

STAR Lights

Highlights from Star Lake for Members of the SLPOA Fall 2023

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Star Lake Property Owners Association

Board of Directors

*Dick Fultz
President*

*Steve Roth
Vice-President*

*JoLene Jean Kerr
Treasurer*

*Gail Hagen
Secretary*

*Linda Dimitrijevič
Director*

*Yvette Lewis
Director*

*Tom Deegan
Director*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Dick Fultz, President

Wow, did this summer seem to fly by! One day I was planning my summer projects and commitments and then it was time to close up the cabin and head south to a full schedule of commitments and events for the fall.

But maybe it just seemed to go fast because of all the great events your Association was involved with., beginning with the annual meeting and breakfast in June. What a great meeting, with over 125 folks enjoying the great breakfast prepared by the folks at Camp Joy. And the annual meeting was equally attended, with election of a new Board member, Tom Deegan, and re-election of our treasurer, JoLene Kerr. We had guest presenters as well - a little something for everyone.

Missing this year was the Swamp Shark tournament. But we are making plans to bring it back in 2024. It was in 'time out' to allow the Board to complete and deliver the greatest membership directory ever. Gail Hagen went all out and hit a home run with the new directory. Our thanks to her for her extraordinary efforts. Several Board members gathered sponsoring ads which kept the cost of the directory at almost zero to our members. Then it became distribution time. We delivered the directories in person, with Yvette Lewis allowing folks to pick up their copies at the Corner Store, first on Saturdays with Board members present and then any day with Yvette doing the honors. The final surge of delivery was led by our treasurer, JoLene, right after Labor Day weekend. All members received their copy. We printed extra so those members desiring an extra copy could purchase one. As a point of interest, each copy cost over \$8 to print, so Thanks go to our ad purchasing sponsors for making this a low cost directory. Be sure to visit their businesses.

The final major event was the annual picnic, graciously held at the home of Mark and JoLene Kerr. Their beautiful home and property saw well over 125 members gathered to visit with their Star Lake family, take in the beautiful views of our lake, and enjoy great food provided by Heart O' Lakes Meats. The popular Root Beer floats were provided Yvette Lewis and Mike and Gail Hagen. Capturing the day with photos was courtesy of Ricki Martin, daughter of Mike and Gail, (she claims she was "volun-told") which are all available on our Star Lake Facebook page. It was a great day and opportunity to meet new neighbors and renew old friendships. Planning is underway for next years' event.

Not all news and events were 'Great'. Last year we lost a good friend and supporter in the passing of Pierre DuCharme and this year we were able to honor his memory at the Celebration of Life held in July at his lake side home. His links to many was shown by the huge crowd that attended. Then in August we lost a good supporter and friend. Bob Dimitrijevič, husband

(Continued on Page 2)

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT (Continued)

of our Board member Linda, passed away after a brief illness at their home in St. Louis. His ready smile and charming wit will be missed. Our sincere condolences to Linda and his family.

So, we are in fall retreat. I have 'retreated' to Kansas to teach hunter education classes, Linda has gone home to St. Louis, and Gail is in Florida, JoLene, Steve, Tom and Yvette are sharpening their snow shovels. We continue to meet as a Board thanks to ZOOM and our electronics - and we continue to do the business of your Association. While less business is required, it is always good to get together and plan for the next summer. I trust that you and your families are well, safe, and already looking forward to a summer on our favorite Lake. I have a list of carry-over projects already started.

Have a safe fall and winter and I'll see you 'on the Lake' in a few short months.



Gail Hagen, Secretary



I joined the SLPOA Board the summer of 2018, the same year that I retired. My husband and I were sitting in the chapel for the Annual Meeting when they were calling for nominations for a Board of Director position. My husband nudged me and I'm pretty sure he grabbed my elbow and edged it up high enough so that I got nominated. It's just like being at an auction – don't blink or move if you don't want to get noticed! LOL! Seriously, I have enjoyed my terms as the Secretary as I have learned a lot, gotten to know so many great people and made many friendships.

Mike and I celebrated our 45th wedding anniversary last December. Our house is on the North Shore of Star, just east of Ebert's North Star Resort. We head to Florida when the leaves start to fall and come back as soon as the ice comes off the lake! We have owned our property on Star Lake for over 20 years and have put lots of blood, sweat and tears into our slice of heaven. We have 4 daughters (all married) and 9 grandchildren (the older 2 are married). And I can't forget about our baby, Adelle – she's a yellow lab that loves when people stop over. We are very fortunate that everyone lives within 200 miles of Star Lake. We have a very busy household on weekends and holidays and we love every minute of it.

In my spare time, I'm usually sewing (quilts) or quilting on my long-arm (a big sewing motion that you move around on a 12-foot table with a track). In addition to sewing quilts that I donate to Quilts of Valor, I also have started sewing Memory Quilts that I make from a loved one's clothing.

When you are out on the lake and are coasting along the North Shore – stop in and say hello! We always have something cold to drink and an empty chair or two!

*"The meaning of life is to find your gift.
The purpose of life is to give it away."*

William Shakespeare

THE HISTORY OF STAR ISLE

By Gail Hagen, Secretary

*Some of my favorite memories as a young teenager were summers on Star Lake. I remember one particular summer that my parents had sold our home in Moorhead and were planning to move to Minneapolis in late August, so we were living at our place on Star Lake. My dad was an over-the-road truck driver and gone during the week, and my mom worked for the Veterans Administration in Fargo and commuted into work every day, leaving my sisters and I at the lake. It was the summer that President Nixon resigned, the movie *The Exorcist* was in theaters, “Band on the Run” was playing on the radio, and 3 teenage girls had lots of time to explore Star Lake! With a couple of mini-bikes, a runabout with a 40 horse Johnson motor and no adults around, we could have gotten into a lot of trouble, but instead we learned lots of card games, perfected our waterskiing skills, and beat down a path in the ditch along Highway 108 from West Rosewood to Rocky’s Resort.*

One of the places on Star Lake that always intrigued us was the Island with the “abandoned” house (we thought it was haunted). Our curiosity got the best of us one day and we decided (on a dare) to explore the Island. The path leading up to the house was overgrown making the house look even more ominous than it did from the lake. Much to our surprise, the house was not locked and even though it was dark inside – it almost seemed inviting with a guest book on the kitchen table. We wondered what the story was about this island, the “abandoned” house, and even the guest book.

Fast forward about 50 years... I decided to learn more about the Island on Star Lake. I spoke to Rod and Alice Spidahl about their 4.5-acre Island, with 3600 feet of virtually untouched lakeshore, and this is what I learned.



Star Isle

Known to many as Star Isle, it was informally named Mu-Jo Crescent Island – after Muggs (Melvyn) Townsend, his friend John Gingrich and the crescent shape of the Island. The Spidahl family now lovingly call it Alice’s Island. Alice is the daughter of Muggs. In 1927, Muggs was a young 14 year-old, and was concerned about all of the trees that were being cut down along Star Lake. His dad told him that if he wanted to save trees – he needed to buy land. And that is what they did. The Island was purchased for \$75 from a tax lien sale and the cabin was finished in 1929. The house was built with brick (layered two wide) that was reclaimed from a barn destroyed by a cyclone in the area. Muggs and friends cleaned all of the bricks by hand and brought them out to the Island in a Model-T pickup across the ice in the winter. The wood for the trusses, framing, floors and doors for the house came from Oak, Maple, Ash and Birch trees that were milled at the Saw Mill owned by Oscar Peterson (Peterson Point), who (in addition to dairy farming) was a skilled carpenter and stone layer.

The History of Star Isle

(Continued from Page 3)



The finished house had a combined kitchen and living area and some sleeping areas in the upper loft – but wasn't used by Muggs, Katherine and their family very much during the summer as they were all too busy working at his Ice Cream Shop in Fergus Falls and running concessions across the country from Spring until Fall. Alice remembers a time when she was out fishing with her dad, and asked about the Island (she didn't even know that it was owned by her dad). Muggs kept the house unlocked intending it to be a refuge for boaters that may need shelter during inclement weather. After some severe vandalism, the house was kept locked. Muggs also lived and instilled in his children and guests the importance of preservation of the natural wild and to live minimally, so the natural vegetation around the house and Island was intentional. Many friends and retreat groups (including even square dancers!), used the island.

The Island was eventually gifted to Alice. For many years, due to break ins, they had to add metal shutters on the windows to keep intruders out. Alice and Rod still enjoy the island which is owned by their three children. Rod has had to replace the roof a couple of times, but they still use the original wood stove and pump water by hand from a sand-point well. They honor Muggs by living their Star Lake life minimally only using kerosene, candles, a wood burning stove and an outhouse. They experience the natural beauty and wildlife that Star Lake offers. Their Island is also home to many loons, which often nest in the "crescent" area of the lake on the North side of the Island. Unknown to most, there is also a wetlands area in the middle of the Island.

Currently, the island is used by many of Mugg's grandchildren as a vacation spot and getaway. The family owners appreciate respecting their privacy and keeping the island in its natural state. The Island isn't meant to be a site to camp out – nor is it a public swimming beach. The beaches are fragile and get damaged when a boat or pontoon is pushed on shore. When personal water-craft go past the Island, it is helpful if they swing wide and slow down to protect the nesting areas of loons and waterfowl.

So now, you will be able to share the story and some history of "Alice's Island" to your family, friends and future generations of Star Lake residents – preserving this bit of history on Star Lake.

About the Spidah! Family - Alice and Rod Spidah! live in Fergus Falls. They have three adult children and two grandchildren. The family lived in Northern Cameroon for five years where they lived minimally among the villagers they served. The entire family enjoys activities in the outdoors like skiing, hiking, fishing and winter camping. They harvest sap each Spring and make their own Maple Syrup, enjoy gardening and their fruit trees, as well as raise bees. They love the outdoors and the Island has given them many years of tremendous enjoyment, and many more years in the future for the descendants of Muggs.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Adopt-A-Highway

By JoLene Kerr, Treasurer

The Star Lake Property Owners Association participates in Otter Tail County's Adopt-A-Highway Program. Twice a year volunteers gather and pick up litter along County Highway 41 from South of 380th going north to the intersection of Highway 108.

This fall, ditch clean-up was held on Saturday September 23, 2023. A huge THANK YOU to our volunteers that donated their time and energy working both sides of the highway to help keep our surroundings litter free.

If you have an opportunity, say "Thank-you to these members: Steve, Kelsey and Nora Roth, Zaundra Bina, JoLene Kerr, and especially to Brenda Ebanks – she hasn't missed this event for the last 11 years, participating in 21 clean-ups in a row! I think she deserves a special fluorescent vest!

It was a beautiful morning and I'm happy to report we have VERY CLEAN ditches!

Fisheries Improvement

By Steve Roth, Vice-President

My docks came out of the lake today and I'm watching them dry as I write this. It is always a bittersweet time... I do love the transition to Fall but always wonder why Summer can't be a bit longer. It has been a gorgeous Fall so far.

First of all, I want to send a "Thank You" to everyone that helped with a couple of projects this Fall, especially gathering and removing the buoys, and the Ditch clean up. I appreciate your ongoing support with your time and energy with these projects.

Secondly, there has been a lot of discussion on our fishery, especially ice fishing pressure. It is in everyone's best interest to at least maintain and hopefully improve the fishery. In July, we held an information session with Jim Wolters, the DNR Area Fisheries Supervisor, about the Star Lake Fishery. Overall, our trends are positive. To keep the trends positive and due to the overwhelming support of the Star Lake residents, the SLPOA has recommended that the state reduce the pan-fish limit on Star Lake from ten fish to five fish per day. The recommendation has been delivered to the DNR and we are awaiting response and follow-up from the state. Any updates will be shared as soon as they are available.

Thirdly, I have had discussions with some of our members about potentially supplementing the Walleye stocking with private stocking. The DNR stocks Star Lake with 2.8 million Walleye fry every other year. The option of supplementing with Walleye fingerlings comes at a big cost, with quotes for 6-8" fingerlings coming at \$2.70/each. The number we would need to purchase would bring the overall cost to over \$10,000, which would require us to plan some fundraising events. In addition, the orders for fall stocking need to be placed with the fish farms much earlier in the year. The DNR will be conducting another MN Fisheries Lake Survey in 2024. The results will give us more data to review as we consider options for Star Lake. I will keep everyone updated once those results are in.

Lastly, I've received a few messages from members about a fishing tournament that is being planned on Star Lake in March of 2024. Permits for Fishing Tournaments are submitted to the DNR and are reviewed at the local level. They are also listed on the DNR website. At this time, according to the DNR, they have not received a permit application for a tournament on Star Lake. We will be monitoring this.

I'm looking forward to ice fishing this Winter and hope to see you on the lake!

Have a great year end!

Membership & Communication

By Gail Hagen, Secretary

The year of 2023 has been a very busy year for Membership & Publicity. We set a new record with 250 paid members. It is great to see more of our Star Lake families join and support our Association.

The biggest project for us this year was putting together the 2023 Membership Directory. We set out with the goal of providing a high-quality, entertaining, and informative directory that our members would be proud to have out on their coffee tables. It was a learning experience for us and the next one will be even better. My thanks to everyone that submitted photos – we had a lot of great pictures to consider, but unfortunately couldn't include all of them in the final directory. And a huge Thank You to our advertisers – we couldn't have done it without their support. We hope you enjoy the Directory! Extra copies are available for \$10 - contact JoLene Kerr or Gail Hagen to purchase.

The next big project we tackled was updating our website and contact management system (email)! We recently finalized the transition and launched our new website the end of October. For those of you that receive our email communications, you will notice a new look and feel also! The updated systems will allow us the ability to add, edit and delete content ourselves – without requiring us to go through the service provider. We will also be able to manage our email communications and send important messages to you quickly – without relying on the availability of our provider. You will also still have the option of completing your membership renewals, payment and donations through the website. Please check out the new website - and let us know what you think!

The last project that is important to Membership and Publicity is the Spring and Fall STARLights Newsletters. We strive to put together newsletters that are informative, entertaining and something that you look forward to reading. We welcome your ideas for articles in future issues and appreciate your feedback.

If you or anyone in your family would like to volunteer for Membership and Publicity – we would welcome your help and expertise!

I hope you have a wonderful winter, have the opportunity to make special memories with family and friends, and find time to enjoy the blessings of life on Star Lake.



Turn in Poachers (TIP)* in Minnesota

Report a violation in progress

- ◆ To report a violation, call 800-652-9093 24 hours a day, or key in #TIP on your cell phone.
- ◆ Download the MNTip app on your mobile device on the App Store or Google Play. Use the form to submit your anonymous tip online. After submitting, you will receive a 6 digit code, which is your anonymous ID to log back into the system. Check back within 24 hours to see if the officer has any follow-up questions.

Report a violation that isn't time sensitive: use this online form:

https://www.tip411.com/tips/new?alert_group_id=22714

*Turn In Poachers(TIP), Inc. is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to curbing the Illegal taking of Minnesota's wildlife and natural resources. TIP works directly with the MN DNR as a public/private partnership.

Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring

Contributed by the AIS Committee

Courtesy Decontaminations

I know we've just put away boats into storage, and pulled docks out of Star Lake. But I wanted to share what I learned about the mobile decontamination unit that everyone can use to get zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species off of their boats. This is the CLEAN part of the message we've all heard: CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY.

In Otter Tail County, the Courtesy Decontamination Station is stored at Maplewood State Park. DNR Staff take the Decontamination Station out to the larger lakes in the county – Pelican Lake, Lake Lida and Star Lake are on their usual route. Anyone can bring their boat to the station and have their boat cleaned.

How do you find where the Decontamination is that day? Go to the DNR website:

https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/watercraft_inspect/courtesydecon.html

You can see a Map and Calendar showing the where the Decontamination station is scheduled to be. The calendar feature searches availability on specific days. Additional dates will be added as the season progresses. If you are unable to find a convenient decontamination location, please contact your local regional watercraft inspection supervisor for alternatives.

Courtesy Decontaminations - What to expect:

- ◆ The crew will be working at an open public water access.
- ◆ Watercraft entering and exiting the water will have priority - you may have to wait.
- ◆ Inform the inspector that you are there for a courtesy decontamination.

Before your visit:

- ◆ Call the contact person listed for the site to confirm the unit is present.
- ◆ Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the posted end time.
- ◆ If you are traveling with prohibited invasive species attached to your watercraft (such as zebra mussels) please print out and complete a permit before traveling.

About that permit: Go to the DNR Website and print off the permit. Fill out the permit and bring it with you. There are no fees for this permit. https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/ais_transport.html



Treasurer's Report

by Jolene Jean Kerr

The account balances for SLPOA (as of October 6th, 2023):

General Fund:	\$ 4,343.93
Lake Protection Fund:	\$ 18,289.69*
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 22,473.62

*Totals in the Lake Protection Fund amount includes the funds received from rom the Star Lake Concerned Citizens Group (SLCCG) in the amount of \$16,053.95 which was donated to the SLPOA in May of 2020.

Water Safety - Buoys

By Yvette Lewis

Fall is a beautiful time of the year on Star Lake. But it doesn't seem to last very long! We've already had those white flakes coming down this year!

Our volunteers worked hard to remove all of our buoys - just in time! A HUGE thank you for your time and commitment!

Ty and Emily Riley
Robbie Rimer
Arnie Schenck

Mike Anderson
Bob Gettel

Ryan Salberg
Steve Roth

Our sincere apologies if we have missed someone! Again - thank you for your hard work! We know it is not an easy task!

Recommended Minimum Ice Thickness
(Rough Guidelines for New Clear Ice Only)

2" or less
STAY OFF!!

4 Inches
Ice Fishing

5 Inches
Snowmobile or ATV

8-12 Inches
Car or Small Pickup

12-15 Inches
Medium Truck

Minnesota
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Department of Natural Resources

STAR LAKE CASINO DEMISE - 5th ANNIVERSARY

By Lee Mindemamm

Editor's Note: There are 14.5 acres of Indian Trust Land on Star Lake. Many of us were on Star Lake in late 2015 when it was learned that the White Earth Nation had acquired additional land and planned to use it to build a Casino, Hotel, Restaurant and Campground. The project was very controversial and widely opposed by residents on Star and Dead Lake. Ultimately, the project was rescinded by WEN in 2017 and the SLPOA was the recipient of residual funds from the Star Lake Concerned Citizens Group. No matter what your position was (in support or opposition), most agreed that the project would have definitely changed Star Lake and this is in our history. The following article was submitted by former members of the SLCCG to recognize the significant donation to SLPOA and summarize the events leading up to the WEN's decision to rescind their resolution.

This past August 31st, 2023 marked the 5th Anniversary of the White Earth Nation (WEN) Rescinding their Resolution No.001-16-004 originally enacted in late 2015. This resolution would have established a Casino, Hotel, Restaurants, Campground, and accompanying parking lots & infrastructure. WEN invested millions of dollars in the initial stages of the development, and in acquisition of 355 acres of adjacent private land in and around the existing 14.5 acres of "Indian Trust Land".

An interesting point here is that the "Indian Trust Land" was deeded to the MN Chippewa Tribe and remains so today. The WEN is one of six "Bands" of the Chippewa Tribe but because they are the "closest" Band to the Trust Land, they are able to use the land. The 355 acres of private land remains under the control of the WEN. This private land is classified as "fee status land" which means it is "taxable".

There were multiple public meetings thru-out 2016-17, as well as media attention. In the fall of 2017, the project was ultimately abandoned by WEN due to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers environmental concerns, a subsequent Otter Tail County requirement for an Environmental Assessment Study, as well internal opposition within WEN.

Property owners may remember the rallying cry **"NOT A DONE DEAL!** on billboards in the area and on the letterhead of numerous letters & articles. The primary opposition to the development was mounted by the Star Lake Concerned Citizen Group (SLCCG), a small group of Star Lake property owners and concerned citizens. The development ground to a halt in the fall of 2017 with the Corps of Engineers ruling.

On May 9, 2020, the SLCCG conveyed the remainder of their funds (\$16,000+) to the SLPOA with the stipulation that they be held in the SLPOA "Lake Preservation Fund", where they remain today as the majority of that special account.

The phrase "It's NOT a DONE DEAL" was coined by the SLCCG after hearing the many voices saying *"there's nothing we can do about it because this is A Done Deal!* In the end – public awareness, the will of the WEN people, and the extensive work of SLCCG, it was **NOT A DONE DEAL!**



STAR LAKE PICNIC

By JoLene Kerr, Treasurer



It was a beautiful day on Star Lake for our annual picnic, held on Saturday, August 26th. My husband and I hosted the event at our home on Beaver Dam Trail. This year, we enlisted one of our directory advertisers to cater our gathering. Heart O' Lakes Meats of Pelican Rapids prepared and served approximately 129 meals to Star Lake residents and their guests. We enjoyed a delicious buffet of Taco Meat, Spanish Rice, Refried Beans, Tortilla Chips and all of the toppings. The Taco Bar was enjoyed by all. Root Beer Floats were also served and there were even some "goodie" bags for the little ones.



Thanks to everyone that attended – old friends, new friends... it is always great fun and reinforces the comradery among all who "love" Star Lake!

We are sharing pictures from the event (thanks to Ricki Martin) and more are available on the Star Lake Property Owners Association Facebook Page.

The Star Lake Picnic in 2024 will be hosted by Dale and Yvette Lewis with the date and times announced in the summer of 2024. We hope to see everyone there!



NATURE'S ART ON STAR LAKE



Photo Credit: Deb Hagen



Photo Credit: Audrey McKinnon



Photo Credit: Deb Hagen



Photo Credit: Deb Hagen



Photo Credit: Kathy Torkildson



Photo Credit: Deb Hagen

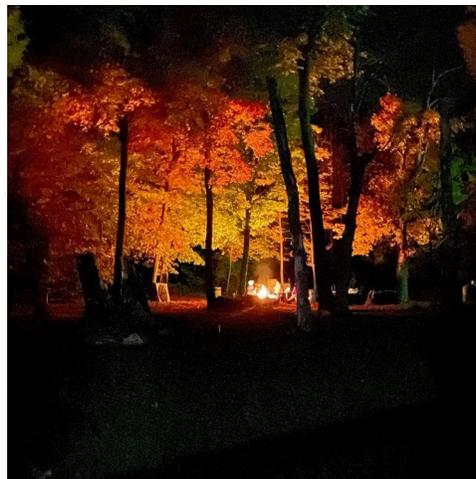


Photo Credit: Kathy Litton



Photo Credit: Ricki Martin



STAR LAKE GEAR

Back By Popular Demand : The Star Lake Gear Online Store is open for a limited time and is loaded with lots of options to show off your love of Star Lake. The store is open starting through midnight, **November 14h**, Orders will be shipped directly to you approximately 2-3 weeks after the store closes. A small portion of your purchases will be donated back to Star Lake Property Owners' Association, helping us to defray the cost of the Dynamic Speed Signs we have purchased to help make it more safe for all around Star Lake.

Don't miss out on this opportunity! Please share this with your family and friends. Thank you for your support!

DEADLINE: MIDNIGHT - NOVEMBER 14TH

<https://starlakefall23.itemorder.com/>



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Star Lake Property Owners' Association

Star Lake and Surrounding Area Events

- November 10th:** Star Lake Gear Online Store Closes
- November 18th:** Tour of Homes, Festival of Trees, Vergas
- November 24th:** Holiday Parade of Lights, Perham
- Starting Nov. 24th:** Lights in the Pines, Perham
- November 24th:** Lighted Horse Parade, Pelican Rapids
- November 25th:** Christmas Market, Dent
- November 25th:** Small Business Saturday - Shop Local
- November 25th:** Small Town Christmas, Vergas
- December 2nd:** Christmas at the Barn Craft Boutique, Dunvilla
- December 2nd:** Over the River Holiday Festival: Fergus Falls