



## Letter from the President

Greetings Shore Owners!

With such a mild winter and a relatively mild spring, the expectation for summer like weather has been pushing us for a few months now. This time of the year brings excitement from all to BRING ON THE SUMMER. Well, we're hoping it's right around the corner.

We've made Stone Lake our home away from home for the past 33 years. As we always waited out the winter and spring months, the summer was always thought of as SO special to look forward to. Why is that every year? Part of any journey is the anticipation of time and events ahead for the summer. These are things we've dreamed about for the past 6 months. I'm sure I speak for all of you when I say that it's so exciting to look forward to and plan for the summer. Knowing that warmer weather is about to arrive, the trees are almost fully leafed out, the lake temperature is continuing to warm up, the fish hopefully are starting to bite, the days are longer, the sunsets are spectacular, the lazy boat cruises have begun, the first jump in the lake is soon to happen, and friends that we haven't seen for many months are starting to surface. Yes, there's so much to look forward to. Now is the time for our dreams to come true. I hope you all have a wonderful summer.

Stay safe and enjoy!

*John Ryan* - President SOSLA  
(Shore Owners of Stone Lake Association)

## SOSLA Upcoming 2024 Meetings, Events, and Important Dates!

- **June 1, 3:00-5:00 PM**  
SOSLA Summer Kickoff  
Location: Whistle Punk
- **June 15, 10:00 AM**  
Membership Meeting  
Location: Lion's Park
- **July 4, 11:00 AM**  
Boat Parade  
(Rain date July 5)
- **August 17, 10:00 AM**  
Membership Meeting  
Location: Lion's Park  
Annual Picnic & Golf  
Outing to follow.

## Stone Lake Events

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of Month, 6:30-7:30 PM**  
Stone Lake Township meeting at Town Hall.
- **Monday & Thursday 9:00 AM – 12 PM**  
Stone Lake Township office hours.  
715-865-6015

**SOSLA OFFICERS AND BOARD**

[stonelakeshoreowners@gmail.com](mailto:stonelakeshoreowners@gmail.com)  
PO Box 102, Stone Lake, WI 54876

**President: John Ryan**

612-940-8623

[Jrryan1127@aol.com](mailto:Jrryan1127@aol.com)

**Vice President: Steve Erickson**

507-259-3798

[erickson.stephen@mayo.edu](mailto:erickson.stephen@mayo.edu)

**Secretary: Melissa Sunderland**

715-416-2399

[mandrea75@yahoo.com](mailto:mandrea75@yahoo.com)

**Treasurer: Doug Baker**

608-220-6303

[dougstonelake@gmail.com](mailto:dougstonelake@gmail.com)

**Past President: Gary Erickson**

715-865-4406

[GaryJohnErickson@aol.com](mailto:GaryJohnErickson@aol.com)

**Board of Directors**

**Don Bushek – AIS**

763-213-7572

[donbushek@yahoo.com](mailto:donbushek@yahoo.com)

**Gail Emerson**

612-799-6439

[gaile100@yahoo.com](mailto:gaile100@yahoo.com)

**Cathie Erickson**

715-865-4406

[CathieErickson@aol.com](mailto:CathieErickson@aol.com)

**Betty Hanson**

715-865-2710

[bahanson35@gmail.com](mailto:bahanson35@gmail.com)

**Kevin Krueger**

952-210-6570

[kmk971@hotmail.com](mailto:kmk971@hotmail.com)

**Dar Nielsen – Membership**

(951) 206-2985

[dar@thenielsenfamily.us](mailto:dar@thenielsenfamily.us)

**Susan Mattis Turnham – Newsletter**

218-355-1368

[smturnham@aol.com](mailto:smturnham@aol.com)

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**Regular Summer Dump Hours**

June, July & August  
Wednesday & Saturday Mornings:  
9 AM to 1 PM  
Accepted Plastic Recyclables:  
#1, 2, 5

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**Stone Lake Yard / Garage Sale**

Saturday, June 1, 2024 ▪ 9 AM to 3 PM

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**Town of Stone Lake  
Annual Clean Up Day**

Saturday, June 8, 2024 ▪ 8 AM to 1 PM  
(At press time, this date was pending approval at  
April Township meeting.)

The annual clean-up day for residents of the  
Town of Stone Lake will be held on Saturday,  
June 8, 2024 from 8 AM to 1 PM at the Stone  
Lake garbage and recycle facility located at  
N5960 Walter Road. At this time the town will  
accept free of charge:

Appliance, TV's, electronics,  
computer equipment, satellite receivers,  
fluorescent light bulbs, vehicle batteries, and a  
limit of 6 free car and truck tires.  
(More tires may be brought in for a fee.)  
(Furniture may be brought for a fee.)

Items not accepted:

Paint, paint cans, stain, stain cans,  
flammable liquids, leaves, brush, and  
construction debris.

Regular garbage fees will apply on that day. If  
you have questions about what items are  
acceptable, please call Gary at 715-699-4702.

Note: A second clean-up day will be held in  
September, date to be determined.

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## Stone Lake AIS Fundraising Update

Stone Lake people have stepped up in a big way to help us fight Eurasian Water Milfoil and other invasive species. In response to SOSLA's plan and appeal announced last November, to date \$54,500 has been committed from 68 donors. What an amazing outpouring of support!



This money will enable SOSLA to move aggressively in 2024 and 2025 to implement plans to keep EWM at bay and hopefully not interfere with anyone's enjoyment of our beautiful lake.

To celebrate all of you who have contributed, we think we should get together to start the summer off right! So, mark your calendars for:

### **SOSLA Summer Kick-off**

Saturday, June 1

3:00 – 5:00

At Whistle Punk (they will have their usual line-up of refreshments for sale)

In addition to the 64 shore owners who have contributed to date, we'd like to extend a special thanks to the following area businesses for their financial support:

- Advance Printing
- Cranberry Festival
- Cut In Stone
- Rollingwood Nursery
- CJ Landscaping

Finally, I'd like to thank the AIS Fundraising Committee for their tireless efforts: Mike Degen, Gail Emerson, Kevin Krueger, and Melissa Sunderland.

*Rolf Thompson*  
*SOSLA AIS Fundraising Committee Chair*



Craig Roberts, Fisheries Biologist for Washburn and Burnett Counties, Wisconsin DNR will be a guest presenter at our August 17th SOSLA meeting. He will talk about the 2023 Creel Survey done on Stone Lake last summer and will include a question-and-answer session.

*Bill Byrkit*

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## Establishing a Preferred Lake Services Provider List

At the last member meeting, I gathered a list of the service providers used by those in attendance. Those providers included dock and lift companies, watercraft rental places, fishing guide services, and boat storage and transport people. In other words, anyone who might be putting equipment into Stone Lake. My plan is to contact those companies, quiz them about their decontamination procedures, remind them of AIS-related county and state regulations, and finally, to attempt to get their pledge to adhere to those regulations. The results of these contacts will then be distributed to SOSLA members to guide their hiring decisions.

My survey letters will go out in the next week or so, and I hope to get responses back and the results out to members within a month.

Following is the list of service providers from the member meeting. If you have any to add, PLEASE email their contact information to me at donbushek@yahoo.com as soon as possible.

Current list of vendors to receive survey letter:

Buck's Dock Services  
Hayward Power Sports  
John Paine  
Leverton's  
Dock Boys  
Round Lake Marine  
Mike Jorgensen  
Just In and Out  
Shell Lake Boat  
Rob Paine

*Don Bushek*

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## Adopt-A-Highway



Through snow and rain, the intrepid Highway Cleanup Crew persevered in early November 2023. Steve Erickson had noticed a fairly large amount of trash near Lake Road and Hwy 70, suggested we do the cleanup and did the organizing. He was correct – there was more trash than we found at the previous cleanup including a shredded tire and a microwave.

The fall crew consisted of Steve Erickson, John Ryan, Melissa and Joe Sunderland, Cathie and Gary Erickson, Susan Mattis Turnham, David Turnham and Gail Emerson. We gathered at Red Schoolhouse's overflow parking lot and worked on both sides of the road from each direction. With such a great crew, we were done with our assigned mile in only an hour!

*Gail Emerson*

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## Purple Loosestrife

2023 was an average year for loosestrife on our lake. Some gains and some losses – a few new colonies on the east and south shores plus Lake Avery. The loosestrife beetles are still active on the northwest corner of Big Stone. It would be easy to forget about loosestrife now that Eurasian milfoil is upon us. But we will need to

redouble our efforts to keep our lake clear and swimmable. I really appreciate many of our shore owners stepping up to remove and eradicate loosestrife on their beaches.



*Stephen B. Erickson*

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## Eurasian Watermilfoil Surveillance

You've heard a lot about our plans for dealing with EWM in Stone Lake. Central to all of these plans is finding and monitoring the locations of the outbreaks. We've hired professionals to do surveys, and will continue to do so, but our best defense will still be vigilant surveillance by those with the most to lose. That's us!!



Photo: EKKWI.ORG

Hopefully, every property owner who is able will keep a keen eye on the area around their own dock and shoreline, and on the lake in general while out and about.

Nevertheless, there will be potential milfoil growing areas that can't or won't be monitored by a shore owner. The railroad-owned shoreline, the middle of Little Stone Lake and Avery Pond, and shorelines with absentee owners are some examples.

To ensure that the entire lake is under someone's watchful eye, I will be gathering a group of volunteers this spring to do periodic inspections of areas that have no other monitors.

More information about this volunteer crew will be coming to you shortly. I personally believe that this group will be crucial to early detection of milfoil outbreaks while they are most effectively dealt with, and sincerely hope for an overwhelming response to the call for volunteers.

*Don Bushek*

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## 2025 Calendar

A brief overview of photo submittal requirements:



- The submittal deadline is August 11 but you are encouraged to submit early. Photos do not have to be submitted all at once.
- Submittals are limited to six photos per shore owner household.
- Please take photos in a landscape format (think of holding your cell phone sideways).
- Pictures with people should be as generic, or non-identifiable, as possible.
- The Board has decided to expand the area of local festivities, nature and wildlife to the "general area" of Stone Lake – meaning a reasonable distance into Washburn or Sawyer Counties. Water related pictures should still only be of Stone Lake proper. If you take a unique picture of one of the neighboring festivals, such as the LCO Pow Wow, or the Spooner Rodeo, we will let the members decide during voting if it is considered representative of our area.

Anyone staying at your cabin while taking the photograph can enter. Send your pictures by e-mail to [garyjohnerickson@aol.com](mailto:garyjohnerickson@aol.com).

*The Calendar Committee*

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## Wetland Park



boggy south end filters water runoff from the town before it enters Big Stone. It was home to beavers last summer, plus the usual bog flora and fauna. The uplands to the north is a

“This land is your land, this land is my land...” sang Peter, Paul and Mary. They could have been singing about our own Wetland Park! The Town of Stone Lake purchased the property several years ago. The

hardwood forest. Maintenance has been under the volunteer direction of Tom and Carol McDonald, who also keep up the Historical Museum caboose and have supervised maintenance work on the Stone Lake cemetery. I volunteer to help maintain the trails, tables, benches and gazebo – lovely places for picnics after a hike. Come visit! Bug spray is supplied year around and trail maps are posted around the property. Enjoy!

*Steve Erickson*

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## Boat Landing Spring Updates

I'm happy to announce that Andy Slesar will be returning as our paid monitor again this year. As you've heard me say before, Andy is great for this job and I'm glad he's coming back again this year. Andy's salary is paid by the Township through an annual WiDNR grant that SOSLA applies for and administers.

The landing is showing its usual spring ice damage. The Town is aware of the damage, and if past years are any indication, will have it repaired this spring before any sane person would want to be out on the water.

The decontamination equipment will be operational again this year with no planned changes.

Finally, let me remind everyone of the Washburn County and Wisconsin statutes aimed at preventing AIS from being transferred between lakes via their boat landings. These statutes are enforced by, and violations are reportable to the county Sheriff's department. In layman's terms:



If decontamination equipment is available and operational, it must be used according to posted directions to clean all watercraft and trailers entering or leaving a lake.

All watercraft and trailers entering or leaving a lake must be cleaned of visible vegetation. Live wells and PWC sumps must be emptied when leaving a lake, and must be empty while the watercraft is on the road. Bait buckets containing lake water must be emptied and bait discarded when leaving a lake.

*Don Bushek*

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## Lake Levels

Stone Lake is classified as a seepage lake, meaning it has neither an inlet nor outlet. The water level is influenced almost exclusively by rain and snow falling directly on the water, from run-off, and by evaporation. Some inflow and outflow occurs through movement of ground water but generally not in sufficient quantities to substantially affect seasonal water levels

Typically, the level of Stone Lake increases moderately over the winter season due to snow accumulation, and ice cover temporarily stops the evaporation that occurs during the open water months. The fall to spring change of the 22/23 winter season was above normal with a rise of 5.8 Inches due to the heavy snows. The previous fall to spring change (21/22 winter season) was fairly normal with a rise of 3.8 inches.

This year's late fall to spring change, however, was out of the ordinary with a 6.8-inch drop – a total of over 9 inches since many of you left in late summer. The winter had extraordinarily low snowfall and greater evaporation due to limited ice cover. The first day of total ice cover (January 12) was the latest the lake froze-over since continuous recording was started 30 years ago, and the 'ice out' date was March 16, the earliest recorded during that same time period. Average winter ice cover is approximately 120 days compared to this winter's 64 days. The longest was 160 days during the winter of '95/'96.

*Gary Erickson*

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## Broadband Expansion in Stone Lake

Last August during the SOSLA membership meeting, the possibility of providing high speed reliable broadband internet to areas of Stone Lake that currently have poor or no internet service was discussed. Following the meeting, many SOSLA members provided comments to Mosaic Technologies describing the poor internet service they experience. Mosaic is an internet service provider located in Cameron, Wisconsin that is expanding broadband in several nearby townships including Sand Lake.



In the fall of 2023, the Town of Stone Lake Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a resolution acknowledging the importance of improved internet accessibility for homeowners and businesses in the township. The board also agreed to support Mosaic Technologies' plan to apply for Federal grant money intended to cover costs required to expand their high-speed internet service into the township.

On March 7, 2024 Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers announced that the Wisconsin Public Service Commission had awarded \$43 million dollars for broadband internet expansion to 30 projects in the State of Wisconsin. One of the approved applications was submitted by Mosaic Technologies and is projected to include residents and businesses in the Town of Stone Lake.

These grants are funded by the American Rescue Plan Act; a federal program passed by Congress and signed by President Biden in 2021. The funds are designed to expand high speed internet access to rural areas of the country that have not had reliable and affordable internet access.

Over the coming months, more information will become available from Mosaic Technologies regarding the construction timeline and process for their build out of the infrastructure required to expand their service.

*Allan Rosenwald*

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## Proposed Wake Sports Bill Falls Short

In November a bill proposing to regulate enhanced wakes, such as those created by wake boats, was introduced into both houses of the Wisconsin legislature and sparked heated debate around the state. Although no action was taken before the legislative session ended, the controversy will almost certainly continue into the next session.

Wake boats have ballast tanks that hold thousands of pounds of lake water and create larger than normal waves by increasing the boat's displacement. While creating added fun for wake surfers, wake boarders and tubers, the enhanced wakes have raised concerns among property owners, anglers and others over shoreline erosion, damage to aquatic vegetation and fish habitat, disturbance of bottom sediments, public safety, and conflicts with other water sports. Flooding of loon nests is a particular concern on northern Wisconsin lakes.

In addition, the design of the ballast tanks on many of wake boats makes them very difficult or impossible to fully drain, leading to concerns over transfer of invasive species.

This bill (AB 656/SB 680) was sponsored by Sen. Felzkowski and Rep. Swearingen whose districts include Oneida and Vilas Counties which have even more lakes than we have in this area. The bill equated wake surfing and wake boarding to waterskiing and called for minimal limitations on wake sports. It would have prohibited wake surfing or wake boarding on bodies of water 50 acres or less or within 200 ft. of a shoreline, dock, pier, boathouse or other structure on the water. No minimum depth was specified. It would have taken away the right of local government (Towns) to adopt local more restrictive ordinances regulating wake surfing or wake boarding. There was speculation that this bill was written on behalf of wake boat manufacturers and distributors to preempt stronger regulations and did not adequately address public safety or environmental concerns.

Lake protection advocates and organizations around the state rose up in opposition to the bill saying that:

- Scientific research indicates that enhanced wakes should be prohibited from areas closer than 500-700 feet from shore to stop damage to shorelines and prohibited at depths less than 20-30 feet to stop damage to lakebeds and fish habitat;
- Because of the unique characteristics of individual lakes, local government should be allowed to continue adopting more restrictive standards; and
- Wake boat manufacturers should be required to provide the means for wake boat users to easily empty their ballast tanks as required by existing state law to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels and spiny waterfleas.

At the urging of Wisconsin Lakes, the Washburn County Lakes & Rivers Association (WCLRA), SOSLA, the Last Wilderness Alliance, Wisconsin Greenfire, Lakes At Stake, and others, many legislators, including those who represent Washburn County, withdrew their support for the bill. Although Sen. Felzkowski said that amendments to strengthen the bill were coming, that did not happen and the bill was not voted on before the session ended. In the meantime, another bill was introduced that would have allowed wake boats only in approximately 77 lakes statewide that are 1500 acres or more. It didn't go anywhere either.

Stay tuned. The debate will continue through the summer and into the fall. Several lake organizations are working together to reach a consensus on a science-based solution that they can all support. Additional groups are getting involved. New ideas may emerge. It seems likely that one or more new bills will be introduced in the 2025-2026 legislative session.

If you have questions or comments on this topic, contact Cathie Erickson at [CathieErickson@gmail.com](mailto:CathieErickson@gmail.com) or 612-910-3566.

*Cathie Erickson*



## Treasurer's Report

All income categories were higher in 2023. The most obvious is the \$37,200 AIS Management Fund donations, but other AIS donations for boat landing monitoring and general maintenance were also higher. AIS expenditures are mostly for remediation expenses prior to our DNR grant approval. The grant paid for approximately \$5,700 of additional remediation expenses which are not included in this report. Postage and printing cost increases contributed to the increases in calendar and newsletter expenses.

*Doug Baker - Treasurer*

| SOSLA                                             |  |                |                |
|---------------------------------------------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| FINANCIAL REPORT                                  |  |                |                |
|                                                   |  | 2022<br>ACTUAL | 2023<br>ACTUAL |
| Beginning checking account balance                |  | 11,099.54      | 11,501.47      |
| Beginning savings account balance                 |  | 7,460.57       | 7,470.85       |
| Beginning Cash Balance                            |  | 18,560.11      | 18,972.32      |
| <b>INCOME</b>                                     |  |                |                |
| Membership dues                                   |  | 1,640.00       | 2,710.00       |
| Calendar contributions                            |  | 1,280.34       | 1,660.00       |
| AIS contributions                                 |  | 1,317.88       | 2,257.00       |
| AIS Management Fund donations                     |  | -              | 37,200.00      |
| Donations                                         |  | 120.00         | 373.69         |
| Legal fund (rezoning issue)                       |  | (1,060.00)     | (1,415.70)     |
| Interest                                          |  | 10.28          | 22.51          |
| Total Income                                      |  | 3,308.50       | 42,807.50      |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>                               |  |                |                |
| AIS Expenses                                      |  | 296.88         | 1,831.93       |
| Calendar printing/mailing                         |  | 1,356.73       | 1,912.03       |
| Dues/fees                                         |  | 387.50         | 365.00         |
| Meetings/picnic                                   |  | 138.53         | 151.06         |
| Newsletters publication/mailing                   |  | 548.65         | 696.96         |
| Office supplies/postage                           |  | 98.00          | 36.65          |
| Post office box                                   |  | 70.00          | 82.00          |
| Total Expenditures                                |  | 2,896.29       | 5,075.63       |
| Increase in cash                                  |  | 412.21         | 37,731.87      |
| Cash Balance                                      |  | 18,972.32      | 56,704.19      |
| Ending checking account balance                   |  | 11,501.47      | 9,210.83       |
| Ending savings account balance                    |  | 7,470.85       | 47,493.36      |
|                                                   |  | 18,972.32      | 56,704.19      |
| Unspent AIS funds included in the above balance   |  | 6,598.71       | 44,223.78      |
| Unspent legal funds included in the above balance |  | 6,255.00       | 4,839.30       |

SHOREOWNERS OF STONE LAKE ASSOCIATION (SOSLA)

