

Geneva Lake Guardian

GENEVA LAKE ASSOCIATION

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www.genevalakeassoc.org

Winter/Spring 2011

The Association is dedicated to Conservation, Ecological Preservation and Education, and the General Welfare of the Geneva Lake Area.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF GENEVA LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC. • PROTECTING GENEVA LAKE SINCE 1935

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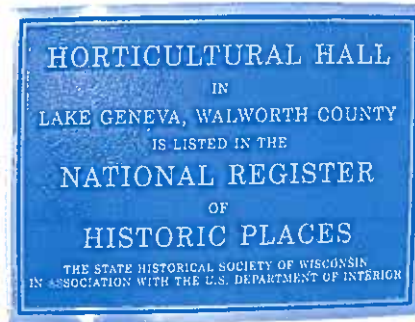
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HORTICULTURAL HALL CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL

One of Lake Geneva's most charming landmarks will reach a milestone this year when Horticultural Hall celebrates its 100th birthday! Built in 1911, the roots actually began in 1877 when summer lakeshore residents enlisted their gardeners and estate foremen to assist in raising money for the support of Holiday Home Camp. By auctioning fruits and vegetables and staging mid-summer fairs, they were able to support the camp. One account reveals that a watermelon brought \$100.00 and a bunch of grapes \$75.00!

as they present the very popular "Tales of Lake Geneva" on Sunday afternoon July 31st. This event will feature local community members recalling days gone by in the city, with this year highlighting Horticultural Hall. Re-creation of the 1911 Farmers Market; a local heritage tour, and programming featuring renowned speakers, such as Roy Diblik of Northwinds Perennials and Christine Register from the University of Wisconsin, and Mrs. Betty Adelman from Heritage Flower Farm, will provide a fun and stimulating week of activities. A grand celebration is also being planned for Saturday evening August 6th along with an old fashioned ice cream social on Sunday, August 7th to culminate the festivities.



By 1904 that group organized into the Gardeners and Foremen's Association, and in 1911 a Horticultural Society was formally organized by Simeon Chapin. To provide a meeting place for those and other groups, ground was broken later that year for Horticultural Hall. Subsequent years saw a flurry of farmers markets, flower shows, horticultural projects, and rummage sales at the hall to benefit Holiday Home Camp. In 1915 The Lake Geneva Garden Club was organized by Mrs. Charles Hutchinson, wife of the then president of the Art Institute of Chicago, and that group continues to provide financial support for Horticultural Hall. Now operated as the non-profit Geneva Area Foundation, Horticultural Hall is directed by dedicated trustees and volunteer board members who see to it that the building is preserved and maintained, and are charged with raising the capital to do so. Supported by generous individuals and groups, the hall is also available to be rented for meetings, weddings etc. The tradition of the Farmers Market continues each Thursday, May through October.

A full week of programming and activities is being planned to honor Horticultural Hall from July 31st through August 7th with Mr. Harold Hartshorne, grandson of Simeon Chapin, serving as Honorary Chairman of the Centennial week. The celebration will begin in conjunction with Lake Geneva's Historic Preservation Commission



More details of the weeks' events will be available soon on the website at www.horticulturalhall.com and in local news publications and radio broadcasts.



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HACKMATAK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

PROJECT UPDATE

The US Fish and Wildlife Service – Division of Conservation Planning (Midwest Region) reported on its website, (updated on November 10, 2010) results of the open house events held in Wisconsin and Illinois last autumn. Approximately 550 people attended the meetings where, “Service staff answered a variety of questions about such topics as landowner rights, snowmobile use, the biological values of the study area, acquisition processes and economic impacts.” These public meetings were the second step in the process. The Service website further states, “The next step will be to analyze the issues and gather data that will be used to evaluate a draft Environmental Assessment in late spring 2011.”

According to the Service, “The purpose of creating new refuges... is to preserve wildlife, plants and their habitat for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.” Agricultural and urban land usage have changed natural contiguous tracts of wetlands, prairie and forest habitats. Several rare wetland types, including fens and bogs, are involved. Migratory patterns of some avian species are presently interrupted by encroaching suburban development. Lisa Seiser, reporting on the October 21st locally held event for the Lake Geneva Regional News, quotes the Hackmatack Wildlife Refuge summary, “...fragmentation is the leading threat to the integrity of this region’s habitat.” When you visit the website, you will see in the USFWS maps how development has affected the area targeted for the Hackmatack refuge.

Named for the Algonquin word for the tamarack tree, Hackmatack could contain up to 30,000 acres that are home to 109 plant and animal species of concern, including the federally designated endangered whooping crane.

Recreation is a valued component of the study area with fishing, camping, opportunities for children to learn while exercising, and wildlife study for all ages. Unused rail lines have been effectively converted to greenway corridors in other areas of the country, allowing access for biking and hiking. Economic benefit from the proposed refuge for local communities is one area that Service representatives addressed at the meeting. While some people may view the refuge as a negative effect on local businesses, it is hoped that

businesses would profit from increased public interaction with nature.

Representatives from the Geneva Lake Association who attended the October 21st meeting in Lake Geneva were impressed with the enthusiasm of attendees. The candor of the Service representatives to specific questions raised by the public was refreshing. People were relieved to learn that all habitat restoration and preservation would be on a voluntary basis – willing buyer and willing seller- only. Eminent domain would not be invoked to acquire property, and owners within the designated area would be offered fair market value when funds were available for the Service to purchase land or an easement on the land. If a property owner chooses to sell land to the Service, some relocation benefits will be available. Owners would also be allowed to create conservation easements on their property. One of the brochures available to the public, entitled “Frequently Asked Questions”, is very helpful.

The Openlands organization has been actively working with The Trust for Public Land and other groups to, “... gain ongoing support... (and) to continue to coordinate efforts with the USFWS as they conduct the study.”

A group of citizens from Illinois and Wisconsin compose the membership of **Friends of Hackmatack**. The vision statement of this organization pictures “...a natural wildlife refuge that recognizes, protects and restores the rare natural communities, unusual glacial landforms, high quality waters and abundant native plants and animals of the bi-state region.”

Anyone can send an e-mail message to the Fish and Wildlife Service to: r3planning@fws.gov.

A project update in pdf format is available from the Service. For that, and for more information, or to submit your comments and ideas, visit the website www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/Hackmatack

The Openlands website with Hackmatack information is: www.openlands.org/Policy/Issues/update-feasibility-study-approved-for-hackmatack

The website for Friends of Hackmatack, another good source for information, is: www.hackmatacknwr.org

DO COAL-TAR BASED PAVEMENT SEALERS POLLUTE SOIL AND WATER?

From time to time we try to raise topics of specific interest that may affect Geneva Lake and its environs. Such a topic arose recently, reported by a respected Chicago newspaper. We have tried to present both sides of this issue, and hope this is informative enough for you to make your own decisions. Recently we discussed paint chips being washed into the lake. Here is another commonplace material-driveway seal coating that may be a potential danger to Geneva Lake.

The January 16, 2011 edition of The Chicago Tribune contained an article about the safety of coal-tar based sealants for asphalt driveways. Concerns about chemicals, called PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) have existed for a long time, but mounting evidence from scientific studies is gaining more attention from municipalities around the country. As the treated surface deteriorates, the particles containing PAHs become part of the water runoff that could well wash into lakes and streams.

According to the Tribune article, “PAHs are of particular concern (to environmentalists) because they don’t break down easily.” It continues, “The Geological Survey found that although concentrations of banned chemicals like DDT and PCBs are slowly declining in the environment, levels of PAHs are increasing.”

Science Daily (January 15, 2010) noted, “Apartments with adjacent parking lots treated with coal-tar based sealcoat

contained house dust with much higher concentrations of PAHs than apartments next to other types of parking lots.” The report indicates that the amount of house dust with PAHs was up to 25 times higher from coal-tar based sealcoats. Particles of sealcoat are tracked in on shoes of people who have walked across the parking lots. The dust on the parking lot surface itself was 530 times higher.(www.sciencedaily.com)

Ironically, as the Chicago Tribune reported, federal and officials of various states have “...prosecuted dozens of companies for illegally dumping coal tar and fouling neighborhoods with PAHs. At least 40% of the polluted industrial sites on the EPA’s superfund cleanup list have problems with PAH contamination...” The local free newspaper The Beacon carried an excerpt from the Tribune article which stated that the manufacturers of coal-tar based sealant lobbied to exempt it from EPA regulations for coke ovens. “EPA regulations allow for the legitimate recycling of coal tar under certain specified parameters.”

Countering the statements about EPA superfund sites having “problems with PAH contamination”, the Pavement Coatings Technology Council (www.pavementcouncil.org) states, “A thorough discussion of PAHs should have included some mention of other, more dominant sources of PAHs – car exhaust, wood smoke...” This organization also defends

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MEMBERSHIP FORM

All persons interested in the conservation, preservation, environmental education and general welfare in the Geneva Lake Region are invited to become members. The contributions requested from members are as follows:

Regular Membership - Annual Contribution \$30.00

Sustaining Membership - All Members who so elect, Annual Contribution \$50.00

Contributing Membership - All Members who so elect, Annual Contribution \$100.00

Donor Membership - All Members who so elect, Annual Contribution \$150.00

Benefactor Membership - All Members who so elect, Annual Contribution \$250.00 or more

Commercial Membership - Annual Contribution \$60.00

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL
(Please Print)

Name _____

Home Address _____

_____ Phone _____

Summer Address _____

Pier # _____ Phone _____

Business or Profession _____

Business Address _____

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All Contributions Are Tax Deductible

Send Membership form to: GENEVA LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC. P.O. Box 412, Lake Geneva, WI 53147

NEW MEMBERS

Since our last newsletter, we have the following new members in the Association:

RESIDENTIAL

Dan & Lyn Rosenthal

JoAnne Brown

Joseph P Howard

Kevin Henning

Keith Snidtker

Rosemary Blaskovich

Ken & Mary Gustafson

Tom & Janet Nickols

Kirsch's Pier Shops, Inc.

John & Sandy Miller

Welcome!

We intend to list all new members of the GLA in our newsletter. Membership automatically includes listing in the annual Directory issued in June each year.

A REMINDER!! Only members who are current with their membership dues will receive the Directory. Any recipient of this newsletter who is not current has until the end of March to become current. After that date, we cannot guarantee inclusion in the Directory. We sincerely hope recipients of this newsletter who have never joined the GLA or have let their membership lapse will consider joining us and helping us continue our efforts.

We have not raised our membership dues in a number of years and do not intend to do so at this time. It would be great if members would consider "moving up" in membership class when renewing. All members receive the same benefits, except for their designation in the Directory. The GLA newsletter the "Geneva Lake Guardian" is mailed to all people on our mailing list.

TAX LETTERS Through 2009, confirmation letters were sent each January for contributions of \$250 or more. For 2010, the policy was changed to acknowledge in January contributions of \$100 or more. Starting in 2011, tax letters will be sent the month following receipt for contributions of \$100 or more. We have plenty of stationery and stamps, so if you'd like such a letter, just donate \$100 or more! Great deal, isn't it!

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DO COAL-TAR BASED PAVEMENT SEALERS POLLUTE SOIL AND WATER?

existence of PAHs in sealant by describing the conditions that trigger the EPA's superfund cleanup are set for each location based on conditions that prevail at each site..." which, they claim "... have no relevance to sealants."

Dane County, Wisconsin banned the sale or use of refined tar-based pavement sealers on July 1, 2007. The city of Austin, Texas did the same on January 1, 2006. Coal-tar based sealants are still allowed in Walworth County. As consumers become aware of the possible danger, they should know that there is a viable alternative. For example, the Asphalt Paving Alliance reported in an article, The Role of Asphalt in Livable Communities that,

"Asphalt that is not coal-tar based has been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and used successfully as a primary liner for both sanitary and hazardous-waste facilities."

A representative from the GLA recently discussed this topic with a local asphalt paving contractor. He said that coal-tar based sealant is efficient in reflecting light and resisting water damage to driveways, thus extending the life of the underlying asphalt, but that sealant without coal-tar is available. Customers can request that a contractor use an asphalt based sealant that is not coal-tar based when paving and sealing driveways, parking lots, playgrounds etc. He said the cost is, "...about the same."

REVIEW OF SHORELAND ZONING LAWS

The GLA Annual Meeting in July, 2010 hosted Senator Neil Kedzie and a panel of guests from area government entities for a presentation and discussion of the new regulations. The Summer 2008 and Summer 2009 editions of the Geneva Lake Guardian newsletter included a description of the new regulations. However, due to the fact that the regulations will be enforced as of April 1, 2011, along with several inquiries received by GLA representatives, the following synopsis should serve as a helpful reminder:

Piers placed before February 6, 2004, may be exempt from any registration or permits if they meet size and location standards. **If piers are larger than these exemption standards and were placed before the February 6, 2004 date, they may be eligible for the "grandfather" category,**

but must be registered with the DNR before April 1, 2011. If they are too big for the "grandfather" category, or were placed after February 6, 2004, and are larger than exemption standards, owners will need to apply to the DNR for an individual permit to determine if the pier may remain as it is. Pier size is but one of the many new areas the DNR is addressing in the new zoning laws, but it has sparked the most interest from GLA members.

Other issues addressed in the new regulations include vegetation management and nonconforming structures. Complete information is available at the DNR website: <http://dnr.wi.gov>. The newsletters referenced above are available on our website-genevalakeassoc.org.

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