

Last Column
Submitted by Bob Becker

Forward

This is the last column I am writing to you as president of the Paw Paw Lake Association. I have enjoyed working on your behalf and on behalf of Paw Paw Lake. Your support for the PPLA has been gratifying and I hope the Board and I have lived up to your expectations. Please continue to support the Association with your time, treasure and talent. Your new president, Joe Stepich is an able leader and he and the entire board will work hard for you going forward. Thank you all for your support. God speed to you and this great lake community.

Some of you may say “finally”. This is my last column as president of the Paw Paw Lake Association (PPLA.) reporting on issues revolving around the PPLA. Since 2005 it has been my privilege to work improving our relations with our townships and the community at large. It was important to rebuild a trust confirming the goals of the PPLA were not in opposition to the benefit of the community in which we live. I have felt from the beginning of my term that the lake benefits the community and the community enhances the lake.

It is important to work on common goals as a clean and healthy lake provides a mechanism to help our communities thrive. In times of economic strife that is perhaps more important than in the ‘good times’. Love ‘em’ or not the fact is we are but a tank of gas away from the Chicago area and as folks cut back on the distances they travel, we remain in their bull’s eye. The call of the lake for many and the bustling restaurants, orchards, vineyards and the businesses along Friday Road will hopefully help sustain us through turbulent times and ultimately help us to thrive once again.

As the vintners, orchard men and farmers must be kind stewards of their lands we, too, must be kind stewards of our watershed and the lakes it serves. Clean and plentiful water is the most precious commodity we have, whether it is in the form of a lake, a stream or the aquifer from which we draw our drinking water. What we put on our lawns, for instance, impacts not only our lakes and streams; but the same excess nutrients we apply may also impact the quality of our aquifer and our drinkable water.

I would be not surprised if most area soils were rich in phosphorous levels, enough to support a growing a lawn. If you’ve been paying attention you know any nutrient that is not absorbed by your lawn or ‘personal watershed’ it will find its way into our streams, drains and ultimately into the lake or the aquifer (your personal water source) as runoff or infiltration.

If you’ve been fishing or boating on the lake, you’ve realized weeds (fueled in large part by lawn chemicals) are hindering those activities and seemingly getting worse every year. You may have even wondered how these weeds could be better controlled. One way to help and rid the lake of chemicals is to simply stop applying fertilizers containing phosphorus to your lawn, whether you live on or near the lake or even at the edges of the township. Will fewer weeds emerge over night? Of course not; but it will help over time. This is the most important thing you can do to help promote a healthy less weedy lake and maintain a watershed is to use Zero (middle Number) phosphorous. It is a simple thing to do.

Coloma Township will initiate a fall leaf pick up program starting on the first Monday in November and continuing each Monday through the month. Simply rake or blow your leaves (leaves only) to your curb or roadside on the weekend for the weekly pick up. Watch the mail for your card with areas of automatic pick up, pertinent phone numbers and for those areas where pick up will be by request. Coloma Township joins with Watervliet Township in offering this excellent program. Watervliet Township program also begins on the first Monday in November. We thank both townships for providing this needed service. Call your Township office for more information.

Good bye and Good Luck!