 **
Maribeth Maupin & Bill Sonnycalf
#121 **
Johe Schwieterman **
Frank & Lorraine Attivissimo #79 **
James Martus #216 **