

A View from the Lake by Tom Schroeder – President, Beaver Dam Lake Management District

Well, we continue to live in strange times. With the cancellations of many events and activities including the Rutabaga Festival and the continual reminders of social distancing and other Covid-19 recommended precautions it seems that Beaver Dam Lake is being used more than ever. With the air temperatures in the 80's and 90's and the water temperature in the high 70's for much of July, being on the lake or in the water was most pleasant. The water quality remains very good with little evidence of algae growth. However, there have been numerous inquiries and questions about Swimmer Itch occurring in various locations around the lake. It doesn't appear to be prevalent throughout the lake but most reports are from areas where water fowl such as geese and ducks frequent. In previous articles I have addressed how to avoid the problem and there is a lot of information on the Internet including a CDC site. You can minimize exposure to the problem by applying an oily lotion on your body, especially your legs before entering the water and by drying off immediately after leaving the water.

The BDLMD Annual Meeting was held at the Cumberland Middle school on Sat. July 11, 2020. There were 29 in attendance which was higher than I expected because of the Covid-19 concerns. Seating provided distancing opportunities and, although optional face masks were worn by many attendees. Dr. Alan Carson was elected for another term. The proposed budget was passed with funding approved for the match percentage for a potential construction grant and the Planning Grant for the SE storm water pond, the remaining obligation to complete the Jeffery Blvd. and 3rd Ave. storm water project and control of invasive species. The current BDLMD officers agreed to serve another year.

I have received many comments and complaints about wake board boats (Wake Boat - WB) and the effect of the waves that are created on the shoreline, docks, swim rafts and other water craft both on the lake or tied off to docks and/or on lifts. Some people are advocating limiting the use of the Wake Boats including time of day use, limiting areas of the lake and increasing NO WAKE ZONES. However, inboard, inboard-outboard stern drives (I/O) and outboard powered watercraft can produce waves similar to a WB. The issue is really using a common sense approach when operating any water craft between the no wake speed and top end capability of the water craft. Whether operating a wave runner/jet ski in a circular manner to make waves, operating a large water craft more suited for the great lakes or using a water craft in a manner that creates large waves, the operator should be aware of the boating regulations currently in place that address required distances from land, docks and other watercraft on the lake. Stay as far from shore as possible when creating large waves for wake boarding and surfing. Slowing down or avoiding congested areas on the lake such as the Narrows or the Dam (narrowing between Williams and Rabbit Bay) or stopping dead in the water when experiencing potentially dangerous situations are just a few suggestions that will help address the majority of the complaints I have received. Again, the use of common sense and being aware of the surroundings when operating any water craft may help to address this growing issue.

Last week two of the three buildings on Elm Street along the south shore of Library Lake were demolished as part of the South East storm water pond/project. The last building should be gone in two to three weeks. The design of the area for the storm water ponds, etc. is underway. The Lake District is planning to apply for a Lake Protection grant in Nov. 2020 to help offset some of the cost of building the storm water project. If successful, construction will take place in the 3rd quarter of 2021.

Late last week the “No Wake” buoys going north and south across the lake near the beach were removed by the City at the direction of the WDNR. It was discovered that the permit allowing for the placement of the buoys had expired. Until the issue of the buoy permit and placement is resolved please slow down when you are boating near the beach area and fishing pier. The “No Wake” buoy just off the fishing pier and boat launch will remain and should be observed. Like the issue of water craft creating large waves, please use common sense when boating in this area.

There are still 5 or more weeks of good weather for using the lake. Please be safe and enjoy our great Beaver Dam Lake.