

# Okauchee Lake Management District

Spring 2018

## Greetings from Okauchee Lake Management District Chairperson Carol Wilson



In all seasons, Okauchee Lake is a great place to be. Whether it's snowing in April or warm in December, there is always something to do in and around the lake. Throughout the year, the Okauchee Lake Management District (OLMD) and its Board of Commissioners endeavor to maintain the beautiful aspects of the lake that we all enjoy.

In the past year, the OLMD continued to harvest weeds and conduct pier pick-ups for residents despite the excessive summer rainfall. In the winter months, the OLMD applied for and received a Clean Boats, Clean Waters grant to establish boat cleaning and/or boat inspection sites at the public launch and near the Golden Mast Restaurant. Volunteers are being sought to assist in this program as boat inspectors for the 2018 summer season. The purpose of

the program is to educate boaters about aquatic invasive species and prohibit them for spreading into Okauchee Lake. Also, as you may be aware, a Muskrat Control Program was started this spring. To date, more than 250 muskrats have been removed from the lake and shoreline by trapper, Arnold Groehler.

I would like to thank all the Board members elected by the public at the 2017 Annual Meeting; they are: Tom Godar, Secretary, Dennis Johnson, Lake Operations Liaison, Dee Schriver, Treasurer, and Town of Oconomowoc Representative, Bruce Mueller. Their hard work and dedication are what makes the OLMD successful in these endeavors!

Wishing you a safe & happy season!  
*Carol Wilson*

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## Spraying Permit Information

The OLMD is in the process of obtaining a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to apply herbicides for the control of the aquatic plants in Okauchee Lake for the 2018 season. A copy of this application is available for your review at [www.olmd.org](http://www.olmd.org). Any questions you may have can be directed to Dennis Johnson at 414-828-5461 or [info@olmd.org](mailto:info@olmd.org). This Notice is required under Chapter NR 107 of the WI Administrative Code.



## Muskrat Update By Arnold Groehler



Photo courtesy of Caroline Jasinski

There have always been a lot of muskrats on Okauchee Lake. In the past few years their population levels have increased dramatically, such that they are causing significant damage to the lake shoreline and water quality. The OLMD Board commissioned Arnold Groehler, a local trapper, to trap and remove them from our lake. Lake residents who wanted the muskrats removed were notified to complete a form authorizing Mr. Groehler to trap them from their property shoreline. Over 400 lake residents requested this service.

The trapping started on March 26th and continued through the month of April. Over 250 muskrats have been caught and removed. Every part of the muskrats will be utilized. Many people like to eat muskrats and there is a waiting list for all of the ones caught from our lake. They are especially popular on the East Coast in states, such as Maryland and New Jersey, where they will be

identified on the menu as "Marsh Rabbit." The fur on the stomach side of the muskrat is used as an inside liner for high quality mink coats while the longer back fur is made into hats, many of which end up in Canada for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Once the trapping is completed it is important that lake residents repair the damage done by the muskrats. The burrow entrances need to be blocked with large rocks, so that new muskrats do not move in. The burrows going up into the lawn should be dug up and filled in with a stone base and topsoil cover. Should you have any questions, or need assistance with these repairs, contact Mr. Groehler at 262-490-9363, or email [jmgroehler@aol.com](mailto:jmgroehler@aol.com).



First day's catch of 34 muskrats

### OLMD Weed Cutting Operations Soon Underway! Please Be Safe!

- Do not swim near or around equipment. If you swim between piers, we cannot cut in your area until you exit the water.
- Keep boat/wave runners at least 150 ft. from equipment at all times! We cannot change direction easily to avoid you.
- If passing equipment, please do so without a wake. A wake can cause operators to lose control of equipment.
- Please mark any underwater obstacles, such as boat tracks, ramps, raft chains, etc. with a clearly visible buoy. These are unsafe for employees and equipment. If unmarked, these obstacles would prevent us from cutting in your area.
- Placement of personal buoys may affect OLMD's ability to cut weeds in that area.

### Police Report

The following information was provided by the Town of Oconomowoc Police Department at the August 28, 2017 Annual Meeting. Town Police patrol Okauchee Lake on a part-time basis from the first weekend in May through Labor Day and beyond. Officer Wiercyski reported the following :

- Total patrol hours: 412
- Citations: 74
- Warnings: 229
- Boater Safety Class : 1

During the 2017 Tie-Up, the DNR, Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, Town of Oconomowoc and the Town of Merton provided boat patrols. There was one Boat Tie-Up related OWI arrest made off the lake. Many boats had designated drivers and this was believed to be a factor in the low number of arrests for this year's event. Please continue to use safe boating practices.

## Goose Round-Up

In 2018 the District will again cooperate with the USDA Fish and Wildlife Service to round up non-migratory Canadian Geese on Okauchee Lake. The Goose Round-Up will take place in mid-June when the birds are flightless.

In order for this project to move forward, we need your consent. **We are required to have your consent to access your property before the Round-Up. Once you provide consent, you are no longer required to complete it annually.** IF YOU SUBMITTED THE CONSENT FORM TO THE OLMD AFTER 2012, YOU DO NOT NEED TO FILL OUT THE FORM EACH YEAR. IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE CONSENT FORM SINCE 2012, PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED GOOSE ROUND-UP CONSENT FORM BELOW **BY JUNE 15, 2018.**

Return the consent form to:

OLMD  
P.O. BOX 526  
Okauchee, WI 53069

This form can also be completed online. To do so, please visit our website, [www.olmd.org](http://www.olmd.org) and click on "Forms".

**We need to know where the geese hang out!** Please let us know where you have seen geese by calling the OLMD office at 262-966-0286 or emailing us at [info@olmd.org](mailto:info@olmd.org).

### Permission for Entry to Property for Goose Round-Up

I authorize representatives from the United States Department of Agriculture—Wildlife Services and the Okauchee Lake Management District (OLMD) to access the property/properties listed below for the purposes of goose round-up. This permission form has no expiration date and remains in effect unless you request to be removed from the approved site list. Decisions on goose management will be made on an annual basis. Please contact the OLMD by calling its office at 262-966-0286 or by emailing [info@olmd.org](mailto:info@olmd.org) if you wish to be removed from the list, have problems with geese on your property, know of a nest, or have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your assistance!

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (Mandatory): \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form as soon as possible, no later than June 15.

## Seeking Boat Inspection Volunteer Help!!

The Okauchee Lake Management District ("OLMD") sought and received a "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" Grant for the summer of 2018 to undertake the difficult but important role of inspecting boats before they enter Okauchee Lake.

As lake users and riparian owners know, Okauchee Lake, and most southeastern Wisconsin lakes, has suffered from aquatic invasive plants and other species, such as Eurasian Watermilfoil and Zebra Mussels, that are carried from lake to lake, often on the bottoms of boats or trailers, harming our lakes and ecosystem. Recently a new invasive species, Starry Stonewort, has exploded from affecting one lake in Wisconsin to at least seven, including two in Waukesha County: Big and Little Muskego Lakes. These lake-smothering algae can easily and unknowingly be spread from lake to lake making it essential to ensure boats are clean of debris. As a result, we will train and staff adult volunteers to help with inspection duties at the two main entrance points for recreational users on Okauchee Lake: the DNR launch site and the launch site at the Golden Mast. Volunteers will be trained in inspecting boats and

trailers carrying lake debris and informing those boaters that they must clean the bottom of their boat and trailer to ensure that no invasive species is able to enter Okauchee Lake.

Please consider volunteering to be a boat inspector! Send your expression of interest in volunteering to the Okauchee Lake Management website at [info@olmd.org](mailto:info@olmd.org).

Please include the following contact information:

- Name
- Complete Address - including Street/City/State/Zip Code
- Preferred Phone Number for Contact
- Verification that you are over the age of 18

Over the next several weeks we will be organizing our volunteers for training and assignment.

Thank you very much for considering your part in maintaining the beauty and value of Okauchee Lake!

## Things That Float: Buoys, Rafts, Other Markers & You!

Okauchee Lake is home to about 1,000 riparian owners and is enjoyed by lakeshore owners, their friends, and hundreds of guests each week who launch their boats at various launch sites. Understandably, this creates questions about rules and regulations, as well as a need for good old-fashioned courtesy. One question heard often is where people can place their floating docks and mooring buoys?

Mooring buoys may be placed within 150 feet of shore without a state permit, as long as they do not affect public rights (fish and wildlife habitat, navigation, etc.) or other riparian owners. Having a buoy further than 150 feet from shore will require the owner to apply for a permit.

Only riparian owners may place swim rafts or similar structures in the water and again, the rafts must not interfere with the rights of other property owners or with the rights of the public to use navigable waters. Any swim raft or water trampoline must be placed within 200 feet of shore and all swimming rafts should be well marked in both day and night to warn boaters of possible hazards. The rafts should be no more than 38 inches high, and no more than 200 square feet in surface area. Water trampolines, generally round, are limited to a 15 foot diameter.

Generally, while operating a motor boat on any lake, Slow-No-Wake speed is required within 100 feet of a raft, pier or buoy restricted area and lakeshore. This rule is extended to 200 feet from the lakeshore for a personal watercraft.

Riparian owners should also be aware that they may not place such Slow-No-Wake buoys without first having received an approval from the municipality and the DNR. The DNR website has information on applying to place such markers.

The Okauchee Lake Management District is not a law enforcement agency, but urges all of our riparian owners and guests to follow the lake regulations and practice common courtesy while using our wonderful lake. This applies to placement of your piers, buoys and rafts, and operation of your boat or other watercraft. Be aware of the noise levels of the boats, whether from the engines or sounds systems, and how we greet and treat one another on the lake. Let's make this a safe summer, full of fun, family & friendship!



## Okauchee Lake Independence Day Celebration Fireworks & Venetian Night Lighted Boat Parade

Date: Wednesday, July 4, 2018  
Time: 9:30 p.m.  
Location: Island Park In Front Of  
The Golden Mast Restaurant  
On Okauchee Lake

The Venetian Night Lighted Boat Parade is sponsored by the Okauchee Lake Yacht Club (OLYC). The parade leaves Party Island at 8:30 p.m. and will arrive at the mouth of the Channel at 9:00 p.m. Spectacular fireworks to follow! This



The photo above is a compilation of actual 2017 Okauchee Lake fireworks created by Cameron Cech.

To help continue this yearly tradition, please call Monica Pakalski at 414-801-4888 or send your donations to:

**Okauchee Fireworks Fund  
W353N6220 Marina Drive  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066**

For more information about the Boat Parade or the Okauchee Lake Yacht Club, please contact Susan Kay at 262-569-5993 or visit the OLYC website at: [www.olyc.org](http://www.olyc.org).



fireworks display is funded solely by donations from local residents and businesses.



For additional fireworks fun...On Saturday, June 30th, another fireworks display will begin at dusk near Whittaker Bay. Enjoy!

### Slow No Wake

In July, 2017, for the first time in seven years, there was a Slow-No-Wake established on Okauchee Lake due to high water levels that was removed a few days later. A "Slow-No-Wake" designation was issued by the Chief of Police and, as is customary, was based on lake level measurements collected at the dam. At that time, the order was posted on the Town of Oconomowoc website, the Town of Oconomowoc Facebook page, the OLMD website and posted at the Town of Oconomowoc Town Hall, its posting boards and the launch sites around Okauchee Lake. In the future, it is important to remember that "Slow-No-Wake" by definition means the slowest possible speed by which one can maintain steerage. It is imperative that in times of Slow-No-Wake, all boaters adhere to the definition. Violations observed on the lake should be reported through the City of Oconomowoc dispatch center at 262-567-4401. This number could be used for emergency purposes in addition to calling 911.



### Calling All Okauchee Lake History Buffs...

Okauchee Lake Management District is seeking historical information about Okauchee Lake. Photos are ideal but memorabilia of all kinds is welcome. If you have any information, photos, memorabilia or lake history that you would be willing to share, please email the OLMD at [info@olmd.org](mailto:info@olmd.org).

### OLMD Barging Policy

It is the OLMD policy regarding collection of aquatic plants from landowners that all plants for pick up **MUST** be placed on the end of the pier. This placement facilitates pick up, avoids damage to the hull of the barge on shoreline obstructions (i.e., rocks) and allows the employees to safely transfer the plant material to the barge.

Plants will be picked up during the week from piers in the sections being cut on a particular day and every Monday and Friday, weather permitting.

Plants must be free of any trash, such as cans, tree limbs, leaves, etc., as the farmers who receive our material will not accept anything except plants.

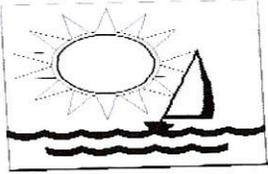
In the rare event plants must be on the shoreline, they must be in one pile in a location allowing the employees to easily transfer the plants directly to the barge. Please note adequate space is required between piers, boatlifts, etc. to safely maneuver the barge to the pick up point (20 feet minimum). If, in the opinion of the foreman (and after discussion with the riparian owner), these conditions are not met, the Commission's policy is to refuse pick up of plant material until the above conditions have been met.

If you have any questions, please call 262-966-0286.

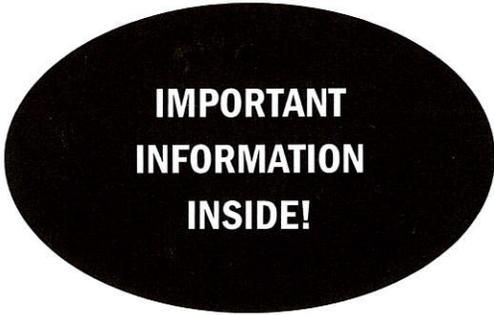




## Okauchee Lake Management District



PO Box 526  
Okauchee, WI 53069  
[www.olmd.org](http://www.olmd.org)



## District Meetings

Okauchee Lake Management District meetings are held the second Monday of every month from April through October at 7 p.m. at the Town of Oconomowoc Town Hall located at the junction of Brown Street and CTH K. Check the website at [www.olmd.org](http://www.olmd.org) for agendas, minutes and updates. Please reserve the date of August 27, 2018 on your calendar for the Annual Meeting! All are welcome to attend.

We hope to see you soon!

## Commissioners

Carol Wilson	Chairperson/County Rep.	262-367-7363
Tom Godar	Secretary	608-577-9235 /Thomas.Godar@huschblackwell.com
Dee Schriver	Treasurer	262-560-1487/dschriver@aol.com
Dennis Johnson	Lake Operations	414-828-5461/mej2548@yahoo.com
Bruce Mueller	Town Representative	414-704-5420/bruceTRC@wi.rr.com