

**Pretty Lake Conservation Club  
Pretty Lake, LaGrange County, Indiana  
Minutes of the July 16, 2022 General Meeting**

The 2022 annual General Meeting of the Pretty Lake Conservation Club was held on Saturday, July 16, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the clubhouse of the Pretty Lake Conservation Club. The meeting was called to Order by President Scott Alexander (cottage 177-D), followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and prayer lead by Jim Mertz (cottage 116). Board members present were: President Scott Alexander, Vice President Cary Fries (cottage 89), Treasurer Sue Mertz (cottage 116), Secretary Craig Bobay (cottage 113), Chris Alexander (cottage 177-D), Barb Butler (cottage 35), Natalie McLaughlin (cottage 155), Beth Pusti (cottage 118-A), Andy Scheidler (cottage 105), John Stemmler (cottage 152), and Tom Tassler (cottage 15). Board members absent: Cathy Kantorak (cottage 227). Attendance was reported to be 47.

Scott Alexander reported that no DNR Officer was available to be present due to a staff shortage, and that no LaGrange REMC representative was available to talk about the fiber optic cable installation taking place around the lake.

**Deal Ditch Update:** Butch Vaughn (cottage 12-A) reported on the continued effort to improve water quality flowing into the lake via the Deal Ditch. High E. coli levels in the ditch have been a concern over the past several years. E. coli can double every 20 minutes in stagnant water in hot weather, so water current/flow plays a significant role in the E. coli numbers. Butch stated that the ditch was created in 1907 as a tile ditch, then in 1950-52, the ditch was converted to its present open condition. No maintenance was done on the ditch until the recent years, when the joint PLCC and county agency efforts began. LaGrange County's Health Department, Soil and Water Conservation District, and County Surveyor are all very involved in working with the PLCC to remedy the water quality problem. With the County Surveyor's work over the winter on dredging and clearing the ditch south of Co. Rd. 400 S. up to Co. Rd. 430 S., water stagnation issues in that section of the ditch have been greatly reduced, helping to improve the current and quality of the water that flows into our lake (as it did when dredging was conducted a few years ago on the north side of Co. Rd. 400 S.). Clearing and dredging the Deal Ditch has removed stagnant water pockets as they cleared trees and vegetation. This past March the County Health Dept. also conducted a dye sample of the septic system of a mobile home residence along the ditch (south of 400 S.), and no septic runoff problems were detected. Tests conducted this year show E. coli levels are now generally down to acceptable limits in most test areas – this includes several areas where the levels were previously too high to count. High levels are still found in the area where the ditch passes through a culvert under E. 430 S., and specifically, at the southern terminus of that culvert, which is approximately 80 feet from where the ditch discharges into the lake. The levels on the north side of E. 430 S., where the ditch flows into the culvert are much lower. The slow flow of the water through the culvert causes stagnation and leads to the higher E. coli counts. The E. coli levels are reduced to acceptable levels as soon as the Deal Ditch waters enter the lake, due to dilution. Testing will continue over the remaining summer months. Butch will report those test

results to the PLCC Board. The clearing and testing costs are being handled by the various above listed County agencies, and Butch reports that those agencies have been very helpful. The PLCC Board and members appreciate these efforts and reports, and thank Butch Vaughn for the progress and dedication to seeing this problem resolved.

**Eurasian Milfoil Update:** Rod Bergstedt (cottage 231), our resident weed control expert, spoke about the invasive Eurasian milfoil weeds in the lake that we have been treating with herbicides since 2013. Rod applies for annual LARE grants through the DNR on our behalf to help us tackle the invasive weeds. The goal of the Division of Fish & Wildlife's Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Program is to protect and enhance aquatic habitat for fish and wildlife, and to insure the continued viability of Indiana's lakes and streams for multiple uses, including recreation. Rod was able to secure a grant for Pretty Lake this year to treat up to 20 acres, at a cost not to exceed \$6,500. Last year, no grants were issued, and the PLCC paid 100% of the costs of the treatment (which was \$6,200.00.) An initial survey of the lake is done every year to determine areas in need of treatment. On June 15, our contractor (Aquatic Weed Control) treated 6.8 acres, which is down from the 9.4 acres treated in 2021. Usually, the DNR picks up about 80% of the cost when a LARE grant is given and the PLCC pays the rest. The total cost this year was \$3,915, plus an additional \$300 to be paid for a late summer "Tier Two" invasive weed study. The products approved to treat Eurasian milfoil are 2-4-D and Procellacor, both are selective for destroying milfoil, and no swimming or fishing restrictions are required when using these to treat milfoil. Cheryl Clelland (cottage 121) asked that lake residents be given better advanced notice about the date and areas of treatment. Rod said he did not get much notice from the contractor this year, but he will try to get the word out better next year. Chris added that the PLCC can help pass that information along to members.

**Outlet Project:** Jim Mertz updated the membership on the Outlet Project. This was a recommended project when Cardno provided us their report (environmental restoration and development study) a few years back. The project's goal is to increase the flow of the outlet stream by controlling erosion. Placement of glacial rock in the area of the outlet stream will accomplish that goal. The DNR has approved a permit for this work. Jim said he hopes the project will be completed before the end of 2022. Jerry Fletcher, (cottage 75) who lives next to the outlet said he regularly clears the outlet of debris to help keep the stream flowing, and he would appreciate help. Jim added that the PLCC annually has volunteers thoroughly clear the stream at the time the weir (dam) is adjusted to lower the lake to the and legally established winter level.

**Treasurers Report:** Sue Mertz reported the PLCC bank balance of \$ 58,979.59 as of June 30. Several expenses have yet to be paid. The annual audit of the PLCC books was conducted on March 18, 2022, by Vicki Stanski and Craig Bobay. Sue handed out an annual financial report (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021). Highlights of the budget include income from: July 4 Bingo (\$420), Cruise-In (\$1,047), Rummage Sale (\$2,669), Labor Day Bingo (\$422), Labor Day Breakfast (\$596), Walk Fort The Water (\$1,496), Golf Scramble (\$2,571), Memorial Day Bingo (\$236), Memorial Day Breakfast (\$1,000); and expenses of insurance (\$1,789), Aquatic Weed Control (\$783), money down on the Clubhouse siding project (\$3,674).

**Membership Report:** Barb Butler reported 81% of Pretty Lake homes have joined the PLCC this year. This favorably compares with 69% last year. \$5,1500.00 has come into the PLCC from membership fees as of June 30. Members have donated an additional \$5,575.00 for lake enhancement, and an additional \$5,080 for clubhouse improvements. We have 228 cottages, among 8 zones (which range between 23 to 33 cottages per zone.) A volunteer zone director is assigned to each zone to pass out newsletters and represent the zone. Our zone directors and our members help make our Pretty Lake community be such a special place. Barb also reported that new Pretty Lake Community Directories will be printed and distributed later this summer. She and Cathy Kantorak are working on this project. Each PLCC household will receive one directory free of charge, and may purchase extra directories for \$5 each.

**Clubhouse Report:** John Stemler reported for Cathy Kantorak (who is our clubhouse manager). We have 10 rentals this year. Cathy, Barb, and Sue painted the kitchen and restrooms this year. John and his daughter painted new lines on the pickleball court, and the club replaced the tennis/pickleball net this year. Larry Spatt (cottage 169) made some plumbing repairs. The Board appointed a subcommittee (Scott, Cathy, John, and Chris Sluyter) to look at possible Clubhouse repairs. As reported last year, the original wood exterior is deteriorating significantly, and is in dire need of attention, so the subcommittee obtained bids from several contractors. At the recommendation of the subcommittee, the Board approved a contract of \$18,370 with Maumee River Construction Co. to install new siding on the Clubhouse. The work is to be completed this fall. John passed around a sample of the selected reverse batten board siding (with a wood grain look). The siding has a 50 year pro-rated warranty, and a ten year labor warranty. He reported that the roof is in good condition.

**Merchandise Report:** John Stemler reported merch sales of \$2,600 so far. This year we sold t-shirts, golf shirts, hats, sweatshirts, and beach towels. The towels sold out quickly, so he will order more next year. He thanked Andy Goodman (cottage 19) whose business, AG Apparel, produced the merchandise.

**Cruise-In:** Cary Fries reported the fourth annual Cruise-In will be August 6. In addition to classic cars, cycles, wagons, and decked out golf carts are welcome. Food and drinks will be for sale, as well as the 50/50 raffle and door prizes. Cary is looking for sponsors and door prizes.

**Golf Scramble:** Tom Tassler reported the golf scramble will be September 10. A flyer will be available for those interested in participating. Tom is asking for donations for prizes. If you have any connections or items to donate, please call.

**Walk for the Water:** Craig & Nancy Bobay are again organizing the Labor Day weekend "Walk for the Water" this year. This is a non-competitive, healthy event on Saturday, September 3. Participants begin at their own location or the PLCC Clubhouse at 8:30 am, and walk at their own pace around the lake in a counter-clockwise direction on our wonderful "Pretty Lake Walking Path." This event is for our community and the conservation of the lake. See [www.Prettylake.org](http://www.Prettylake.org) for more information and for registration. The registration includes a "Lake Life" t-shirt. You can order a shirt even if you're not walking. \$20.00 per adult, \$12.00 per child under 12. Deadline to order shirts

is August 20 . T-shirts can be picked up at cottage 113 (4670 S 930 E) on September 2 from 5 pm to 8 pm. This is the third year for the Walk.

**Rummage Sale:** Barb Butler reported the annual Rummage Sale will take place Saturday, August 13, 8 am to noon. Annually, this is the biggest money-making event of the year for the PLCC. Its success relies on our wonderful volunteers. Drop off your donations beginning Sunday, August 7, noon – 2 pm, and Monday through Friday August 8-12 until 3 pm. We will take furniture, books, kitchen ware, seasonal items, lake toys, kids toys, tools, knick knacks, garden equipment, etc. Call Barb if you want to volunteer, have questions, or would like donate items and need help bringing them to the Clubhouse.

**Upcoming Events:**

August 6, Cruise-In, from 11 am- 2 pm  
August 13, Rummage Sale, from 8 am - noon  
September 3, Walk for the Water, at 8:30 am  
September 3, Bingo & Root Beer Floats, at 7:00 pm  
September 5, Labor Day Breakfast, from 8 am - 11 am  
September 10, Golf Scramble, at 9 am  
October 22, Fall Bonfire, at 7 pm  
November 12 Fall Clubhouse Clean-up, at 10 am  
December 13, Outlet Stream Clean-up, 10 am.

**Board of Director Nominations and Election:** The 2022 PLCC Board consists of 13 Board of Directors. We must have a minimum of 9, and a maximum of 15 members on the Board. The current 2022 PLCC Board of Directors (see above) are willing to serve again, except for Beth Pusti, who is taking a break from PLCC Board service. Beth has served very well, and she will be missed. Craig Bobay reported that the Nominating Committee nominates Annette Spatt and Chris Sluyter to the Board. Jim Hensel nominated Andy Goodman to the Board. The nominations were seconded, nominations were closed, with no one else stepping forward. Pursuant to the PLCC Bylaws and Constitution, no further election is necessary since fewer than the maximum were nominated. Therefore, Scott Alexander, Cary Fries, Sue Mertz, Craig Bobay, Chris Alexander, Barb Butler, Cathy Kantorak, Natalie McLaughlin, Andy Scheidler, John Stemmler, Tom Tassler, Annette Spatt, Chris Sluyter, and Andy Goodman were elected as PLCC Board members for 2023. Board meetings are typically April through October, at 6:30 pm on the first Tuesday of the month. All PLCC members are welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings.

**Round Table Discussion:** Pete Lapitsky (cottage 45) and his neighbor Lisa Kaufman (cottage 44), who both live next to where the Deal Ditch enters the lake spoke about the significant erosion that has gradually occurred at the mouth of the lake. Pete reported that the area is soft and is also being undermined by muskrats, adding to the erosion problem. Pete and Lisa asked that the PLCC consider undertaking some remedial work, such as adding glacial stone, to improve the flow and repair the damage caused by the erosion.

Cary Fries reminded everyone of the 10 mph speed limit on the lake, that boats should not cruise within 200 feet of the shoreline, and that residents be considerate of each other as it concerns loud noise. Cary said the slide in front of his mom's cottage (Laura Fries, cottage 52) is about 200 feet from the shoreline. He said that lake residents need to be courteous towards each other when on the lake. Others spoke up to agree with Cary.

Butch Vaughn stated that the swans on the lake are Mute swans, which an invasive species originally brought to the USA from Europe and Asia in the late 19th century for ornamental ponds. The Indiana DNR website says "Mute swans are an invasive species that have become established in high numbers on many bodies of water in Indiana. They can damage our aquatic and wetland ecosystems while acting aggressively toward people, pets, and native wildlife. However, many people are unaware of the problems mute swans cause." The DNR website also says: "Less abundant are native trumpeter and tundra swans. Trumpeter swans are a state endangered species that have seen recent breeding success in some northern Indiana counties... after aggressive management and removal of mute swans. Tundra swans breed in remote Arctic areas and pass through Indiana during fall migration to their wintering grounds along the mid-Atlantic coast." Butch said the DNR and PLCC should educate people about the Mute swans and then limit their population on the lake.

Chris Alexander said these topics raised by Cary and Butch (and other issues) suggest that the PLCC should have another Conservation Fair next year. Newer and also longer-term lake residents can learn and be reminded about these matters at a Conservation Fair. Chris also said she will add some of this information in the PLCC Newsletter.

Welcome Wagon. Denise Landers and Peggy Tassler volunteered to take over the duties of welcoming new residents to the lake.

Cynthia Rockwell (cottage 229) spoke out against the proposed Strawberry Acres housing development. She and husband Les asked for donations to help pay for a lawyer that they and other residents have hired to challenge the proposal. They believe the development is bad for our community, and the process to approve the development is violating County ordinances and rules. Craig Bobay stated that the PLCC has taken no official position on the proposed development, but the Board did ask many questions of the developers, and then the PLCC passed along that information, as well as information about the related LaGrange Planning Commission hearings, to the PLCC community.

Barb Butler reported that a resident has filed a petition with the LaGrange County Council to vacate an easement along the northwest shore. She asked that concerned residents contact her for more information.

New lake residents Matt and Laura Ritchie (cottage 38), Julie and Andy Goodman (cottage 19), and Terry and Dawn Baldwin (cottage 97 – Leon Wolfe's daughter) introduced themselves and were warmly welcomed to Pretty Lake.

**Adjournment:** At 11:12 am, Craig Bobay moved to adjourn, with a second from Andy Goodman. All approved.

*-Prepared by PLCC Secretary Craig J. Bobay*