

The Shoreline

**A Publication of the
Portage-Crooked Lakes Improvement Association**

August/September 2026



Photo courtesy of Doug Picken

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From the President...

The second half of summer is upon us. Our attention now turns to things that need to happen going into late summer and early fall. First and foremost, of these is the treatment of milfoil. The wind and weather have not been conducive to searching for it as of this writing. However, there are sunny and calm days ahead and we hope to understand the milfoil landscape very soon. We received some reports of where it may be and will be following up on them.

Although we didn't receive the same grants as last year, we secured another grant for \$14,700 to help cover treatment costs. Even so, our financial status will likely remain similar if history repeats itself. Our bill to treat milfoil last year was \$38,500. While our treasurer's report shows a healthy fund balance, it is quickly depleted once our AIS treatment bill comes due. Thank you to our members for your continued support.

Our annual Fall Dinner Meeting and Auction will be held September 19, one week later than usual because of a scheduling conflict. Look for the newsletter insert on page 7 with menu options. Reservations must be received by **September 4**. The auction helps offset our AIS expenses, so we hope you'll join us for an evening of good food, fun and fellowship.

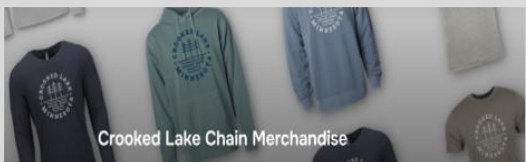
As members of the Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Association (www.mnlakesandrivers.org), we have access to valuable programs and resources, including the Lake Steward Program that launched this summer. We hope more shoreline property owners will participate. The program is free, risk-free, and does not obligate you to take any action based on the survey results. In fact, most lake properties likely already meet the requirements to be recognized as Lake Stewards.

We also receive legislative updates that may affect our lakes. As a trial this year, I'll forward them to our members so you can stay informed about issues that may impact us.

Hope to see you on the water!

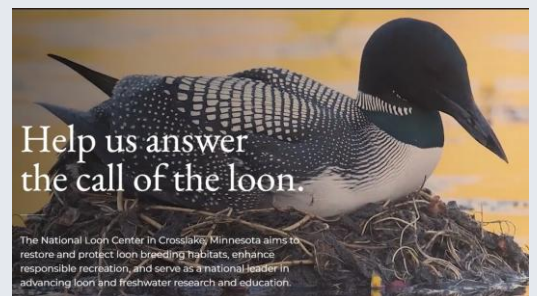
Scott Maghan

Silent Auction/Fall Dinner and Business Meeting *Saturday, September 19th – Details on page 6-7*



Interested in Some Lake Apparel?

Sota Clothing has an ongoing opportunity to purchase Crooked Lake merchandise. You can check it out by going to the "Crooked Lake Chain Merchandise" tab on the home page of the PCLIA Website.



Help us answer
the call of the loon.

The National Loon Center in Crosslake, Minnesota aims to restore and protect loon breeding habitats, enhance responsible recreation, and serve as a national leader in advancing loon and freshwater research and education.

The National Loon Center in Crosslake
<https://www.nationallooncenter.org/>

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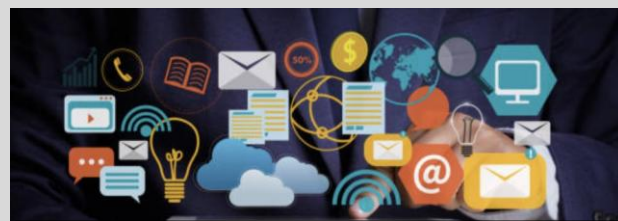
Board Meetings

Held at Bay Lake Town Hall at 8:30 a.m.

August 1, 2026

September 26, 2026

*Scheduled meetings are subject to change.
Meetings are open to the public.



LAKE COMMUNICATION

PCLIA WEBSITE

This is a great resource for accessing information about our chain of lakes. It provides a wide range of topics including: facts about our lakes, water quality, AIS education, boating tips, photos, video lake cruises, social events and much more. You can find us at pclia.com. Check it out!

PCLIA FACEBOOK

The PCLIA has a Facebook page for members to join and receive information on the association and its activities. Search *PCLIA of MN* on your Facebook home page, and you should be directed to the page where you can join the group.

PCLIA EMAIL

Our board of directors welcomes all of your suggestions, comments and questions. Please contact us at info@pclia.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

	Beginning Balance 1/1/2026	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 6/30/2026
Healthy Lakes/ AIS Fund*	\$0	\$4,019.88	\$1,505.00	\$2,514.98
Fish Stocking Fund*	\$3,207.21	\$1,354.22	\$0	\$4,561.43
General Fund*	\$87,790.80	\$8,876.85	\$1,745.98	\$94,921.67
PCLIA Lake Legacy Initiative*	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$728.54	\$20,000.00
TOTAL FUND BALANCES	\$100,998.01	\$24,251.05	\$3,979.52	\$121,269.54

*The **Healthy Lakes/Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Fund** contains funds specifically donated for monitoring and taking corrective steps to protect the quality of our lakes.

*The **Fish Stocking Fund** contains funds specifically donated toward the stocking of fish according to DNR guidelines.

*The **General Fund** contains funds not specifically designated for Healthy Lakes, AIS, or Fish Stocking.

*The **PCLIA Lake Legacy** contains funds received for member education, sustainable shoreline practices and youth engagement.

Please note that the cost of AIS treatment in 2026 is not reflected in these numbers.

SUMMER FUN

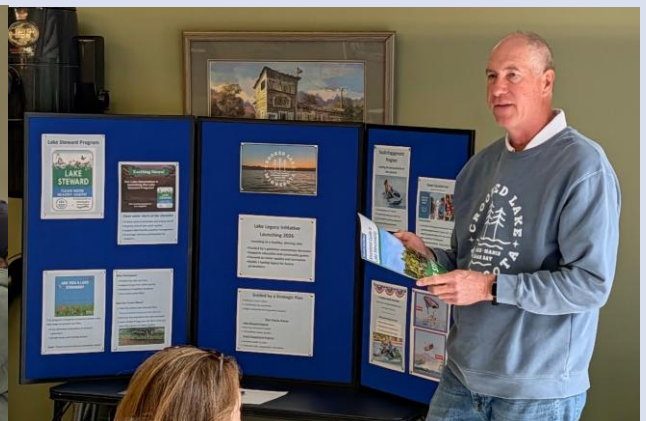
June 13th - Picnic



Over 80 lake association members and their families gathered at Andy and Joy Larson's on a beautiful cool windy day to enjoy great food and conversation.



We heard from two of our board members, Tim Kensok and Dean Forchas. They discussed the two initial key areas of focus for our new Lake Legacy Initiative - lake stewardship and youth education. Tim discussed the Lake Steward Program, an exciting step toward protecting and enhancing the lake we all enjoy. Dean reminded the crowd about the jet ski safety talk and demonstration that will be happening at our 4th of July Family Fun Event. President Scott Maghan talked briefly about Eurasian Milfoil identification and announced that Kris Picken was able to secure \$14,700 dollars in grants!

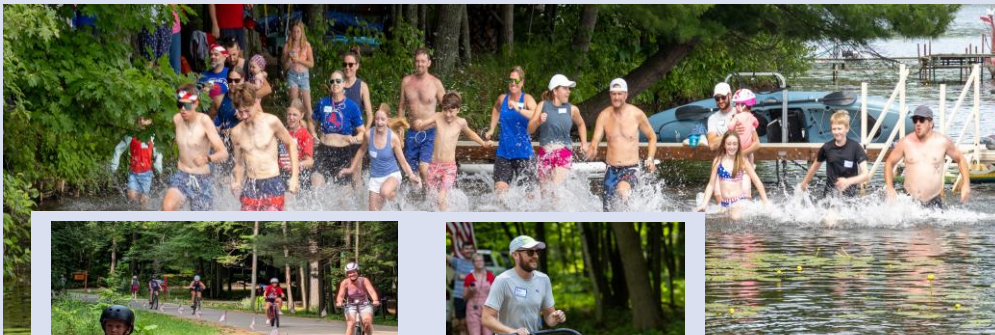




6th ANNUAL FAMILY FUN EVENT

July 4th Larson's on Sugar Bay

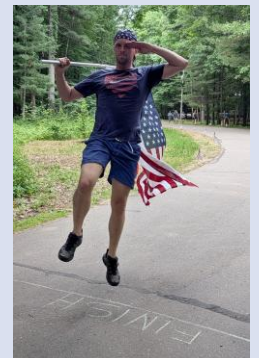
A beautiful summer morning brought out close to 90 participants and spectators for the **"Triathlon of Fun."** Swimming, biking, running and cheering added up to lots of fun had by all!



A big thank you to Andy and Joy Larson for, once again, hosting these fun events!



*Top 3 winners of the triathlon
Ben Bastian, Gabe Jukish, Nolan Ullrich*



As part of this year's Family Fun Event, the **Lake Legacy Initiative** launched its **Youth Engagement Program**. Following a water safety discussion by Gabe and Nolan Jukish, participants enjoyed an exciting jet ski freestyle demonstration by these two professional world champions.



Photos courtesy of Doug Picken

The Youth Engagement Program Survey

The goal of this initiative is to connect young people with our lakes. To create activities they'll enjoy, we first want to learn what interests them. If you have youth that live on or regularly visit our chain of lakes, please take a few minutes to complete our survey. Your feedback will help shape future programs.

Use the survey link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RRBKPPY>



Coming Soon

Fall Dinner

4th Annual Silent Auction!



Toro Flex 60V Trimmer and Leaf Blower Kit Value \$320



Golf & Dining Gift Cards



Dozens of Auction Items to Bid on



Weber Grill Value \$295

Hello lake residents of Portage, Hanks, Sugar Bay and Crooked Lake!

Summer may be winding down, but the fun isn't over! Join us on

Saturday, September 19th for our Annual Fall Dinner and Silent Auction. It's a great opportunity to reconnect with lakeshore friends, enjoy a wonderful evening, and bid on dozens of unique auction items. Proceeds from the auction help support the improvement and protection of our beautiful chain of lakes.

The social hour and silent auction begins at **4:30 p.m.**, with bidding closing promptly at **6:00 p.m.**

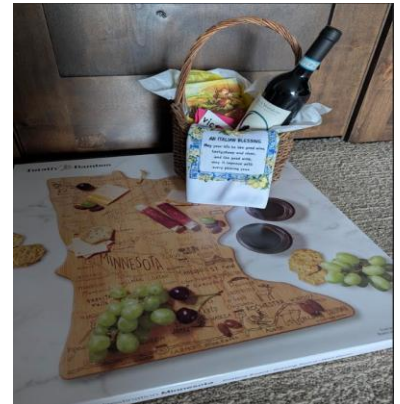
Cash or checks only, please.

We will once again feature dozens of items and certificates for goods and services generously donated by our local businesses.

Want to help? We're still accepting donations through **August 15th**. Merchandise, gift baskets, services, event tickets, or other creative items are all welcome. If you'd like to donate, please contact us at info@pclia.com.



Gift cards and T-shirts



A Taste of Italy brought to you from the region of Montepulciano-Tuscany



Gift Cards



Larson/Weber Surf & Turf



Handcrafted Benches Value \$200



- **WHEN:** Saturday, September 19th
- **WHERE:** The Bridge Tavern on Highway 6 north of Crosby
- **WHAT:** 4:30-6:00 *Social*
4:30-6:00 *Silent Auction Bidding* (cash or check only, please)
6:15 *Dinner*
7:00 *Business Meeting* (You may attend the meeting even if you don't participate in the dinner.)

Please cut and return this form to be mailed in order to reach us no later than September 4th.



#1 Brisket #2 Chicken #3 Walleye

Food Choice # _____

***This form must be mailed in order to reach us no later than September 4th.**





***Join us for our annual
Silent Auction/Fall Dinner and Business
Meeting***

Saturday, September 19th

*Your reservation and payment must be mailed in order to
reach us no later than*

September 4th

The Loon Book Club: Where Everyone Talks at Once

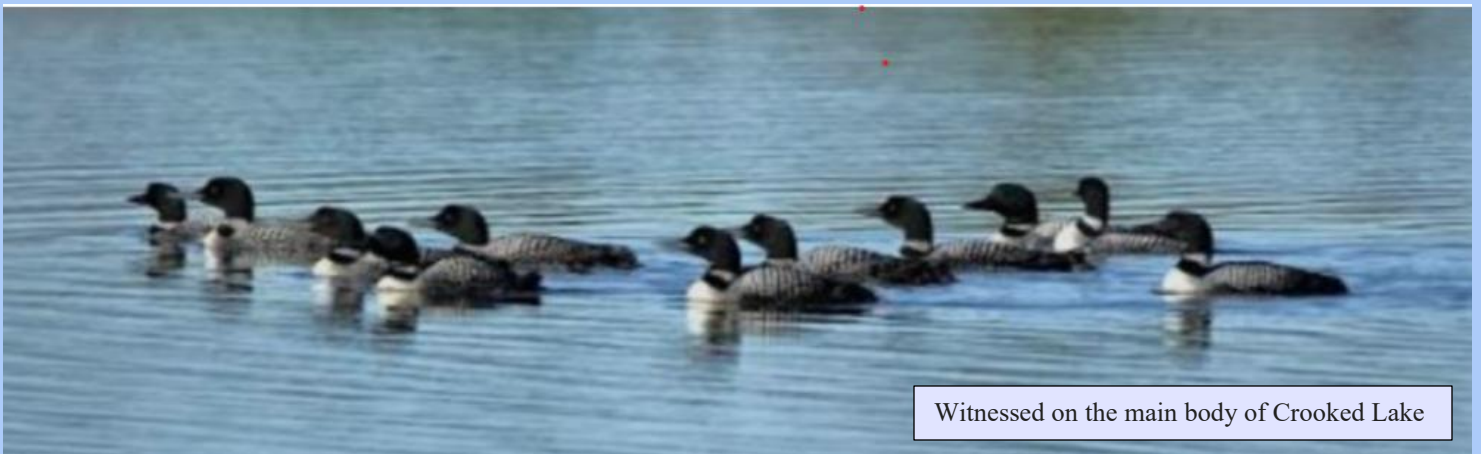


If you've ever looked out across the lake on a summer morning and spotted a small flotilla of loons gathered together, you may have wondered: Is this a neighborhood meeting? A family reunion? A support group for birds with unusually dramatic voices?

As it turns out, loons do sometimes hold what scientists call "social gatherings." Several adults may come together, especially later in the summer, to swim, dive, call, and generally keep tabs on one another. Researchers are still sorting out exactly why they do it, but possibilities include checking out territories, reinforcing social familiarity, and perhaps preparing for migration. Around here, we prefer the simpler explanation: book club.

Picture it: six loons in a loose circle, all facing inward, each pretending they finished the book. One loon gives a thoughtful tremolo, which roughly translates to, "I loved the symbolism, but the ending felt rushed." Another dives underwater to avoid admitting it only read the first chapter. A third surfaces with a fish and says, "I brought snacks."

Loon gatherings can look surprisingly organized from shore. They may circle, call, dive, splash, and then suddenly separate as if someone suggested reading the minutes from the last month's meeting. Like any good book club, there is conversation, occasional side-eye, and at least one member who takes things a little too seriously.



Witnessed on the main body of Crooked Lake

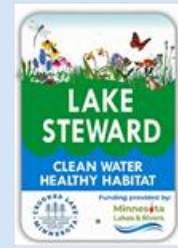
The next time you see several loons gathering on the lake, enjoy the show from a respectful distance. They may be discussing migration routes, comparing fishing spots, or debating whether this month's selection had too many characters. Whatever the agenda, one thing is certain: the loons have mastered the art of lakeside socializing—no folding chairs, no coffee cake, and absolutely no indoor voices required.

-Submitted by Kari Bunkers



Lake Legacy Initiative

Lake Steward Program



The First Lake Stewards Join the Program

Earlier this year, PCLIA launched the Lake Steward program. The program recognizes property owners who help protect our lakes through sustainable shoreline practices. We are pleased to announce that several lake residents have taken part in the program.

Why Become a Lake Steward?

By becoming a Lake Steward, you can help create a cleaner, healthier lake. It's an easy way to make a positive difference while enjoying the natural beauty and abundant wildlife our lakes provide. If your property qualifies, you'll also earn a Lake Steward sign to proudly display, recognizing your commitment to protecting our lakes. Best of all, participation is free, risk-free, and does not require you to make any changes based on your survey results.

Interested? Here's How to Learn More

Visit the [Lake Steward Quiz](#) here or on our PCLIA website. The quiz explains the program, helps you evaluate your shoreline, and offers simple, practical ideas that can improve water quality and benefit our lakes. Take the quiz today and see how easy it is to become part of the effort to protect the lakes we all enjoy.



The Portage-Crooked Lakes Improvement Association

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Portage-Crooked Lakes Improvement Association (PCLIA) may contract to treat Eurasian Water Milfoil, an Aquatic Invasive Species in the Crooked, Sugar Bay, Hanks and Portage chain of lakes in 2026. This is dependent on an evaluation of the need.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has granted the PCLIA a waiver requiring that the association obtain the signatures for approval of lake-shore property owners. Instead, the PCLIA will notify property owners of the treatment through alternate forms. This newsletter notice is one form that the PCLIA is using to notify property owners. Other forms include, but not limited to, notification through the association's web page, member newsletter and annual meeting.

The proposed dates for treatment are June 1, 2026 through October 31, 2026. Eurasian Water Milfoil is the target species for the treatment.

The method of control or product being used: EPA and MDA registered aquatic herbicides. Such as but not limited to Liquid 2,4-D, Granular 2,4-D, Granular Tri Clopyr, Florpyrauxifen-Benzyl.

Landowners may request that control not occur adjacent to the landowner's property. If you desire that the treatment of Eurasian Water Milfoil not occur adjacent to your property, please notify the Portage-Crooked Lakes Improvement Association immediately at the following address and email address below:

PO Box 564
Deerwood, MN 56444
info@pclia.com

Corporate Sponsor

We would be happy to entertain other sponsorship opportunities. If interested, please reach out to us at info@pclia.com with your interest and contact information.



JIM CHRISTENSEN
LAKESHORE MARKETING GROUP

LakeshoreBroker.com
218-820-2147



**CALL FOR A COMPLIMENTARY
MARKET APPRASIAL OF YOUR PROPERTY**

Beyond Our Shores

Hunter's Bay History: Four Generations on Bay Lake

Along the west side of Highway 6, between Bay Lake, Maple Lake and Crooked Lake, stands one of the area's most familiar landmarks – Hunter's Bay Store, currently called Hansen Sports and Hunter's Bay Store. The store has served generations of residents and visitors, and its history is closely tied to the Hansen family. What follows is a recollection of that history, told through the memories of the late Curt Hansen as recorded in 2008.



Hunter's Bay Store, circa 1930s-40s

1933 – Store built by LaSalle

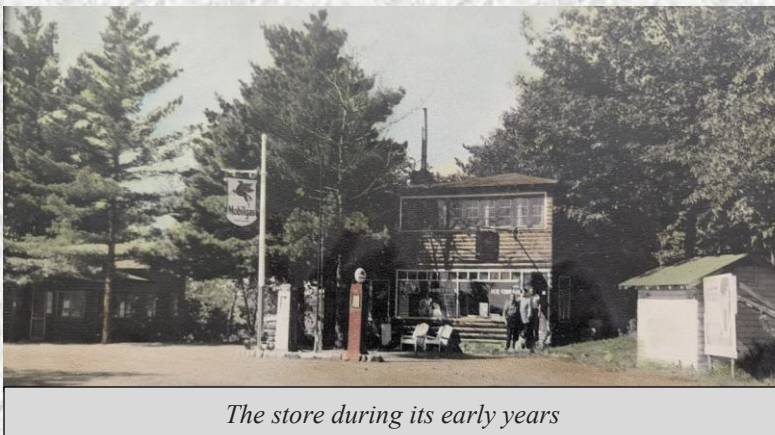
The Hunter's Bay Store was built in 1933 by Chester LaSalle. He also built some of the cabins on Bay Lake for Bronson-Erickson who owned the building next to the store and used it for a real estate office.

LaSalle built our cabin on Woodland Beach in 1936. That year my mother and I would row over to the store to shop. Dad had bought a 3 H.P. Champion motor from LaSalle for \$39.50 to put on a 16-foot flat bottom row boat he bought in town, but Mother would not let me run the motor that first summer.

LaSalle sold the store in 1938-39 and moved to the city. There were 4 or 5 owners over the next few years. One tried a toboggan slide behind the store, next a bar and dance hall upstairs, but none of these were successful.

1944 – Hansen family purchases store

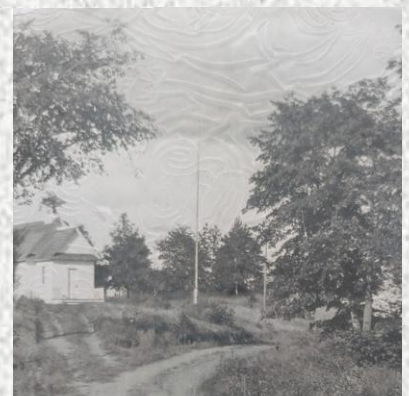
In March of 1944, Happy Trotzig, the owner of the store at that time, came into Dad's radiator shop in Minneapolis and said, "Art, I'm going to sell the store." Dad said, "I want to buy it." We came up to look it over and things were very run down. Nothing had been kept up since the store was built. Dad made sure that he could buy the building next door from Bronson-Erickson and bought both. I was still in high school in Minneapolis so Mother opened the store. We only ran the store from May through September at that time. There was no such thing as a snowmobile, so there was nothing to do all winter.



The store during its early years

1949 – Schoolhouse Acquired

In 1949, Ralph Hunt came into the store and asked Dad if he would be interested in buying the Katrine schoolhouse. The township had no use for it and it was originally part of the Hunters Bay plot. Dad said, "Yes, I will buy it."



The former Katrine schoolhouse before its move

Shore Lore Shore Lore Shore Lore

Preserving Our Lake's Legacy

On a fall evening in 1951, my friends, Gene Anderson, Bob Paulson and I went into Club La Gauyle in Brainerd for a cheeseburger. There Bob saw a girl he had met earlier in the summer. She was with two girlfriends – one of them was Ruth Carlson. The four of us started going to Tuesday night wrestling matches because Ruth wouldn't stay awake when we went to the movies. Most of you know the rest of the story – we were married on June 6, 1953. Ruth's dad and Elmer Anderson remodeled the schoolhouse into a summer home and we lived there for many years.

In 1962, Highway 6 was rebuilt and the school house was condemned. We had heard there were people in Crosby bidding on it so we raised our original bid. We later found out that we had placed the only two bids.

We moved the schoolhouse to its present location. Dean and Jane used it for a summer home until they built across the lake in 1991.



Present location of schoolhouse

1970's – New store opens

In 1975, we tore the old store down in late September and had Thanksgiving in the basement of the new store, moving up as the store floor and living quarters were completed.

In 1977, we sold the shop in Minneapolis and also our home. My commuting twice a week was over. I think that pretty well covers the history of the Hunter's Bay Store. The new store is getting old, along with some of us who are still working. It's been interesting – many friends – fun to watch many of the kids who grew up around the store now coming in with their grandchildren. It is hard to imagine what Bay Lake will be like in another 64 years, so I won't even try.



Curt & Ruth Hansen in front of Hansen's Store



Hansen's Sports and Hunter's Bay Store today, serving lakes area fourth generation of customers

More than ninety years after it was built, what once was Hunter's Bay Store, remains a gathering place for the surrounding lake communities. Through changing times, new buildings, and four generations of family stewardship, the store and its growing business continues to reflect the enduring spirit of the lake and the people who call it home.

Do you have old lake photos or family stories tucked away in a shoebox? Consider sharing them so we can continue preserving our lake's history together. Reach out to us at info@pclia.com

Shore Lore Series • Vol. 13

PCLIA

Portage-Crooked Lakes
Improvement Association
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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